

Colossians 1 (Part 4): 24-29 • Christ in us, the hope of glory!

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Colossians 24 through 29. Let's go ahead and read it, and we'll pray.

²⁴ “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, ²⁵ of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶ the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. ²⁷ To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.” (ESV)

All right. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank You for Your word. Thank You, Lord, for preserving Your word. Thank You for this letter from Paul to the church in Colossae. Thank You, Lord, for the wisdom that it contains and the insights, Lord, to our, our own personal life with You. And help us, Lord, we pray now to hear from You. Open our spiritual eyes and ears. Give us wisdom we pray. Jesus' precious name, amen.

All right. These last six verses of chapter one—the apostle Paul begins to speak a little bit about his ministry, and in doing so, he makes a statement that might sound somewhat strange to our ears. He says, “*Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake.*”

When you think about Paul's suffering, you need to know that he actually wrote this letter from a Roman prison, and so he was suffering at this very time. But those sufferings really kind of went on throughout his whole ministry. And the topic that he begins this section with, which is rejoicing in suffering, is certainly not limited to this letter.

He spoke of it often. And if you look up those passages where Paul talks about his suffering and he talks about rejoicing in his suffering, you'll begin to kind of be able to piece together a little bit of how he viewed suffering and how you and

I ought to view suffering as it relates to being a believer and the suffering that we deal with.

But I think one of the ways this is probably best seen is in—and by the way, I'm talking about suffering for the Lord. I'm talking about suffering the sneers and mocking and jeering and joking that, you know, the world levels toward believers simply because we believe in Jesus Christ. We believe He is the only way. We believe that God created the heavens and the earth and all the other things go along with it.

And I think one of the best responses to how Christians ought to view suffering is seen in the book of Acts chapter 5. I'll put it on the screen for you.

Acts 5:41 (ESV)

Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.

You'll remember that after the disciples left the Sanhedrin it says, “⁵*they left the presence of the council, (and they were actually) rejoicing.*” Why? Because they got the last word in? Because they embarrassed all of the members of the Sanhedrin?

No, because “⁵*they had been counted worthy of suffer(ing) dishonor.*” Because you remember what happened in this particular instance. Gamaliel got up and basically kind of convinced the council, just leave these guys alone. If this is of their own doing, it's just going to evaporate after a period of time, so, you know just...

And so they went, you know, okay, all right, fine, but they went ahead and beat them anyway. They had them beaten and then they set them free. And as these guys are walking away from this beating, which probably wasn't a slap on the wrist, they knew how to beat people in that culture, and it says they walked away rejoicing because “⁵*they (had been) counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus.*” So, we see why they were rejoicing. They'd been counted worthy. Worthy of what? Let me show you this. Jesus says it beautifully, of course, in Matthew chapter 5. Check this out.

Matthew 5:10-12 (ESV)

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be

glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

I love that passage. You know, it's interesting, once in a while, have you ever heard Christians say this, we'll be talking about rewards or maybe the conversation about rewards will come up (rewards for good deeds, rewards for, in this case, suffering, the Bible talks a lot about it), and some Christians, I think, like to kind of put on a false sense of spirituality, and they'll say well, I don't think we ought to talk about rewards. I don't think we should be doing things for rewards.

And I'm like, umm, Jesus talked about it a lot. He talked a lot about “do this and there's a reward.” He told parables about investing in the kingdom with the things that God had given you. And He said there would be a payoff at the end. And I'm thinking to myself, Jesus wasn't bashful about talking about it. He would just kind of lay it out there. And I think there's this sense in some Christians like it becomes insincere.

What we do is now takes on a note of insincerity if we're thinking about rewards. I don't think so. And I think that's one of the reasons that the disciples, when they left the Sanhedrin that day, they were rejoicing because they'd been counted worthy of having that kind of a reward, knowing what Jesus had said, hearing what he had said, that this is going to be good for you.

