

## Living Christ

Faith – Hope – Love

Colossians 1:1-8

Overview: In this passage the apostle Paul communicates that there are seven evidences of faith found in the gospel, which is truth.

Outline:

Greetings – Colossians 1;1,2

Thankfulness – Colossians 1:3

Evidences of Belief – Colossians 1:4-8.

1. Established in grace; 2. Provides supernatural peace; 3. Received by Faith; 4. Promotes genuine love; 5. Secure in hope; 6. Extends to the world; 7. Bears fruit

### **This study uses the WISDOM acronym:**

**W** – What is the main point, or key thought, and we work the issue

**I** – Investigate the scriptures. Study God's word.

**S** – Seek counsel from other sources, voices and articles.

**D** – Develop a response. The best response is a written one because there is many a slip from the mind to the pen.

**O** - Openly discuss your study with others; this is especially valuable in a small group or learning community setting.

**M** - Move to action. This is where we apply what we have learned to our lives. It is in application that we find that God's word is indeed living and active. And transformation occurs as the heart is impacted.

**Please note:** *This is a study guide, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. We need to walk in the truth therefore: It's you, the Holy Spirit and the Scripture in the interpretation process. Try not to relinquish your personal study to reading and repeating commentaries, check in with them as resource to make sure that your interpretation is not way off.*

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**W** [What is the issue] In reading the scripture the objective here is to determine the main point or points that Peter is trying to make.

**Read** *Colossians 1:1 – 8*

Ask yourself questions while discovering the main points in this text:

Ask the Who What Why When Where and the So what [what difference does this make – or it's the application question] questions to discover the main issue or issues that are in this text. Command to obey; doctrine to understand; life in the church to live out; and application (to myself) to apply.

Write down your questions...as you write, clarity regarding the text of scripture will emerge.

In reading the overview develop your own questions to discuss:

- How does received Grace result in peace from the Father?
- Discuss Faith – saving faith; growing in faith; and the faith – the body of truth.
- Describe the evidences of love in the body with John 13:34,35 as a reference passage.
- How does hope enable us to live, love and serve well; in the church and in the world.
- What does it mean to expand into the world and bear fruit.

## I Investigating Scripture: Read Colossians 1:1-8

### **Greetings – Colossians 1: 1,2**

Col 1:1 “an apostle” the Greek ‘to send’ (apostello). Jesus chose twelve to be ‘with Him’ and called them ‘Apostles’ (Luke 6:13). This term was often used of Jesus being sent from the Father (Matt. 10:40; 15:24; Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48; John 4:34; 5:24, 30, 36, 37, 38; 6:29,38,39,40,57; 7:29; 8:42; 10:36; 11:42; 17:3, 8,18,21,23,25; 20:21). In Jewish sources, an apostle was someone sent as an official representative of another, similar to ambassador (2 Cor. 5:20).

1:2 Saints (hagioi) is the term “holy”, which means “set apart” (1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1; Rom. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Phil. 1:1). To be saved is to be part of the new community, a new family, which we are called to serve (1 Cor. 12:7).

God's people are holy (saints) because of the imputed righteousness of Jesus (Rom. 4 and 2 Cor. 5:21). Believers are both declared holy (positional sanctification) and called to be holy (progressive sanctification).

Grace to you and peace

Grace – describes the loving, merciful character of God. Humans are right with God because of who He is, not because of who they are. It is God's kind, generous, loving, forgiving, slow to anger, abounding in compassion mercy that is the hope of humanity. Christianity is founded in the unchanging character of God (Mal. 3:6; Heb 13:8; Jas 1:17), the finished work of Jesus Christ (Mark 10:45; 2 Cor. 5:21) and the ministry of the Spirit (John 14:25-26; 16:7-15).

Peace is the result of understanding the character of God and the promises of the gospel (John 14:27; 16:33). Peace is an internal joy and stability apart from circumstances, and/or persecution (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15)

### **Thankfulness – Colossians 1:3**

Thanks / giving thanks is a theme in this letter (Col. 1:12; 2:7; 3:15; 4:2), as joy is in the letter to the Philippians. Remember that Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter.

### **Evidences of Belief – Colossians 1:4-8.**

1. Established in grace; 2. Provides supernatural peace; 3. Received by Faith; 4. Promotes genuine love; 5. Secure in hope; 6. Extends to the world; 7. Bears fruit.

1. Established in grace & 2. Provides supernatural peace – these two were discussed in the first two verses of this study.

### 3. Received by Faith – [Col 1:4a]

faith" This term (pistis) has to be understood in context.

