

Colossians 1:1-8 April 6, 2008 - Skip MacMillan

The message of Christ, the Gospel - God loves sinners, was taken to them by Epaphras. This was good news for Paul, to hear about a church that was healthy, alive, and focused on the right things.

Not a Corinthian church with issues, not in the spotlight but one marked by faith, love, and hope. Faith, hope, and love are consistent themes in the New Testament, I Cor. 13, Eph. 3, 1 Thess.

"We have heard"

Faith in Christ Jesus

Salvation, God loves sinners, 1 John 4:9-12 and Romans 3:21-22.

We are all living by faith: believers, agnostics and atheists.

Believing that what we study and believe is in fact true.

The difference is this: an agnostic and atheist's faith is built on the ever-changing human understanding. A believer's faith is based on God, truth given by God.

Our faith is founded in and on the Being who created and sustains all the galaxies, on a being who is perfect, who is love, who is holy, who is righteous, who humbled Himself because of His love for you, who died and rose from the dead and ascended into heaven.

I have placed my faith and life in His hands.

Faith in our daily lives: we have faith the LORD saved us, lets us now have faith for our daily lives.

Faith that His words and promises are true in Scripture.

Faith that He has, does, and will move mountains.

Faith that He does delight and sing over me.

Faith that He desires to walk with you in the garden in the cool of the day.

Faith that He hears our prayers and loves us so much that He answers our prayers.

Faith that He is there and He rewards those who diligently seek Him.

Faith that He has, does, and will heal the sick.

Faith that He will take care of you financially.

Faith to speak His name and message to a friend.

Faith to give your money, time, and life to the things God calls us to; that He sees and will reward you.

Luke 12:15, 29-34.

Faith

"Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1).

"We live by faith and not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7)

"We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." (2 Corinthians 4:18).

Faith, an example in Luke 7:1-10.

The church at Colosse was known for their faith in Christ Jesus for salvation and for each day.

Love you have for all the saints

Knowing the love of Christ found in the gospel, they in turn love each other.

"Christ's love compels us..." (2 Corinthian 5:14).

His goodness and love for you causes you to look at life and people differently, as He does.

Show me a person who loves people and I'll show you a person who is understanding God's love for them!

John 15:9-17

Fruit God produces in and through us is Love for each other.

Jesus' command is "love each other".

Why? "...so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11).

1 Corinthians 13:13 says love is the greatest thing of all.

Matthew 25 says we will be judged by how we loved each other.

Galatians 5:6 says, "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love."

Guatemala

Pray America's love for God.

Their love for each other (Christian's compassion for Don Thomas).

Love for the people of Guatemala.

Displayed by: their words spoken to each other, attitudes toward each other, prayers, compassion and care for each other and affection toward each other.

The call is for us to do the same:

To continue caring and loving each other.

To give our time to each other.

To pray for each other.

To put each other ahead of ourselves.

To give each other the benefit of the doubt, to overlook wrongs, to forgive.

To love as Christ has loved us, unconditionally.

The church at Colosse was known for their love for all the saints.

"May the Lord make your (our) love increase and overflow for each other" (1 Thess. 3:12).

Hope

"... hope that is stored up for you in heaven"

John 14:1-4

He is preparing a place for me.

He is coming back for me.

I will be with Him forever, without separation, temptation, sin, struggle, Revelation 21.

Casa Santo Domingo, 450 years old, built in 1547, hotel in Antiqua, history, beauty, power, huge footprint.

"... the word of truth, the gospel...."

"All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing".

Santiago: Mayan's dark room, Catholic's old building, and the Evangelicals outside with John 1:12 - "To all who receive Him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

Chichi: Gospel in the form of medical help, feeding, providing clean water, discipling, and housing. Love in action, 1 John 3:16-20.

Individual people:

Osefa: "God is good," and Don Thomas praying and giving thanks. "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15).

My life - Guatemala, to hand a bowl of food to a hungry child, care about others, John 15:11.

Ron Morin, changing a 39-year-old man's heart 30 years ago, and then at 64 starting a ministry to share the gospel through building homes, giving food and water and passing on the message of the gospel.

The Gospel rescues and changes people from the inside out.

The gospel brings a love for God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The gospel brings a love for people.

The gospel brings a desire to give and help.

The gospel brings the power to overcome what is humanly impossible: broken marriage, addiction, the past, the present, hard heart, lack of passion, lack of forgiveness, lack of hope, despair, etc.

God's love and power overrides all of that!

We/you must grow in your understanding of the gospel and all its implications over your lifetime.

It doesn't change the peripheral: music style, dress, or foods.

It does change hearts, minds, attitudes, perspectives, and priorities.

Galatians 5:21-22 - "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control" are showing up all over the world.

God's gospel unites people under Christ, all races, languages and backgrounds; all are one in Christ.

This is the gospel bearing fruit all over the world.

The church at Colosse was known for their hope.

Questions:

This is what Christ came to live, die, and resurrect for.

This is God's plan for His church.

What are we known for?

Money, decrying the woes of society, traditions, setting up political action groups, great band, a big brick building, intelligent/academic, good speaker, charismatic, having a high cool factor, etc.?

What will we be known for?

What are you known for?

Being funny, smart, quiet, loud, poor, rich, gossip, hard worker, organized, serious, sociable, what?

What will you be known for?

May we be known for our faith in Christ Jesus for salvation and for our daily lives.

May we be known for our love for each other, our community, and the world around us.

May we be known for our hope in the fact that Jesus is preparing a place for us, He is returning and our hope that one day we will be with our LORD God forever and ever.

This is what needs to be said of you and Eternal.