

Colossians 1:3 Commentary

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CHRIST IS ALL IN ALL

Click chart to enlarge

Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

[Colossians Overview](#) - Click Chart on right side

Christ			
Preeminent in All Things			
Supreme Lord - Sufficient Savior			
Colossians 1	Colossians 2	Colossians 3	Colossians 4
Supremacy of Christ		Submission to Christ	
Doctrinal and Corrective		Practical and Reassuring	
What Christ Did For Us		What Christ Does Through Us	
Christ Our Lord	Christ Our Life	Christ our Love	

Christ the Head of the Body	Christ the Lord of the Universe	Christ the Head of the Home	
Instruction	Warnings	Exhortations	Reminders
Reconciliation	Creation	Submission	Conversation
His Person and Word		His Peace and Presence	

Colossians 1:3 We **give thanks** (1PPAI) to **God**, the **Father** of our **Lord Jesus Christ**, **praying** (PMPMPN) **always** for you, (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [Eucharistoumen](#) (1PPAI) [to Theo patri tou kuriou hemon iesou Christou pantote peri humon proseuchomenoi.](#) (PMPMPN)

Amplified: We continually give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah), as we are praying for you,

Barclay We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for you in our prayers ([Westminster Press](#))

KJV: We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

Lightfoot: We never cease to pour forth our thanksgiving to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, on your account whenever we pray to him.

Phillips: I want you to know by this letter that we here are constantly praying for you, and whenever we do we thank God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: I am giving thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ concerning you, constantly offering petitions

Young's Literal: We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, always praying for you,

WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST: Eucharistoumen (1PPAI) to theopatri tou kuriou hemon iesou Christou:

- **Give thanks** - Ro 1:8,9 1Co 1:4 Eph 1:15 Php 1:3-5 4:6 1Th 1:2
- [Colossians 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

We give thanks - Paul and other brethren are praying (? a prayer meeting or separately), a good pattern to imitate (1Cor 11:1).

Moule - Thanksgiving is the instinct of the life of grace.—These thanksgivings recognize God as the whole Cause of all goodness in His saints. ([Colossians 1 Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges](#))

Give thanks ([2168](#)) (**eucharisteo** [word study] from **eú** = well, good + **charizomai** [word study] = to grant, give) means to show oneself grateful, to be thankful, to give thanks. Note **present tense** (continuous action) for thanksgiving and for praying. Paul "sets the bar high"! As discussed below this is the equivalent of praying without ceasing (1Thes 5:17) combined with giving thanks in everything (1Thes 5:18).

This whole section is one sentence in Greek, with a minor break at the end of verse 6

MacArthur adds that "Paul was not always praying for the Colossians. Rather, whenever he was praying for them, he always expressed his thanks to God. (Vincent, Barclay, Lightfoot, et al agree)

It seems that the apostle always began his prayer with praise to the Lord, and this is a good example for us to follow. Prayer is the unspeakable privilege of having audience with the Sovereign of the universe. Have you availed yourself of this privilege yet today?

Spurgeon - For the church that was at Colossae Paul gave hearty thanks to God for many most important blessings, especially for their faith, their love, and their hope. It would be a very useful exercise to our hearts if we would often give thanks to God for the gifts and graces, which we discover in our Christian brethren. I am afraid we are more inclined to spy out their faults, and to suppose that

we deplore them, than we are to discern the work of the Holy Spirit in them, and from the bottom of our hearts to give thanks to God for them. (ED: "Amen!" or "Oh my!") (From [Spiritual Knowledge: It's Practical Results](#))

PRAYING ALWAYS FOR YOU: *pantote peri humon proseuchomenoi* (PMPMPN):

- Col 1:9, Eph 1:16-19 Php 1:9-11 1Th 3:10-13 2Th 2:16,17 2Ti 1:3
- Click note on prayer
- [Colossians 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

PRAYING WITHOUT CEASING

Praying always - More literally "always for you continually (**present tense**) praying". He could have just said **praying** and his use of the **present tense** would have quite clearly conveyed to his readers that it was his habitual practice to pray for them. Paul goes a step further, adding the Greek adverb **always** which is also placed first in the (original Greek) clause to "doubly" emphasize that his prayers were at all times (without exception, on every occasion, every time, without end, repeatedly, unceasingly). The antonym (opposite) would have been hardly or hardly ever or once in a while or on rare occasions or "once in a blue moon."

