

# Bible Studies for Life: November 15

*Committed to Pray • Colossians 1:1-12*

*By Becky Brown*



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To review our progress on the theme of commitment, we remember that God has always been committed to us. We should live out our lives in personal commitment to Him. We are committed to His Word. We are committed to His church, the Bride of Christ. Believers who are “all in” are also committed to prayer.

We will look at the letter of the Apostle Paul to the church at Colossae, a city in Asia Minor located east of Ephesus. Possibly, this church had been started by the faithful friends of Paul who lived at Ephesus. Paul had not been to Colossae, but he was familiar with the people in that church family. He also knew about the ongoing ministry being accomplished there.

The pastor of the church at Colossae was probably a man named Epaphras who was a friend and fellow worker with Paul. While Paul was in prison in Rome (approximately 62 B.C.), he wrote to this church family to encourage them and advise them against false teachers who were attacking believers in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Timothy was with Paul at this time as well. Epaphras had brought news of the church to Paul.

The letter to the Colossians was written to “saints” and

faithful brethren in Christ. Once, a little boy and his parents were visiting cathedrals in Europe. The stained glass windows usually contained portraits of famous religious figures. "Dad, who are these people?" His father replied, "Well, son, these are some of the saints." When they returned home, the little boy told his friends about the saints he had seen in the windows. He said, "Well, the saints are the ones who let the light shine through." May this be the case with us in our daily walk.

"Grace and Peace" were words of common greeting in first century correspondence. Paul used these two greeting words in nearly all of his letters to churches as well as in the letters addressed to individuals. The grace of God and the peace that only comes from God are Paul's intent. Verses three through 12 are recorded in two very long sentences. Verses three through eight comprise the first sentence. Verses nine through 12 contain sentence number two. Paul was long winded, but what a powerful two-sentence prayer punch we find in this chapter!

Those who are committed to God will be committed to pray for one another. Paul provides a "pray-er" guide by assuring them of his faithful prayers offered on their behalf. He gives thanks to God for them, stating that he prays "always" for them. He had heard from Epaphras about their faith in Jesus and their mutual love for each other. He reminds them of the precious hope that is "laid up" or stored safely away in heaven because of their commitment to the Gospel. He applauds them for the fruit that is being borne through their faithfulness.

Paul prays that they will be filled with the knowledge of God's will and that they would possess spiritual wisdom and understanding. His desire for them is that they walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, that they be intent on pleasing Him in all respects. He prays for their continually increasing knowledge of God. He yearns for them to rely on God's strength

and power and to attain steadfastness and patience in the work.

From these two prayer sentences, we see that Paul loved these people he had only heard about through Epaphras. Because of their mutual relationship with Christ, Paul could feel what they felt, love like they loved, show concern for them, and shower them with compassion and encouragement.

In the year 2000, I was commissioned for full time ministry by my home church family in New Orleans. Rhonda Kelley, a professor at New Orleans Seminary and wife of the seminary president, gave a charge to me at that time using this very passage of Scripture. These verses hold a very special place in my heart. We must be committed to pray for one another.

During these days of isolation due to the COVID-19 coronavirus, we find ourselves separated from our church family in many ways. Of course, we can still pray for one another, but why not go a step further? Ask God to bring one person to your mind in your church family. Put pen to paper and write out a prayer for them. Fold it. Stuff it. Stamp it. Mail it. Then, think of another person and...

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