

Colossians 1:1-8

May 11, 1999

Vital Truths Connections

Aim: Strength believers commitment to Christian truth.

1A Introduction

1B Note: the mood of our day,

- 1 “We can figure things out” “We have all we need to take care of all pain and worries, physical and otherwise” (with out the Cross, our at least the Cross is not central and crucial. This is not said out right but practiced).
2. “We understand all the psychological dynamics and have all the treatments and/or therapies needed to take care of *any* problem, *now!*”
3. “We must not offend but accept each and all teachings, truth is relative!” This mentality or mood leave people open to just about any good sounding idea, however unbiblical.
4. “*Things will fulfill.*”

2B There can be persuasive argumentation that leads one astray! (Col. 2:4). There can be ways of thinking that can be quite captivating but not be Christian, (Col. 2:8). “. . .the danger for the enthusiastic young convert comes from error *within* the churches, teaching that is largely, even emphatically, Christian, but *which has been influenced more than it knows by the spirit of the age.*” (Fullness & Freedom, R.C. Lucas p. 21).

3B Still the fundamental need for all is connection with others. And the question needs to be asked, how are we doing in our human connections? While many can claim a good connection or at least an intellectual connection with the things of God, our human connections tell the truth.

Message: *We are to strengthen our unity with fellow believers in Christ by highlighting vital truths we hold in common and live by.*

4C Outline

- 1C** The Colossian Connection 1-2
- 2C** Commonalities with the Colossians 3-6
- 3C** The Colossian Example 7-8
- 4C** Some Applications

2A The Colossian Connection 1-2

Vs 1 An apostle, a sent one, an agent of Jesus Christ. By now they knew Paul, cf. 1:7-8. They had heard about Paul once persecuted the church and was now being greatly used of God, cf. **Acts 22:1-8**. Even Luke, “the beloved physician,” was apparently well known to the Colossians, cf. 4:14.

My apostleship, Paul says is by the will of God. **Note** the *co-working* of the Father and Son. Paul as their agent. And, Timothy the brother, most likely also well known or heard of to that church.

- Vs 2** Paul was writing to the church in town of Colosse. He points out that the members were saints and faithful brothers, (believers). These seem to point out both their position and outstanding character, cf. vs 8. Their position was a wondrous union with Christ, as both belonging to Christ and being with Christ. **Note** the emphasis of Jesus Christ in the first 2 verses, (mentioned three times!).

For the phrase; εφ'ν Χριστῶ, see TDNT, Vol. 2, p. 531-2.

3A Commonalities with the Colossians 3-6

- Vs 3** WE HAVE JOY OVER YOU! Paul was giving thanks to God the Father of the *Lord* Jesus Christ. Paul was indicating that God the Father and Jesus Christ stand in an eternal relationship to each other. Note again the unity being emphasized here. God the Father, the Lord Jesus and Paul and Timothy. We are giving thanks to God for you. What must have the Colossians felt at reading this!

Always, thanking and / or praying for the Colossians.

- vs 4** WE HAVE SAME OBJECTS OF FAITH AND LOVE! Why was Paul so thankful about the Colossians? Because of their faith and Love. The Colossians' life was characterized by faith in Christ and love for believers. The fact that many Christians have misrepresented Jesus Christ and worse, have abused the truth of the Gospel, let us not throw out the baby with the bath water! There is nothing greater than Christ and what He produces in believers!

- Vs 5** WE HAVE THE SAME BASIS! On what basis were the Colossians living the life they were living? "Because of what you hope for. . ." (BAG, 2nd ed. p. 253) "Hope as expectation of good is closely linked with trust, and expectation is also yearning, in which the element of patient waiting or fleeting for refuge is emphasized. . . .But this hope is not a consoling dream of the imagination which causes us to forget (or deny) our present troubles. . ." (TDNT, vol. II, p. 522). The apostle Paul was rooted in reality. But he also knew the certainty of a good future. The hope stored in the heavens for them. "Thus ἐπιζῆειν, means expectation with the nuance of counting upon in, Lk. 6:34; 1Cor. 9:10; 1Tim. 3:14.