There is going to be a great reward awaiting you in heaven. They were like, yes, and nobody can take that away. That's pretty cool. And here's the interesting thing, suffering for Jesus is always connected with glory. And by the way, that's when we talk about rewards, we're talking about glory, and suffering is always connected with glory. Let me show you what Peter said from 1 Peter: 4. He says,

1 Peter 4:13 (ESV)

...rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

You see, when His glory is revealed, you're going to share His glory. You shared in His sufferings, you will share in His glory. Isn't that cool? And then check out Romans chapter 8. I love this. Paul writes and says, you know what? When I sit and think about the sufferings of this present time, I am convinced that they're “*not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*”

Romans 8:18 (ESV)

...I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

You think about all the sufferings, you can't even compare them to the glory that is coming. And then just a couple of verses earlier, Romans 16 and 17. Look what Paul says.

Romans 8:16-17 ESV

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

“¹⁶ *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit (first of all) that we are children of God, (and you know what?)* ¹⁷ *if (we're) children, (well) then (we're) heirs (and if we're) heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,*” That is so cool. But look at this last part, “¹⁷ *provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.*”

You see, this whole idea of suffering for Jesus is always connected with the glory that we're going to share with Him. It's always connected, right? And that's one of the reasons why the early disciples, when they thought about suffering, when they experienced suffering, their response to it would be rejoicing, because they know God just deposited an incredible investment under their name in the bank of heaven, if you will, and nobody could take it away.

That is so cool. You'll notice that the second statement that Paul makes about suffering is equally kind of strange. It might even cause some raised eyebrows where he goes on to say there, “*and in my flesh, I'm filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. For the sake of his body, (of course, that meaning) the church.*” (Colossians 1:24)

And so, you kind of look at that and you wonder, huh? What's he saying? He says that something's lacking. What is lacking? What's lacking as it relates to Christ's afflictions? Well, let me tell you what Paul's not saying. He is not saying that somehow what Jesus did on the cross was insufficient or inadequate.

There's nothing lacking there. One of the most delightful statements that I read in my Bible is one of the final statements Jesus made on the cross. Three words. “*It is finished.*” (John 19:30 ESV) Done. Completed. And so, there's nothing lacking there, okay. We know that. We have to kind of look at this and we say, well, then what was still lacking as it relates to suffering?

Well, what Paul is talking about, what still is lacking is the suffering and the rejection of Christ that is still being expressed by an unbelieving world. They're still doing it today. They did it when He was here. They're still doing it today. And guess who are the recipients now of that rejection of Christ?

It's us, right? We're still receiving that same rejection, and we're filling up what is still lacking in as it relates to that. And because of the fact that we are experiencing the rejection of Christ, you need to know and understand that that means that Jesus is not unaware, nor is He unaffected by what we suffer.

People, that's so important. Jesus, remember, is the head of the body. We're the body. When your body hurts, is your head unaware of it? We would like it to be, but our mind, our head is intimately connected with the rest of our body.

And when I cut my hand, or if I stub my toe, isn't that the worst? Walking around in the house at night, dark, and you hit something with your foot. And you know, you remember? You hit it, and then it's like two seconds before you feel it, and you know it's going to be bad, and you start cringing ahead of time. And then all of a sudden that pain just goes "Gw-ooow!" You know, and you're, "Ouch!"

And so out from my mouth comes the expression of my pain and so forth. I'm very well aware of what's going on. Jesus is very well aware of what's going on with you when you are mocked, made fun of, rejected, hurt, left out, or whatever. Our suffering is His suffering.

I've always loved that passage in the book of Acts when Paul is making his way to Damascus and Jesus meets him along the way. Paul is not yet a believer in Christ, but he is after this. And let me show you this from Acts on the screen from Acts chapter 9. It says,

Acts 9:3-5 (ESV)

Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

"Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting (my church, oh wait, that's not what it says. He says) "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

That's the intimacy, you guys, between the body of Christ and the head. It is not disconnected. It is very much connected, very much feeling the reality of what we feel and so forth. And so, what should our attitude be towards suffering after keeping all these things in mind? I think Peter sums it up beautifully. Look at 1 Peter 2. He says,

1 Peter 2:20-21 (ESV)

...if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of the God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

“if when you do good and you suffer for it, you endure (it, he said, yeah) this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this (ooh, wow, look at this) For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example so that you might follow in his steps.”

