***America is no Longer a Christian Society

Colossians 1:1-2

COL-67***

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Our subject is "Prayer for the Colossians," segment number three in Colossians 1:9-14.

**The Rapture**

We Christians today are living near the end of the dispensation of the church, thus completing 6,000 years of human history since the creation of Adam and Eve. The church age, which began on the day of Pentecost, 2,000 years ago, will be terminated in the very near future by the instantaneous removal to heaven of the church on the day of the rapture. The day of the rapture is referred to technically in the Bible under the words "the Day of Christ." The rapture will include both the dead and the living members of the body of Christ, the church. This is reported to us in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. All the Christians who are in the graves will pop out alive in glorified bodies, like the body of Christ, with eternal life surging through every cell in their body, totally free of the sin nature. Then the Christians who are living (a number of you will be included in that) will be caught up instantaneously with those believers from the graves to follow them with your glorified bodies, and the eternal life completely in control of everything that you are at that point in time. It is a great day, and it is in the immediate future.

**Bible Prophecy**

In the prophetic picture, that is actually the next thing that has to happen. There are a series of things that go in order in Bible prophecy. And the next thing that must happen is the rapture of the church. The word "rapture" means the catching away. Christians on the day of the rapture will enter God's presence in heaven with varying degrees of spiritual maturity, which has been produced by doctrine in the soul. And that is of great importance, and of great interest to us. I have repeatedly cautioned you that some Christians will not be able to enter into the joys and the happiness of heaven in the degree that other Christians will, simply because some Christians have a puny capacity in their souls. They have never built a relationship with God – a functioning relationship on the basis of the Word of God. Doctrine does not surge through their being. Doctrine does not possess their entire mentality. To the degree that it does, however, will be the degree that you'll be able to enter into the experience of being in God's presence.

**Heavenly Rewards**

Special crowns of honor will also be given to some Christians for exceptional development of various spiritual qualities through doctrine during their lives. There will be large rewards to which will be given to believers who have lived in the Word of God so that they were able to serve God with their spiritual gifts with great divine good works.

**The Angelic Warfare**

This nearness of the return from heaven of Jesus Christ in the rapture makes our day the intensified stage of the angelic warfare. That means that things are heating up with Satan and the demons. Satan knows that his time is getting very short, and therefore, he is moving into a frenzy state of operation. Naturally, high on that list of that kind of frenzy of the demonic world is going to be any group of believers who is telling the truth about God; about humanity; about the nature of relationship to God; and, most of all, about what is in the immediate future of the defeat of Satan and his minions, and the great and glorious victory of God. That is not information that Satan wants to have made known. He still hopes to take over this world and create his own millennial kingdom with man as the center, and human viewpoint as the dominating philosophy.

So, this nearness of the return of Jesus from heaven puts us in a time when Satan is in an intensified stage of activity. And church ministries, such as Berean, which are based upon doctrine and organization, and in their mission are going to be, and are being, hit by Satan's human and demonic forces with great intensity everywhere. The very word "doctrine" is a great offense in our society today, that makes you suspect when you even speak about that word and when you promote that concept.

I have received several letters recently from church organizations which are biblically based, and are doing a great and good job for the Lord. They are relating in these letters their great financial shortages. They are struggling to be able to stay in operation, and they're asking for help. We at Berean Memorial Church are also currently experiencing our own successful satanic restriction on our financial support that we need. We are, in fact, facing, and are in the process of, downsizing, and are eliminating areas of ministry consequently, because the financial base has been eroded to the degree that makes it impossible to do some of the things we have been able to do. Satan's purpose in all this, of course, is to silence the teaching of the Word of doctrine. He wants to silence such a ministry by one way or another. And lack of sufficient funds is one way. Another way is a substitution of programs, instead of teaching a doctrine. Another way is conducting seminars and social events. People are always running off to seminars on one thing and another, related to the Bible, which they should be getting in their churches. They want to run off to social events. And they get themselves so exhausted from social events that they can't arrive at church to be instructed in the Word of God, to have the main thing that they need in their lives. And all of this is in place of learning doctrine in the local church ministry.

People, therefore, you may expect, under this kind of an intensified stage of antagonism on the part of Satan, are going to be inclined to dislike any pastor-teacher who teaches the deep things of doctrine, especially if he is a pastor-teacher who is not cowered or deceived by the arrogance of the sin nature. He is not impressed by the smug self-confidence of those who have anointed themselves, as those in Colossae did, as having superior insights with God. It's an old story. We're learning it here in the book of Colossians, and it's our experience of this very day because this is Satan's modus operandi. So, if ever we Christians need to unite in prayer for divine protection and enablement, it's in today's intensified stage of the angelic warfare.

