

# A Passionate Worship (Part 1)

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 13 June 2010

Preacher: Don Coleman

[ 0 : 00 ] It's good to see everyone here tonight, and if you have your Bibles with you, I want you to open them to Colossians.

Colossians chapter 1. And I think I want to read the text again so that we can keep all these together in our minds.

This is a prayer. All these things, I mean, all the various elements of this prayer. Starting with verse 9, Colossians chapter 1.

And for this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. So that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord to please him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

[ 1 : 10 ] 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.

For he rescued us from the domain of darkness. Transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Now, what we've been looking at for now, I guess three Sundays, and this will be the fourth Sunday night, we've been looking at this prayer of the Apostle Paul's.

Incredible prayer. Very important prayer. And I have entitled it, From Wisdom to Worship. So this is the fourth and final division of the prayer.

Although we're not going to complete the prayer tonight. This fourth and final division of the prayer. Really, I am taking liberty and extending on past the prayer proper itself.

[ 2 : 21 ] Because Paul transitions on further. And his subject is, well, a lot of things, but under the heading of worship. Worship.

And so it's going to take us a couple of weeks, maybe three Sundays, to really unpack all that he says at this point. But to review, Paul prayed for a practical wisdom.

Remember that? That the Colossians would be filled with the knowledge of God's will. And what could be more practical than that?

To be filled with the knowledge of God's will. What could be more practical than having a wisdom that just always knows, in any given situation, exactly what God wants?

A practical wisdom. Then Paul prayed for what I have called a pleasing walk. Pleasing walk. That the Colossians would walk in a worthy manner.

[ 3 : 23 ] A manner worthy of the Lord, literally, in the text. In a way that would please him. So that's why I call it a pleasing walk. And what could be more pleasing to God than that?

When you begin to think about it. That is a believer whose life, whose walk, always matches the life of Christ. With nothing glaring.

No clashes in the life. Nothing that's inconsistent with the nature and character of God. And then third, we looked at this last Sunday night.

Paul prays for a powerful witness. That the Colossian believers would have a powerful witness. That they would be so strong spiritually. Mature spiritually.

That they would be able to respond to suffering and persecution. With all steadfastness and all patience. And loving it. Joyfully.

[ 4 : 21 ] Alright, so a practical wisdom. Pleasing walk. Powerful witness. And then fourth and finally, Paul prayed for a passionate worship. That these Colossian believers would have a passionate worship.

Paul prayed that that would be a constant part of their Christian experience. And what could be more exciting and more important for us to pray for one another. Especially in the context of gathering as God's church here. On Sunday morning and Sunday night. But even beyond the corporate gathering and assembly of the church. That our worship of the Lord would be a constant part of our Christian experience. A passionate worship. Now, let me qualify this just a bit. And say I'm not talking about a worship that is solely based upon feeling. We need to kind of understand what we mean here by passionate. Not based on feeling. [ 5 : 31 ] Not emotionalism. But a worship that's based upon truth. The truth of God's word. As it's revealed. He reveals it in his word. So revealed truth.

An experiential truth. That engages the feelings. You see. It's not feelings on the front end. That defines our worship totally. It is feelings as a result of God revealing himself. Through his word. The truth of God's word. Now, what truth specifically? Well, for one.

And this is the subject. Paul's subject here. Or his focus here. The truth of which he speaks. That ought to produce passionate worship in us. Is the awesome truth of what God, by his grace, has done for the objects of his grace.

His children. His born again children. And our response in worship to all that he has done and is doing. Now, Paul includes some of these truths.

[ 6 : 35 ] Really kind of breaks them out into about. Into three truths. Relative to what God has done. According to his grace. And let me just give them to you very quickly.

The first one we're going to look at tonight. It comes to us out from verse 12. And so it's this truth. That God has, by his grace, he has qualified us for an inheritance.