If anybody ever comes up to you and says, I've been a Christian for this long, or whatever, I just don't know what my calling is. I'm just worrying and praying about it, and I don't know what I'm called to do. Just tell them, take them here to 1 Peter say, well, here's one thing I'll tell you is part of your calling, your calling is to suffer like He suffered. Yeah. So, there you go. Now go do it. Well, I wasn't actually thinking about that, Pastor. I was thinking about something a little more glorious. Yeah, so were the disciples when they talked about themselves.

Anyway, now in speaking of the church, Paul goes on, look at verse 25 in your Bible. This is an important verse too. He says, he's talking about the church, he says *“of which I have become a minister.”* (Colossians 1:25) And this is the Greek word diakonos, and it means servant.

It's where we actually get our word deacon. But you know, I've always had a problem with that word because I don't think it refers to an office, not like pastor or apostle or prophet or evangelist or something like that. The word diakonos, and in fact, most of the modern language Bible translations actually put the word minister in here, except the NIV.

They put in the word servant. And I like that honestly the best. Because I don't like it when people use that word to describe an office within the church. People do it. They do it a lot. In fact, I've had people come up to me. Sue and I went back years ago, we went back to her class reunion. It was like the 20-year class, graduation class. We happened to be in Minnesota.

We grew up with all these kids, and one of the gals that I knew very well came up to me and said I understand you're a minister. And I want to just, Sue jokes with me about how I have to correct everybody as a teacher, but I wanted to just go, no, I'm...but it's kind of petty to say, actually...

I understand why people use the term, but I cringe and the objection that I have to calling pastors ministers is the insinuation that comes from it, that pastors are supposed to do the ministering. Well, they are, but not exclusively. The fact of the matter is the Bible teaches something else. Let me show you Ephesians 4, where Paul talks about the fact that Jesus gave to the church “*apostles.*”

Ephesians 4:11-12 (ESV)

...he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

He gave to the church “*prophets,*” He gave to the church “*evangelists*” and pastors. That's that word “*shepherds and teachers.*” And then he tells us why “*to equip the saints for the work of ministry.*” Why? To “*build up the body of Christ.*”

You see, my job is to minister, but my ministry is to teach the Word of God to equip you, to build you up to go do the work of the ministry. When we start calling pastors ministers, we start thinking, well, it's what he does. Ministry is we do this. We do our thing. I do this. I work my job, I raise my children, and the pastor does ministry.

No, my job is to equip you to do the work of the ministry. And that's such an important distinction. And Paul's ministry, look at verse 25, we're continuing in verse 25. Paul's ministry was “*according to the stewardship,*” that's when God gives you something that belongs to him, but you're there to take care of it, “*from God (he says) that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known,*”²⁶ *the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to the saints.*” (Colossians 1:25-26)

Paul considered himself to have a very special calling in the Lord to declare the kingdom of God. And he talks, you'll notice here about this “*mystery hidden for ages.*” Mystery? What was the mystery? Oh, it was a mystery. You and I don't think of it much as the mystery anymore, because we've been reading it in our Bibles for so long. But the mystery he's talking about is the fact that Gentiles can be part of the kingdom of God.

That was a mystery. It was not revealed. And that's what the word mystery means in the Bible. It means something that was previously unrevealed but has now been revealed. And that mystery is that the Jews are not just God's people, but Gentiles are now brought in to join with the Jews. And that now there's no distinction between the two groups.

I want you to listen as and follow along on the screen as I read Paul's expounding about the mystery beginning in Ephesians chapter 2.

Ephesians 2:12-19 (ESV)

...remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances,

“Remember (he says, now he's talking to Gentiles) Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, (you were) alienated from the commonwealth of Israel (you were also) strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off (you've) been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both (Jew and Gentile) one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances.” And he goes on to say:

...that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

Ephesians 2:12-19 (ESV)

“¹⁵ that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, (Jew and Gentile) so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off and peace to those who were near (the Jews). ¹⁸ For through him we both (now) have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.”

You and I read passages like this and it's just like, it's everyday stuff. But this was not everyday stuff in Paul's time. This was a revelation. This was a mystery. This was a profound mystery that God had revealed. And Paul had the stewardship of the revelation of that mystery, and he took it very seriously. And you can see by how he expounded on that mystery in that passage in Ephesians, how powerful and dynamic and life changing was that mystery.