So, how are you doing with your three days of prayer covenant relationship? Something that would drive Satan out of his mind virtually, would be to turn loose a ministry that has the capacity to enlighten people spiritually in a way that is realistic, and not to be subject to all the whims and the trivialities of the sin nature that undermine that outreach.

One of our states in the country is going to have a referendum. It is going to ask the people of the state to decide whether to impose a state income tax upon the offerings of religious groups before they use money to send out missionaries, or to operate their local ministries. And you can just count on the fact that, if this passes in that state, it will go like wildfire across the country. Satan's people are in great positions of authority. And they're just itching to silence the work of God. And one of the ways to silence it is what I've just shown you – the financial end of it. Squeeze off the finances, and you'll be downsizing and eliminating activities, and you'll be less and less of a thorn in Satan's side.

**Our Society Dislikes Christians**

We Christians live in a society that dislikes Bible oriented Christians for two basic reasons. They have two basic problems in their thinking as Americans. First of all, in spiritual matters, they do not look to the Bible as the authority which speaks for God. So, the first problem in the American thinking is that when you talk about religious matters, you have no Bible as the authority. The Bible is not where they look to think about spiritual things.

**Abortion is Murder**

Now, you cannot have anything more brutal than what the President just vetoed – that Congress and I think in the Senate unanimously (but overwhelmingly anyhow) passed a bill that doctors would henceforth be forbidden to practice of a child who is near the end of his term, ready to be born, up in the last months and last weeks, to be able to turn that baby around in the mother's womb, and to grasp its little legs, and to pull it out of the womb, except for the head, and then to pierce the skull of the baby while it's still in its mother's womb, and turn on a machine that sucks the brain out. The child is now dead, and now the entire baby is removed. And he is declared to have been born dead. That is not considered murder. That is such a horrendous process just to think about, and if that's not in infanticide (the killing of an infant), I don't know what is. And here the president of the United States vetoes that restriction.

Well, his excuse is, because the cleverness of the political mind says, "I want the stipulation that if it is for the health and wellbeing of the mother, then it's okay to kill that baby when he's nine months old." And, of course, that means that every doctor who wants to make the money can say, "I stipulate that this is for the wellbeing of the mother." Well more and more now, the statistics are coming out, such that if there's anything that is for the wellbeing of the baby, it is for the mother to be able to properly deliver that child. And there is so rare an occasion – it is now admitted that a mother's life is so rarely dependent upon the child that she has, and the child to be born, it's practically non-existent. It is one of those enormous lies of the political liberal world. And we Christians stand around, and smile, and say, "Okay." And we cower down in front of these feisty liberals who are ready to demean our nation and our culture with that kind of a brutal action – such a brutal treatment of a human being.

**Our Society Discounts the Bible**

Now, if we're going to talk about that, why do we say that that's wrong? It's because of the Bible. The Bible says, "Thou shalt not murder." And what you are doing is murdering a human life which is a human life from the point of conception. It is an act of murder. Society cannot decide that. The Supreme Court cannot decide that, though it tried to do it. And those men, who have died and gone on the other side – they are receiving their just deserts for that action. It is the Bible, like in Psalm 139, that spells out how God puts together a human baby, in such poetic grand detail that you suddenly recoil with horror to realize that a human being reaches inside that mother's body and destroys a creation – a creative work of God (a work that is in progress).

So, Americans have a big problem today because they have drifted off from the Word of God. They depend for spiritual orientation on what they can think (human reason), and on empiricism; that is, their experience – what they can gain through their senses. Now, we have gone extensively in the 1 Corinthian passage that says that you don't get any information about God through rationalism. You cannot think your way to divine truth. And it says that you cannot get any information about God through your senses. It's very limited. You cannot find a knowledge of God except through one way, and that is by faith. And that faith has to be in the Bible, in believing what it claims to be, and demonstrates to be in many ways – the very Word of God.

