

Raised with Christ || A series through Colossians

The power of the gospel Sermon Synopsis: The Gospel is the good news that the kingdom of heaven (faith, hope, and love) has broken into the lives of all who understand it and respond.

Colossians 1:1-8 (ESV)

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father. We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

What's wrong (e.g., Colossian context)

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, **to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae**: Grace to you and peace from God our Father. (Colossians 1:1-2, ESV)

What's going on in Colossae?

- Mysticism — direct experiences of God.
- Judaism — those tired of the amorphous mystical religions found solace in the law.
- Young converts to Christianity could be easily confused by the *conflation* of spiritual ideas available to them.
- Direct experiences with God (mysticism) and Law (judaism) are *not* inherently bad.

Syncretism: the mixing of religious ideas and practices from a wide range of sources

Result: a kind of Jewish Transcendental Mysticism

Christ wasn't outright rejected as much as added to a preexisting buffet of spirituality.

Today: when the Christian faith gets co-opted by a power ideology (consumerism, politics)

We've created a world in our image, added Jesus to it, and our world is falling apart.

What do we need

The breaking through of God's world into our world in Christ — resurrection was a taste!

Paul has heard that this breakthrough has happened in the small town of Colossae...

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, since **we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.** Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel (Colossians 1:3-5, ESV)

Faith in Christ = trust leading to action. Jesus doesn't want to be part of your life, He wants it all!

Where have these three phrases come up before? ALL. OVER.

Romans 5:1-5 (ESV)

Therefore, since we have been justified by **faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in **hope** of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's **love** has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Galatians 5:5-6

For through the Spirit, by **faith**, we ourselves eagerly wait for the **hope** of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through **love**.

Ephesians 4:2-5

with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in **love**, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one **hope** that belongs to your call—one Lord, one **faith**, one baptism

Colossians 1:4-5

since we heard of your **faith** in Christ Jesus and of the **love** that you have for all the saints, because of the **hope** laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel

1 Thessalonians 1:3

remembering before our God and Father your work of **faith** and labor of **love** and steadfastness of **hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:8

But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of **faith** and **love**, and for a helmet the **hope** of salvation.

So why do these three words keep showing up together? They are tangible and permanent effects of the breaking through of God's world into our world. It's what it looks like!

1 Corinthians 13:12-13 (NLT)

Three things will last forever—**faith**, **hope**, and **love**—and the greatest of these is love.

Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians is that these are the *imperishable* items you want in your fridge.

- Faith is the conviction to act on what you know about God
- Hope is confidence to endure the challenges that come
- Love is being committed to the highest good of others, without any guarantee of reciprocity, and at your own expense

Summary: Believing what Christ says, looking forward to what Christ will do, leading to a relentless love for those around you.

This is what is happening in Colossae.

This is what *could* happen in SB too.

*This is not syncretism. This is unabashed trust in Christ as savior, teacher, king.

How does this happen?

Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, **the gospel, which has come to you**, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf and has made known to us your love in the Spirit. (Colossians 1:5-8, ESV)

The gospel: Christ brings heaven into our world!

1. Respond to the gospel

Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, **the gospel**, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, **since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth**, just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf and has made known to us your love in the Spirit. (Colossians 1:5-8, ESV)

*Christianity Explored

1. Grow deeper in the gospel

Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, **the gospel**, which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world **it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you**, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf and has made known to us your love in the Spirit. (Colossians 1:5-8, ESV)

This means that we never *graduate* from the truth of the gospel...we only grow deeper into it! (that's what Colossians is about). Talk about fence/pathway concerns.

*Gospel of sin management vs. come and die

What might this look like for already Christians?

1. Bearing the fruit of the gospel

it is bearing fruit and increasing

Are you growing in faith, hope, and love? Specifically, are you growing more trusting of God's will, more hopeful in the future, and is this leading you to open your life up to people in new ways? (i.e., mustard seed)

2. Sharing the testimony of the gospel

since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, **just as you learned it from Epaphras** our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf and **has made known to us your love** in the Spirit.

- Epaphras is gossiping the gospel!
- Are you talking about what God is doing in your life?

Sharing and bearing (fruit)!

Whole book is about that. For now, ask:

1. Do I often think on how the gospel daily impacts my life?
2. If not, why not?