

HARD TIME PRAYER



“May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy...”
Colossians 1:11 ESV

Paul wrote this letter to the church in Colossae from prison in Rome. (Go figure!) They were facing a threat from the inside. It was likely that a shaman-like leader had emerged in their church, and was distorting the gospel, leading people astray with his “sensuous mind” There is historical evidence for teaching that invokes the power of angels as spiritual guides and protectors. With amulets being found that were supposed to be magical. One such amulet had the inscription: “Michael, Gabriel, Ouriel, Raphael, protect the one who wears this...”

So, why were these hard times for the Christians? Simply put, they were losing the true picture of Jesus, his place as supreme above all things, and the power of God in their lives. Often, when we hear about struggles, or hard times, we imagine persecution...

We think about crises in our families...

We think about struggling to pay our bills...

We think about problems on the job...

We think about political unrest...

We think about the civil and social justice...

We think about the pandemic...

These are absolutely hard times Scripture addresses over and over again. But there are also trials and struggles of faith believers face—just like they did in Colossae.

Who’s telling the truth? What voice should we believe? These questions are poignant for us today, as well. There is a battle on for our minds and our hearts. The spirit of the world is seductive and deceitful. And the enemy constantly tries to take our eyes off of Jesus. In today’s verse, Paul shows us how we should pray.

1. **Pray for God’s power.**

Our strength alone will never be enough to fight the battles we’re up against. We need

God's power to radically invade our circumstances and our culture. How does this power flood our lives? Prayer!

2. **Pray for endurance and patience.**

Our first inclination is usually to pray for deliverance from hard situations. But Paul tells the Colossians to pray for endurance and patience to weather the storms. What if, instead of praying for God to take us out of trials we prayed for endurance and patience within them? This is where character is forged (Rom 5:4).

3. **Pray for joy.**

Did you know we can have joy right now, even when things are confusing and hard? Even when there are a thousand voices telling us lies, when we press into God's presence and ask for his wisdom, we can hear the voice of truth through the static. Joy isn't something available to us only on the other side of hard times—it's available now! Pray for it.

Dear Lord, thank you for not allowing life to get the best of us. We know you to great, gracious and merciful. In these hard times we are thankful for the unseen angels that are assigned to us and your Spirit that is keeping us. Thank you! In Jesus' Name. Amen.