

Paul's Purpose: Rooted in Christ (Colossians 1:24-2:7)

To Read:

1. Ephesians 3
2. Hebrews 6

1 I. Introduction

A. This morning we're jumping back into Colossians with Colossians 1:24-2:5

1. But before we start, I want to remember what Colossians is about and how Colossians is organized
12. So, we'll start with our purpose statement for Colossians: Colossians calls us to see how truly glorious Jesus is and to root all of our hope in Him knowing that He is true wisdom to meet our every need. This will prevent us from instead pursuing the hopes and purposes of this world and being captured by worldly wisdom.
13. And then let's remember the outline of Colossians, we are looking at Colossians in four parts:
 - 1a. Rooted in the Gospel (~ chapter 1)
 - 1b. Refusing Worldly Wisdom (~ chapter 2)
 - 1c. Renewed in Christ (~ chapter 3)
 - 1d. Relational Truth (~ chapter 4)
14. Last month, we spent three weeks in Colossians looking at the first section: Rooted in the Gospel
 - 1a. In the first verses, we saw Paul's Prayer: Rooted in the Gospel and saw Paul remind them that their hope was in the gospel and pray that their hope would continue in the gospel
 - 1b. In the next verses, we saw Paul's Song: Rooted in Glory and saw Paul sing about the glories of Christ, who He is and what He has done, and then call the Colossians to continue finding their hope there
15. As we went through these sections, we saw that Paul was building a foundation for the Colossian's faith, a foundation that we could describe in a simple cycle:
 - 2 a. The cycle started with the gospel, the gospel had come to the Colossians and the promises of the gospel had given the Colossians a true and abiding hope
 - 2 b. And this hope, which was laid up for them in heaven, had produced faith, grasping onto the promises of God, which had worked itself out in love for all of the saints - evidence that the gospel had truly come to the Colossians
 - 2 c. And seeing this evidence in their lives, Paul gives thanks for the gospel and calls the Colossians to give thanks as well
 - 1 d. If the Colossians keep giving thanks for the gospel, the gospel will grow in their lives, their hope will grow, their faith will grow, their love will grow and their thanksgiving will grow - a cycle that keeps building on itself
 - 123e. And then we saw that at the center of this cycle was Jesus Christ - Jesus is the gospel and Jesus is our hope, so Jesus is the object of our faith and our first love, and it is through Him that we give thanks to God for the gospel
 - f. So the more we make of Christ, the more we see of His glory, the bigger the gospel will appear to us and the more we will grow in this cycle

1 B. As we continue on, this morning we are doing the last part of the first section

1. As we finish chapter 1 and move into chapter 2, Paul is going to start talking about his mission, his purpose
 - a. Paul has been celebrating the glories of Christ, but last time we looked at Colossians he finished with a warning - if Christ is this glorious, then you must remain stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel
 - b. He then turns and says, "don't turn from this gospel, this is the same gospel that has been proclaimed everywhere and this is the gospel that I serve" - *If indeed...*
2. Paul has prayed that the Colossians would remain in the gospel, he has celebrated the glories of the One at the center of the gospel and now he is going to tell the Colossians why he serves the gospel, what is his purpose, his mission?
 - 1a. So, I'm calling this last section Paul's Purpose: Rooted in Christ
 - b. Paul is going to describe his ministry, first in general terms and then specifically about the Colossians - and his ministry has one purpose, Paul serves the gospel in order that everyone will grow into maturity in Christ
 - c. And then Paul is going to give a charge that will close this first section - he charges them to stay rooted in Christ, he serves the gospel to see everyone mature in Christ and he charges them to be mature, to stay rooted in Christ
3. And, just as it has been the center so far, Paul's ministry is focused on hope
 - a. Through chapter 1, Paul has thanked God for the Colossians hope, he has prayed that they would endure in hope, and he has warned them to continue in hope, but now Paul is going to say hope is at the center of his ministry
 - b. Paul's ministry is to see everyone mature in Christ, his ministry is to see *Christ in you, the hope of glory*

C. So, let's read Colossians 1:24-2:7 together this morning

131. Again, you can follow along in your Bibles, or I have the text up on the screen this morning

13D. Proposition: Paul wants us to be rooted in Christ and pursuing nothing else, so make the gospel your guide and stay.