He's qualified us for an inheritance. And that will be the focus tonight. Number two, he rescued us from the power of darkness. That's the second thing.

That's the second point of worship. What God has done that ought to produce in us a passionate worship. That God has rescued us from the power of darkness. And then, consequently, the third one.

And he has placed us in the kingdom of his son. And these are sources of great worship of the Lord.

[ 7 : 40 ] These things he has done. Now, today we're going to look at the first of these worship-worthy truths. And so I would name it this way.

The inheritance that is thoroughly sovereign. The inheritance that is thoroughly sovereign. So look at verse 12 again. Here's the source of our passionate worship.

Giving thanks to the Father who has done what? He has, if you have a King James, it's made us meet for the kingdom. A little difficult to understand.

But it means that he's qualified us for something. He has qualified us to do what? Don't share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

And yet, even with that translation, it bears some explanation, doesn't it? That he qualified us for the inheritance of the saints in light. What does all that mean?

[ 8 : 41 ] Well, in first place, and I guess this ought to be our focus initially, is what is this inheritance? I mean, if we're going to, as a result of this great truth that Paul has inserted here in chapter 1, if we're going to be led to, and he's praying that it would lead us to a passionate worship, then maybe we ought to know a little bit about the substance of this truth.

What is this inheritance? It's really not an easy thing to define or qualify. Can you tell me what this inheritance is?

New Testament often mentions the believer's inheritance. We find that concept or that reality all throughout Scripture.

Later on, as a matter of fact, in this letter, in Colossians, in chapter 3, verse 24, he says, well, starting with verse 23, Whatever you do, do your work heartily as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance.

It is the Lord Jesus whom you serve. So the reward of the inheritance. What is this inheritance? Paul in Galatians, I might, well, let's see.

[ 10 : 05 ] I think I jotted it down here. Galatians 4, 7. Paul said, you are no longer a servant or slave. No longer one of those, but a son.

Remember this passage? You're not a slave any longer. You are a son. And if a son or since you are a son, then you are an heir of God. An heir of God through Christ.

And so there is, again, not the word inheritance, but the word heir, implication, the heir of an inheritance. And so what is this inheritance? Or we might also look at the passage we studied some weeks ago on Sunday morning in 1 Peter chapter 1, one of my favorites, in verse 3, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His great mercy, has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to obtain an inheritance.

And he goes on to say, An inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you. Now, in the context of 1 Peter 1, Peter's talking about salvation, but is this inheritance just strictly our salvation in the fullest sense?

It is, and yet it's something more than that. What is it exactly? Is heaven the inheritance?

[ 11 : 40 ] That might be one suggestion. Is it heaven itself? Well, we would have to admit that partly yes. It is heaven.

And all that is there prepared for us. In the general sense, maybe this inheritance is heaven.

Although, if I might remind you that Peter, in that passage I just quoted again, or read for you out of 1 Peter chapter 1, verse 4, Peter said that this inheritance is reserved for us in heaven.

In heaven. And in our text here, in Colossians chapter 1, Paul says that this inheritance is located someplace. In light, he said.

In fact, the Greek noun there is it's a locative. That means a lot, doesn't it? Well, it means it speaks of location.

And so it could be translated that this inheritance is in the place of light. In that place where light is. And where would that place be? Well, none other than heaven. All right?

[ 12 : 49 ] So, we can establish this truth, this conclusion, that the inheritance, whatever it is, it is located someplace. Specifically, in heaven.

That's what Paul said in both of these, or Peter said and Paul said. All right? So, the inheritance must be something there waiting for us.

Now, you follow along here. There's a logical flow of thought here, I hope. At least, I planned for it to be that way. So, if it's not heaven itself, then it is something there waiting for us.

Some greater blessing that's waiting for us there. Waiting for us there in heaven. Not just heaven itself, but something there in that place.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 25 and verse 34. You don't need to turn to it, but it's an invitation that will one day be extended to all believers.

