

W_90_Colossians.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the chapel of the opened book. Under the covering title of the Aroma or the Fullness. The special subject before us this evening is the prayers of the Lord's Prisoner, particularly associating Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians together. It is our custom in these meetings to read a portion of scripture together. So those of you who are listening to this recording, if you care to join us, will you switch off for a little while while we read together? Psalms 90 and 91. The subject before us this evening is a consideration of the prayers that we find embedded in the prison epistles, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. But we have just read two Psalms. And one of them is headed a prayer of Moses, the man of God. And the second psalm has no heading. And the rabbinical rule is if you have an author. Over one psalm and there are no more authors mentioned. He's the writer of all the rest till you get to another author, which is reasonable. Here we have then a prayer of Moses. This has been a psalm to which people have turned in times of stress. I suppose that in the time of the last war or the last two wars when bombers were dropping, Psalm 90 was read by more people than almost any other scripture put together. And yet, friends, if we're honest with ourselves, could we say that this is true of us? We are consumed by thine anger and by thy wrath? Are we troubled? They see.

[00:01:59] We want to be honest in our interpretation of Scripture. Moses was dealing with things in his own peculiar time. And he was facing this fact that he led a people out of Egypt and they so rebelled and so rebelled that God said not one of them that came out of Egypt, who was over 20 years of age should ever go into the land of promise. So he summed it up. He said, The days of our years are three score years and ten. They might reach to 80. But a person who was 20 when he came out of Egypt. And he was wandering 40 years in the wilderness would be 60 at the very latest when he died and so on. It's just dealing with that time. And then these people, they said God had brought them out of Egypt and their children to die in the wilderness. And God said, And your children that you've spoken about like that shall live all the time with you in the wilderness. And when you're dead, they'll go in. So only with thine eyes shalt thou see the pestilence and the arrow shall not come nigh thee. With long life or length of days. Will he satisfy you? Give you 40 years at least in the wilderness all that time and show you his salvation. You see, you're not lost anything. Friends, If another war comes, read Psalm 90 and all the lot together, if you will.

[00:03:27] But that's where it comes in, you see? Do you see my point? There are prayers in the Scriptures which belong to the man and his time. What a game We might have read Psalm 72 where David is looking down the age to see his great son, the true David sitting upon the throne and he shall come down like showers upon the mountains. He shall think of the poor and the needy. His dominion shall be from the river to the ends of the earth in all eternity. And when he says that Psalm, he says the prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended, consummated, reached. Then you get the disciples coming to our savior and saying, John the Baptist has taught them a prayer. Won't you teach us one? And he said, Will you pray? Say our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Because they were waiting for the kingdom and they were in the presence of the King. And he had been announced. And John the Baptist had said, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. You see. Now, isn't it fine to think that God hasn't left us without. Some guidance. Alas, I don't think many of us have gone to him and said, Oh Lord, give us some guidance as to how to pray for. You can speak to Christians who have got the complete New Testament.

[00:04:53] And if you were to say to them, Do you know the pattern prayers that we have in Paul's prison ministry, they'd be perplexed in two ways. They'd say Prison ministry. What's that? And never bothered, never read for their guidance, the prayers that are actually embedded in these scriptures. You see, you can't say, oh, well, they were the prayers of the apostle Paul. We'll just go on. You can't because they form an integral part of the epistle. They are put there for our meditation and our learning and our examination just as any other part. Well, now, strictly speaking, our subject this evening is the epistle to the Colossians. We're giving it an examination. But just as it says, no man leadeth unto himself and no man dieth unto himself. So no one epistle can stand by itself. They're all interrelated. And the more we know of the interrelation, the more we know of any one of them. You know that rather searching line in the poet? What do they know of England? Who owned the England? No. Well, the more you know of all the rest of history, the more you can put through the history of your own people in its right perspective. So in this evening, we are giving a consideration not only to the prayer of Colossians one, but to the prayers of Ephesians and Philippians, so that we may see there is a consistent line of teaching in these prayers.

