

Colossians

^ Col 1:1-14

Praying in a letter

Do you pray? - of course

How?

Some like to pray out loud

Some like to pray in silence

Or listen in silence

Some pray with

Images

Objects

Things to keep our attention

Praying for people

Also out loud, or in silence

Have you tried writing to pray

As a journal

Or for someone to receive

Apostle Paul often prays for the recipients of his letters

Often at the beginning

Do we do that

Via email

a letter or a card?

It is good to pray in this way

As not only those who write/ receive are blessed

But also those who read it afterwards

Like we do with this letter of Paul/Timothy to the congregation of the Colossae

Introduction Colossians

Colossae

Town in middle of Turkey

East of Ephesus

In the neighbourhood of Laodicea

Paul did not start this church

Instead Epaphras was in Ephesus

And became a Christian there

And brought Christianity to his home town - Colossae

Place of writing

Paul was in prison

Where?

Ephesus or Rome

Most likely Rome

He seems to have written a lot of letters then

To be sent to Colossae, Ephesus, and Philemon

There are clear parallels between Eph and Col.

Time if Rome 60ad, if Ephesus

Reason

Encouragement

Syncretism

When Christian faith is diluted by other faiths

Greeks, Jews and Phrygians

All brought their own faith practices and culture

And this then started to affect the teaching of the gospel

The letter addresses a number of these

But then also addresses from the theology practical living -> fr Ch 3 onwards

Structure Col 1:3-14

Thanksgiving for Colossians

Prayer for Colossians

Who is Jesus

Thanksgiving for Colossians

^ Col 1:3-6

Paul thanks God the **Father**

For their Faith, hope and love

Faith in **Jesus Christ**

Love for all the Saints

Saints are all who believe in Jesus Christ

Hope laid up in Heaven

Truth of the Gospel

Bearing fruit and growing

In the whole world

among yourselves

Once you truly comprehended the grace of God

The messenger Epaphras

^ Col v7-8

Brought the Gospel to the Col

And brought news of their acceptance back to Paul

The Cols loved in the **Spirit**

Interlude: Father, Son & Spirit

God the Father

Giving Thanks

Jesus Christ

Son of God the Father

Faith in him

Spirit

Their love

All three of the Trinity are present here

And Paul speaks of them as three, but in one breath...

One in three, three in one

Interlude: The Gospel

Believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Father

The Kingdom of God is near

God came on earth in Jesus Christ

Repent therefore

Receive the grace of God in the form of forgiveness

And follow him

The hope that through him we have in Heaven

The result of conversion

The Love you have for all the Saints

bearing fruit

Love in the Spirit

Faith in Jesus Christ changes us

Prayer for Colossians

^ Col 1:9-12

Paul continues to pray for them in writing - Why?

Surely now that they believe it is OK, isn't

Should Paul not pray for those who not yet believe?

No, he prays for them

He knows that this step is critical and that as Christians they need to grow

They need also to know better who Jesus is

The small plants that have been started to develop out of the seed that Epaphras has sown, need nurture and care.

And this is what Paul prays for:

1. Asking that they may be filled with the knowledge of God

Spiritual wisdom

This is how we receive the mystery of the power of the Holy Spirit among us

Intellectual wisdom

This is how we understand God with our brains So that they may fully know him.

2. Asking that they will live lives pleasing to God - how?

Bearing fruit in every good work

Not only new believers

But loving each other is word, thought and deed

Growing in the knowledge of God

Even though he has prayed that we are filled with the knowledge of God

Now he prays that this knowledge will transform us and that we grow because of it

This is sanctification - the ongoing process of becoming the people that God wants us to be

Never ends

3. He prays for strength for them

Why?

because life will be hard for them as Christians And God wants to use them!

How?

To be strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power

4. He prays that they will be prepared

To endure everything

Life as a Christian is uncertain

But God may ask things of us that we do not expect!

With patience, joy and thanksgiving!

5. With the result and calling that we share in the inheritance with all the saints

The call and rescue

^ Col 1:13-14

From the power of darkness

Redemption and restoration

restoration

Forgiveness of sins

Transferred us in the Kingdom of his Son

Response