11. A joyful struggle: I'll suffer joyfully to see you mature in Christ (Colossians 1:24-29)
12. A specific concern: Let the wisdom of Christ be your firm foundation (Colossians 2:1-5)
13. A universal charge: Continue in Christ forever (Colossians 2:6-7)

1 II. A Joyful Struggle: I want to see you mature in Christ (Colossians 1:24-29)

1 A. As Paul closed his glorious recitation of the greatness of Christ he finished with a solemn warning - the Colossians must hold onto this Christ, they must hold onto this hope forever - that's where we ended last time in verse 23

- 1 3 1. And he emphasized which gospel he is talking about - it is the gospel that they heard from the beginning, it is the same gospel that has been preached throughout the world, and it is the gospel which Paul himself serves
- 1 2. And Paul uses that identification, as a minister of the gospel, a servant of the gospel, to spring into this next topic - Paul's gospel ministry - if the gospel has brought us hope, and not any hope, but a glorious hope seen in the glories of Jesus Christ, then Paul is going to serve this gospel with his whole being to the end, whatever may happen
3. And, as we look at verses 24-29, I want to see four things: Paul's passion, Paul's purpose, Paul's practice, and Paul's power

2 B. Paul describes the passion of his ministry in verse 25

- 1 1. Why is Paul so devoted to this gospel? What makes Paul pursue this gospel everywhere He goes? Why would Paul write a letter to a church that he had never visited? Why? Because that's what God had called Him to do
2. He says He became a minister of the gospel, a minister of Christ, and a minister of Christ's body, the church, according to the stewardship that was given to Him by God
3. Paul's ministry is rooted in the command of God, and we all know the story, how Christ Himself appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus and called him away from his life of persecuting the church to serving the gospel
4. Paul's ministry, his service to the gospel, was built on the very command of God and this gives Paul's ministry great authority and power, the Colossians should listen to Paul's words of exhortation, his words of wisdom carefully, because Paul was appointed to this service and specifically appointed to this service for their good
- 1 5. He says at the end of verse 25 that God appointed him to this service specifically for them, for the gentiles, for the Colossians - God called Paul out to serve the gospel to build up the Colossians in their faith
6. And this is the story of all gospel ministry - at the root of all gospel ministry is the command of God Himself to work in His authority for His people's good
7. Paul's story of being called out and appointed is perhaps more dramatic than the average pastor, or elder, or evangelist, or church member, but these ministries are no less founded on the command of God and no less filled with the authority of God - so these ministries should be respected and listened to as ministers serve the church to build it up in Christ

3 C. And then Paul moves on to the purpose of his ministry in verses 26 and 27

- 1 1. Paul's service to the gospel is to make it known - he is to take the mystery that was hidden for ages and generations, the mystery that would be in time the revelation of Christ, His redemptive and reconciliatory work that remakes the universe, Paul is to take the mystery of the gospel and make sure that everyone knows it, especially the Gentiles
- 1 2. But Paul's purpose doesn't stop there - he doesn't just proclaim the gospel, he wants to magnify the gospel, to show how great it is - the gospel is great and is doing great things and Paul wants everyone to see how great it is, to know its glory
- 1 3. But then Paul makes the most important statement of this section, and perhaps of all of Colossians - Paul says that the riches of the glory of this mystery is that Christ is dwelling in them and His indwelling presence is their hope
4. That is Paul's purpose - to see everyone grounded in Christ, firmly rooted in Him so much that the center of their being is Christ, that their life revolves around Christ, that they can honestly say that it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me - Paul wants to see that blossom in all of Christ's people
- 1 5. Because this is their great hope, their hope is that they will see and rejoice in the glory of Christ both now and for all eternity, and they can because Christ is dwelling in them, He has come and made His residence with them and even taken them over - this glorious Lord is overtaking them from the inside out
6. So Paul's purpose is to proclaim the gospel and magnify it in such a way that believers see Christ their hope formed in them and they pursue Christ as all their hope without looking anywhere else
7. This is a believer's only hope, that Christ would dwell in them, that they would have communion with this great glory, that His death would be realized in them so that the power of His resurrection can be remaking them - Paul works for this