So, Dr. Sagan – this is his problem. As you look upon him, you see very clearly that the kiss of death is upon him. And what is he struggling with? He says rationalism is the way to find out the truth. Our experience (empiricism) is the way to find out the truth about these religious things. And from his rational and from his empiricism, he does not see any possible way for someone to die to cover the sins of someone else, or that anybody could possibly find that the Bible as a book had the authority to speak for God, and that it was that kind of a special book. Well, I can guarantee you that Dr. Sagan, while smart about the stars, is dumb about the Bible. He is not versed in the Word of God. Most Christians are dumb about the Bible. And those who are the dumbest become real hotshot experts in their own eyes, and begin to create a little cult and following of their own, as they promote their dumbness. All the great cults were brought into being by women who thought themselves great spiritual leaders with great spiritual insights. And again, all of those women, right down the line, deviated from the plain literal meaning of Scripture, and went off into perversions of the Word of God. In spiritual matters, you cannot learn about God except from the Word of God.

So, people today – what do they do? They mindlessly accept some ecclesiastical body as the source of spiritual truth. Usually it's some religious system that they were born into. And what comforts them in all this? Sincerity. I've warned you about that word in the past. People believe that sincerity counts with God. People believe that if you are sincere, then God will overlook the fact that you are sincerely wrong. They cannot conceive that what Adam did to us when he sinned was that he took away our eternal life – the life that made us in the image of God. And after that, Jesus Christ is the only person since then who was born with eternal life as a human being. He's the only person born with eternal life, because He was sinless. He had no old nature to kill that eternal life when He took his first breath after He was born.

The result is that it is absolutely essential for anybody who is going to have a relationship to God, to have it on the basis of God's eternal life, he has to have that eternal life restored. And the only way you get that life that has no beginning and no ending, is through faith in Jesus Christ. That's when you're regenerated. Regeneration means your human spirit, which is dead, is brought to life. How? Because suddenly you are injected with the eternal life of God.

Now, this is pretty heady stuff, to realize if you sit here this morning as a Christian with eternal life within you. And therefore, it can never be removed. It can never depart from you. You are ready at this moment to enter the new Jerusalem in full capacity. The only question is what you're going to do with the days of your life now. Your future is secure and settled. The question is: are you going to trivialize your life, or are you going to build a spiritual maturity structure in the soul, so that you have a great capacity to enjoy what you see in heaven, and what you'll experience there?

People who don't know something about the great pieces of music cannot appreciate what is going on when they're listening to music. They have no capacity to enter into the marvels of what they're listening to. But with a little education and training, suddenly what they're listening to takes on enormously greater meaning to them. Well, that's what heaven is going to be like.

**Our Society Discounts the Constitution**

So here's the first problem: people in American society that we have to deal with don't relate spiritual things to the Bible. That is not the way they think about spiritual things. This is then compounded by a second defect in American thinking. And that is that in political and societal matters, decisions are not made on the basis of the limitations on government, which is imposed by our constitution. So, the next thing is no constitution.

**The 10th Amendment**

Why did Mrs. Dole, in a recent, brilliant, standing-ovation speech that she made to a political group – why did she make such a great issue in her speech to them that her husband constantly carries in his pocket a copy of the 10th Amendment. Because that's where the whole trouble lies. And that's what we're having an election about. The 10th Amendment has been virtually wiped out of the Constitution. And with that amendment wiped out, as the founding fathers realized, if we don't have that amendment, they can wipe out the Constitution, no matter what else we do – freedom is gone. There'll be no restraint upon a national government. The 10th Amendment says that any authority, or any power, not delegated to the federal government is reserved to the states and the people. That is so simple. Then you say, "Well, what can the federal government do?" So you look back up in the Constitution. Ah, they can have an army; they can have a navy; they can take care of the post office; and, they can issue money. Nobody else can do it. The states can't do this. It's forbidden to the states. States can't have their own army and go to war. And right down line, there are something like maybe 19 things – that's what the federal government can do. And then, bingo! It's over. And the rest is where?

Well, it's as Madison said, when they were debating in the colonies to accept the constitution, that the powers of the federal government are few and limited. But the powers of the state are many and unlimited. And that's the way it should be. That is why you're hearing this expression: "turning power back over to the states." That was a violation of the Constitution to begin with. Do you realize that three-quarters of the laws we now have in the federal government are unconstitutional, because there's no place in the constitution that authorizes them to do that? How did that happen? It happened because liberal activist judges have been derelict in their oath and duty to limit the acts of the federal government to those specific powers enumerated in the constitution. The judges have looked the other way, because the Constitution was a restriction upon them.

