

Colossians 1:3-8 (NKJV)

We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

1. What a great book
 - a. Thank you Craig for setting us up for success
 1. It's Placement
 2. That it is a book of Jesus's Church
 3. Theme
 4. Keys
 5. Chapter Emphasize
 6. Key Greek Word “Pleroma” Fullness

The main part of our study today is going to be looking at 7 Aspects or Principles that flow out of the gospel once it is believed on in someone's life. Before we look into that let's take a quick peek at who Paul's thankfulness and how he prays.

This is Paul's normal pattern of First giving a salutation or a greeting in a letter and then moving on to why he is thankful. In all his letters he follows this pattern except for Galatians. It seems that he's so fired up about what's going on there that he skips the niceties and the thankfulness. But here we see he is thankful and he prays.

Colossians 1:3-4

We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus

Often when we read it in our modern translations it sounds like Paul is incessantly praying for the Colossians. It's all he's doing is just on his knees praying for them and he never stops. A better way to organize this verse would be to say:

Colossians 1:3

We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ always in regard to you when praying.

Paul is saying that he always gives God thanks for the Colossians every time they come up on his prayer list. He's not giving the Colossians a pat on the back but giving God constant thanks for the believers in Colossae and believers everywhere. Paul is also thankful to God for what the gospel produces in the believer's lives.

Here is the list of the 7 Aspects or Principles the Gospel produces so you can look for them as we go through our study.

7 Aspects of the Gospel

- Faith
- Hope
- Love
- The Whole World

- Fruit
- Grace
- Men

Let's first start by looking at what this word gospel means. I get a little frustrated with the term Gospel and it's broad usage. It seems whenever someone says they talk about the Bible or Jesus they say that they've "shared the Gospel. They may have shared the truth or shared the Word or spoken of how great Jesus is but have they really shared the Gospel?

The Biblical Gospel

- **Greek: euangélion**, yoo-ang-ghel'-ee-on; a good message,
- **Good News:** The glad tidings of salvation through Christ, the proclamation of the grace of God manifest and pledged in Christ
- **Jesus Preached It:** The gospel of the kingdom. **Matthew 4:23**
- **Paul Preached it:** For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, **1 Corinthians 15:3,4**

My heart for bringing this out is so that we could get back to the core or the bones of the Gospel. The great news, Biblical Gospel is made very specific for us Paul. It is a great foundation and core for us to preach and build on. It's not too complicated these are great bones to preach directly or to add to biblically. You can preach exactly what Paul preached about Jesus' death, burial and resurrection in fulfillment of the scriptures. Or you can build on his three point gospel and expand on the birth of Jesus, his crucifixion or resurrection, whatever you feel comfortable with according to the scriptures. When I first realized that the Gospel isn't a complicated message it empowered me to share with others the message. If I can just even regurgitate what Paul said in Romans 15 that's enough.

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek

My hope is that we'll get back to the simplicity of the gospel and not feel intimidated to share it with those around you.

Once the gospel is received there are amazing things that flow out of our lives from it. First of all, how is the gospel received? **By Faith**

The gospel is received by faith and when we believe the gospel and trust in Jesus it even produces greater faith.

Colossians 1:4

Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus

The first aspect or principle that flows from the Gospel is Faith, What is faith?

What the Bible says about Faith

- **Faith Defined:** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. **Hebrews 11:1**
- **Faith Makes Sons** For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. **Galatians 3:26**
- **Faith Grows:** So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. **Romans 10:17**
- **Faith is Victorious:** For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. **1 John 5:4**

When we put our faith in the gospel these are the things that flow out. I didn't believe in the creation story until I had faith in the gospel and read the word and then I had faith the story was true. I didn't believe in Noah's Ark until I believed the gospel and started reading that I have no doubt the Ark story is true. Faith starts in the Gospel and grows immensely as we read and walk with God. Paul was thankful to God for the Colossians and their faith.

Next we see that the Gospel produced love in the Colossians. **1:4 and of your love for all the saints**

Paul heard from Epaphras that the believers in Colossae had love for those in the family of God. They were willing to not just love in word but in deed. And that is what true biblical love is: the willingness to sacrifice our needs and our wants to esteem the needs of others greater than our own.

Paul spoke about this also in **Philippians 2:2** fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the **same love**, being of one accord, of one mind.

The idea is that we as believers would have the same love for all the saints. That we would be actively expressing love toward one another no matter the location, history or offense.

And truly this love has to be supernatural. Do we have the same love for believers at Oaks as we would at Santa Barbara Community, Reality, Community Covenant and Living Faith.

The next Principle that flows from the gospel is hope.

Colossians 1:5

Because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.