3 D. So Paul describes the practice of his ministry in verses 28

1. If the eternally and infinitely glorious Christ has broken into the world to give the Colossians and all believers a new hope in Him and that hope is found in His dwelling in believers, then Paul's ministry is going to be designed around that truth
- 2 2. Paul's ministry is going to simply be proclaiming Christ - *Him we proclaim* - as Paul will say elsewhere (1 Corinthians 2:2) - *For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*
3. Paul's ministry has only one aim - to make Christ known so that the Colossians and all believers will know the depths and the glories of the hope that Christ has given them
- 1 3 4. And Paul will do what is necessary to make Christ known, whether it is teaching - describing and detailing who Christ is, what He has done and what He has called us to - or if it is warning - calling out dangerous doctrines or practices that cloud who Christ is, what He has done for us and what He has called us to

- ① 5. And what does Paul use to teach and warn? Wisdom - which is found in Jesus Christ - Paul teaches Christ, so He teaches all wisdom - there is nothing else Paul needs to teach to make the Colossians complete in wisdom
- ② 6. Paul's goal is to make sure that everyone is mature in Christ - that they would know Christ, both in knowledge and in communion, and that they would live in Christ, living His life as their own
7. Paul knows that this maturity is a process so Paul continually works to proclaim Christ and to call away from other things

③ E. But Paul doesn't see this as being an easy task - the minister's task of pushing believers up into Christ is impossibly hard work

- ① 1. But Paul is going to work hard toward this task, he is going to toil, even struggle to make these realities bear fruit in believers - words that evoke a man striving after a herculean task, a task that will take all of his energy and more
2. And that is exactly what Paul is saying - the task of pushing believers up into Christ is a task far beyond all mortals, one that will call every last ounce of devotion from the ministers of Christ and will still not be enough
- ① 3. But Paul doesn't despair because, in the end, it is not his power that will accomplish this task, but God's power - Paul will work hard and he did work hard, but the power came from Jesus Christ - Paul can work to see Christ formed in the Colossians because Christ was found in Paul
4. Paul could work past the limits of endurance, through hardship and persecution and rejection and cold, hard hearts, and gospel heresies and everything else Paul faced and still endure because His effort didn't come from Him, it came from Christ in Him, the hope of glory
5. So Paul's going to keep working hard, he's going to strive and toil and even struggle until he sees the Colossians perfected in glory, until he sees them mature in Christ

F. And because Paul's power did not come from himself, he can devote himself to this ministry with joy, the work of the gospel is a joyful struggle to Paul

- ③ 1. This brings us back to verse 24, a verse that could be confusing, but I think really makes perfect sense once we understand Paul's train of thought
- ① 2. Paul's ministry was from Christ, His ministry is to proclaim Christ, and His ministry is empowered by Christ, literally Paul's ministry is Christ working in him
- ① 3. So what does Paul mean when he says that he is filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions? Is he saying that somehow what Christ did was not enough? May it never be even thought!
4. Paul isn't saying that Christ's sufferings weren't enough, Paul is saying Christ's sufferings aren't done - Christ had suffered in His own body on the tree to bear and destroy our sins and that suffering is finished, but now Christ is suffering in His body, the church, to proclaim His work, to take His work to individuals who would be called to receive His work
- ② 5. Paul's identity here in Christ is of paramount importance to this passage - Paul is filling up in His flesh what is still needed in the afflictions of Christ, Christ is still suffering through Paul to bring His body to maturity
- ① 6. So Paul can rejoice in his toil, his struggle, even in his suffering because that suffering is the hallmark of the gospel - the gospel came through the suffering of Christ and the gospel always comes through the suffering of Christ
- ② 7. And that suffering is being realized in Paul which means that Christ is in Paul, Paul has the hope of glory residing in him so all of his sufferings from the gospel become not only bearable but a joy, a harbinger of hope, a testimony of Christ in him
8. So Paul will devote Himself body and soul to this work and He will continue on in this work until it claims his last full measure of devotion - and in Paul's case it did, eventually it claimed his life, he was poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice of the faith of those he led to Christ

② G. But why is Paul telling the Colossians all of this? What does this have to do with Paul's purpose in Colossians?