Consequently, what is at stake? Freedom. Freedom is under great threat as governmental authorities assume powers they arrogate to themselves – powers that were not granted to them by the Constitution. And the courts looked the other way. Congress, for a long time has simply stipulated that it has the power just on its own. Nobody ever says, "Wait a minute. You can't create your own powers. The Constitution forbids that. But when the courts don't say, "That's right," then they do it.

Now, until the time of Franklin Roosevelt, that was the nature of the case. And Franklin Roosevelt came along and said, "I want to have a socialist country from now on – not a private-enterprise; private-ownership; and, free-enterprise country, and proceeded then to set up federal agencies that were socialists to the core. Well, because the Supreme Court had nine judges on it that were still in the tradition of the first 150 years of the United States, they came down and said, "You can't do that. That's illegal."

Now those of us who were alive at the time (as teenagers) can remember the headlines in the newspapers: "Roosevelt wants to pack the Supreme Court." He actually asked the state to give an immediate amendment to expand the court from nine to (I think it was) 15 members, so that he could put enough socialist judges on the court immediately that they would approve his National Recovery Act socialist programs.

Well, it's been downhill ever since. And American society, you have to understand, operates without the Constitution. How did this happen? Once they left the Bible, they left the bases of freedom. And only you Christians understand the intimate connection with the two.

Satan has, in effect, enslaved the states to the authority of the federal government in our country. And this is in violation of the constitution. And what Satan has created is a national government. Alexander Hamilton wanted a national government when they were writing a constitution. The men said, "No, no, no, no. The states are going to retain their authority. If a state wants to be a socialist state, like Massachusetts, then the state should be a socialist estate. Go live there. If you want a free enterprise, private ownership state, then go live in Texas. You can have 50 different kinds of economies in the United States, because the 10th Amendment says that the people of every state can run the things of their state. The only thing they can't do is print their own money; run their own wars; their own post offices; and, a few other things like that that the federal government has to do.

Why does Satan want a national government instead of a federal government? Because Satan wants to bring nations together into a world government. He cannot bring 50 sovereign independent states into a world government. That is what is happening. You can see how important it is to know the divine institution of government; how it was designed; and, what its purpose is – to maintain the law and order within a nation, and to preserve the freedom that every individual has been given by God.

**Americans Lack the Knowledge of the Word of God**

Well, Satan is moving at full speed to unite nations into this world government under his authority, where he is their god. And this is made possible today because, unlike the Colossians, Americans lack knowledge. Americans lack the knowledge of the Word of God. Here's the way the prophet Hosea puts it. Hosea 4:6: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge (this is the knowledge of the Word of God), I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children." And the children of America have been forgotten. They are in horrendous disarray of evil. And parents find that it's an uphill fight to rear their children in godliness: "Since you have forgotten the law of your God (doctrinal principles), I'm going to forget your children. I'm going to turn them over to the world system:" "Because you have rejected the knowledge of doctrine, I will also reject you from being My priest." Who is God's client nation (priestly nation, so to speak) in the world today except the United States? That's why we stand alone as a superpower, because we are the client nation of God. We are His personal agent in the world. And we're going to be rejected as the priestly intercessor between mankind and the living God. Why?

It is because the pulpit is filled with do-dos who pursue everything under the sun except the hard road of teaching the Word of God – instructing people in what is their heritage, and what enables them to be real men and real women: "My people perish because of a lack of knowledge." Without the wisdom of doctrine, the sin nature will be able to dominate the mind with its lusts and its human viewpoint delusions. Sins from the weakness of the sin nature are lusts which corrupt man and flood society with evil. Human good from the strength of the sin nature flood society with false compassion, resulting again in great evils.

A Christian lacking doctrine in his human spirit is no better off than the unsaved who is under the domination of the sin nature. That kind of a Christian is at the mercy of false doctrine and religion, lacking spiritual stability in facing Satan and his world.

You should not view this as a personal demand on the part of the pastor-teacher when he warned you that, if you take a negative attitude toward the instruction which you receive from him, which is confirmed by the Word of God, and which therefore is the truth of God, that will have dangerous repercussions for you personally. If you want to send your mind off completely away from reality, and spin off into your own world of self-religious self-destruction, just have a haughty attitude toward the pastor-teacher who is true to his calling.

Ephesians 4:14-15 describes what happens for such a Christian negative to the instruction of the pastor-teacher: "As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming, but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, Who is the head, even Christ." We are to grow up into the image of Christ. And what is the basis for this? It is the basis of the instruction which God has provided as the book of Ephesians describes for us in the pastor-teacher ministry.

