Faith Matters

Daily Devotional, Wednesday, August 9, 2017 - Prayer on Behalf of the Church

AUGUST 09TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Colossians 1:1-12

Today we meet Epaphras, a man who had a heart for the local church. He was most likely converted to Christ under Paul's teaching when the gospel was rapidly spreading throughout Asia Minor. Epaphras evangelized his hometown of Colossae and founded a church there—and possibly the churches in Hierapolis and Laodicea as well.

Although very little is written about Epaphras in the New Testament, the letter to the Colossians emphasizes his great love and deep concern for Christ's church (Col. 4:12-13). At the close of the letter, Paul points out that Epaphras is "always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God" (v. 12).
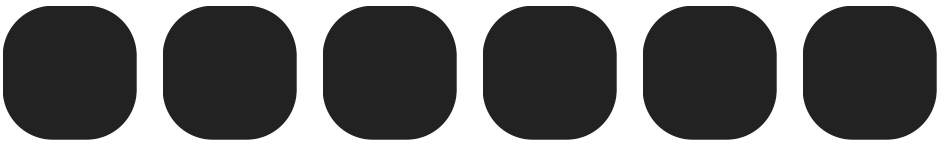
What he was asking for wasn't greater numbers or bigger offerings but spiritual maturity and the true knowledge of God's will. At that point in time, Epaphras was in prison with Paul (Philem. 1:23), and he couldn't refute the false teachers who'd infiltrated the church at Colossae. But being apart from his congregation didn't mean he was helpless. Intercession is a powerful ministry. It can alter circumstances, change thinking, and bring God's truth to light. Epaphras went to his knees to plead for the church, and Paul joined him, which we see in his prayer in Colossians 1:9-14. (See also Col. 1:7)

Is anything weighing on your heart? Do you feel helpless to remedy the situation? If so, follow Epaphras and Paul's example: Go to the One who knows exactly what to do and has the power to accomplish it. Then rest in Him and let His peace guard your heart and mind.

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