1. Remember that Paul is, in this first section, trying to form a bedrock, a foundation for the Colossians' faith so that he can go onto warnings and corrections in the second part of the book
2. And by describing his ministry to the Colossians, he can emphasize the purpose of his ministry and its overwhelming passion - his purpose is to see Christ in them and his passion is enough to take him to suffering and death to see this happen because the reward offered is that great
 - a. Christ in them, Christ in him is so glorious that Paul will willingly toil, and suffer, and even die for that
 - b. And Paul wants his passion in his service to the gospel to be contagious - this is how glorious I see this gospel, can you see this gospel as that glorious? Will this gospel claim your life in the way it has claimed mine? Will seeing Christ in you and in others be your passion to the point of death?
- ① 3. But, I think there is a second reason Paul is describing his ministry, and it has to do with his purpose (verse 28)
 - ② a. He is working to see each of them know the mystery of Christ so that they are mature (or complete) in Christ
 - ① b. These are wisdom words, perhaps words that were being used in some of the false ideas in Colossae, the Colossians seemed to think there were mysteries beyond Christ that they needed to know that would make them complete
 - c. But Paul is saying, 'no!' - my ministry of pushing you into Christ is the greatest and deepest mystery in the universe and by growing up into Him you will be perfectly complete, lacking nothing
 - d. Don't search for other things, grasp on to Christ, listen to and live in my gospel - which leads to our next point

**Kid's
Question**

1 III. A Specific Concern (Colossians 2:1-5)

1 A. As we move into chapter 2, Paul is going to continue talking about his ministry, but now specifically about the Colossians

1. He is toiling to see the gospel bring everyone to maturity in Christ, and this is where Paul thinks the gospel needs to work in the Colossians' hearts - this is how Paul is striving to see Christ formed in the Colossians
2. And in his struggle for them, his ministry to them, he wants to see something positive and something negative
3. So, we'll look at two things in these verses: Paul's desire for the Colossians and Paul's concern for the Colossians

2 B. Paul's desire for the Colossians: find everything in Christ (Colossians 2:2-3)

1. Paul's desire for the Colossians is the same as his desire for all the churches - he wants to see the Colossians mature in Christ, to have all of their hope set in Christ and to be sure of that hope
 - 1 a. So, his struggle for the Colossians is *that their hearts may be encouraged* - this is the primary desire of Paul's struggle
 - b. Paul wants for them to be encouraged - to be comforted in Christ, to be rejoicing in Christ the same way that he is rejoicing in Christ - he doesn't want them to be cast down, searching for other, elusive hopes the world tries to offer
 - c. In other words, he wants the Colossians to be complete in Christ and to know that they are complete in Christ, he wants to find them mature in Christ, knowing the hope of glory
 - d. But, to see this goal realized, Paul wants to see three things flourish among the Colossians, so let's look at these:
2. First, Paul wants them to be drawn together in Christ
 - 1 a. So he continues, he says - *that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love*
 - b. In Colossians, there is a sense that whatever is happening in Colossae is threatening to destroy their unity in Christ
 - i. As the Colossians turn to embrace wisdom other than Christ, division flourishes because Christ is what holds them together - these other 'wisdoms' promote self-centeredness, self-reliance and division
 - ii. As soon as Christ ceases to be the sum and total of what the church is pursuing, the church will no longer be held together, we are drawn together in our pursuit of Christ and that is what holds the church together
 - c. So Paul wants the church to be knit together in love - he wants them to remember that they are brothers and sisters in Christ, that they are pursuing Christ together, that Christ has loved them and they are to be loving one another
 - i. Throughout Scripture, love is held up as the ultimate display of grace, love for Christ and then each other
 - ii. And if we devote ourselves to sacrificially loving each other in Christ, we will be encouraging each other in Christ, our hearts will be encouraged, we will be seeking each other and in turn seeking Christ
 - d. So mutual love founded in Christ becomes Paul's first hope for the church in Colossae, the first bulwark against error
 - i. As one commentary put it: *Once it is agreed among the brethren that there are no essential truths outside of Christ, and that therefore there can be no essential insights hidden from anyone who is now in Christ, it becomes possible to maintain mutual confidence and love among themselves.*
 - ii. Love fuels confidence in Christ and confidence in Christ fuels love - Paul wants them to remember that, to set aside things that are dividing them, drawing them away from each other and to pursue Christ in one accord
3. Second, Paul wants them be sure of salvation in Christ
 - 1 a. He continues on - *that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love and to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ*
 - b. In Colossae, there seems to have been a creeping philosophy that said that salvation started with Christ, but to reach completeness, to find your full potential, to be mature you need to understand things beyond Christ
 - i. There are mysteries that the mature will understand - those who know these mysteries and follow these teachings are more mature, more complete than those who simply know Christ
 - c. So Paul's second goal is that they would find complete understanding, that they would know all of God's mysteries
 - i. He has the same goal as those he is combatting, but then he defines what God's mystery is - it's Christ
 - ii. Christ is the sum and total of God's mystery, to know Christ is to know all of God's truth
 - iii. And Paul wants them to know and to understand Christ, he wants them to be steeped in Christ, to be pursuing this knowledge and this wisdom at the expense of all other knowledge and wisdom
 - d. And, as they know all that Christ is and all that Christ is for them, they will find surety in Christ
 - i. The goal isn't just knowing Christ, but that they would *reach all the riches of full assurance* in knowing Christ
 - ii. Paul wants them to know Christ so well that they know they can rest in Christ, Christ is everything for them, they need not seek anything else
 - iii. In other words, Paul wants them to know that they are complete, they are mature in Christ - if they have Christ they have all of God's mystery they don't need anything else
 - iv. If they have Christ, they can be sure of salvation, and salvation in its fullest measure - the only way to experience salvation more is to know Christ more - nothing else can add to salvation
 - e. So Paul wants them to be sure of salvation in Christ
 - i. And this is what loving each other will lead them to - if they are pursuing each other in Christ, then they will be pursuing Christ together and they will grow in their knowledge and experience of salvation in Christ