This kind of a Christian, who is out of touch with doctrine, is almost always oriented to socialism. He likes government controls on the citizens. He doesn't mind destroying the initiative and the personal freedom of the individual citizens. This unfolding tragedy in America is carrying our republic into a world government by the evil men of Satan, who are in charge, and who are in places of authority. The pastors of the churches are to blame for this national destruction. And those who sound off with the truth of doctrine are held in contempt. They're ridiculed, and they are restricted. Satan has plenty of help in trying to hold back some pastor-teacher who, if he had the means, would be such an explosive force that the world of Satan would reverberate with the sounding of the Word of God. People would turn against it, but people would have a chance.

That's where we stand today. We have a society where the Bible is not the basis of deciding spiritual things; or, if they use it, they pervert it. And we have a Constitution which, consequently, has no constitution, which was based upon the principles of Reformation Christianity. It is a Constitution which can be distorted to whatever you want it to say. . . .

Now, in Colossians 1:9-10, the apostle Paul is facing these same problems that we have outlined for you that are in our society today. Then begins verses 9-10, which are some of the most significant verses in all the Bible, because these verses are going to speak to you about a knowledge, the "epignosis" knowledge, the full deep knowledge, that can only come to a Christian who's been taught the Word of God, and has a storage full of doctrine in his human spirit.

The passage that I read to you in our introduction this morning (our orientation from 2 Peter) repeatedly used the word "knowledge," if you were listening. And I kept translating it for you as full knowledge. I will list for you, in time, how many times full knowledge comes up. It's not just brain knowledge: those of you have been reared in a Christian home; those of you who have learned the principles of doctrine; and, those of you who have learned the Bible stories. But it's the full knowledge that has triggered an internal change of enormous consequence within your very being. And without full knowledge, "epignosis" knowledge – not just "gnosis" in-the-head knowledge, you have nothing, and you are nothing.

Now, what Paul does is that he commends these people for all of their capacities that they have – their reception to doctrine. And then he says, "Now I am praying for you. I'm switching from thanksgiving to prayer, because I'm afraid you're going to lose the one thing that makes you head-and-shoulders above everybody else in this empire – people with 'epignosis' knowledge in their human spirits. May God forbid that you should ever lose that. If you lose that, you'll be nothing as a church, and you'll be nothing as an individual Christian. You'll be back to no Bible for deciding spiritual things, and no governmental restrictions upon the tyranny of government."

"For this reason," he says, "adding prayer to thanksgiving." We may also translate this as: "because of this." What does he mean by that? Well, he is referring back to that entire long Greek sentence in Colossians 1:3-8, that we looked at in such detail. He says, "Because of all the tremendous things that I have observed about you in verses 3-8, in this long Greek sentence, for this reason now, I switch from thanksgiving to prayer." And Paul prays for the Colossians on the basis of their demonstrated grace orientation described in this sentence.

"For this reason," he petitions God on the basis of what he learned from Epaphras about their grace lifestyle. Precisely because of the Colossians grace understanding, are they capable of going on into the deep things of the Spirit of God? Many of you are Christians who have walked in great depth with God. You've gone through hard times with Him. You understand what it is to walk in the deep things of the Spirit of God. It's a functioning part of your life. It has enabled you to use your spiritual gifts, and you're always on your feet. You are like my little cat, no matter how I hold her, and no matter how high or how low – I'll get over the bed, and have her upside down, looking in her green eyes, whistling, and I'll let her go. And, boy, she lands on her feet. She's so full of "epignosis." She's always on her feet, because I teach her all the time, and she's never off balance.

Now, that is what Paul says: "I have to thank God for a group of people like that. You get all the stupid people who hit up against you. You get all of Satan's things. You get all the world's things. But none of that hits you. It just flows off of you. You just blow it off. Why? Because your eyes are on the Lord, and what you do is for the Lord's glory.

So, Paul says, "Because you have this capacity, you're able to go far above other people in the things of God. A society which lacks people with a grasp of doctrine will become corrupt and enslaved. And I'm sure that in the back of Paul's mind, he says, "The Roman Empire needs people who are versed in doctrine, and who function on it, because if we don't have it, the Roman society is going to degenerate, which it did in time, into a brutal society.

