

**All Things New**  
**Week 12: A New Mission**  
**Colossians 4:2-18**

I'm pretty sure we saved the hardest section in Colossians for our kids to read! But, with that, we have now read the entire book of Colossians during this 12 week series...except for 2 verses. I had them scheduled for week 10, but then decided to change direction. But that feels too unfinished for me, so I've asked my daughters to come help me read the ones we missed. (READ Colossians 3:20 & 21)

Okay, NOW we've read the entire book!

We're wrapping up our series through the book of Colossians today. Over the last 12 weeks, we've been going piece by piece, verse by verse, seeing what this ancient letter has to say to us as modern readers. We've seen that Jesus is the one thing that makes all things new. When we put our faith in Jesus, we receive a new identity, we find life and a fresh start. As we follow Jesus, we find a new sense of meaning and purpose in our life that's based on our new standing with God. In Christ, we receive everything we need to be rooted and built up in the faith.

And, as Jesus makes us new, we find freedom from our old ways of life that used to bind us in slavery to our sin. Now, since Christ is all and is in all in our lives, we are free to walk with compassion and humility, kindness and love. And this new life that we have in Christ changes everything, including our relationships with those closest to us. It even gives new meaning and purpose to the work we do, which is what we talked about last week.

Andrew Conder sent me this picture and said, "I don't think this is what Paul had in mind" ... (show Office meme)

So, over the last 3 months, we've seen how Jesus makes all things new. And, as we close out today, we're going to see that Jesus makes us new, and then he sends us out into the world with a new mission. He sends us out to continue the work he started and help people find and follow Jesus. To take the good we've received in Christ, this new life that we've found in Jesus, and give it away to others. So that, what was started in us can take root and grow in their life, too.

We've been sent out to follow Jesus. To do what he did and love how he loved. And throughout the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the four books that tell the account of Jesus' life, throughout the Gospels we see Jesus loving and serving others. Bringing the Kingdom of Heaven just a little bit closer in people's lives.

Matthew 20:28 – "The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Luke 15 – Parables of Lost Things (Sheep, coin, son. Rejoicing when the lost are found)

**Luke 19:10** – “For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.”

- Next verse, “While they were listening, he told them this parable” about the servants and bags of gold. Point of the parable is that we are to use God’s resources for God’s purposes.
- We are to use our time, talent, and treasure to invest in what matters to God. To invest in people and show them Jesus, who loves them. Who came to seek and save them, too.
- Generosity Challenge update later!

It’s in this context that we find the very next verse...(READ Luke 19:29-38)

Today is Palm Sunday. The day we celebrate Jesus humbly riding into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, on his way to carry the weight of our sin to the cross. I was actually there a year ago Friday...(show pictures)

On Palm Sunday, Jesus rode into Jerusalem as a humble servant willing to give his life as a ransom for many. He rode into Jerusalem looking for lost people and doing what was need to save us. And over the course of the next week, Jesus would be betrayed, crucified, buried, and resurrected. (Prayer path)

Before he ascends back to Heaven, though, Jesus sends his disciples out with a mission. Matthew closes his Gospel with these words...(READ Matt. 28:18-20). The Apostle John starts the book of Acts with these words...(READ Acts 1:8)

The rest of Acts is about the Gospel spreading throughout the world, including to this small, insignificant, bypassed town of Colossae in Asia Minor. And in the opening words of his letter to this church, the Apostle Paul praises God for their faith in Jesus and the way the Gospel was working in them and making them new.

And then he says this in verse 6, “This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God’s wonderful grace.”

Don’t miss this...the Gospel started with Jesus riding into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey to seek and save the lost...it continued with those first disciples being sent out into the world with the good news of God’s grace and love....that message eventually made its way to the Colossians who were growing and bearing fruit from it...just like what was happening around the world.

