

Jude 20

But you, beloved, must remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, “In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.” These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, not having the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And on some, who are doubting, have mercy; and for others, save, snatching them out of the fire; and on others have mercy with fear, hating even the tunic polluted by the flesh.

Jude 17-23 is the application section of Jude’s letter, or in other words the instruction manual on how to contend for the faith against the impostors. This is the section in which Jude, who loves combinations of three, gives his readers three commands on how they must contend for the faith against the impostors who have crept in unnoticed.

1st – Jude 17-19 **Jude commands the church to** remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2nd - Jude 20-21 **Jude commands the church to** keep yourselves in the love of God.

3rd – Jude 22-23 **Jude commands the church to have mercy on all the unbelievers who have been being led astray by the impostors.**

Jude, being inspired by the Holy Spirit writes these three imperatives that the church must follow obediently to **contend earnestly for the faith.**

On last time we spent some time answering the question, what does Jude mean when he writes, keep yourselves in the love of God?

The simple meaning is to keep yourself in the sphere or circle of God’s love in such a way that God increases your experience of His love to the point that His love is overflowing in and upon you, which in turn causes you to continually love God with all your heart, soul, mind, strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself.

Ok Jude, how do we keep ourselves in the love of God?

Jude 20-21 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

This is the second part of Jude's application section where Jude gives the second of three commands to the church on how they must contend for the faith. With this command Jude gives the church three secondary commands in order to be obedient to this command and how to follow this command while staying spiritually healthy.

Primary command or imperative -- keep yourselves in the love of God

Participle or secondary command -- building yourselves up on your most holy faith

Participle or secondary command -- praying in the Holy Spirit

Participle or secondary command -- waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

In other words, Jude gives the command to the church to keep yourselves in the love of God, but Jude does not leave the church in the dark on how to keep yourselves in the love of God.

Ok Jude, how can the church keep themselves in the love of God?

Jude's answer comes in a pattern of three. **1st** -- building yourselves up on your most holy faith. **2nd** -- praying in the Holy Spirit. **3rd** -- waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

On last time we looked at the 1st participle building yourselves up on your most holy faith. Today we will look at the 2nd participle. 2nd -- praying in the Holy Spirit.

As we look at these participles individually, we should notice that although they are all secondary commands in order to help us to obey the primary command, which is **to keep yourselves in the love of God**. We see in the Scriptures that when you obey these participles in the order that Jude writes them, they actually

compliment one another and cause us to grow in our obedience to them in such a way that they are not only commands that are to be obeyed, but they are new desires that are privileges that cause us to become more Christlike and protect us from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-10 We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention *of you* in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ before our God and Father, knowing, brothers beloved by God, your election, for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full assurance; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything. For they themselves report about us what kind of an entrance we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.

If you take the time to study these verses you will see that the word of the gospel (faith) comes with power to build up the elect, which brings the joy in the Holy Spirit (praising God or praying in the Holy Spirit giving thanks to God), which causes the elect to wait for His son from heaven.

Jude 20-21 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

Participle or secondary command -- praying in the Holy Spirit

Jude commands every believer in the church to pray in the Holy Spirit.

Paul makes a similar statement as Jude about praying in the Spirit.

Ephesians 6:10-18 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the might of His strength. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm

against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE. In addition to all, having taken up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one, also receive THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, **praying at all times with all prayer and petition in the Spirit,**

Does this mean that every believer must pray or speak in tongues?

No, not every believer is given the gift of tongues, therefore Jude cannot command every believer to use a gift that God has not given them.

Furthermore, Jude has already given the command to the building yourselves up on your most holy faith. Paul said that if a person only speaks in tongues, that person is not building up the church and as we just read Paul's words to the Ephesians, we saw that Paul never mentions praying in tongues as part of putting on the full armor of God.

Why do Christians need to be commanded to pray?

Because of remaining sin in our flesh we either don't see our need to pray or we don't believe God will answer our prayers.

When Jesus took His disciples to Gethsemane to pray, He had told them what to pray for and they still fell asleep in their sorrows instead of praying even after Jesus woke them up, they still did not continue in prayer.

Luke 22:40 Now when He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

Luke 22:45-46 And when He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow, and said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise up and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

Matthew 26:40-41 And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “So, you *men* could not keep watch with Me for one hour? Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

One man (Thomas Schreiner) wrote – Believers cannot keep themselves in God’s love without depending on Him by petitioning Him in prayer. Love for God cannot be sustained without a relationship with Him, and such a relationship is nurtured by prayer.

James points out that our remaining sin keeps us from praying.

James 4:1-8 What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have, *so* you murder. You are envious and cannot obtain, *so* you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity *toward* God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world sets himself as an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”? But He gives a greater grace. Therefore *it* says, “GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.” Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

Do I have to close my eyes to pray?

