



A LEADER'S PRAYER

PART 3
COLOSSIANS 1:9 – 12 (NKJV)

Warren W. Wiersbe,
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COLOSSIANS 1:9 – 12 (NKJV)

⁹ For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

¹¹ strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;

¹² giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.



The prayers in Paul's prison letters are undoubtedly unique.

- To begin with, he prays for others and not for himself. The requests in his prayers center on spiritual blessings, not on material or physical matters.
- Of course, it is not wrong to pray about physical or material needs, but spiritual needs are vastly more important.



How would you pray for a group of people you had never seen?

- All that Paul knew about the believers in Colossae, he learned from their faithful Pastor, Epaphras.
- Paul knew that the false teaching was threatening the church, so he focused on that problem. In his prayer, Paul made three requests.



PAUL PRAYED FOR...

- Spiritual Intelligence (Colossians 1:9)
- Practical Obedience (Colossians 1:10)
- **Moral Excellence (Colossians 1:11 – 12)**



HE PRAYED FOR MORAL EXCELLENCE (COLOSSIANS 1:11 – 12)

- Wisdom and conduct should always be related to moral character.
- One of the significant problems in our evangelical world today is the emphasis on "spiritual knowledge" and "Christian service" without connecting these crucial matters to personal character.



For example, some, Christians, teachers and preachers claim to have God's wisdom, yet they lack love, kindness and other fundamental qualities that make the Christian life beautiful and distinctive.



Knowledge, conduct, service and character must always go together.

- We know God's will that we might obey it, and, in following it, we serve Him and grow in Christian character.
- While none of us is perfectly balanced in these four factors, we should strive for that balance.
- It is God's energy that empowers us.



Paul used two different Greek words for God's energy:

- *dunamis* (from which we get our word "dynamite") means "inherent power“;
- *kratos* means "manifested power“; power that is put forth in action.

The grace of our Christian lives is a result of God's power at work in our lives.

Spiritual growth and maturity can come as we yield to God's power and permit Him to work in us.



We usually think of God's glorious power being revealed in incredible daring feats — the Israelites crossing the Red Sea, David leading a victorious army or Paul raising the dead.

- But the emphasis here is on Christian character: patience, longsuffering, joyfulness and thanksgiving.
- The inner victories of the soul are just as great, if not greater, than the public achievements recorded in the annals of history.



For David to control his temper when Shimei was badmouthing him was a more incredible victory than his slaying of Goliath (2 Samuel 16:5 – 13).

Proverbs 16:32 (NKJV)

He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

The word *patience* means "endurance when circumstances are difficult". It is the opposite of despair.



This word is never used in reference to God; for God does not face difficult circumstances.

Jeremiah 32:27 (NKJV)

“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?”



**FIRST, PATIENCE IS AN ESSENTIAL
CHARACTERISTIC OF THE MATURING
CHRISTIAN LIFE.**

If we do not learn to be patient, we are not likely to learn anything else. As believers, we can rejoice even in our tribulations.

Romans 5:3 – 4 (NKJV)

³ And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope.



**We must never think that patience is
complacency.**

Patience is *endurance in action.*

**The picture of
patience is not the
Christian sitting
around doing
nothing and
waiting for God to
do something.**

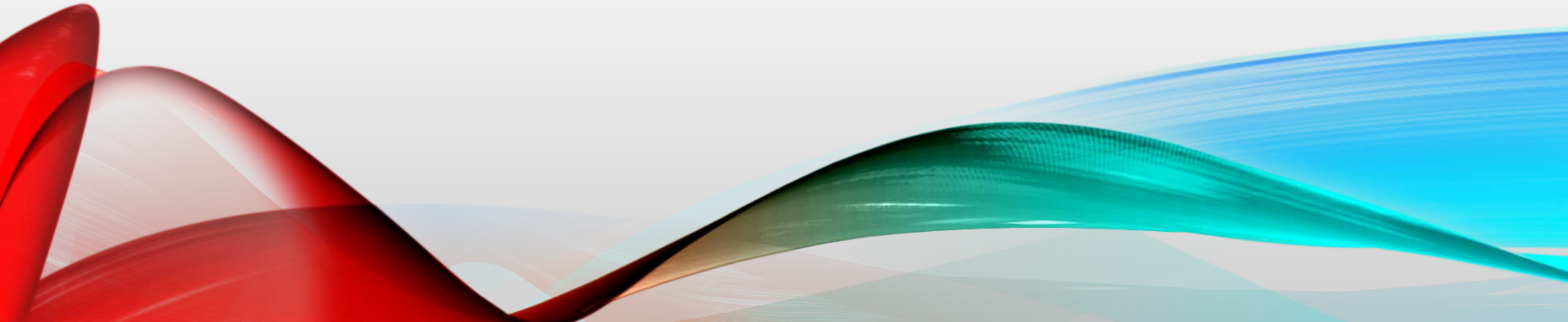
- It is the **soldier** on the battlefield, keeping on when the going is tough.
- It is the **runner** on the race track who refuses to stop because he wants to win the race (Hebrews 12:1).
- Too many Christians tend to quit when circumstances become difficult.



