

## Paul Prays: Thanking and Asking

Colossians 1:3-14

Today we continue our new series on Paul's letter to the Colossians. Paul's warm greetings are prayerful and remind them of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### [1] Thanking

"We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you..." (Col 1:3-8)

- Paul is thankful to God for the Colossians' faith, love, and fruitfulness
- Question: But what does a thankful prayer achieve?
  - A warm welcome in this letter
  - Christlikeness– for He gave thanks to the Father (Matt 15:36, 26:27; see also Luke 17:11-19)
  - But the word "achieve" might reveal something about the questioner (and us!)

### [2] Asking

"...we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that..." (Col 1:9-14)

- Paul asks God that the Colossians might grow in every way
- As part of that growth, Paul encourages their thankfulness by reminding them of the gospel: "...giving thanks to the Father, **who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**" (Col 1:12-14)
  - He has qualified you!

- He has delivered us from the domain of darkness... What is that?
  - *I can't see.* Darkness is confusion, blindness. (Deut 28:28-29)
  - *I'm not seen.* Darkness has its attraction– no one sees what I'm doing and thinking. (John 3:19-21; Rom 13:12)
  - *If I'm not seen, I can do and be what I want.* Darkness provides the illusion of god-like sovereignty and autonomy. In that sense it is spiritual – and even Satanic. (Luke 22:53; Acts 26:18; compare 1 John 1:5)
    - Darkness is also final, poetic justice (Jude 1:13)
- Transferred to a new domain *through the forgiveness of sins*

### Questions for Reflection and Application:

1. Read Colossians 1:1-14. Paul's warm greetings speak of his prayer life for the Colossians. What can we learn from this?
2. What do we learn about Christ's prayer life from these verses? Matt 15:36, 26:27; Luke 17:11-19.
3. If we're saved, does it really matter how we live our lives? Explain Paul's words in Col 1:10.
4. The gospel is expressed in Colossians 1:12-14.
  - a. Who does the "qualifying" and "delivering"?
  - b. Express your experience of being delivered from darkness to light!