

Colossians 3 – Present in Spirit

Welcome back to Redemption Church. It is a great day to worship God here in Plano Tx. My name is Chris Fluitt and I greet you in Jesus name.

We are in the 3rd week of our Colossians series. Today I want you to get your Bibles out and turn to Colossians chapter 2.

We are going to have someone help us read scripture today.

Colossians 2:1 (NIV2011) I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally.

Colossians 2:2 (NIV2011) My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,

Colossians 2:3 (NIV2011) in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 2:4 (NIV2011) I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.

Colossians 2:5 (NIV2011) For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

Clap your hands if you are thankful for the word of God.

Outline

Verses 1-5 Paul asserts his motive, intention, and goals.

Paul wants the Colossian & Laodicean Church to know that he is working hard for them.

Colossians 2:1 (NIV2011) I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally.

Colossians 2:5 (NIV2011) For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

Paul can't be there in the physical, but he is present in spirit.

The work of God is being done all throughout our world. We can't be everywhere in the physical. You can only be one place at a time.

Present in Spirit

Paul declares that he is present in spirit. Sometimes we might say "I can't be there but I am with you "in spirit." We use it as a way of saying "I support what you are doing, I am rooting for you, I am absent but I don't want you to fail..."

But when Paul says "I am present with you in spirit" he goes beyond simply rooting for them or thinking about them. The word for spirit here is pneuma (pnyü'-mä). Pneuma is the word translated as God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ.

Paul is declaring that He is hard at work, contending for them in God's Holy Spirit. Through the Spirit, Paul is present. Through the Spirit, Paul is at work in Colossae. Through the Spirit, Paul is effecting the outcome of Laodicea.

So we have a group of people that Paul has never met, yet in the SPIRIT, he is hard at work for them.

Redemption Church, do you see the parallel here for us?

We don't all the people the Hattabaugh's are preaching Jesus to in Lebanon... But we can be with them IN SPIRIT!

We don't understand all that Pastor Yoel Rodriguez is dealing with in Cifuentez, Cuba... but our faith can move mountains for Him in the Spirit!

We don't know the congregation of believers in Maykop, Russia that the Kissel family is ministering to... but we can be a force in that revival. We can be there through the power of God's Spirit.

Katmandu, Nepal... Our underground missionaries in East Asia...

This is why it is important to be IN PRAYER. **You can't be IN THE SPIRIT if you are never spending time IN PRAYER.**

Do you believe that when we pray in the Holy Spirit, that we are present and working.

Redemption we need to be people of prayer. We need to be people who pray IN THE PNUEMA, SPIRIT.

Pray in the Spirit

This is a major teaching in your Bible. Paul constantly talks about prayer in the Spirit. The following verses are all from the Apostle Paul. (It would be good to take notes on these verses.)

Ephesians 1:17 (NIV2011) I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

“I keep asking...” Paul didn’t just pray this one time. He was continually praying. And how was Paul praying?

God give them the Spirit of wisdom & revelation, so that they may know God better...

Ephesians 1:18 (NIV2011) I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,

We spend so much time praying that God will do stuff like give us a new car or cause our boss to be a nice person. Here Paul is praying for spiritual transformation to take place within the heart.

Redemption we need to pray like this.

Ephesians 6:18 (NIV2011) And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.

How often should we pray in the Spirit? ON ALL OCCASIONS... ALL KINDS OF PRAYERS & REQUESTS... FOR ALL THE LORD’S PEOPLE.

All kinds of occasions... prayers & requests...

- When we hear about a tornado hitting in Moore, Oklahoma or Garland, Tx...
- When we see the news break with another school shooting...
- When we hear about injustice, persecution, and affliction of others...
- When someone loses there job...

- When someone is in the hospital...

ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE...

We must focus our prayers on the people of the Lord. Why? Shouldn't we pray for everyone? Yes we should pray for everyone, but the Lord's people are the ones who have received the calling and empowerment of God to go help EVERYONE.

Focus your prayers on those that can help others. If you are a Christ follower, you can help so many people.

Romans 8:26 (NIV2011) In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

The Spirit always knows how to pray. This is why we should pray in the Spirit.

