**Colossians – Pre-eminence** – **wk 9 – More than a Hotline**

**Background: Paul – 6-year-old Colossae – Epaphras needed counsel…**

**Would Colossae survive?**

**Theme – The preeminence of Christ in all things**

**Jesus is preeminent in all creation as creator / Pre-em in our personal life, marriage life, family life, work life – all of it.**

**This main theme is all about – what is means to be rooted in Christ**

* **The 1st half is about the roots system = what we believe**
* **The 2nd half is about the fruit system = how it affects our life**

**Colossians 2:6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. (Keep growing - stay grounded and rooted in Christ - stay strong in what you were taught)**

**Today – This is our last week in Colossians.**

**Two neglected fundamentals – Prayer & Witnessing**

**Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. (writing in prison for sharing faith in a culture hostile to Jesus) 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.**

**The Call to PRAY - Three ways to Pray**

**\*\* Pray consistently – Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer…**

**Daily and throughout the day.**

**We are all good at praying in crisis - this is more than distress prayers. This is all about communing w/God.**

**1 Thess 5:16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing…**

**How do you pray – all the time? The reality of communion.**

**\* No bible school or seminary required.**

**Eph 6:18 Pray in the Spirit at all times, with every kind of prayer (relationship) and petition (requests). To this end, stay alert with all perseverance in your prayers for all the saints.**

**When you hit a wall – a trial – a decision – a challenge – pray!**

**This the intention to - Matt 6:33 – Seek first the kingdom…**

**BTW - God does not love you more when you pray, but you know his love more when you pray.**

**Many often wait too long to pray or ask for prayer.**

**When you feel far from God – dry – struggling… pray**

**Prayer reflects a relationship. The joy and communion of God.**

**Christians alone – have that privilege.**

**Hebrews 4:16 Let us (Followers of Jesus by faith) then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.**

**Ephesians 3:12 - In Him and through faith in Him we may enter God's presence with boldness and confidence.**

**Every day – throughout the day – only through Jesus – we can walk personally with God.**

**\*\* Pray watchfully – Col 4:2b …prayer, being watchful…**

**Being alert, discerning, ready, eyes open, alert – ready to pray as needed – as you sense the HS leading you.**

**(Paul in his comparison of Colossians, Ephesians says) Ephesians 6:18 Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints…**

**(Peter echoes this) 1 Peter 1:13 Therefore, with minds that are alert and fully sober, set your hope on the grace to be brought to you when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming.**

**Be alert, sober-minded – be ready – be watchful.**

**Don’t lose hope and trust in Jesus – PRAY!**

**1 Peter 5:8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.**

**Be alert, sober-minded – don’t forget and don’t get distracted, the enemy is seeking to rip you and your family apart – PRAY!**

**When you sense your family / marriage is under attack – pray!**

**We hear the news of chaos and war – pray!**

**We hear of a family crisis – pray!**

**We hear of a mass shooting – pray!**

**We hear of layoffs – pray!**

**We hear of our friend's or a strangers trials – pray!**

**And not just saying you will pray and thinking about it.**

**Be watchful and ready – to pray!**

**\*\* Pray worshipfully – Col 4:2 prayer, being… thankful. (Thankful prayers)**

**Grateful, worship-minded prayers that focus on the goodness of God.**

**-Giving thanks is always prayer – who are you talking to?**

**-True worship is always prayer – who are you talking to?**

**Our “music time” is to be a time of gratitude – it is prayer.**

**Unfortunately, most of the time when people pray it is not thankful prayers it is frustrated, worried, and request prayers.**

**\*We are encouraged to ask and make requests in prayer – but there are 5X more challenges to be thankful.**

**Philippians 4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer (intentional act) and petition, (humility - recognition of your need for God) with thanksgiving, (worshipful / gratitude) present your requests to God. (after recognition of God’s power, humility, submission and gratitude – we present requests) 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

**If we live in perpetual petition – we will live as a victim.**

**If you live in gratitude towards God – you live victorious!**

**1 Thess 5:16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.**

**Notice we don’t give thanks for all things – but in all things.**

**Ephesians 5:20 - Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

**This is at the heart of prayer – Humility and - Humility is reflected in gratitude.**

**BTW – God does not get the thank you and the worship. We need to remind ourself of our inability and his great ability.**

**John 4:23 - Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.**

**He is not looking for worship. He is looking for worshipers.**

**People who are humble and have a right perspective of who He is.**

**The Call to PRAY - Two Things to Pray**

**It is a given that you pray for yourself and family - but remember to…**

**\*\*Pray for your leaders - 3 Pray for us, too…**

**Pray for me, our team, and those in equipping ministry roles committed to making disciples.**

**Paul often asked for prayer**

**Ephesians 6:19 - Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel…**

**1 Thessalonians 5:25 - Brothers and sisters, pray for us.**

**2 Th 3:1 As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.**

**Romans 15:30 - I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.**

**That last one – join me in my struggle. Equipping ministry is a joyful difficult labor. It is hard - pray for me. Pray for us.**

* **We seek God for our church and for vision – pray for us.**
* **We spend hours and days preparing the Word of God - pray for us.**
* **We work to meet and disciple the body of Christ – pray for us.**
* **We carry your cares – and are burdened for you - Pray for us.**
* **We bear your heartaches and joys - Pray for us.**
* **We pour our hearts out and our emotions for the sheep and often get kicked to the curb - Pray for us.**
* **We are often burdened financially and in need – pray for us.**
* **We get tired like you and can feel overwhelmed – pray for us.**
* **We want to be good spouses and parents too – pray for us.**
* **We need encouraging friendships too – pray for us.**
* **We strive to have a healthy spiritual life ourselves – pray for us.**

**Romans 15:30 - I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me.**

**When I know I am being prayed for – I take delight and joy.**

**(David Butler – Dorothy)**

**\*\*Pray for the lost – Col 4:3 And pray… that God may open a door for our message…that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ…**

**Your friends, family, neighbors, community, America, the world – they need Jesus. He is their only hope.**

* **Pray for open doors - open hearts and ears.**

**Divine appointments and opportunities.**

**There are people all around you that you know, who do not know who Jesus is… pray for an open door**

**Leading my co-worker to Jesus one night after work…**

* **Pray for clarity**

**Paul knew all the right answers - yet wanted prayer for clarity.**

**It is important that you understand what you believe and why.**

**Pray that what is said makes sense and is accurate to the word of God. Not opinions & passions, but the word of God.**

**Praying for the lost – is all about Praying for God’s agenda - God's will - God's heart for the world.**

**Matthew 6:9 “This, then, is how you should pray: “‘Our Father in heaven holy is your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**God your kingdom come! In my life, in my family, in my community, in our nation, in our world – Your kingdom come!!**

**Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.**

**Let’s pray that right now.**

**This only works if you actually pray – don’t just sit there.**

* **Prayer to know Jesus**
* **Pray for God’s will in your life**
* **Pray for your family (spouse/kids/ parents)**
* **Pray for your family who don’t know Jesus – by name**
* **Pray for your friends who don’t know Jesus – by name**
* **Pray for your co-workers who don’t know Jesus – by name**

**Pray for open doors and clarity**

* **Pray for our community – the hurting and lost**
* **Pray for our leaders – guide them in your will**
* **Pray for the hurting – main / Israel conflict**
* **I humbly ask you to pray for me**

**Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.**