This came by means of the word of truth: the Gospel, genitive in simple apposition, "that is, the Gospel," which seems to be giving a categorical example. "The word of truth is a large category, and the Gospel is a specific example, central and foundational the life of a Christian.

- Vs 6** WE SHARE THE SAME RESULTS! We need to read of believers in other times and other places! Bearing fruit and increasing. Cf. 3John 4. Oh the joy of seeing one's efforts having the intended good effects!

Examples:

- 1 I suppose a physician feels great when what he has prescribed has been applied and is now greatly helping his patient!
- 2 When a teacher sees the student's eyes light up when he comes to understand

something difficult.

3 When a parent sees a child succeeding.

4 When a wife sees a husband do really well.

5 When one loving sees the loved one responding in kind.

There is great joy in all these situations

The Apostle Paul was obviously quite joyous. But why exactly was Paul excited? What made Paul excited should maybe make us excited!

Well, here it is, People heard and understood the grace of God in truth. Note, there can be a hearing but not an understanding of it. Understanding entails seeing the connection between what is heard and one's life. Cf. **Matt. 13:18-23**.

Here the truth, that is, the Gospel was bearing much fruit and Paul was excited. So the Colossians had understood that man is a sinner accountable to God. That man can never meet God's standards of righteousness. That God had sent from His heart, His own Son to pay for man's sins. And that trusting in the finished work of Christ they would receive the free gift of eternal life! And, the Colossians were living their lives according!
Have you trusted in Jesus Christ??

4A The Colossian Example 7-8

Vs 7 The news of the wonderful effects of the Gospel, came to them by way of Epaphras.

Epaphras was a wonderful example of fruit.

A ***bond-servant***- a fellow slave, doing another's will. We all do another's will! Whether of sin or righteousness. But here, Epaphras was a slave of Christ. Epaphras had given his life over to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ.

faithful, servant of Christ.

Vs 8 We get our news from a reliable source, Epaphras. And he told us about your love, in truth of truly, not some unrealistic representation of your heart condition.

A Some Applications

1B Do you know Jesus Christ as your Savior?

2B Let us seek those of like-mindedness concerning the things of Jesus Christ in the work place and or neighbor and strengthen our bonds with them.

3B Let us rededicate our efforts to having others follow Jesus Christ and His teachings.

What are we excited out? A raise at work? A new purchase we have made? How about being excited about changed lives because the Gospel of Jesus Christ is making an impact? If that is not appealing to us, a huge red flag should go up in our minds. This at the very least indicates our priority and values are out of whack!

Repetition Jesus, 4 times; Christ, 6 times; God, 4 times; love, 2 times; faithful, 2 times; heard, 3 times; you, 8 times.

Continuity *faithfulness*; vs 2, Paul address the "faithful brethren." vs 5, they continue in what they,

“heard before. . .,” vs 6, “. . .bringing forth fruit. . .since the day you heard. . .” vs 7, Paul points out who the Colossians had heard the message from, Epaphras, “who is a faithful minister.”

unity; vs 1, there is great unity between Paul, Jesus, God (the Father) and Timothy, “. . .our brother,” vs 2, Paul is seeking to further connect with the Colossians through this letter. Vs 3, Paul’s appreciation and care for the Colossians is quite evident. Vs 4 and 5, the Colossians are committed to the same person and goals as Paul and have the same basis for life as Paul. Vs 7, Paul calls Epaphras, “our dear fellow servant, . . .on your behalf.” vs 8, Epaphras has also been the connection between Paul and the Colossians. The unity between Jesus and God the Father is alluded to in vss 1, 2, and 3.

Audience: believers

goal: to guide and strengthen believers

Argument: You Colosians are dear to us because in Christ our God, we have vital things in common.