[ 13 : 55 ] And the invitation is this. Come, you who are blessed of my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

So, that again suggests that it's something there. Something in heaven. And really, heaven is or is and will one day be for us a wonderful place.

And yet, heaven is shrouded in mystery, isn't it? Did you know that the Bible speaks more about hell than it does about heaven? Huh? Interesting. And yet, you have some sense when you're reading the descriptions of heaven, especially in Revelation, you have some sense that the writers are groping for words that could come close to describing it.

That is, words that we have in human languages. And I think we would have to admit that what is there in heaven and what has been prepared there, all of the various features of heaven are not describable.

Not in any human language. And so, John, for one, who describes heaven in Revelation 21, he uses the words he had at his disposal.

[ 15 : 18 ] And yet, even those words are pretty exciting, aren't they? I mean, when you think of heaven, do you think of crystal seas and pearly gates?

There's entire gates made out of one pearl. Do you think of streets of gold? Do you think of those things? Do you think of mansions?

And so forth. Some of that kind of influenced by various English translations. We have this view of heaven and what's going to be there.

And, you know, and it's all right, I guess, to think of mansions. I've got a mansion just over the hilltop. It's all right to think of that. I mean, Jesus did say in my Father's house are many mansions.

According to the King James, dwelling place, you know, I've heard somebody make a big deal about that, you know, spoofing, kind of talking down on those who like the King James and they'll say, well, the Bible doesn't say mansions, it says dwelling places.

[16:30] And then those on the King James side, they'll say, well, that sure takes the shine off of it. You know, I just can't imagine going to heaven and getting my dwelling place. You know, that could be anything.

But see, we understand regardless of how it's translated, we're talking about a heavenly dwelling place. And if John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, described heaven with, you know, words like gold and pearls and all kinds of precious metals, then what kind of heavenly dwelling place would it possibly be?

It truly would be, by any standard here, a mansion. Do you think of heaven in those terms? The Cathedral Quartet sang a song a number of years ago and entitled, I'll Be Going in Style.

I don't know if you've got any southern gospel folks out here. Do you remember that one? It kind of goes like this. Well, I'm not going to sing it for you, but here are some of the lyrics. I'll be going in style someday when this life is through.

I'll be sailing past the Milky Way and all the stars and planets too. I'll be traveling in luxury, getting closer every mile to a mansion waiting just for me.

[17:41] I'll be going in style. That's a touchy-feely, you know, emotional kind of song. And it's all, of course, motivated and springs out of the description, the incredible description of heaven in the Bible.

Is that our inheritance? Not just heaven itself, but the things that are there, like the streets of gold and so forth. And heaven is going to be a great place.

There's not going to be any sin, any sorrow, any sickness, any death there. And, you know, that will be there in the presence of all the saints of all the ages.

And you could just name some of them that you'd like to meet and sit down with and talk with and, you know, learn from. I, for one, would like to sit down with David and have him sing the Psalms.

Find out what the tunes were, you know, and so forth. Great place. And what a point of worship. Just in itself. What a point of worship that we could get all excited.

[18:44] And it's the truth of Scripture. And it engages our emotions and our feelings. And that might be our inheritance.

But let's think further. Paul says that this inheritance, by the way, is something that is right now, too. A little difficult to pick this out here, but if you would look back at Colossians chapter, or chapter 1, verse 12. Giving thanks to the Father, he said, who has, present tense, qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Now, the saints are in light in heaven. There is, grammatically, room to understand here that the inheritance is something we have now.

That, at least in part, are experiencing and can experience here, right now. The inheritance, see, that the Father has given us and has prepared, especially for us, that, as Peter described, is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away and reserved for us.

[20:11] Those things. We enjoy some of it, apparently, in the present. Right here. But, we will enjoy the fullness of it at some future time, in the future life, after we leave this earth and go to heaven.