Hope is a huge outflow of the gospel. Once we know we're saved we have this heavenly hope. We have hope in the temporal world that God is sorting this all out for good but even greater than that we have hope that eternity is going to extraordinary. Hope is not just a positive wishfulness. In Christ it is so much more. Let's take a quick look at this word hope.

Biblical Hope

- **Blessed Hope:** looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, **Titus 2:13**
- **Hope Purifies:** And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. **1John 3:2,3**
- **Hope Doesn't Disappoint:** Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. **Romans 5:5**
- **Hope Anchors:** This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, **Hebrews 6:19**

Our hope is connected to heaven. It's like we have this long rope tethered all the way into the Holy of Holies. Our hope doesn't look to this life but the next. There is a divine bank account in heaven waiting for our arrival and it's our inheritance **incorruptible** and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven. **1 Peter 1:4**

The first three Aspect of what the Gospel and what it produces is that it starts by faith and creates faith, it produces love in our lives for others and it rests in hope.

When you hear those three words I'm sure it reminds you of the **triad of Christian Virtues** Faith, Hope and Love. – 1 Corinthians 13

Colossians 1:6

Which has come to you, as it has also in all the world

The next principle is that the Gospel is for the whole world. It isn't a regional religion, it isn't just for the Jews, it isn't just another one of the religious cults. The gospel is created for all men to be saved.

Gospel is Worldwide

- **Gospel Proliferation:** "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. **Matthew 24:14**
- **Our Gospel Calling:** And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. **Mark 16:15**
- **No Gospel Alternative:** "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." **Act 4:12**

The Gospel is the exact fit for every man. Jesus came so that all men would have the opportunity to be saved. The Gospel is a perfect solution for every individual and is also a perfect solution for everyone in the world. My salvation is extremely personal to me yet it can be so expensive to touch anyone anywhere. Maybe you experienced this during the Christmas season. Wouldn't it have been awesome to buy one gift that you could have given to every person on your list and it would have met every need and desire they had? That's what the gospel is. God's perfect gift that meets every individual's need. The perfect piece that fits into whatever hole is in someone's heart.

1:6 and is bringing forth fruit

The gospel brings fruit. When people put their faith in Jesus it produces fruit. The idea of fruit is one that makes your personal life a better one but fruit also spreads out. That's what fruit does, it grows and drops off the tree to spread its seeds and moves beyond where it is planted. When the gospel starts working in a life they start producing fruit and people see that fruit and come buy to pluck some of that fruit for their own lives. Our lives should be so transformed by the gospel that people ask questions, they wonder what has happened and can that happen in their lives? That's why sharing your personal testimony is so important. People can clearly see who you were, they can hear a clear presentation of the Gospel and how to receive Jesus and then the fruit that is flowing out of your life once you started walking and growing in Jesus.

The question is are you still bearing fruit? And is the fruit you are bearing attractive and do you see the gospel spreading? If you question that just come back to the simple gospel and God will be faithful to bear fruit in your life.

Grace is the next aspect we see

Colossians 1:6

as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;

Grace is the profound gift that manifests itself in the believer's life after hearing and putting their faith in Jesus in the gospel. Please remember that Jesus is in the center of the gospel. We believe in a person, Paul in his gospel mentions Jesus three times. I fear that many miss the grace of God because they miss the gift giver of grace Jesus and trust in faith or grace without it connected to a person. Let's take a look at grace in the Bible.

Biblical Grace

- **Grace:** χάρις *cháris*, *khar'-ece*; acceptable, benefit, favour, gift,
- **Grace:** Getting what we don't deserve
- **Grace Acronym:** God's Riches At Christ's Expense
- **Grace's Origin:** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. **John 1:14**
- **Grace is a Gift:** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **Ephesians 2:8**
- **Grow in Grace:** but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen. **2 Peter 3:18**

Grace is that gift we get from God that has to be received by faith. We can't earn it we can't work for it. It comes through believing in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. And once we receive the gift we continue in it not trusting in anything we have done or can do but in Christ and Christ alone.

The last facet is that the Gospel is spread by human agents.

Colossians 1:7-8

as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

I so love how Epaphras is spoken of here. He is a fellow servant. **syndoulos**, soon'-doo-los; A fellow slave but he is faithful, he is faithful to God and His people to serve them Epaphras is not described as a shepherd or an amazing teacher, he is described as a deacon and a slave. To me that gives hope to all of us in our opportunity to share the gospel. You don't need to be charismatic, you don't have to have amazing oratory skills, you don't need to know the Bible backwards and forwards. You just need to be saved by Christ through the Gospel and be His slave and you can be used to Preach the Good News to the world.

So there we have seven things that Paul was giving thanks to God about in regards to the believers in Colossae. These amazing things were produced in their lives through the Gospel and when Paul received this report from Epaphras he couldn't help but thank God.

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Romans 10:14-15

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"