

HOPE (Colossians 1:1-14)

Colossians is one of my “go to” books. I go there when I don’t know where else to go. I go there when I need to remember what this faith is all about. I need it to remind, encourage, instruct and at times correct me - which was the purpose of this letter for its original hearers.

We’re all tempted to try and earn, add to or pursue something beyond Jesus. What happens when we begin to believe Jesus isn’t enough? The temptation is to look to other things to satisfy.

1. Thankful for what is already evident (Colossians 1:1-8)

FAITH always has an object it rests in. Rom 10:9; Heb 11:6

Faith “*reaches out to grasp what God offers in Jesus.*”

V5 This FAITH and LOVE “spring from” HOPE. Like the fertile soil that produces a garden, or like a tree that bears fruit HOPE in the gospel produces faith and love.

HOPE here is not an uncertainty or a wishful thinking like “I hope so” = it’s a certainty; confident expectation

This hope is “*stored up for you in heaven.*” Hope holds onto Jesus and “*eagerly looks forward to the time when God completes what he began in Jesus.*” 1 Peter 1:4-5!

V6 “since the day you heard and understood God’s grace in all its truth.”

Maybe you heard the gospel in some form when you were younger but never understood God’s grace.

When did grace become the sweetest and most scandalous (shocking) truth you ever encountered?

God’s grace was shaping their lives in a new way!

2. Asking for what is always needed (Colossians 1:9-14)

To know God’s will (and walk in it) + experience God’s power.

KNOW GOD’S WILL: Filled w/ = under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

“live a life worthy of the Lord” ESV “to walk in a manner” = metaphor - behaving, living

“please him in every way” = every area of life! Eph 5:8-10

EXPERIENCE GOD’S POWER: This is STRENGTH for the life they’re called to live! For their fight against sin and temptation, their discernment of false teachers / teaching, their enablement to stand under the weight of opposition. Endurance is what we need.

3. Thankful for what is already accomplished (Colossians 1:12-14)

There’s something life-giving and empowering that happens through thanksgiving and praise and Paul will come back to this throughout his letter.

Joyful thanksgiving that springs from the same place your faith and love come from = hope!

The Father has qualified you, rescued us and brought us (transferred us). Acts 26:18

QUESTIONS

1. What qualities does Paul already see in the lives of the Colossians that show the gospel is bearing fruit in their lives? He thanks God for these qualities.
2. What does this teach us about the importance of recognizing what God has already done in the lives of those around us?
3. The gospel isn’t stagnant, it produces something – it “bears fruit” in the lives of those who embrace it. Where do you see the fruit of the gospel (the word of truth) at work in your own life?
4. What does Paul specifically pray for the Colossians? See Colossians 1:9-12
5. Why is understanding God’s will important for spiritual growth?
6. What would it mean to you if someone prayed these things for you? How would praying this prayer for others both encourage you and serve the person you’re praying for?
7. Have you ever thought about “adopting” the prayers found in the Bible and using them in your own time of prayer – as a pattern / template?
8. Paul ends his prayer with thanksgiving / gratitude for the extraordinary things he’s done in Jesus. Walk through VV12-14 and celebrate what The Father has done.
9. What has this passage taught you about being a disciple of Jesus?