Then he goes on, look at verse 27 in your Bible. ^{“27} *To them* (and he's speaking of the saints here now, Jews and Gentiles, now who are one) *God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*” This is one of the most incredible revelations that God has made known to the saints of God or to the church, if you will.

“The riches of the glory that are ours.” What is that glory? Christ in us. Christ in us is our glory. He living in us. That's our glory. Our glory isn't working harder, doing more, being more devoted. It isn't in our own spirituality or anything else that we can do in and of ourselves. It is in His abiding presence in us.

Earlier in this very study we talked about glory and how it's connected to suffering. But that's not our hope of glory. We don't go around hoping that we're going to suffer so we can experience glory with Him. That, you know, He is our hope of glory, not suffering. It is all about Him, right?

It is His power living in us, empowering us, enabling us, teaching us, maturing us, and all because of Him. It's all Him. It's all Him doing that work in us. And then Paul ends the chapter by saying here, verse 28, *“Him we proclaim,”* your Bible may say preach, which is actually a fine translation too, because preaching is proclaiming.

Proclaiming is a big part of preaching. But notice what the proclamation or the preaching includes. Here also in verse 28, he says, *“Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom.”* The works of proclaiming Christ contain both warnings and teachings. Let's talk for a minute about warnings.

As parents, we have to do that with our kids sometimes, don't we? When they do something they shouldn't do or they're about to do something they shouldn't do. And we say hey, I just want to warn you. Then they roll their eyes at us and they're like, oh, dad, you just don't get it. Yeah, I know, but I'm going to warn you anyway because it's important.

And warning is really never that much fun. The Greek word that is translated warning here in the ESV means to lay on the mind or the heart to lay something important on the mind to lay it upon the heart. The New American Standard Bible uses the word admonish.

I like that word, too, and they translate that phrase. “We proclaim Him, admonishing every man.” (NASB 1995) The word admonish means to caution or to warn or to counsel. And again, that's not always very fun to do and it's not very fun to receive either. I don't know if you've recently been warned or admonished by someone.

I don't particularly care for it. I'll just be honest with you. My flesh doesn't like to be admonished because it hits me right in my pride, and so I don't like it. If somebody says hey Paul, you shouldn't do that. That's dangerous, or something, I'm like, hey chill man. Instead of what I ought to say which is, yeah, you're right. That is dumb. There's a proverb that speaks to this in the 13th chapter. Let me show it to you on the screen. It says,

Proverbs 13:1 (ESV)

A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

He's like, oh, come on, get over yourself, right? That's a scoffer. But if you're wise, you'll listen. That means if you're smart. If you're dumb, you won't. Okay? If you're smart, you listen to instruction, and if you're dumb, you don't. It's all there is to it.

Here's the good news though. If you're dumb, you can get smart by starting to pay attention and listen. And Paul says there are times in our ministry that we have to go about warning. We have to give warnings to people. And that's not fun to do. But wisdom listens, even when the message is hard to hear.

Then the other thing Paul says that we, he has a stewardship to do, is to teach everyone. Teaching. Teaching, by the way, is almost always in the Bible connected to faith and doctrine. It refers to giving a person an understanding of the Word and how it applies to our lives. How I can put it into practice? If I tell you what the Word of God says, but I never exhort you and say, now, here's how you can walk this out, I haven't done a very good job as a teacher. I've only done half of a job, let's say that.

And then at the end of verse 28, Paul gives the goal of all this warning and all this teaching. Check it out. He says “²⁸ that we may present everyone mature.” And so all the warnings that we give people, and that's the same thing we do for

our children. When we warn them, we just want them to grow up, right? We want them to mature. That's why we do it. Why do we give them instruction? Because we want them to grow up.

We want them to mature. We want them to, and that's the goal. The goal of what we do is that people would grow spiritually mature, growing up in Jesus. If you were to go around and ask somebody, what do you think it means to be a mature Christian? What kind of answers do you think you'd get? It's an interesting question, isn't it?

What defines a mature Christian? Is it being able to pray in public without getting nervous and having all the right words, and it just sounds great when you're done? Is that maturity? I think some people think so. Is it being able to recite all 66 books of the Bible in book order?