No. God’s Word never commands a person to close their eyes to pray. In fact we have many examples of prayers with open eyes.

Matthew 14:19 And ordering the crowds to sit down on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed *the food*. And breaking the loaves, He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave *them* to the crowds,

John 11:41 Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

John 17:1 Jesus spoke these things; and **lifting up His eyes to heaven,**

Luke 18:13 But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to **lift up his eyes to heaven,**

Jude 20-21 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God,

What is prayer?

One man (Wayne Gruden) writes, Prayer may be defined as follows: Prayer is personal communication with God. This definition is very broad. What we call “prayer” includes prayers of request for ourselves or for others (sometimes called prayers of petition or intercession), confession of sin, adoration, praise and thanksgiving, and also God communicating to us indications of His response.

One man (Dean Olive) said that prayer is the ordinary means of grace that draws us closer to God.

Westminster Shorter Catechism Q98: What is prayer? Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of His mercies.

One man (Brother Lawrence) wrote – There is not in the world a kind of life more sweet than that of a continued conversation with God.

What is praying in the Holy Spirit?

1689 Baptist Confession chapter 22 paragraph 3. Prayer with thanksgiving is an element of natural worship and so is required by God of everyone. But to be acceptable, it must be made in the name of the Son, by the help of the Spirit, according to his will. It must be accompanied by understanding, reverence, humility, fervor, faith, love, and perseverance. Prayer with others must be in a language that is understood.

John 4:7-24 The woman said to Him, “Sir, I see that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you *people* say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is, **when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth**; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. **God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.**” The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when He comes, He will declare all things to us.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am *He*.”

1689 Baptist Confession chapter 22 paragraph 6. Under the gospel, neither prayer nor any other part of religious worship is now restricted to or made more acceptable by the place where it is done or toward which it is directed. Instead, God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit and in truth—daily in each family and privately by each individual. Also, more formal worship is to be performed in public assemblies, and these must not be carelessly or deliberately neglected or forsaken, when God by his word or providence calls us to them.

John 14:12-17 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, this will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*. “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, that He may be with you forever; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him. You know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

Being adopted by God causes the adopted children of God to pray in the Holy Spirit, crying out to their Father. No one taught them to cry out to their Father, it just naturally flows out of the child’s heart when they receive the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 4:4-6 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

Romans 8:11-17 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brothers, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the practices of the body, you will live. For as many as are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received *the* Spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry out, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, also heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.

Has this happened to you?

The Holy Spirit not only causes us to cry out, “Abba! Father!”, but the Holy Spirit helps us to pray as we should according to the will of God.

Romans 8:26-27 And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

Why does God want us to pray?

One man (Wayne Gruden) writes – Prayer is not made so that God can find out what we need, because Jesus tells us, “Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him” (Matt. 6:8). God wants us to pray because prayer expresses out trust in God and is a means whereby our trust in Him can increase. In fact, perhaps the primary emphasis of the Bible’s teaching on prayer is that we are to pray with faith, which means trust or dependence on God. God as our creator delights in being trusted by us as His creatures, for an

attitude of dependence is most appropriate to the Creator/creature relationship. Praying in humble dependence also indicates that we are genuinely convinced of God's wisdom, love, goodness, and power—indeed of all of the attributes that make up His excellent character. When we truly pray, we as persons, in the wholeness of our character, are relating to God as a person, in the wholeness of His character. Thus, all that we think or feel about God comes to expression in our prayer. It is only natural that God would delight in such activity and place much emphasis on it in His relationship with us. The first words of the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father who art in heaven", acknowledge our dependence on God as a loving and wise Father and also recognize that He rules over all from His heavenly throne. Scripture many times emphasizes our need to trust God as we pray. For example, Jesus compares our praying to a son asking his father for a fish or an egg and then concludes, "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!". As children look to their fathers to provide for them, so God expects us to look to Him in prayer. Since God is our Father, we should ask in faith. Jesus says, "Whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith". But God does not only want us to trust Him. He also wants us to love Him and have fellowship with Him. This, then, is a second reason why God wants us to pray: Prayer brings us into deeper fellowship with God, and He loves us and delights in our fellowship with Him. A third reason God wants us to pray is that in prayer God allows us as creatures to be involved in activities that are eternally important. When we pray, the work of the kingdom is advanced. In this way, prayer gives us opportunity to be involved in a significant way in the work of the kingdom and thus gives expression to our greatness as creatures made in God's image.

Jesus in His human flesh always prayed to His Father.

Luke 3:21-22 Now it happened that when all the people were being baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

Mark 1:35 And in the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus rose up, went out of *the house*, and went away to a desolate place, and was praying there.

Luke 6:12 Now it happened that at this time He went off to the mountain to pray, and He was spending the whole night in prayer to God.

Mark 6:45-46 And immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of *Him* to the other side to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending the crowd away. And after bidding them farewell, He left for the mountain to pray.