And so we get to the end of this letter and Paul lists all these men and women who were continuing the world that Jesus started. The work of seeking the lost so they can be saved by God’s grace. And people from every walk of life have joined in on this mission! Men and

women, rich and poor, slaves, and prisoners, and free. People who would be naturally inclined to distrust, and even despise, each other, found unity in their faith in Jesus and shared mission of making him known throughout the world. And what we find throughout the New Testament and Church history is that, **As the Gospel grows in us, it begins to move through us!**

As Jesus makes us new, gives us a new identity, we find a new purpose and joy in our life. We naturally want to take the good we've received and share it with others. We find the joy of knowing Jesus and making him known to others. And, as followers of Jesus, we get to use every resource God has entrusted to us to do the work he's called us to do.

Generosity Challenge Update **(show video as participants walk onto stage)**

- 1) How did you feel in the days after taking the generosity challenge? Were you excited? Did it feel like a burden?
- 2) How did you decide what to do with the money? What was your process? Did you invite others to join you?
- 3) How did you mobilize God's money for God's purposes?
- 4) What surprised you about this experience?
- 5) Is there anything you learned about yourself or serving the Lord from this experience?

Tom and Kelly Ruemler – Excited about the opportunity. Money had already doubled before they left church that day. Put the money on kitchen table. Summer in Florida, went with them. Prayed for wisdom and clarity.

Decided to donate the money to His Eyes in Honduras to purchase Avocado and fruit trees. The \$200 they left with that day multiplied by 10x and they were able to buy the trees. 50 have been planted so far, another 100 will be planted over the next several months. Fruit will provide nourishment for local community, but also sold to help support church and ministry.

Avocado trees can live up to 200-400 years. Mango trees provide an abundance of fruit for up to 300 years. That \$100 is going to pay dividends for generations to come!

The point is, as the Gospel grows in us, it begins to move through us. We use everything at our disposal to share the good news of who Jesus is and what he's done for us so that more people will come to know, love, and follow him. More people will find new life in him. The Gospel always comes to you on its way to someone else. It was never meant to stop with you, you were meant to pass it along to others.

So, how do we do that? It can take on many different forms, but in Colossians 4, Paul gives us some insight into how the Gospel ought to move through us on its way to others...(READ Col. 4:2-6)

In this new mission we've been sent out on, we pray, not for our will to be done in Heaven, but for God's will to be done on earth and through us. We pray for God to use our circumstances, no matter what they are, as a way for the Gospel to be proclaimed. I love that in verse 3, Paul doesn't ask for the prison doors to be opened, but that God would open a door for the Gospel to be heard amongst his fellow prisoners. What circumstances are you in right now that you could start praying for God to use to reach others?

Paul tells us to be wise with our actions and words. If we get caught up in the same battles as everyone else in our culture, people won't be able to see how Jesus makes us new. We'll just blend into the noise of our culture. But as followers of Jesus, we ought to rise above the noise so we can show people the grace of God with our lives and then tell them about it when the moment is right.

Paul tells us to make the most of every opportunity and what a great opportunity this week to invite someone to join you for Easter next Sunday. People are more open to an invitation to church this time of year than anytime else. Take a step of faith and invite a friend, a neighbor, a co-worker. Someone you've been praying for. Invite them to join you at worship next week. (All services the same. Consider attending 8am to make room for others. SK! programming at all services.)

As we live out the new life that Jesus is forming in us, we get to share that new life with others and invite them to find it in their life, too. And we do it in a way that is gracious, generous, and kind. A way that gives life to others and makes them want to find what we've received in Christ.

As the Gospel grows in us, it drives out the old and brings in the new. But, it doesn't end with us. The Gospel always comes to us on its way to someone else. This new life grows in us and then moves through us to take root and grow in the lives of others.

Throughout this series, we've had some visual representations of this new life...

- Sermon bumper montage, new life growing in us.
- Flowers on windows, new life growing in others.

On Palm Sunday, Jesus rode into Jerusalem to seek and save lost people like you and me. The Gospel, the good news of his life, death, and resurrection, spread throughout the world and is taking root in our lives. And as it does, we take the new life being formed in us and share it. We take the good we've received and give it away to others so they, too, can find that Jesus makes all things new.

Grace be with you.