1. Its OT background meant "faithfulness" or "trustworthiness," therefore, it was used of believers living godly lives.
2. It was used of believers accepting or receiving God's gift of salvation.
3. It is used in growing in faith (Heb 11:6)
4. It was used in the collective sense of the Christian doctrine or truths about Jesus (the faith – Acts 6:7 and Jude 1:3, 20).

In Colossians it is used for the brethren who have put faith in the Lord of the gospel. Saving faith has as its object Jesus Christ. True saving faith transforms the heart to love. The next point

### 4. Promotes genuine love – [Col 1:4b]

A powerful and visible evidence of being a child of God is love for believers (1 Jn 2:9-11). It is a command by our Lord (Jn 13:34,35). Love is not merely an emotion but is active and intentional as described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a.

Jesus's love drew the Colossians to himself and to one another. A point of clarification: this love does not mean that we feel the same emotional attachment to everyone, biblical love is so much more as described in 1 Corinthians 13; it is intentional and intended to serve others and meet needs of our brethren.

### 5. Secure in hope – [Col 1:5]

Hope is one aspect of the trilogy of faith – hope & love that Paul uses to describe an authentic church. In 1 Corinthians 13:13, "But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love." Faith and hope are interconnected with a connection that cannot be broken. We believe, therefore we hope.

Colossians 1:5 – Paul describes hope being laid up for you in heaven. *Apokeimai* – means in store or reserved.

Peter 1:4 - to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you (NASB)

Hebrews 6:18-19 – so that we who have found refuge in him may find strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us through two unchangeable things, since it is impossible for God to lie. 19 We have this hope as an anchor for the soul...(NET – New English Bible)

An evidence of hope is to live life with an eternal perspective. The present comfort is traded for future reward.

## 6. Extends to the world [Col 1:6b]

The gospel of Jesus is the only hope of this lost and dying world. It is not only for the Colossae region but for the entire world. Application for us it is not just our local region but for the entire world. The gospel transcends cultural, geographic and political boundaries.

John 8:12 – Then Jesus spoke out again, “I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Romans 1:8, 16,17 – First of all, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world.

Romans 1:16,17 – For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is God’s power for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, just as it is written, “The righteous by faith will live.”

## 7. Bears fruit. [Col 1:6b]

The gospel has a personal and corporate impact. Personal it transforms our lives (2 Cor 5:17; Rm 12:1,2; Jn 15:1-17). Corporate impact as individuals put their faith in Jesus, the body grows.

## S Consult other sources

### SAINTS (hagios)

God created humans for fellowship, but the fall (Genesis 3) caused a relational and moral barrier between a Holy God and sinful humanity. God chose to restore His conscious creation; therefore, He calls on His people to be “holy – set apart” (Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7,26; 21:8; 1 Peter 1:15,16). By a faith relationship with YHWH His people become holy by their covenantal position in Him, but are also called on to live holy lives (Matt. 5:48; Eph. 4:1,17; 5:2-3,15; 1 Pet. 1:15).

This holy living is possible because believers are fully accepted and forgiven through (1) Jesus' life and (2) work and the presence of the Holy Spirit in their minds and hearts. This establishes a dual situation for believers:

1. being holy because of Christ's imputed righteousness (Rom 4)
2. called to live holy because of the presence of the Spirit. (Eph 1)

Believers are saints (hagioi) because of

1. the will of the Holy One (the Father, cf. John 6:29,40; 1 Pet. 1:15-16)

2. the work of the Holy Son (Jesus, cf. 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 1:18-21)
3. the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:9-11,27)

The NT always refers to saints in the plural. To be saved is to be part of the family of God, which we call church. Biblical faith starts with a personal acceptance of God's free gift of salvation, and grows into corporate worship, fellowship, discipleship, stewardship, ministry and evangelism. We are each gifted (1 Cor. 12:11) and called for the health, growth, and well-being of the Body of Christ—the church (1 Cor. 12:7). We are saved to serve.

It became a title for believers (Acts 9:13,32,41; 26:10; Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2).

**O** [openly discuss] After we have our written response this is where we interact with our community or connect group and learn from one another. Share openly and honestly what our Lord has taught you from scripture. Your understanding may change as a result of your discussion with others. Let the Holy Spirit lead and be open to learn from one another. It is an amazing experience as the Spirit of the Lord shows up in our discussion and lives are touched and changed.

**M** [Move to action.] Apply God's word to your life, this where transformation occurs as the Spirit of God moves in your life and you respond to His prompting. This is where the heart connects with the head and the hands. Without application we will gain knowledge and remember what the apostle Paul says, "Knowledge puffs up but love builds up."

My personal application: { write it down and share it with someone who will hold you accountable }.

An application to ponder:

How well do I evidence these seven aspects of belief?

Grace; Peace; Faith; Love; Hope; Evangelism; Bearing fruit.