



On Praying

5 Days On “From Futility To Fruitfulness”

Day 1: Qualified by God's Love

Reading: *Colossians 1:9-14*

Devotional

Today's passage reminds us of a profound truth: we are qualified not by our own merits, but by God's love. Paul prays for the Colossians to be filled with the knowledge of God's will, emphasizing that our primary calling is to become more like Christ where we are.

In our achievement-oriented culture, we're constantly measuring ourselves against external standards of success. But God operates by an entirely different economy. His qualification system isn't based on our performance but on His character. When Paul writes that God "has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light," it's already done.

When we truly grasp that we're already qualified in God's eyes, it frees us from the exhausting cycle of trying to prove our worth. We can approach relationships with humility rather than defensiveness and serve others from a place of overflow rather than obligation.

God doesn't look at our inadequacies and sigh; He looks at Christ's perfection credited to our account and declares us more than adequate for His purposes.

Reflection Question: In what specific area of your life do you most struggle with feeling unqualified, and how might believing God's declaration of your worth in Christ change your approach to that area?

Action Step: Identify one task or relationship where you've been holding back due to feelings of inadequacy. This week, take one concrete step forward in that area, reminding yourself that you're acting from God's qualification, not your own.

Quote: "The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope." - Tim Keller

Prayer: Father, help me to rest in the assurance of your love and qualification. May I live from a place of acceptance rather than striving for it.

Day 2: Strength for Endurance

Reading: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Devotional

Paul's prayer in Colossians speaks of being "strengthened with all power according to his glorious might." This echoes today's reading, where God's power is made perfect in our weakness. Often, we face situations that feel beyond our capacity to handle.

Paul uses the word for "power" that gives us "dynamite." But notice what this divine power is meant to produce: not dramatic victories or explosive breakthroughs, but "endurance and patience." This reveals something profound about God's priorities.

In our instant-gratification culture, we often pray for God to remove our difficulties. But God is more interested in our character development than our comfort. The very struggles we wish to escape are often the means by which God shapes us into people who can handle greater responsibilities.

This doesn't mean God is indifferent to our pain. Rather, He's working within our struggles to accomplish something eternal. Endurance means "to remain under"—not passive resignation, but active perseverance that enables us to keep loving when others are unlovable and keep believing when circumstances suggest otherwise.

Reflection Question: What current challenge in your life might God be using to develop your character, and how can you shift from asking Him to remove it to asking Him to strengthen you through it?

Action Step: Choose one ongoing difficulty you're facing and write down three specific ways you can practice "remaining under" it with grace this week—whether through prayer, service to others, or choosing gratitude over complaint.

Quote: "God allows us to experience the low points of life in order to teach us lessons that we could learn in no other way." - C.S. Lewis

Prayer: Lord, in my weakness, show Your strength. Help me to rely on Your power rather than my own resources.

Day 3: Living Out Our Calling

Reading: *Ephesians 2:8-10*

Devotional

Our passage today reinforces the idea that we are saved by grace, not by our own efforts. This aligns with Paul's prayer for the Colossians to "live a life worthy of the Lord." Our calling isn't about finding a specific job or role, but about living out Christ's character wherever we are. The phrase "live a life worthy" can be misleading if we misunderstand it. Paul isn't suggesting we need to earn our salvation. He means: since God has declared you worthy through Christ, let your life reflect that reality.

This transforms how we view our "ordinary" lives. Whether you're changing diapers, analyzing spreadsheets, or teaching students, your primary calling is the same: to embody Christ's love in whatever sphere God has placed you.

Too often, we compartmentalize our faith, acting as if Sunday church behavior and Monday workplace behavior operate by different rules. But Paul sees every conversation and relationship as an opportunity to "live worthy" of our calling. A life worthy of the Lord has substance—meaningful rather than superficial or self-centered.

Reflection Question: Looking at your daily routine and relationships, where do you see the biggest gap between your Sunday faith and your Monday-through-Saturday living, and what one change could help bridge that gap?

Action Step: Pick one regular interaction in your week (with a coworker, neighbor, family member, or service provider) and intentionally practice one specific way of showing Christ's love—whether through genuine interest in their life, patience during frustration, or unexpected kindness.

Quote: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." - Frederick Buechner

Prayer: Jesus, help me to see my daily life as an opportunity to live out Your love and character. Guide me in serving others as You would.

Day 4: From Darkness to Light

Reading: *1 Peter 2:9-10*

Devotional

Colossians speaks of being rescued from the domain of darkness and brought into the kingdom of light. Today's reading in 1 Peter expands on this, describing believers as those called out of darkness into God's wonderful light.

The language Paul uses is dramatic and military: we've been "rescued" from one kingdom and "transferred" into another. This wasn't a gentle relocation—it was a liberation operation. We weren't just making poor choices; we were prisoners of war.

But notice that this rescue wasn't based on our cry for help. Paul says God "has rescued us"—past tense, completed action. While we were still content in our prison, God mounted the rescue operation. This is the scandal of grace: God saved us not when we deserved it, but when we needed it.

Living in the kingdom of light means we now have new values and priorities. We're no longer defined by our past mistakes or current struggles, but by whose kingdom we belong to. This identity shift should create both humility (remembering where we came from) and confidence (knowing where we now stand).

Reflection Question: What aspects of the "domain of darkness" from your past still try to influence your thinking or behavior, and how can you more fully embrace your identity as a citizen of God's kingdom of light?

Action Step: Identify one specific area where you still think or act more like a citizen of darkness than light, and this week, make one practical change that reflects your true citizenship in God's kingdom.

Quote: "The Christian life is not a constant high. I have my moments of deep discouragement. I have to go to God in prayer with tears in my eyes, and say, 'O God, forgive me,' or 'Help me.'" - Billy Graham

Prayer: Father, thank You for bringing me into Your marvelous light. Help me to walk as a child of light and to reflect Your brightness to those around me.

Day 5: Bearing Fruit in Every Good Work

Reading: John 15:1-8

Devotional

Paul prays for the Colossians to bear fruit in every good work. Today's passage from John reminds us that this fruitfulness comes from abiding in Christ, not from our own efforts. His audience would have immediately understood the agricultural imagery Jesus uses. A branch cannot produce fruit by trying harder. Fruit is the natural result of a branch's connection to the vine. Cut that connection, and the branch will wither no matter how much effort it exerts.

This is both liberating and challenging. It's liberating because it removes the pressure of manufacturing spiritual results through willpower. It's difficult because it requires us to focus on our connection to Christ.

"Abide" means to remain or dwell—not a momentary visit but a permanent residence. Abiding in Christ means making our relationship with Him the stable center around which everything else revolves through prayer, Scripture reading, and constant dependence.

When we truly abide, fruit becomes inevitable. We don't manufacture patience—it flows from the vine. The "good works" Paul mentions aren't burdensome obligations but joyful expressions of Christ's life within us.

Reflection Question: What does "abiding in Christ" look like practically in your daily schedule and decision-making, and where do you notice the most disconnect between your stated desire to abide and your actual patterns?

Action Step: Establish one new rhythm this week that will help you maintain connection with Christ throughout your day—whether it's a brief prayer between meetings, Scripture meditation during your commute, or a moment of gratitude before meals.

Quote: "I have learned that the more we depend upon God the more dependable we find He is." - Cliff Richard

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me to abide in You today. May Your life flow through me, producing fruit that brings glory to the Father.