[00:06:20] Now, you don't think about teaching in prayers, or some people do when they have a prayer meeting, they take the opportunity to teach God what he's got to do and what they've got their eyes shut. They know there's a certain member of the congregation there and they're teaching him of it. Well, prayer was never, never given us to do that. But if prayers are going to be acceptable in the ears of God, they will have to be in harmony with his will and they will have to be in harmony with our calling. And how are we going to know that if we shut our eyes to the guidance which is here? Well, now, of course, I'm wasting time because you're saying, well, now get on. We believe all that. But then I don't know everybody that's listening to this recording. Do I beg your pardon? You may want to have had this explained to you. So now we will open the book. You will notice. The. The way in which the chart sets out these prayers. These will be supplied with the recording when the time comes through. The ministry of our brother, Mr. Ramsey. You will notice most obviously, that the first prayer in Ephesians one and the prayer in Colossians one. Most certainly, as it were, balance one another. Just look at the key words. He says, I've heard of your faith and love in Ephesians one and in Colossians.

[00:07:50] He says, I've heard of your faith and love. So he doesn't mind repeating himself. He's introducing his prayer in both Epistles because of the same facts that had come to his knowledge. Now, in the Ephesian prayer, he stresses that there is power and might at our disposal because we are associated with the risen Christ and the power that raised him from the dead. And in the colossian prayer, he also gives us an indication that there is power and might at our disposal. We look at that presently. I'm only giving you the words. First of all, there's a stress upon wisdom that God would give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. And there we have in the colossian prayer again, wisdom and spiritual understanding. And then in Ephesians, he's stressing the hope. And in Colossians, in the verses just preceding the prayer, we have the hope. We don't look at all these and test them. And then in Ephesians, he speaks about the inheritance in the Saints. And in Colossians he speaks about the inheritance of the Saints. In Ephesians the position to which our thoughts are directed. Are far above all. And in the corresponding prayer, he tells us we've been translated. And when you think of being translated, if you know your Bible, there's one man's name comes into your mind, isn't it, Enoch? So that you've got more or less the same feeling. He was caught up to heaven.

[00:09:34] And these are far above all. And then in both cases, Christ is the head of the body, the church, the fullness. And in Colossians, it's the same thing from another point of view. Well, the mere fact of pointing out those parallel words should be enough for most of us to say, Oh, most surely they are going over the ground, perhaps from two points of view. But they are definitely intended. Then when we look at the prayer in Ephesians three, the center of the Epistle. We have, among other things, love that exceeded knowledge. And when we come to Philippians one, we have love abounding in knowledge. The one is the love of Christ, which exceeded knowledge. And the other is your love, which is abound in knowledge. So there's a little parallel there. And then in Ephesians three, we are bid to comprehend with All Saints what is breadth and length and depth and height. But when we come to Philippians, we are not to comprehend such vastness, but to prove the things that are more excellent or try the things that differ. And then in the climax of the prayer in Ephesians three is that we may be filled unto all the fullness of God. And in Philippians, that we might be filled with the fruits of righteousness. If Jesus is taking us away right to the glorious position of fullness, Philippians says, and come down a little bit and see to it also that you're filled with the fruits of righteousness down here.

[00:11:08] And there's a balance to be struck between the high calling and the lowly walk. And then the one is unto the ages of the ages. And Philippians says, and don't forget the Day of Christ, which comes just at the beginning of it, you see. So we've got this cluster of prayers. Well, now, shall we go back to the Epistle, to the Ephesians? And you see, I've listed out a book here. What as it happens to be a book I've written, I thought, well, I'm not going to sit and patiently copy this out on a bit of paper so that you won't see me reading the book, because most of you will be aware that in the testimony of The Lord's Prisoner, I have set out on page 40 a comparison now not between Ephesians and Colossians, but a comparison and a contrast between Ephesians one and Ephesians three. So I give chapter and verse for those who later on may be wishing to look this up for themselves. Testimony of the Lord's Prisoner, Page 40. Now the two prayers. Ephesians 115 to 19 and Ephesians 314 to 21. Now these prayers are addressed to naturally the first prayer. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory. Ephesians three. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a most extraordinary thing in Ephesians one. It's about the only passage in the whole scripture where you'll get this relationship, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[00:12:47] Why? Why put it like that? Well, if you remember that when the the Prophet Hosea said that the people of Israel would become low army one day. He didn't tell you what low army means? He says the people of Israel will be will become not God's people. And so many of us leave it at that. But he said something more. He said, You will not be my people and I will not be your God. What if I believe that to be true? It's no good me praying to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because for the moment he says, I will not be your God. Well, what do I do then? I say I've got something even better than the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. You have? Yes. I've got the God of the one that steps in and takes the place of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and all are not together. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ is the mediator. And I'll start with that. You see, otherwise, as a gentile, having no hope without God in the world, I wouldn't know what to call him. I wouldn't dare to use any of the titles. I'd be like the poor old Syrophoenician woman, which he heard everybody saying, Oh, thou son of David. Well, that's what I'll say. She said, Oh, thou son of David. He answered another word, you see.