And so, that part of it that we enjoy here, whatever that may be, and we'll get to that here in a minute, what we enjoy here, of course, pales in comparison to what it will be like there and what we will enjoy of our inheritance there.

I mean, there's nothing here to compare to it, even though some of it is something we enjoy here right now. The greater part is there in heaven.

A number of years ago, there was a missionary by the name of Henry Morrison. He was a missionary to Africa and served in Africa for some 40 years, a bunch of years ago.

And, he gave his life, really, nearly all of his life there in Africa and led many, many Africans to Christ. Well, the time came for him to retire.

[21:24] Health had caught up with him, bad health, rather, and so he boarded a boat to head for home. And, on the same boat, President Roosevelt was traveling.

And so, when they got to the harbor and got home and were getting off of the boat, as you can imagine, there was great celebration and fanfare for the return of President Roosevelt.

And, no one was there to greet Henry Morrison. And, just kind of got all over him for a moment. Came very dejected by the whole ordeal.

And, he thought to himself, you know, I ought to have some recognition, some appreciation for the 40 years I've given in missions.

And, now, I have come home after 40 years of faithful service and not anyone even cares. And, he said, there was a little voice in his ear that said, but Henry, you're not home yet.

[ 22 : 30 ] Not home yet. what a day it was, I guess, I'm sure, when Henry Morrison made it home. And, to hear the Lord say, well done, thou faithful servant.

Or, come ye blessed of the Father, of my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. So, the inheritance of the saints in light.

Where is it? Is it heaven? Here? Some of it here? I think so. Is it there? In the here after?

Obviously so. Our inheritance. There. Now, I want to ask you, though, think for a moment. What really is this inheritance?

What is the substance of it? Now, think about it. What is this inheritance? The substance of which we will enjoy or we enjoy now. Some of it, anyway, now.

[ 23 : 34 ] But, the balance of it, the fullness of it, we will not enjoy until we get to heaven. What is it? Is it streets of gold? Well, I haven't walked on any streets of gold here.

Not any. I don't know if there is such a thing. Maybe there is in some, some, oil barren palace somewhere. Maybe it has a little sidewalk of gold.

I don't know. But, if the inheritance is things like that, streets of gold, then I'm not enjoying any of that here. I'm really not. Is it pearly gates? No, I don't think so.

I don't think, actually, it's possible for there to be a single gate, one gate made out of a single pearl. Is it mansions? Well, for some, that might be the case.

I love our house that we've bought and moved into, or at least we're almost moved into, and yet it's no mansion. Not at all. And so, what is, then, is this inheritance?

[ 24 : 36 ] Well, take your Bibles and open to Romans chapter 8 and verse 14. Something very interesting here.

You might think a bit of a stretch, but when we add this to some other things the Bible says, I think you'll see what I'm talking about. Romans 8, 14.

The Bible says, For all who 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 a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, Abba, Father.

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God. Now that in itself, just those few verses are incredible. Verse 17 is what I want you to see. And if children, literally since children, because He's already said in verse 16 that we are children, so it's not contingent or if you're children, but since children, heirs also, heirs of God.

God. That's what it says. Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may be glorified with Him.

[ 25 : 57 ] Heirs of God. Now, how are we to understand what Paul is saying here in the phrase heirs of God?

It may not be as obvious as you think. In fact, grammatically, he is saying one of two things. If, in this phrase, God is the subject, you've got to get your brain wrapped around rules of grammar here a minute.

Some of those rules of grammar are a little difficult to apply to Greek translations, but if God is the subject, now follow me here, and then, then obviously, heirs would be the object.

God's the subject, heirs are the object and so the idea would be that the heirs belong to God. That would be our natural tendency, natural translation. The heirs belong to God, we belong to God, heirs of God, heirs belonging to God.

And that certainly is true, scripturally. But if in this phrase, Paul meant for heirs to be the subject, by the way, it can.

[ 27 : 13 ] If heirs is the subject, then God is the object. That means God himself is our inheritance.

