



SERIES: August / September Series “HE IS ENOUGH”

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Thursday, 09/30/2021

Scripture: Colossians 4:12-13

TITLE: Proactive Prayer

While driving through rural Alabama on a recent trip, I saw a sign that read, “When life gets too heavy to carry, kneel.” I wish more of us took that advice seriously. Sure, then the going gets real tough. We toss a prayer up to God. But before we get that desperate, we call friends, search Google, and do everything we can do. And then we sprinkle prayer for good measure.

But what if, instead of reactive prayer, we were proactive. What if, instead of being desperate, we were dependent? Or maybe you’re wondering, “Who cares, Nat?” Well, the Apostle Paul Apostle does, and so should we. Here’s what Paul said about prayer in Colossians 4:12-13.

“Epaphras, a member of your own fellowship and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you his greetings. He always prays earnestly for you, asking God to make you strong and perfect, fully confident that you are following the whole will of God. I can assure you that he prays hard for you and also for the believers in Laodicea and Hierapolis.”

You may remember that Epaphras was the founder of the Colossian church and likely the pastor of it. He alerted Paul to the heretical teaching about Christ. Epaphras was not just near to Paul but also part of the Colossian family. He was a fellow servant or slave of Christ. He, like any good pastor, was praying for His spiritual family. Paul says he was “earnestly” praying for you. A better translation was agonizingly praying. He was fervently laboring in prayer on the Colossian's behalf.

What was he praying for? Paul said that Epaphras was praying for God to make them strong and perfect.

Now, the NLT does a poor job translating this. He is praying that they will be strong or prepared and unmovable in their faith. He is not praying they become perfect but fully mature. A committed disciple-making disciple who is fully committed to Christ.

Paul is praying that they will be fully confident. He is praying that they are fully convinced and persuaded to the truths of God and of Jesus Christ. They need to be strong, mature, and convinced of who Jesus is and what God has said so that they will lovingly obey Him no matter where He calls. Epaphras was praying for his spiritual flock and the flocks in the area for their continued pursuit of Christ.

And that’s my prayer for you as well. So here’s my challenge for you today: pray and do.

I want you to spend time specifically praying for the faith of your friends, family, and church. In times like these, it seems too easy to fall away. We need to stand firm, stand faithful, and stand on God's Word. We need to pray that way. And then we need to do it as well. We need to constantly need to be on our knees praying for others and then putting on our new nature. In other words, just do it. We need to live it out.

So pray and do. When we are not just hearers of the word, but doers, we will win the day.