4. Third, Paul wants them to find wisdom in Christ
 - 1 a. Verse 3 is really a parenthetical phrase, not specifically Paul's desire for the Colossians, but it serves to intensify the last statement - God's mystery is found in Christ
 - i. Paul doubles down on that statement saying all wisdom and knowledge are found in Christ
 - ii. And this indicates two things - if they have Christ, they have all wisdom and knowledge, if they are pursuing Christ, they are pursuing all wisdom - but also, if they are pursuing anything else, it means they are not pursuing wisdom - if all wisdom is found in Christ, then there is no wisdom outside of Christ
 - iii. So, not only does pursuing things outside of Christ fail to add to the mysteries of salvation, but pursuing things beside Christ is the definition of foolishness - it is grasping after nothingness
 - iv. Trying to make your life better by embracing the wisdom of this world is a path to nowhere, not only useless, but foolish - the world's wisdom is a broken cistern that cannot hold any water
 - b. So, as Paul holds this up, he's calling the Colossians to pursue Christ for all of their wisdom
 - i. If you want to grow in wisdom and in knowledge, if you want to be mature, if you want to find hope and confidence, if you want your life to be better pursue Christ and nothing else
 - ii. There's nothing outside of Him, nothing - to seek outside of Him is to seek nothing, but to find Him is to find a treasure beyond all compare
 - iii. To know Christ is to possess riches, to find treasure, to see glory - why do you need something else?