[00:14:13] So the title meant something. She was on the wrong track. So there are two addresses now in both prayers. There's a request that he may give. And of course, all prayer in some measure is a request that he may give, for we are going as the needy ones, the helpless ones, the poor ones to the one who possesses all riches. But of course, we mustn't make prayer into beggary. We must sometimes spare a little time to forget our needs and thank him for something, or even say, Blessed be God. I've got so many blessings, I don't know what else to ask for. Oh, that would please him sometimes. And if you ever friends get up from your knees at prayer and you start off and you suddenly say, Oh, I forgot to ask, don't worry, because he says, Seek ye first The kingdom of God and his righteousness and all the other things will be thrown in when you ask for them or not. Isn't that fine? So he says that he may give. Now, what are you. What are you asking for? A spirit of wisdom and revelation. But if you pray that prayer as God wants you to, you'll please him just as much as old Solomon did. Because he said to Solomon, Now I know the temptation of having three wishes. You know the fairy stories. They're very true. I wish people would read fairy stories sometimes because they're splendid visor they've got poke at you, you know? Person gets three wishes.

[00:15:42] Well, he spends the first one, then he gets into such a pickle, all he can do is to waste all the lot to get rid of them and get back where he was before, you know. And the Lord said to Solomon, Because you haven't asked for riches or for the life of your enemies, but you've asked for wisdom. I'll give you the rest. So, friends, I don't say pray because you know, that will happen. But it will if you set first the desire that you may know him and his will. There be many things that he might have said, Well, I won't trust them to him, but he I can now. So we have wisdom and revelation. And in the third chapter, the prayer is that he may give you strength by his spirit in the inner man for something. So there's two petitions or walking together. Not only that he may give, but that he may know something. And in the first case that he may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches are, the inheritance, what the exceeding greatness of the power that raised Christ from the dead. And in the third chapter, only one thing. But the one thing is so vast that it's beyond us that you may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. I think there's something that exceeding in both prayers.

[00:17:03] The word exceeding is the translation of the word hyperbole. And a hyperbole is an exaggeration. That is to say, if we weren't dealing with God, some of the things we believe would be just exaggerations. But blessed be God. We can never live with him. And so it says exceeding power. The word isn't used of creation. In creation, we read the scriptures which says he spake and it was done by that. He said, Let there be light. And there was light. But when it comes to raising the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, it is piled out the exceeding greatness of his power. So actually, we ought to keep that in mind. And then in the third chapter, it's exceeding knowledge. The love of Christ is something which is exceeding all knowledge. So he's got that hyperbole there. Again, he says you'll press on to know it and it's right to do so. But you'll always be beyond you, always be greater than you can encompass. And then the means adopted to bring about these answers in the first prayer. It's what we are in Christ, what we find in him and our thoughts are set there where he is. But in the second prayer, it's Christ in us that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith coming down. Now that's the right order. We must never be so taken up with what is going on inside us. First we are we must first of all be taken up with what is going on there at the right hand of God for us.

