

Sermon Series: Colossians

Sermon Text: Colossians 1:1-8 Thanksgiving

God renews our gratitude with displays of His grace in the life of the Church.

1) God displays His grace in the fruitfulness of the gospel (1:6).

- a) v. 6 “it is bearing fruit and increasing (or causing increase)”
- b) v. 6 “in the whole world . . . as it also does among you”
- c) The gospel is a message that comes in writing (v. 1, Apostle) and through preaching/teaching (v. 6 “you heard it and understood”; v. 7 “you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellows servant . . . a faithful minister on our behalf”). But the person of Christ is present in the message so that one encounters Christ in the gospel. If the gospel is rejected, Christ is rejected. When the gospel is received, Christ is received into the life of the believer. Christ gets to work right away to cleanse the temple of the Holy Spirit (v. 8).
- d) **Application:**
 - i) Evangelism and Missions: Encouragement knowing that the gospel is powerful (Rom. 1:16)
 - ii) Personal Piety: Encouragement to put sin to death and grow in your walk with God

2) The gospel produces heavenly life in the Church on earth (1:3-5).

- a) v. 1 “saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae”
- b) v. 4 “your faith in Christ Jesus”—initial conversion and ongoing life of faith; objective content of truth of the gospel (vv. 5, 6)
- c) v. 4 “the love that you have for all the saints”
- d) v. 5 “because of the hope laid up for you in heaven”
 - i) “because of”—hope nourishes faith and love
 - ii) “laid up for you”—it is an objective hope
 - iii) “in heaven”—Christ’s life
- e) **Application:**
 - i) Faith: Not faith in self or in faith; content of faith is objective person/events of the gospel
 - ii) Love: Kinship with all Christians; Communion of saints
 - iii) Hope: Transcends trouble of here and now with reality of there (heaven) and then (future)
 - iv) Saints: A secure position
 - v) Faithful Brothers: A transformed life

3) God renews our gratitude with these displays of His grace (1:3-8).

- a) v. 3 “we always thank God”
- b) v. 4 “we heard of your faith”
- c) v. 7 “Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ”
- d) v. 8 “he has made known to us your love in the Spirit”
- e) Paul and his companions spread word of the good things God was doing in the Church.
- f) **Application:** Overcoming Ingratitude:
 - i) Open your eyes. Stop looking for the speck in your brother’s eye.
 - ii) Turn temptations to gossip into opportunities to thank God for his grace in others.
 - iii) Count your blessings.
 - iv) Let people know *that* you thank God for them and *why*.