**Dr. V. Raymond Edman stated,
“It is always too soon to quit”.**

SECONDLY, ALONG WITH PATIENCE, WE NEED LONGSUFFERING.

This word means "self-restraint" and is the opposite of revenge. Patience has to do primarily with circumstances, while long-suffering has to do with people.



God is longsuffering towards people because of His love and grace.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.



Longsuffering is one fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22 (NKJV)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,



Longsuffering is among the "grace garments" that the believer should wear.

Colossians 3:12 (NKJV)

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;



- It is incredible how people can patiently endure trying circumstances, only to lose their tempers with a friend or loved one.
- Moses was patient during the contest with Pharaoh in Egypt.
- But he lost his temper with his people and, as a result, forfeited his right to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 20).



Proverbs 25:28 (NKJV)

Whoever has no rule over his own spirit
Is like a city broken down, without walls.

Proverbs 25:28 (NIV)

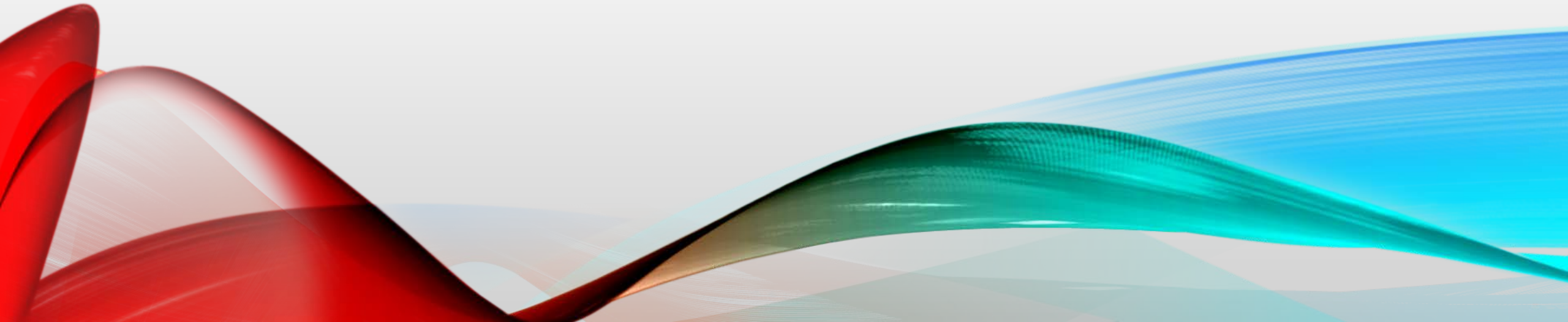
Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.

Proverbs 25:28 (NASB95)

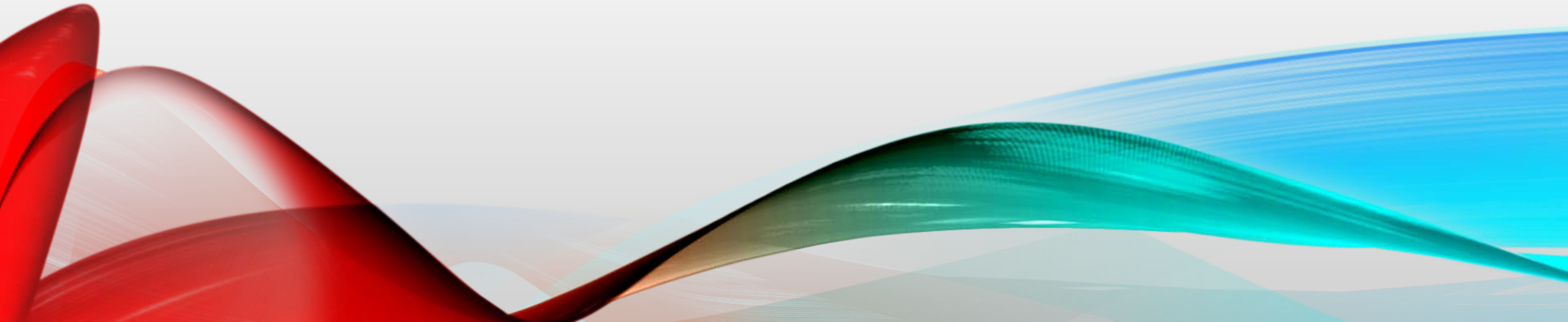
Like a city that is broken into and without walls
Is a man who has no control over his spirit.