[00:18:42] And then with that fixed in our hearts and minds, we can begin to take the other attitude. Then we have the word energy. Coming in both. The power which was wrought in Christ. N Ergo. N ergo. N erg c. And then we have in the second prayer the

power that worketh in us. He says. You might think this is a prayer that's too vast. But now unto him, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all, we ask or think according to the energy that worketh in us. So the answer to prayer is in line with the power that raised Christ from the dead. And then we have the goal, the fullness of him. That's it is. All in all. Or that you might be filled up to all the fullness of God and heavenly powers are mentioned. The principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named in the one prayer and every family in heaven and earth is named in the other prayer. Did you see what a tremendous scope this prayer covers and the two of them together? It practically means that the person who is going to pray those prayers has some enlightenment already. And that is what we find in Ephesians one verses 3 to 14. Introduces the new dispensation. It starts with telling you that you have all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

[00:20:29] Goes on to tell you that you were chosen in him before the foundation of the world and so on. And after it's gone through the work of redemption and the witness of the Spirit, he says, Now I'm not going to tell you any more. Oh, Paul, just go on telling us. Oh, no. Is it? No. There comes a time when the only thing to do is to take what you know. And go into the presence of God with it. Otherwise, you might become one of those nuisances that are just walking encyclopedias, and that's about all they know. Chapter and verse. But how it impinges on life and godliness or hope or whatnot. They never bother. They used to be one friend. I call him a friend, of course, but he was a bit of a nuisance sometimes. And he said to me and he said I could hear him because I just mention his friends. If you were talking to one another quietly and you don't want me to hear and I'm in there, I could hear what you're saying at the moment. I don't need a deaf aid. Well, this particular friend, I heard him about six times that Sunday morning, go to one after the other. And then he came to me and he told me, he said, I've read the gospel according to Luke, and I won't exaggerate. I think he said 315 times. So I say to women, if you walk right through Smithfield meat market and came out the other end, you'd still be wanting your dinner.

[00:21:55] And left it with him. You see the sheer fact of reading it so many hundred times, it means nothing, does it? It's what you're doing with it. So we have now then the thought that we have this prayer following the teaching. He says, I've given you these three things. I've given you the hope of the calling, the riches of the inheritance and the power. And now he says, I'm going to pray that you may have that wisdom to see these

things, to sort these things out and put them in their right place. So that is one of the offices of prayer to follow the reading of the Word of God that it might not merely be printed page or merely a grammar or a lexicon. They're all necessary and wanted, but there's something else to be done. They may then be retranslated by the only one who can do it, by the Spirit of the living God and writing it upon, If I may borrow the language from the New Covenant on the fleshy tables of our hearts. Now, there's 1 or 2 words in Ephesians that I will touch upon, but we must go on because I want to survey these four prayers. And that is in. Verse 17, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in.

[00:23:20] The knowledge of him. Now the margin says for not in and it says the acknowledgement, not knowledge. And if you like to turn, I won't give you a whole list of passages, but I'll give you one in Colossians chapter two, verse two, where the self-same word is translated acknowledgement. That their hearts might be comforted being knit together in love and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God. And it seems to me that this prayer is not to add a bit more knowledge to the person who already got a tremendous lot. Because if you got the knowledge of Ephesians 3 to 14, you've got some knowledge, believe me, friends. And he's not praying. Oh Lord, add a bit more knowledge. He says, Oh Lord, now grant that that person who's got that knowledge may now acknowledge it. And you know, that's where the rub comes. It's easy to sit in a meeting and listen to these things and say, Oh, we have a lovely meeting this evening and all that sort of thing. I hope you do. But if it doesn't move, if it doesn't move from that, somehow you and I have missed our way. Because you remember, he says, Then shall ye know if you follow on to know the Lord? But if you do not use to his glory what is already given you, there will be no more.

[00:24:55] And then instead of you standing still, you'll go back. So acknowledge friends. If you see the truth, stand for it. Don't hide it under a bushel. Don't sit on the fence. That's an awkward place to sit. Don't sit on the fence. The Lord wants those who see the truth to say Amen. Lord, that's where I stand. Just like Luther did. He said I could do no other. And we are glad that he took that line. Although he made good many other mistakes that we did not follow. And so he says, I pray that you may acknowledge. Well, now I think it's best if we move to chapter three of Ephesians just in order to get that in its place and then to Philipians. You will notice that Chapter three, verse 14, the

prayer commences with these words. For this cause, I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if you've got the whole chapter in your mind and in your eye, you will see he started the chapter with those words for this cause. And then if you look at verse one and you've got the remotest remembrance of the grammar that they try to dig into at school, you discover that there's no verb in verse one. He's never finished what he was going to say. Let's read it for this. Cause I. Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you, Gentiles. If you see, he stopped.