Prayer is not about saying and thinking nice words. **Prayer is about coming into unity with the heartbeat of God.**

We don't know what we ought to pray for... but through the Spirit we tune into God's heart.

Sometimes we hurt so much that we don't even know what to say... we can't figure out how to express it. Have you ever hurt so bad that you just groaned? The Spirit knows how to intercede through a groan. It is not about the words you say, it is about the surrender to the Spirit.

Romans 8:27 (NIV2011) And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

The Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. Want to pray in accordance to God's will? Pray in the Spirit.

We just read verse 27 & 28. Does anyone know the next verse? It is a pretty popular verse. Probably read it on a bumper sticker or t-shirt before...

Romans 8:28 (NIV2011) And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

The context of this verse you love, is Praying in the Spirit!

When we pray in the Spirit, it is God who is at work... and we know that God always works for the good!

1 Timothy 2:1 (NIV2011) I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—

1 Timothy 2:2 (NIV2011) for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

1 Timothy 2:3 (NIV2011) This is good, and pleases God our Savior,

Pray for all those in authority.

You don't have to like the president, but you must pray for the president.

You don't have to like your boss, but you must pray for your boss.

You don't have to like your teacher, but you must pray for your teacher.

Pray that those in authority would allow you to live PEACEFULLY, in GODLINESS & HOLINESS.

1 Timothy 2:8 (NIV2011) Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing.

Paul goes out of his way to talk to men. He urges men to pray. He urges to put on an outward display, by lifting their hands. Instead of displaying anger & argument, display holiness and surrender to God.

Men of Redemption Church. I urge you to put your prayer on display. I urge you to worship God with the lifting of your hands. I urge you to let go of anger and argument.

If Paul were here today, I think he would urge us to pray.

Make up in your mind that you are going to commit to prayer.

Be present – in prayer!

Just as Paul was absent in the physical, but present in the Spirit... we too should be present in the Spirit.

Wherever there is problem, you can be present in prayer.

Colossians 2:1 (NIV2011) I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally.

Are we working hard?

Often our heart is moved by the struggles & injustices in the world... but how hard are we contending?

musician

In a few moments, I am going to give us moment to come together in prayer. I want you to come today. I want you to come do some hard work in prayer today... But first I want to talk about Paul's goal.

Paul has an incredible goal in verse 2.

Colossians 2:2 (NIV2011) My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,

What is your goal? Paul's goal was to encourage in heart & unite in love.

Encouraged in heart & United in love

This has really spoken to my heart. I believe Paul is showing how he prayed for Colossae. I have prayed for every one of you this week, that you would be encouraged in your heart and united in love.

I pray that you would have courage in your heart! That you would be brave on the inside and that it would flow out of you.

I pray that you would let nothing divide you... that you would be completely unified in love.

Then Paul says SO THAT... You receive this encouragement & unity so that you can receive what is next... Here is what is next...

Colossians 2:2 (NIV2011) My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,

Full riches & complete understanding

We sometimes jump to prayers about full riches & complete understanding. It is encouraged hearts and unity in love that brings us to riches & understanding...

Some people would happily stop here but then Paul says... in order that...

Colossians 2:2 (NIV2011) My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,

Colossians 2:3 (NIV2011) in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Paul's goal was that would receive encouragement in heart and unity in love... so that they could receive more... they could then receive full riches & complete understanding... so that then they may know...

CHRIST's wisdom & knowledge.

You see there is a process that needs to take place in our lives. It shows us a way to pray brothers & sisters in Christ through the process.

“Lord let them receive THIS... so that then they can receive THIS... so that then they can receive THIS...”

“Lord let them go deeper... Lord let them be brave enough to take the next step... Lord in the end let it all be centered on You.”

“Lord let them receive full riches & complete understanding.”

“Lord let them receive the deeper things of you... let them your full wisdom & knowledge.”

Paul's goal for us today for us to process toward Christ.

Where are you in that process?

Do you need encouragement? Do you need love?

Do you need a blessing or understanding?

Do you need Christ today? Come receive.

Come pray in the Spirit today.

Be present in prayer.