Although anyone can cause you to lose self-control --- especially your enemies; everything and everyone should not cause us to lose control.



**PATIENCE AND LONGSUFFERING GO
TOGETHER, IF WE ARE GROWING
SPIRITUALLY.**



2 Corinthians 6:4 – 6 (NKJV)

⁴ But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses,

⁵ in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings;

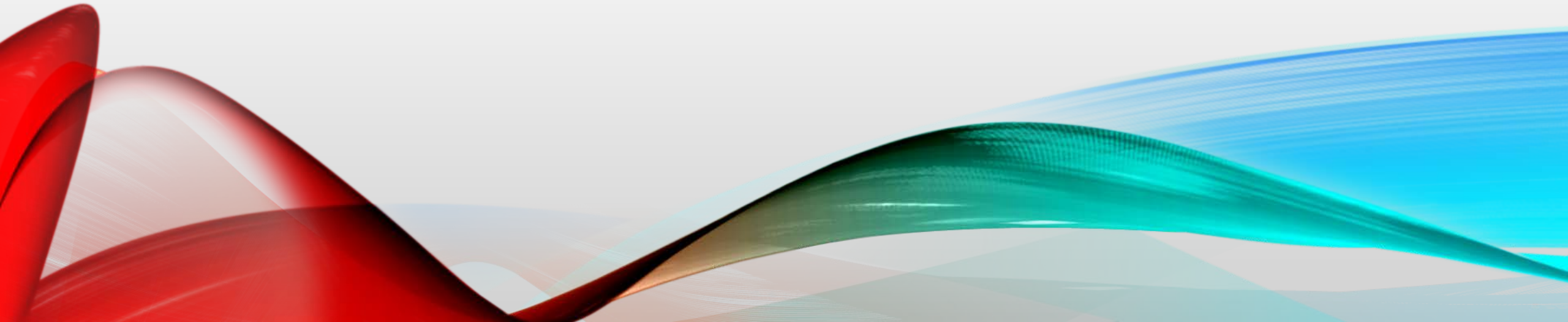
⁶ by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love,



- Indeed, **Paul** displayed these graces in his own life (2 Timothy 3:10).
- **Job** is an excellent example of patience and longsuffering in the Old Testament (James 5:10 – 11).
- In the New Testament, of course, it is **Jesus Christ**.



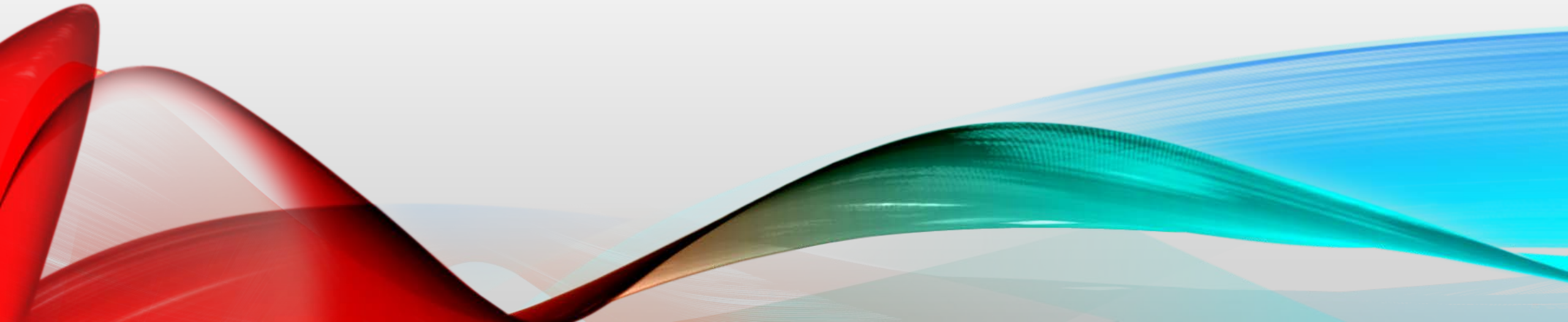
It is easy for God to perform miracles in the realms of the material or physical because everything in creation obeys His command.