[00:26:32] He was going to say something. Well, shall we finish it for him? For this? Cause I pulled a prisoner. Jesus Christ for you, Gentiles. Bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and his way with his prayer. But. He'd said something. And I have a feeling that the apostle visualized that it will come that he was speaking to or they weren't there, but he could see them in his mind's eye and he saw a sort of glazed look go over their eyes. Always said, Have I said something that you don't quite understand? Always said, I'll stop there. I'll be glad he stopped. He said, Look, I'm taking for granted that you've heard of the dispensation, of the grace of God that's been given to me and said, He goes right through this all this mystery that's revealed. And he says, Well, then, having gone so far as that for this cause. For what cause? Oh, I see. I've got to go back to chapter two then to find out the cause. All right. Let's look at chapter two. Verse 20 and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone in whom all the building fitly framed together, grow it unto an holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together. Now I'm going to give you the revised text. For an habitation of Christ in spirit. That's the Vatican manuscript, and that manuscript is a very valuable one.

[00:28:01] Now, this temple was for a habitation or a dwelling place of Christ in spirit. Never sign of God's people who are content to leave it there, just the same as in Chapter four, He says. The unity of the spirit one body, one spirit, you know. And then when he's done all that, he says, But don't forget to each one of us. Don't lose yourself in the mass. Don't think of the whole lot and say, Well, I don't count. He says, you do to each one of us. So here. He said. It's one thing to rejoice that the whole church of the one body is likened to a holy temple in which Christ can dwell. Or he said, I wish it was true of you and me personally a little bit more. So he prayed this prayer. That is verse 16 that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man. That Christ may dwell in your heart by faith. So he's

linking thou the dwelling place for Christ in spirit. In Chapter two, with the possibility of you having a little experimental knowledge of it in Chapter three. I have said in other meetings, perhaps I'll say it again, that this word dwell means not come and spend a weekend. Not come and just a passing visit. I mean, if you ever had to entertain people, you might have looked at one another, said, Oh, well, they're going on Monday.

[00:29:41] You see. So you're very polite in it's all right, but that you're not asking the Lord to come for a week entrance. No, no. But he comes. I don't think it's possible to ask Christ to dwell in your heart by faith without having a certain amount of wonder what's going to happen. You know, I've been in the homes of some people and they even have to stick it on the wall. They have to tell me Christ is the head of this house. But it's been up there so long that they've forgotten it. All they saw on the wall that we wanted it somewhere nearer. And once or twice when I've been away taking meetings, the friends, they said to me, Now do make yourself at home, won't you? Do make yourself at home. In fact, in Manchester they've got a little poem in the in the bedroom. It says, Thou do almost anything. They'll shift off the furniture. But it's no good complaining. We cannot stop it raining. That's Manchester. You see, they'll do anything. So I've thought to myself. I wonder what would happen if I took them at their word. And I said to him, But what's happening up there? Listen, nothing about up there. Well, I said, I can't stand the look of that vase and that old piece of furniture. I'm getting rid of it. But they say, Oh, well, I said, you said make yourself at home, didn't you? Well, now, that's nonsense, friends.

[00:30:58] But are you going to ask the Lord to come into your heart and make himself at home? There'll be some stuff that would go out. Friends, wouldn't there? And blessed be God there to be stuff to come in. So no wonder he said that you ought to be strengthened in your inner man for this. For you're not asking for a slight thing. Then he goes on to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. Not that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. But you might be filled up to. You can't be here with all the fullness of God any more than a shark about the Atlantic in its little tail. But you can have it half full or three quarters full or completely full, a little pale. And that's all that God wants of you and me. I wonder how many half full Christians there are. So he says, I want you to be filled up to the measure of the gift of Christ. And then he says, We are asking for something. Aren't we free? Well, then the hymn says for his riches, is it for his mercy? It is such. None can ever ask too much. Shall he says now unto him that is able

to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us.