Not that we would own God, but God would be our inheritance. we would enjoy the fullness of God for eternity in heaven.

Something we enjoy in part here. And all of which we will enjoy there. What a bold thought.

And it can work out that way. Like we would say, heirs of a fortune. Or heirs of an estate. In this case, heirs of God. God.

That is, God is our inheritance. I think is what Paul is saying here. And there are several passages in the Bible we could go to.

[ 28 : 11 ] And I'll just give you at least one here. Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 14. Ephesians 1, 14.

Ephesians 1, Ephesians 1, In fact, I'll start with verse 13.

In him, that's in Jesus, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, after you listen to that, having also believed, you were sealed in him with the Holy Spirit of promise. Who, who is given, who is given? The Holy Spirit. Who is given as a pledge. Or some of you might have the word earnest.

Earnest of our inheritance. So, God, the Holy Spirit is given. When you believed, you became a born again believer. At that very moment, among other things that happened to you, the Holy Spirit was given to you as a pledge.

[ 29 : 19 ] As the earnest money, in a sense. Not money, but, as a pledge. Pledge of what? Of our inheritance. With a view to the redemption of God's own possession to the praise of his glory.

Now, think about this for just a moment. According to this passage, God, the Holy Spirit, has been given to the believer to act as the earnest or the deposit, guaranteeing our full inheritance.

That's the idea here. to receive what? To receive the full inheritance when we get to heaven. Now, that points, certainly, to our eternal security.

I mean, this is a tremendous passage that I believe proves conclusively that when you're saved, you're always saved. There is no way to lose your salvation. Because we have the Holy Spirit, the seal of promise.

He's the pledge of the full thing. But, He is the earnest and that's most unusual.

[ 30 : 24 ] Because, you see, earnest is a pledge of something greater, isn't it? Like, not a document or a legal document or some bill of sale.

A pledge or earnest is not a contract per se, but it is a portion of the whole. Isn't that what earnest is? For example, if you're interested in buying a house, we bought a house and we did put some earnest money down although compared to the price of the house it was very insignificant.

But it was earnest money and we were earnest in our desire, our contract to buy this house and we paid down a little bit of money. And what we were saying by that earnest money, that small bit of cash, we were, we were in a sense guaranteeing our intent to buy the house and we did buy the house.

Now, if we didn't go through with it, then they'd keep our money. Now, that doesn't work out, that analogy doesn't work out with God, the Holy Spirit being our earnest.

There's no, not going to be any renegeing on the contract there. But, I'm just trying to explain what this, what earnest is in case we're a little in the dark about what that is. So, you pledge some now and later you'll pay the balance the full amount.

[ 31 : 41 ] And so, if the earnest of our heavenly inheritance is God, the Holy Spirit, He being God Himself, in one sense, a part of the whole.

Not that the Holy Spirit is one third God, I'm not meaning that, but in a sense, He's a part of the whole. Then the full inheritance must be God Himself.

That's what I'm saying. The whole of God. Father, Son, Holy Spirit, to enjoy the presence of God forever and ever.

Now, think of it, just the oneness with God, every member of the Holy Trinity. In a limited way, we enjoy that right now.

The blessed fellowship with God the Father, God the Spirit, God the Holy Spirit, or God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. In a sense, we enjoy that now to a limited degree.

[ 32 : 53 ] Truly, the heaven of heavens is the eternal inheritance. True, truly incorruptible, truly undefiled, can never fade away.

And who would that be? It would be God Himself. The psalmist wrote in Psalm 73 and verse 25, and I'll just quote it here for you.

This is in the King James. Whom have I in heaven but thee? David wrote. Do you feel that way? Like David, Whom have I in heaven but thee?

Kind of puts our materialistic dreams of heaven to shame. And I, in all deference to Randy Alcorn and his book Heaven, David kind of puts that to shame that we would be expecting all kinds of wonderful, enjoyable things in heaven that that would be our focus.