How would you characterize your prayers for other saints - at all times or scarcely ever?

Remember that Paul commanded us to

"Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ."

(1Cor 11:1-[note](#))

Praying (4336) (*proseuchomai* [word study] from **pros** = toward, facing, before [emphasizing the direct approach of the one who prays in seeking God's face] + **euchomai** = originally to speak out, utter aloud, express a wish, then to pray or to vow. Greek technical term for invoking a deity) in the NT is always used of prayer addressed to God (to Him as the object of faith and the One who will answer one's prayer) and means to speak consciously (with or without vocalization) to Him, with a definite aim (See study of noun *proseuche* [word study]).

Notice that the prefix preposition **pros** adds the idea of a conscious direction of one's prayer toward God and a consciousness on the part of the one praying that he is seeking God's face, is speaking face to face with God and has His listening ear (cf Ps 66:18).

Proseuchomai encompasses all the aspects of prayer -- submission, confession, petition, supplication (may concern one's own need), intercession (concerned with the needs of others), praise, and thanksgiving.

Vine says that **proseuchomai** carries with it a notion of **worship** (but see the Greek word for worship = **proskuneo** [word study]) which is not present in the other words for prayer (eg, *aiteo*, *deomai*, both of which involve spoken supplication)

Wuest adds that the prefixed preposition **pros** "gives it the idea of definiteness and directness in prayer, with the consciousness on the part of the one praying that he is talking face to face with God...(thus **proseuchomai**) speaks also of the consciousness on the part of the one who prays, of the fact of God's presence and His listening ear. (([Wuest, K. S. Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: Eerdmans](#))

Detzler **proseuchomai** is to bring something, and in prayer this pertains to bringing up prayer requests. In early Greek culture an offering was brought with a prayer that it be accepted. Later the idea was changed slightly, so that the thing brought to God was a prayer. In later Greek, prayers appealed to God for His presence. ([Detzler, Wayne E: New Testament Words in Today's Language. Victor. 1986](#))

Richards notes that "In classical Greek **proseuchomai** was the technical term for calling on a deity. The NT transforms the classical stiffness into the warmth of genuine conversation. Such entreaty in the NT is addressed to God or Jesus and typically is both personal and specific. (([Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

Always (3842) (*pantote* from **pás** = all + **tóte** = then) means at all times. Paul used this word to encourage the Thessalonians that he, Silvanus and Timothy "give thanks to God **always** (*pantote*) for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers. (1Th 1:2-note)

Writing to the saints at Philippi **Paul** says he is "**always** (*pantote*) offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all. (Php 1:4-note)

In the closing of this letter **Paul** reminds the saints at Colossae that "Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, **always** (pantote) laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. (Col 4:12-note)

Paul writes to **Philemon** that "I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers (Philemon 1:4)

Alexander Whyte writes "I am as certain as I am standing here, that the secret of much mischief to our own souls, and to the souls of others, lies in the way that we stint, and starve, and scamp our prayers, by hurrying over them. (Col 4:12-note) Prayer worth calling prayer: prayer that God will call true prayer and will treat as true prayer, takes far more time, by the clock, than one man in a thousand thinks. After all that the Holy Ghost has done to make true prayer independent of times, and of places, and of all kinds of instruments and assistances,—as long as we remain in this unspiritual and undevotional world, we shall not succeed, to be called success, in prayer, without time, and times, and places, and other assistances in prayer. Take good care that you are not spiritual overmuch in the matter of prayer. Take good care lest you take your salvation far too softly, and far too cheaply. If you find your life of prayer to be always so short, and so easy, and so spiritual, as to be without cost and strain and sweat to you, you may depend upon it, you are not yet begun to pray. As sure as you sit there, and I stand here, it is just in this matter of time in prayer that so many of us are making shipwreck of our own souls, and of the souls of others. ([Starving Prayer - Alexander Whyte](#))