[00:32:16] He turned it back on ourselves. That power which raised Christ from the dead is the power that answers our prayer. What a wonderful thought. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages or unto the generation of the age of the ages. Amen. Well, there the two great prayers of Ephesians. Shall we turn the page? As time is passing. And look at Philippians. Chapter one, verse nine. And this. I pray that your love may abound, yet more and more in knowledge. It's a good thing to remind us that the knowledge which is being stressed in these epistles is not merely head knowledge. It must be head knowledge, because otherwise there is no means of expressing or coming to a conclusion, but a knowledge which is the product of abounding love. And you remember the apostle very often slips in the word love. He was a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and charity, as he says, speaking the truth in love. So here he has it. But he has something more. That your love may abound, yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment. And it is rather humiliating, isn't it? To read in the margin in all sense. Is all this mighty preparation that we may have just sense. But of course, he's only telling us that without Christ and without his illumination, we haven't got saints. We wouldn't do the things we do when we're unsaved.

[00:34:02] If we got saints, would we? And there's that picture in the Gospels of the man who was an enemy to himself, suddenly found sitting at the feet of Christ clothed and in his right mind. Because you can see that eyes were the the person who said. Is he said to his wife. He said. They're all out of step. You know, they're all wrong except me and thee. And I have my doubts about me sometime, he said. But we don't want to get quite so narrow as that. But although we have this little rebuke that we're not such sensible people as we think we are when we are being guided by the elements of this world. As the wisdom of this world is enmity with God. So what we call just acting according to common sense may be just sheer folly. So we have abounding love emerging both in knowledge and in sense. The power to discriminate. And that goes on in verse ten. That ye may approve things that are excellent. Of course, if a person's got sense, that's what he will do. If he has the option between two things, one's better than the other, he will approve the better one, won't he? But then the words are also susceptible of another rendering which is found in the margin that you may try the things that differ. And of course I come to the side in the end because if you try, you are approving.

[00:35:42] And if you are trying things that differ. Well, one thing will be better than another. So you can take your choice. But possibly the meaning is best as it is as a margin that this is directing you to try things that differ. And when you put the four great epistles together, Philippians guarantees second. Timothy, you know that Philippians says. That he was wishing he could depart. Second. Timothy says, The time for my departure has come. And there are many links between the two. Philippians is the prize two. Timothy is the crown. Philippians is running a race. Two Timothy is finishing the race. Oh, yes. Now, in two Timothy, we have the precept rightly dividing the word of truth. In Philippians we have the prayer trying the things that differ. Well, if you'd rather try things that differ friends, instead of rightly dividing the word of truth, I wouldn't worry. Because you cover the same thing at the end. You see, so we've got this thought now that embedded in this prayer, he's not only writing to Timothy and saying, Timothy, you observe this principle and he and rightly divide the word of truth. He's saying to all those who are following his teaching, you put it in your prayer that you may do so, that you may rightly divide it. You may try the things that differ. And then Philippians is a practical epistle. He never speaks about fullness. But it speaks about service. It's the only one of this group that starts off with bishops and deacons because it's service.

[00:37:25] This bunch should work out your own salvation. Ephesians says you can't work for it in any way. No, he says. But once you got it, you can work it out. That's Philippians. So all this is impinging on that. You may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ. Our English word sincere used to be explained as being made of two parts from the Latin without wax. There are some who doubt that. But the original word means tested by sunlight. So it comes to much the same thing. And there was no doubt about it that you may be so clear with regard to your walk and your calling that you can stand in the searchlight. I've got tested by sunlight. And without a face till the day of Christ. Now, the actual words, the judgment seat of Christ are not used by Paul except in Corinthians and in Romans and are some, of course, of God's children who said the judgment seat of Christ has no place in the prison epistles. But I believe that the reference to the Day of Christ is a parallel in a similar. And as Colossians is our subject, I would like to ask you to notice these words at the end of Chapter three and see whether there is not an equivalent to the judgment seat of Christ in the prison epistles. Colossians three, Verse 22.