And David said, Whom have I in heaven but thee? You're the only one there I'm interested in. And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

[ 34 : 10 ] That puts our, all of our material outlook to shame, doesn't it? And then he said, my flesh and my heart faileth but God is the strength of my heart.

And then he said this, and he is my portion forever. Let me just break that down real quickly. He said, God, you are my personal possession, my portion, precious possession forever.

perpetual possession. We sing the hymn sometimes, Now I Belong to Jesus. Now I Belong to Jesus. Jesus belongs to me, not for the years of time alone, but for eternity.

I read some years back, I don't remember, stuck with me, read about this young man who was blind, been blind blind from birth, had never seen anything, knew nothing but blindness.

And he met a young lady at college, they fell in love, and they were to be married. And just before their wedding, this young man submitted to a new kind of experimental surgery, eye surgery, submitted to it, not really knowing if it would work.

[ 35 : 50 ] And he made this decision, that he would not take the gauze off of his eyes until his wedding day, when he stood at the front with his bride, and he wanted the gauze to be taken off then, so that the first person he saw was his new bride.

Kind of interesting. But he didn't know if it would work. And so, here she is, at wedding ceremony, and she's walking down the aisle.

And as she's walking down the aisle, his father is unwrapping the gauze from around his eyes, and when the last trip was taken off, he looked and he could see and he saw his bride for the first time.

And he said, you are even more beautiful than I imagined. Now, that illustrates, I think, what it's going to be for us when we get to heaven.

That's the way that we're going to feel when we get there. to look into the face of our inheritance.

Not the streets of gold, the pearly gate, the crystal seas, and all those things, as wonderful as they may be.

[ 37 : 18 ] And believe me, they'll be more magnificent than even language could describe. But the thing we'll want to see is Jesus. John wrote in 1 John 3, 2, beloved, now are we the sons of God.

And it does not yet appear what we will be like. But we know that when we, when he shall appear, we shall be like him and we shall see him as he is.

So I believe God is our inheritance. And all that that brings with it. And yet having said all of that, as great as all that is, this is really not Paul's point.

Just what the inheritance is and how grand it certainly will be is not his point here. Paul's talking about certain truths, certain realities that lead us to worship.

And what I've just described, though they are points of worship, not the point of worship of which Paul speaks. The source of our passionate worship is not so much the inheritance itself or himself, with a capital H, as grand as that is, but rather the source of our passionate worship is something else of which Paul speaks.

[ 38 : 54 ] Do you know what it is? it's in verse 12. It is that God qualified us to share in that inheritance.

That God would qualify us to have it. See, you just write it down this way, grace qualified me.

I worship the Lord, worship him with passion, because by his grace, he loves me, the unlovable. He forgave me, the sinner, and saved me and adopted me into his holy family, and he qualified me for the inheritance of the saints in light, in heaven, and I believe that inheritance is God himself, to enjoy his presence forever and ever and ever.

And that inheritance is perfect communion and fellowship with God. That's the real point here, I think. It's the real point of worship, or it ought to be. You see, this is how God indicates to our own hearts just what our focus and our affections are upon.

our affections upon the things that might be there in heaven, or is it on God himself? Is our affection in the point of worship on getting something grand, or is the point of our worship first and foremost that God would have mercy upon us and qualify us for all of that?

[ 40 : 39 ] I think so. John Newton was so impressed with the thought of God's grace that he wrote, without a doubt, the most popular and famous hymns of all time.

Do you know the name of it? Amazing grace. Amazing grace. But John Newton said this about the grace of God. He said, when I get to heaven, I shall see three wonders there. The first wonder will be to see many there whom I did not expect to see. The second wonder will be to miss many people whom I did expect to see. And the third and greatest of all wonders will be to see myself there. God is our inheritance. To worship him and enjoy him for eternity without end. But the real part of worship is that he would give us that.

[ 41 : 53 ] He would give us that. You