3 C. Paul's concern for the Colossians: don't let world cause you to chase after other things (Colossians 2:4-5)

1. As we enter verse 4, Paul tells them why he wants them to grow in love, and surety and wisdom in Christ, because the world is full of persuasive arguments
 - 1 a. In fact, he's really clear that this is his purpose, he says - *I say this in order that* - this is one of the reasons I love Paul's books, he goes the extra mile to make everything extremely clear
 - 1 b. Why do I want you to grow in love, surety and wisdom? Because the world is going to try to distract you, the world is going to teach you other things, show you other things, try to draw your hope and passion toward other things
 - c. Now, Paul doesn't describe what these arguments are - that's one of the challenges and the strengths of Colossians, a challenge because we don't know exactly what Paul is referring to, but a strength because it applies to all situations
 - d. But just from Paul's statement here, we can draw at least two conclusions - these arguments aren't geared at pushing us toward Christ, at increasing our appetite and our joy in Christ and what He has done for us - otherwise Paul wouldn't be contrasting these plausible arguments with his work to push them into Christ
 - e. But the other thing we can say is that these arguments may appear harmless or even good at first glance - Satan, our enemy, isn't going to come at us with statements that are completely contrary to Scripture, he is too wily for that
 - 1 f. No, the plausible arguments of the world may appear to be things that are harmless, maybe even good things - they might appear that they can exist beside our faith just fine, maybe they even complement our faith, maybe they are things the church ought to be pursuing, maybe these things make us wiser, maybe they make our lives better
 - g. These things are plausible arguments, we might hear them and agree - so we need to be really, really careful about the things we promote and pursue, the things we hear and agree with - are these things rooted in Christ and are they pushing me toward Christ? Are they pushing the church toward Christ? - we'll talk about that more next week...
2. And the fatal bent of our flesh is to pursue things other than Christ, to find other things that will make our lives better
 - a. The old, sinful flesh that still exists beside us and within us, the flesh that we are putting to death (another thing we'll talk about in a few weeks) - it still desires to find anything other than Christ that will restore and renew us
 - b. So, there's a part of us that will naturally gravitate toward the world's plausible arguments - this is why they are so dangerous - they appeal to our flesh while often decorated in neutrality or even religious trappings
 - 1 c. These arguments literally delude us - they make us forget what is true and chase after what is false
 - d. But Paul is telling us - no, there isn't anything beside Christ - He is your hope and He is your joy, pursue Him to the exclusion and loss of all else, pursuing anything else is pursuing an empty lie
3. So Paul tells them not to listen to the world's arguments
 - a. Or rather, he will tell them that in a few verses - he actually doesn't say that right here
 - 1 b. What he does say is if they are being completely consumed in Christ, being drawn together in Christ to find surety in Christ and the source of all wisdom in Christ, then they won't be swayed by plausible arguments
 - c. It's not a command (yet), it's a statement of fact, which is why Paul will work so hard to push them up into Christ - if they are consumed by Christ they won't be distracted by the world, no matter how persuasive it might be
 - d. So really the application here is to be so focused on Christ that we can't pay attention to all the things the world offers - it's the inverse of the oft quoted statement - we should be so heavenly minded that we have nothing earthly to hold onto - Paul wants us to be consumed in Christ so that we can't fall prey to the wisdoms of this world
4. So Paul rejoices because the Colossians started well - they understood the gospel and found firmness in their faith
 - a. But he doesn't want them to shift off that foundation, he wants them to keep pursuing Christ, to be immersed and consumed in Christ so that the plausible arguments of the world have no power over them

2 IV. A Universal Charge: Continue just as you were taught (Colossians 2:6-7)

1 A. Verses 6-7 are really the conclusion of the first section of Colossians - the 'therefore' sums up all of chapter 1

1. If the Colossians had found hope in the gospel, if they had seen glory in Christ, if they are growing in Christ, if they know all wisdom in Christ, then continue in Christ - be walking in Him
2. So Paul emphasizes twice in this short statement that where they had started is where they need to keep going - *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him ... and - established in the faith, just as you were taught*
3. Paul wants the Colossians to see that the gospel is everything, the gospel is everything! There is nothing else that they need, no other thing they need to pursue - in fact, pursuing other things is to dilute the gospel
4. They need to walk in Christ the same way that they came to Christ - the message of the gospel had given them hope which had led them to grasp onto Christ through faith, now all they need to do is to keep living in the gospel - the gospel tells them everything they need to know about how to follow Jesus
5. So don't mix the gospel with other things, don't dilute the gospel with other hopes, don't set things beside the gospel as neutral pursuits, don't seek extra wisdom - walk in Christ with the same passion that brought you to Christ - you tasted and saw that the Lord is good, so keep drinking at this fountain, don't go search out something else
6. You don't need anything else - you don't need to know things beyond what the gospel has shown you in Christ, you don't need to obey things beyond what the gospel leads you to in Christ, you don't need to partake in things that aren't helping you to partake in Christ
7. You need Christ, so you need the gospel - keep walking in it, never let the gospel be less than enough for you

1 3 B. And then Paul, in his beautiful prose, lists four ways that we need to keep walking in Christ - we will be rooted in Him, we will be built up in Him, we will be established in the faith, and we will be abounding in thanksgiving - so let's look at each of these