[00:39:01] Servants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with high service as men pleasers, but in singleness of heart fearing God. And whatsoever ye do do it heartily as to the Lord and not unto men, knowing that of the Lord, ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance for ye serve the Lord Christ. Or they say, Well, I don't mind looking forward to a reward. Yes, thank you for reminding me of that. But there's another verse in Colossians. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done. And there is no respect of persons. Don't forget that too. So you cannot eliminate the same principle which runs through all Scripture, that there is one thing that is salvation, which is a gift. There's another thing. The recognition of your service, which may receive a reward or may involve forfeiture, but it never touches the salvation. God never goes back on that. So Philippians, when it comes to Chapter three and he has the prize in view, he says, not as though I had already attained Well, if the Apostle Paul wasn't sure of his salvation, I don't think I've ever boast to you, but he was as sure as that. It is as sure of anything. But he said, Oh, no, if you're running a race. You don't get you don't settle down and say, Oh, I've got it until you touch the tape. Oh, there's many a slip twixt the cup and the lip says the world.

[00:40:35] And they're true. So the prize is one thing. The hope is another. Now he's still not impinging on the practical side of this philippian prayer being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God. So that is a prayer which is down on practical issues. Now, should we come to Colossians chapter one? He says in this chapter, very much like it was introduced in Ephesians, verse three, We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Praying always for you. Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have to all the saints for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven. He's on the same line. He's heard about their faith and their love. He says, Now I'm speaking about the hope, and he enlarges on that. He speaks about the hope in Ephesians and he enlarges on them for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven. Where have you heard before? In the word of the truth of the Gospel, which is come unto you as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit as it doth also in you? So he's lifting a little bit out of Philippians, as it were, or not. Not that he's lifting it out, but he's combining. As it does also in you since the day you heard of it and knew the grace of God in truth.

[00:42:05] As he also learned of Epaphras, our dear fellow servant who is for you, a faithful minister of Christ, who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit, while now,

having got that basis, he prays for them. For this cause. See Ephesians three. For this cause as something has been brought to my notice. I make it a basis for my prayer. I have brought before you in Ephesians it says that the temple, the church is a temple, a dwelling place for Christ in spirit, for this cause. I pray for you. He said. Now, I've heard this testimony brought by Epaphras, and for this cause, I pray for you. Looks like this man was never fully satisfied, wasn't it? Instead of saying, Oh, that was a fine testimony that he brought, you're all right. You don't need me anymore. He says I do. Oh, yes. He said, You will need prayer all the long, all the time. You're walking through this pilgrimage and you yourself will always be conscious, whatever other people may think about you. That is a tremendous long way to go yet before you will be perfect. That's true, isn't it? And while that lasts, these prayers will remain for us. So he says, for this cause. We also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing you.

[00:43:36] Notice this word worthy comes in Paul's three great prison epistles, each one he had very much in mind, Ephesians four says. I, therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation. Philippians one says that he wanted them to act and and to comport themselves as it become it. Now, what a pity they didn't translate it. Then again, Worthy has it become it? Saints at two. And here it comes. The third time each epistle strikes the note of something worthy. And you do want to remember that the word Axios, which is the word worthy, means a balance. It's putting it on a scale one side, something to balance the other. There is now a philosophic word. It's come into use recently. Axiology. Or the philosophy of values. See? Well, the Apostle knew all about that. So he says that you might. Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, be fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness. Everyone. Just to give a few more thoughts to this before we close. And here we have in verse nine. Lucky tonight is when it says filled with. The knowledge of his will There is no preposition with.

[00:45:22] The only way they can put it to leave out the word with and to keep somewhere in line is to say fueled as to. As to. It is. I'll have to give you this tiny bit of grammar. It is only in the accusative case. He said, Oh, watch the accusative. What? It's the case that says you're the one you see now. That's right. That's accusing it. See?

And it is the word of equivalent notion. Equivalent notion. Now let's get that into our minds by looking at this. That you might be fueled. As to. The knowledge of his will. Field. Field. This is his word. Verbal form. Which we are talking about the pleroma. And if it is the equivalent notion, do you see what's happening? You say to me, what is the fullness? He says, Well, it's the knowledge of his will. See the foolish to which God is moving. The word that we've been looking at from Genesis up to this time and right on the revelation is moving to the day when God shall be all in all. And that is his real. And then further than that. This word knowledge. Is the word that we looked at in Ephesians one. Acknowledge And it comes again. Acknowledge. It was seen as increasing in the knowledge of God, but you can't say increasing in the acknowledgement of God. But you can get increasing because of the acknowledgement of God. It may be that some are not increasing.