MY COMPLIMENTS - We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints. —Colossians 1:3, 4

When I receive a compliment, it gives me a warm, inner glow. At times I have felt guilty for enjoying a commendation. After all, isn't that a form of pride? But I have concluded that it is not wrong to feel good when we receive a sincere compliment because of something we have done. By finding pleasure in being commended, we allow others to exercise their gift of encouragement. Their words can lift our spirits. We also show that pride hasn't gained the upper hand in our lives when we praise others. A proud person is so preoccupied with himself that he doesn't notice what others do and has no desire to compliment them.

Paul freely commended his friends in Colossae because he knew it would encourage them. And we should do likewise. Give people a pat on the back when they deserve it. Compliment the child who does something well. Commend the single mother who regularly brings her children to church. Encourage the man who keeps helping others even though he receives little appreciation from them. Keep trying to please God and the people around you. No need to feel guilty about feeling good when someone compliments you. —Herbert Vander Lugt

For Further Thought

How do I respond when someone commends me?
Why is it sometimes hard to accept a compliment?
Do I freely praise others for their accomplishments?

Praise loudly, blame softly

International Friendship - We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you. —Colossians 1:3

In 1947, Nadia from Bulgaria and Millicent from the United States became pen pals. For years they swapped photos, school experiences, and dreams. Then their letters stopped when government policy banned personal contact with the West.

After many years of political upheaval and change, Millicent, on a whim, sent a letter to the last address she had for Nadia. To their delight, the letter got through. Before long, they discovered that both had married doctors and both collected seashells. Forty-eight years after their first letter, the two friends finally met at Miami International Airport, where Millicent exclaimed, "Nadia! I would know you anywhere!"

The letters of the apostle Paul overflow with affection and gratitude for his friends. In his letter to the Colossians, he wrote: "We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you" (Col 1:3). His letters also encouraged their walk with Christ (v.10).

Any friendship can be a gift from God. But nothing runs deeper than the relationships of those who share a bond in Christ. In fact, Jesus commanded His disciples: "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12). In Him, friendships are treasures that will last forever. -- By Mart De Haan

Of all the many blessings
That our gracious Father sends,

I thank Him most of all today
For loyal-hearted friends.
—Halse

A true friend is a gift from God.

PRAYING LIKE PAUL - It's dark. It's cold. You've been thrown into prison, and you don't know when you'll get out or when you'll eat your next meal. You bow your head to pray. What will you pray for? Safety? Deliverance? A decent meal?

If you are the apostle Paul, you pray for something far different. You talk to God about a group of people you have never seen.

Colossians 1 gives us a brief record of Paul's prison prayer for the people at the church in Colosse. His words help us see how important intercessory prayer should be--even when we have our own troubles.

In Paul's case, he prayed for what he thought this young church needed. He asked God to give them several things, including spiritual understanding (Col 1:9-note), fruitful lives (Col 1:10-note), and strength, patience, and joy (Col 1:11-note).

Paul gave thanks and prayed for his fellow believers "always" (Col 1:3). Not just when he felt good. Not just when he was warm and well-fed. Always.

How often is our prayer-life interrupted by circumstances that we turn into excuses? Our friends, our family members--even people we don't know--need our intercession. No matter what our difficulty, let's pray for others. --J D Branon

We give to others what they need;
We show no greater care
Than when we give them to the Lord,
Surrounding them with prayer.
--D J De Haan

The best way to influence people for God
is to intercede with God for people.