- Jesus could heal Malchus' ear, but He could not automatically change Peter's heart and remove the hatred and violence that was in it (Luke 22:50 – 51).
- God could bring water out of the rock, but He could not force Moses to be patient.



**THIRDLY, GOD'S POWER IS
EVIDENCED IN OUR LIVES, IN OUR
PATIENCE, LONGSUFFERING AND
ALSO IN OUR *JOYFULNESS*.**



- When circumstances are complex, we should exhibit *joyful* patience; and when people are hard to live with, we should reveal *joyful* longsuffering.
- There is a kind of patience that "endures but does not enjoy". Paul prayed that the Colossian Christians might experience *joyful* patience and longsuffering.



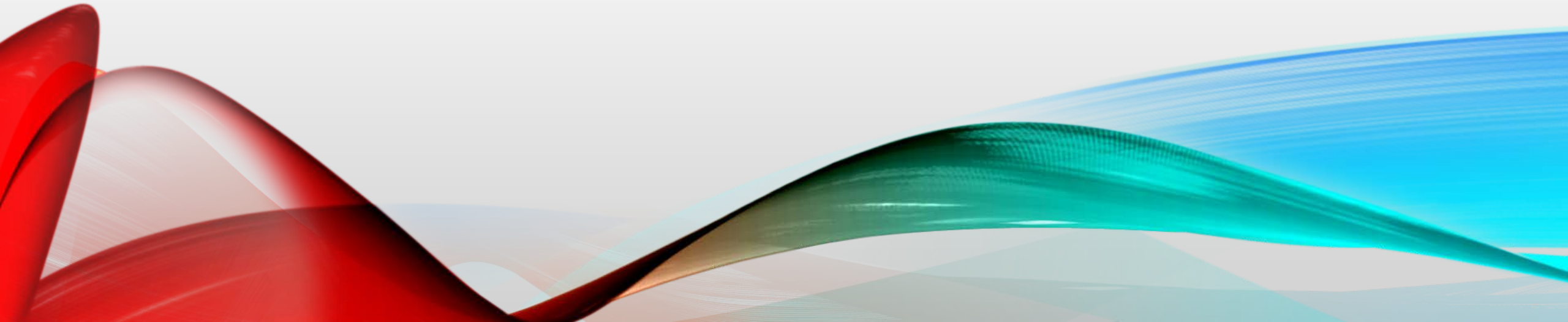
- We often use the words *joy* and *happiness* interchangeably, but a distinction should be made. Happiness often depends on happenings.
- If circumstances are encouraging, and people are kind, we are happy, but joy is independent of both events and people.
- The most joyful epistle Paul wrote was Philippians, and he wrote it from jail as he faced the possibility of being martyred for his faith.



- Only God's Spirit working within us can give us joy amid problems, circumstances and people. "The fruit of the Spirit is ... joy" (Galatians 5:22).
- Joy is not something that we "work up"; it is something the Spirit Himself "works in"—"joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17 NIV).



**THE FOURTH EVIDENCE OF GOD'S
POWER IN OUR LIVES IS
*THANKFULNESS.***



Christians filled with the Holy Spirit will be joyful and thankful. When we lose our joy, we start complaining and becoming critical.



Ephesians 5:18 – 20 (NKJV)

18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,



- Thankfulness is the opposite of selfishness. The selfish person says, "I *deserve* what comes to me! Other people *ought* to make me happy!"
- But the mature Christian realizes that life is a gift from God and that the blessings of life come only from His bountiful hand.



- The one blessing that ought to move us constantly to thanksgiving is that God has made us “qualified to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Colossians 1:12).
- God has “qualified” us for heaven, and while we are waiting for Christ to return, we enjoy our share of the spiritual inheritance that we have in Him!



Ephesians 1:11 (NKJV)

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,



Ephesians 1:18 – 23 (NKJV)

18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power



20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,

23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.



- In the Old Testament, God's people had an *earthly* inheritance --- the land of Canaan.

**Christians today have a *spiritual* inheritance
in Christ.**



As we review this marvelous prayer, we can see how penetrating it is.

- We need spiritual intelligence if we are going to live to please God.
- We also need practical obedience in our walk and work, but the result of all of this must be spiritual power in the inner man --- the power that leads to joyful patience and longsuffering, with thanksgiving.

Have you been praying this way lately?