[00:47:23] It may be that some are not fruitful simply because they are not acknowledging. They are stultifying themselves. And I've got it written out again here. I'll just try to read it to give you the feeling that is underneath the peculiar way in which these words are linked together. For this cause, namely that he has acknowledged the grace of God in reality. And are manifesting this by fruit bearing and increase. We do not cease to pray for you and desire that ye might be filled. And this fullness is none other than the acknowledgment of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, leading to a worthy walk and a fuller increase in the acknowledgment of God for which all necessary strength is available. With all necessary patience to endure. With ultimate triumphant. Joyfulness. Now you say, well, what a long way around to try to explain to me, but he's got it. Pat here, friends. So just one other way of looking at it. At the bottom of this chart, you see there's an alternation. Of two prepositions in an East End is the word is mostly translated in an ISIS is the word mostly translated unto so in. Are being used and ice is the aim you reach. But you discover that when you get to an end, sometimes that of itself is only the beginning of a next step, like a flight of stairs. So would we look, first of all, the means in all wisdom.

[00:49:22] On the eighth, unto all pleasing. I don't think that's coming down. Although this is right. We want all this wisdom. If ever we are going to be all pleasing, if we're a little bit pleasing, we shall want some wisdom. But if we're going to be all pleasing, we shall want all wisdom. Must march together. And if we have means again. In every good work. Good works have a place. But if we never produce good works, we are lopsided

Christians. And we should not be very happy in our own inner experiences. But in every good work the end leading to further knowledge. Because as we grow. So we may know. That much more and in the means and the end one train in all might. This is using one of the words that we've already had in Ephesians. The power that raised Christ from the dead. And to all patients is Oh dear, oh dear. That is an anti-climax isn't it? Fancy talking about the power that raised Christ from the dead and it's all going to impinge upon. All patients, but if it impinged on a little patient's. I don't think it would be out of place. Friends. What do you think? Of course, we may have an exemplary little company here this evening. You'll beat Joe Beckett. Friends. You've heard of the Patience of Job, but you want to hear the patience of some of you people. But I think most of you know me that I could not boast that I'm the most patient person you've ever met.

[00:51:04] There on some occasions. You watch out for one of these times when somebody over there is beginning to manifest. We are talking, doing our best, beginning to manifest that there. Obdurate. It's not that they can't see that. They won't see. Well, then you'll see me stand there and I'll count. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. I say, Mr. Galletly, could you spare a minute? And I go in there. You see, now Mr. Gallop has got that patience that I haven't got. There comes a moment when I cannot suffer fools gladly. I wish I could. But it's a good thing to know your limits, isn't it? But don't I need that? And then if you said, Well, I'm glad you know it, I said, Don't forget yourself, friend. With you, all we do need is when the apostle gave a list of the qualifications that he had as an apostle. Do you know what he put first in one epistle? All patients. No qualifications, we would think first. But he said that comes first. Patience. And he was a man who I think needed patients. Should remember once when he wheeled round and he said just how smutty thou whited wall to the high priest. And then we said, I wish I hadn't said that I was wrong. You see. All this traffic of patients don't put it on one side of the something that doesn't matter very much.

[00:52:22] We could spoil so much because we haven't got it. So it comes patience and joyfulness. God puts that as a part of the goal that we should aim at. He wants us to have a joy in our faith. He wants us to realize that he's lifted the ban and the sin that oppresses and the possibility of it's all gone, and we ought to be able to manifest it in our deportment and in our manner of life. Well, I don't think we could go back further, but I wanted to give the poorer prayers that are embedded in these epistles. Just a

hearing. If I've only done enough to stimulate your interest, to go back to them again and again and again. So you could tell your friends Now they are going to their church with their prayer book in their hands, and you're going to your chapel with your prayer book in your hands. But they may say, well, you've only got a Bible there. They may. That's the finest prayer book that's ever been prepared and ever will be. And then you may be able to drop a little word about these prayers that give you such guidance. So that we may walk worthy. That's the goal. Walk worthy of the calling where we we have been called by the Lord Grant that we may be able to pray more intelligently and more acceptably. As a result of this little testimony this evening.