Hebrews 5:7 He, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverence.

John 14:16-17 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, that He may be with you forever; the Spirit of truth

Luke 22:31-32 “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded to sift *all of* you like wheat. But I have prayed earnestly for you, that your faith may not fail;

John 17:1-25

Matthew 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?” that is, “MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?”

Luke 23:34 But Jesus was saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”

Luke 23:46 And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.” Having said this, He breathed His last.

Jude 20-21 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God,

If Jude commands us to pray in the Holy Spirit, this implies that there may be times when we don't pray in the Holy Spirit or in other words we pray in a way that God is not pleased with.

Matthew 6:5-8 “And when you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees *what is done* in secret will reward you. “And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore, do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

One man (Richard Owen Roberts) writes – Some who say their prayers every day never pray. The formulation of thoughts and ideas along religious lines, the mouthing of words, the bowing of the head and body and the repetition of phrases, do not in and of themselves constitute real prayer. If the heart does not earnestly commune with God, no genuine prayer is present. The mere repetition of written prayers, no matter how beautifully constructed or seemingly sincere, does not guarantee genuine prayer. When the heart of man and the heart of God meet in communion, there is prayer.

Luke 18:10-12 “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying these things to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Praying in a way that pleases God.

Luke 18:11 But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’

Matthew 6:9-13 “Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it

is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]

Jude 2 May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

Daniel 9:17-19 So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your slave and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. O my God, incline Your ear and listen! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of *any* righteousness of our own, but on account of Your abundant compassion. O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, give heed and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

Praying in Jesus name.

John 14:13-14 Whatever you ask in My name, this will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit would abide, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

John 16:23-24 And on that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made complete.

What does it mean to pray in Jesus Name?

One man (Wayne Gruden) wrote – To come in the name of someone means that another person has authorized us to come on his authority, not our own. When Peter commands the lame man, “in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk”, he is speaking on the authority of Jesus, not on his own authority. When the Sanhedrin asks the disciples, “By what power or by what name did you do this?” they are asking, “By whose authority did you do this?” When Paul rebukes an unclean spirit “in the name of Jesus Christ”, he makes it clear that he is doing so on Jesus’ authority, not his own. When Paul pronounces judgement “in the name of the Lord Jesus” on a church member who is guilty of immorality, he is acting with the authority of the Lord Jesus. Praying in Jesus’ name is therefore prayer

made on his authorization. In a broader sense the “name” of a person in the ancient world represented the person himself and therefore all of his character. To have a “good name” was to have good reputation. Thus, the name of Jesus represents all that he is, his entire character. This means that praying “in Jesus’ name” is not only praying on his authority, but also praying in a way that is consistent with his character, that truly represents him and reflects his manner of life and his own holy will. In this sense, to pray in Jesus’ name comes close to the idea of praying “according to his will”.

1 John 5:14-15 And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us *in* whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

Is there a time when a believer’s prayers may be hindered?

1 Peter 3:7 You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

What do I do if I come to the conclusion that my prayers are being hindered because of sin or backsliding?

1st Start with repentance, find a pencil and paper, ask God to show you your sins that are hindering your prayers, write them down and repent of them until God draws near to you again.

James 4:6-10 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore *it* says, “GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.” Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and cry. Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

1 John 1:8-2:2 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for *those of* the whole world.

2nd Go to the word of God and focus on the Gospel of God, building yourself back up in the faith, and this will lead you to a greater prayer life. As I showed you in the beginning of this sermon, how it worked in the life of the Thessalonians. Look how the Apostle Paul when he is writing the words of the Gospel of God, suddenly starts praying in the Holy Spirit.

Paul writes Ephesians 1:3-14 and then he writes down his prayer for the Ephesians.

Ephesians 1:15-23 For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which *exists* among you and your love for all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention *of you* in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you *the* Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the full knowledge of Him, so that you—the eyes of your heart having been enlightened—will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the working of the might of His strength, which He worked in Christ, by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And HE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Paul continues to write Ephesians 2:1-3:13 all the glorious truths of the works of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, which again he writes down his prayer for the Ephesians and then he continues to write the remainder of the letter to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 3:14-21 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that He would give you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; *and* that you, being firmly rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or understand, according to the power that works within us, to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

I believe that any Christian who will take the time to read Ephesians chapters 1-3 or any other part of God's word that focuses on the Gospel of God will end their reading by praising God and praying in the Holy Spirit.

Let's end by listening to Paul pray in the Holy Spirit for the church.

Colossians 1:3-14 We give thanks to God, 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 for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and multiplying, just as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard and understood the grace of God in truth; just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow slave, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, who also informed us of your love in the Spirit. **For this reason also, since the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and multiplying in the full knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. Who rescued us from the authority of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**

Amen!