1. Walking is the main verb in this paragraph, all of the other verbs describe this verb - what does it mean to walk in Christ?
2. Paul's first description of walking in Christ is to be rooted in Him
 - a. Literally this word means root, like the root of a plant - Paul is saying that our lives ought to flow from Christ, be nourished by Christ and sustained by Christ like the root does for a plant
 - b. In other words, our whole lives should be flowing out of Christ - there shouldn't be any part of our lives that are based on something other than Christ, any part of us that is nourished by anything else
 - c. So, we might think of this as looking back - where are our actions, our habits, our convictions, our pursuits coming from? They ought to be coming from Christ, they ought to be rooted in Christ.
- 1 d. We ask, why am I doing, loving, believing, hoping in this thing? Is it because Christ has called me to this in His Word? Or is it rooted in something else?
 - a. Everything in our life should flow out of our vital connection to Christ - He should be the motivation for everything we do and everything that we do should be based on His truth found in His Word
3. Paul's second description of walking in Christ is to be built up in Him
 - a. The root for this word is to build a house, to be building something up, sometimes it even means to grow up - like to raise a family - Paul's saying that walking in Christ means to be being built up in Him
 - b. In other words, our whole lives should be growing up into Christ - our whole lives should be flowing out of Christ and growing into Christ - Christ ought to be the ultimate pursuit of everything we do, everything is calculated to help us grasp onto Christ
 - c. So we might think of this as looking forward - what are we hoping in, how are we growing in Christ, how is Christ becoming our great and only joy? Everything we hope and do ought to be pushing us into Christ
- 1 d. We ask, how is this thing, this hope, this belief, this passion helping me pursue Christ? Is it's end that I find more satisfaction in Christ and less in anything else? Or is this thing guiding me somewhere else?
 - a. Everything in our lives should be leading us to Christ - He should be the goal, the pursuit, the passion of everything we do - our lives should be dedicated to growing up in Him
4. Paul's third description of walking in Christ is to be established in the faith
 - a. This root for this word is to stabilize something - like a foundation - but is also used in the sense of 'confirm' - to stabilize a promise, or our hope in a promise
 - b. Paul is saying that our hope in the gospel should continually be growing, should continually be more sure - we should be more sure of our faith in Christ, more sure that He will save us and nothing else can
- 1 c. We ask, is this helping me to see that my only hope is Christ? As I feel, or do, or believe this thing, am I falling on Christ to save me? Or is this thing distracting me from Christ and the gospel?
 - a. Everything in our lives should be helping us to see our only hope is in the gospel; everything in our lives should be helping to establish us in our faith - our lives should be dedicated to resting in Him

15. Paul's final description of walking in Christ is to be thankful in Him
 - a. The Strong's Notes for the word here, 'abounding', is 'superabounding' - this word means to overflow, to be overwhelming, to be in excess, superfluous
 - b. Paul says, if we are walking in Christ, we should be seeing thanksgiving erupt out of us - we will have so much thanksgiving for all that God has done for us in Christ that we can't keep it in - our thanksgiving will be superabounding
 - 1 c. So we ought to consider - is what I'm doing encouraging thanksgiving in Christ? Is this hope, or belief, or action spurring thanksgiving or is it distracting from thanksgiving? Is it spurred on by grumbling?
 - d. If we are walking in Christ our lives should overflow with thanksgiving, there are no words to exhaust the glory of what He has done for us

C. So, our conclusion and application for this morning is - throw yourself back onto the gospel

1. This is what Paul wants for the Colossians and for us, he wants us to be consumed in the gospel
 - a. The gospel is what brought us to Christ, the gospel is what will bring us to completion in Christ - continue where you started, be steeped in the gospel, meditate on it, love it, rejoice in it, sing about it, live in it
 - b. And it's the gospel that leads to each of these descriptions of walking in Christ - as we steep ourselves in the gospel, we naturally are rooting ourselves into Christ, as we are steeped in the gospel our lives flow out of Christ
 - c. As we steep ourselves in the gospel, we are built up in Christ - our pursuits naturally are designed to run after Christ
 - d. As we steep ourselves in the gospel, we are established in the faith - we are ever more sure of our hope in Christ
 - e. And as we steep ourselves in the gospel, we abound in thanksgiving - we grow in gratefulness for all that Christ has done
12. So the first section ends where it began, by directing us back through hope to the gospel of Jesus Christ
 - 1 a. We ought to be abounding in thanksgiving which happens when, as we draw together in love, we are established in the faith
 - 1 b. And faith grows as we are built up in Christ, looking forward to what He has for us, hoping in His promises
 - 2 c. And hope grows as we pursue the gospel to root ourselves in Christ
 - d. So live here, live in the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ and let that hope flow through your life leading to superabounding thanksgiving
 - e. This is the joy of the Christian life and also your great protection - live here to revel in joy in Jesus and live here to guard yourself against the wiles of the world
 - f. Be so consumed by Jesus Christ that the world can't get a hold on you

**Kid's
Question**