Do you know that I don't know that I can still do that? I mean, I'm almost 63, I'm not sure. I've got the New Testament down because I learned it in vacation Bible school in a song. And that's why I know, and I still to this day, when somebody goes, turn to Colossians, I'm going, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Acts, Romans, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. Right? And there I am, right?

I could sing the whole song for you. It takes me a while. If I'm sitting there tapping my foot when somebody says, turn to this book, you know what I'm doing. Getting to the right book. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John. They never taught us a song for the Old Testament. I don't know if they made one.

But they didn't do it. And so I still struggle sometimes with doing those in absolute book order. But that's not maturity. Is it knowing where every important Bible verse is located and being able to quote it like that? Is that spiritual maturity? I think some people think so.

People will say to me, yeah, my uncle, he knows the Bible backwards and forwards. And that's an impressive thing, I suppose. Is it being able to win an argument when something comes up about God? Being able to blow the other person out of the water? Is that maturity? Is it being able to share Christ with someone who's lost?

I don't suppose any of those things are necessarily bad in and of themselves, but if I had to distill what it means to reach maturity as a Christian, I think I would choose four very simple words: learning to trust Jesus. I think that there's so much maturity that is bound up in that simple idea of learning to trust in Him.

Because you see, when we trust Him, we begin to rest in Him, because I know He's trustworthy.

And so I stopped stressing about so many things in life and I started just going, you know what, Lord, forgive me for stressing, because I know that You're trustworthy. And I'm just going to rest in You, and it makes such a huge difference. And it frankly then begins to translate into obedience because you know His ways are best. When you trust Jesus, His ways are best.

And so, when He tells you to do something, your thought process is I'm going to do that because it's best. It's best to do that. I trust Him, right? And that's what Paul was working in his ministry—to bring about this maturity of getting people to put their faith and their trust in Jesus Christ.

And he said in verse 29 *“For this I toil.”* And that's what it, those are the words out of the NIV (Correction ESV). *“For this I toil.”* But you know what's interesting about that word toil? It means to work to the point of exhaustion. *“For this I toil.”* That you might be mature in Christ. For this I work to the point of exhaustion.

That word also carries with it the idea of a struggle. In fact it's the word where we get our word agonize. But Paul doesn't want to leave you with the impression that all of his work is done in his own power or his own strength, and that's why he goes on in verse 29 and look with me in your Bible.

This is critical that we see this *“struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.”* I think some people get confused a little bit on what this means when we talk about working in the strength of the Lord. We tell people just trust in God's strength. Walk in His strength. And we're kind of like, well, what does that mean? Does that mean I just kind of sit here?

I was once praying for a guy who was waiting for an answer from God. And he was sitting with his hands like that [palms raised] and his eyes closed and his mouth open and I was praying for and finally I kind of stopped, and I looked at him I said, “What are you doing?” And he said, “I'm waiting.”

He kind of saw God like a master puppeteer who was going to just start pulling the strings and kind of make things happen. And I think that's a common misunderstanding of what it means to walk in the strength and power that is ours in Christ.

I'm going to read for you a portion of the sixth chapter of Ephesians. We're not going to put it up on the screen for you because I want you just to listen. And I want you to hear, as we read this, I want you to hear all the action words that you're supposed to do, okay? All the action words that you're supposed to do. But it begins with this idea of trusting in God's strength.

And here's what Paul says. And if you want to write this down for later study, it's Ephesians 6:10-18 (ESV). Here's what he says. “¹⁰ Finally,” listen to this. “*be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.*” That's what we're talking about here, aren't we? We're talking about being strong in Him. But now, listen to your part.

“¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.”

There you go. Isn't that great? It's His strength. It's His power. What's your part? Putting on—three times, wrestling, taking up—two times, standing firm, fastening on, extinguishing, taking, praying, staying alert, and making supplication, which is a way of saying earnestly asking God for things. That's your part.

We do. He empowers. Right? We don't just wait for Him to pull the strings like a puppet master. We get busy. We do. He empowers. He enables with His mighty strength. As Paul said to the Philippians, the last thing we'll show you on the screen,

Philippians 4:13 (ESV)

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.