Now, Hosea saw that coming for Israel. Let me read what he says in Hosea 4:1-6. A society who does not have a majority of people who grasp the deep things of doctrine – what happens to that society? It goes corrupt, and the people become enslaved. Hosea says, "Listen to the Word of the Lord, O sons of Israel. For the Lord has a case against the inhabitants of the land, because there is no faithfulness or kindness or knowledge of God in the land. There is swearing, deception, murder, stealing, and adultery. They employ violence so that bloodshed follows bloodshed. Therefore, the land mourns, and everyone who lives in it languishes, along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky, and also the fish of the sea disappear. Yet, let no one find fault, and let none offer reproof, for your people are like those who contend with the priest. So, you will stumble by day, and the prophet also will stumble with you by night, and I will destroy your mother." And then he comes to that verse that we read a moment ago, summing it all up: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you from being my priests. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."

**"Agape" Love**

Now, that's the thing that Paul has in the back of his mind when he says, "I am certainly going to pray intensively for you believers, since the day we heard of it." This word for "heard" is the Greek word "akouo" (ak-oo'-o), A K O U O. The word "akouo" means to get some information. What specifically did he hear? Well, it's back up in Colossians 1:8. The words "of it" are in italics. They're understood. And you might have to draw a little light arrow up to the word "love" in Colossians 1:8. That's the "it" that he is referring to: "Since the day I have heard of it." And remember that we have pointed out that when they have this "agape" love, that indicates that they're grace oriented. That indicates that they're filled with the Spirit, or they wouldn't have it. That's the only way they get that kind of love. So, he says that this mental attitude love indicates that you are filled with the Spirit (a gift of the Holy Spirit), Galatians 5:22. And the Spirit of God alone can create this virtue in a Christian.

So, Paul was overjoyed to hear from Epaphras of their "agape" love from the Holy Spirit. They were, therefore, a people who were, on the one hand, able to be taught the word; and, on the other hand, they were able to influence the society of the Roman Empire. And he says, "Since the day I heard of your spiritual capacity, we have not ceased." The word "ceased" looks like this: "pauo" (pow'-o), P A U O. This word means "to come to a stop in doing something." And it means "to come to a sudden stop." It connotes, Paul says: "I have not come to a point where I have stopped to pray for you." This connotes regular, frequent prayer. This is the idea of 1 Thessalonians 5:17 – "pray without ceasing." And what he says that he has not done is to cease to pray for them.

**Prayer**

This is that long Greek word "proseuchomai" (pros-yoo'-khom-ahee), P R O S E U C H O M A I. "Proseuchomai" is the strong word for prayer, and it is made up of two words. This first part "pros" (pros) is an added to "eulogeo" (yoo-log-eh'-o), which means "to ask." But "pros" is a word that means "face-to-face," or "eyeball-to-eyeball." So, here's an interesting observation. He has a strong word connoting a direct confrontation with God in prayer. It's a tense which indicates that he does this constantly. It's done by Paul personally, and it is prayer as the tactic of spiritual combat in the angelic conflict. This is the basic word in the Greek New Testament for petitioning God for something.

He says, "I am doing this face-to-face with God, without ceasing, for you." Now, "for you' tells us some very significant things about the Colossian Christians, and about the effect of people praying for one another. This is the note upon which we should come to an end this morning: a society which does not look to the Bible for spiritual religious matters; a society which is seeking to evade the chains of the Constitution on the tyranny of man, and his inclinations to socialism; and, a society that can only be preserved by the light and salt of people who are doctrinally oriented. Paul says, "I found such a group of people in Colossae, and I pray for them day and night. I never cease to pray that they will not fail to realize what a good thing they have, and where God has led them, and that they will keep on learning the word. When the church doors are open, they're going to be there. And the result of this is that something very significant will come to pass, relative to such a people. And we will look upon that next time.

God our Father, we want to thank You for the word that You have given us this morning. And we thank You that these connections have to be made. We thank You that though these things are not obvious, and they're not evident to the unsaved mind, but to the person who is oriented to the Spirit of God, these matters of our society and of our personal lives all fall into place. We thank You for the Word of God, and we pray that You will expand the outreach of Berean Church to sound that word out with an expanded Christian day school, and with an expanded Berean Youth Club program, and with an expanded tape ministry, and with an expanded outreach to the needy in this society. This is dependent upon Your purposes and Your timing. And we humbly wait before You for guidance on both. Take us, we pray, with a solemn rejoicing of what we are through the Word of God, and bring us together with some great testimonies.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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