

The Iron Men of Fellowship of Champions

Colossians 1:5-6

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Opening Prayer

Colossians 1:5 (NOTES)

- "because" - the occasion for Paul's thanksgiving is threefold: 1). their salvation - vs. 6, 2). the work of Epaphras in training them vs. 7, and 3). the good report he received from Epaphras concerning their well-being - vs. 8.
- "the hope laid up for you in heaven" - What is that hope? All the inheritance, bounty, treasure and crowns, sinlessness, and joy of eternal life with our God.
 - 1Co 2:9-10 *"but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND [which] HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." For to us God revealed [them] through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God."*
 - Isa 64:4 *For from days of old they have not heard or perceived by ear, Nor has the eye seen a God besides You, Who acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him.*
 - Mt 6:19 *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. Mt 6:20" But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;*
 - Lu 18:22 *When Jesus heard [this,] He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."*
 - Mr 10:29-30 *Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life.*
- **Discussion:** What is this "hundred times as much," and what and who are these "houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms," etc. that Jesus is talking about? Our brothers and sisters in Christ. Wherever the Body is, around the world, you and I have sisters, brothers, mothers, and even houses in which to rest and lodge when needed.

- "of which you previously heard in the word of truth" - Faith comes through hearing the Word of Christ (Rom 10:17). But, Paul intends more here. The truth that was previously delivered to them was completely efficacious in your salvation. The Gnostics can add nothing of any value to the gospel. It stands wholly effective in its original, unadulterated state. The **gospel** resulted in the conversions at Colossae, not the **Gnostic heresies**.
- **Discussion:**
 - What is "the Gospel"? Discuss. The Greek word, "euaggelion," from which we get the word, *eulogy*, means good news or good report. The good news is that man can escape his eternal damnation to hell by placing his faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. And, what is that work? His death, burial and resurrection.
 - 1Co 15:1-4 *Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,*

Colossians 1:6 (NOTES)

- "*constantly* bearing fruit" - Let us do a little introspection, a little self-reflection, a little self-examination. Is the Gospel constantly bearing fruit in your life? My life?
 - What is the evidence of your conversion, or mine?
 - Could you or I be found guilty in a court of law of being Christians? Could anyone testify on our behalf?
 - What is the spiritual fruit that is being produced in your life? Are you living a changed life? Could others say about you that you live a righteous life? That I live such a life?
 - Do you share your faith with others? Are people getting saved around you?
 - Do you serve enthusiastically in the body, especially without complaint or grumbling, or are you a bench-warming consumer of the ministry of others? Meet with a pastor or elder and say, "Put me in, Coach!"

- Are you an example of agape love?
- Do you give to the church, missions, the poor and needy in your life, in your family?
- "constantly bearing fruit *and increasing*" – These are hard questions for a Saturday morning. The authenticity of the truth of the good news (Gospel) of God's unmerited favor, and lovingkindness (grace) is born out in the evidence of its "constantly bearing fruit and increasing." This is in stark contrast to Gnostic doctrines which claimed that additional esoteric knowledge (hard to understand and known exclusively by the Gnostics) and ritual experience were required for salvation.
- "just as in all the world also ... even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it" - The Gospel is necessarily reproductive in the life of every converted person, those changed "*by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.*" (Titus 3:5). If the Gospel has saved you and me, it produces fruit in our lives that others can see, attest to, and glorify God by. This is a world-wide, ageless, transcendent, universal truth; a concrete and immutable fact. If the Gospel hasn't saved you, it won't produce fruit in your life. The Gospel produces change, and not only in the life of the believer, but in his world, as some people soften to the truth, come to faith in Christ, and grow into maturity, while others break relationships with, or shun the believer, or just recede into the past.
- Paul is reassuring the believers at Colossae and confronting the Gnostics with the facts of power of the Gospel to make the most critical spiritual difference in people's lives. Paul reminds the Church that they have received God's grace, the existence of which the Gnostics denied.

Application Discussion

Closing Prayer

Small Groups

- Discuss current Scripture reading assignment.
- Prayer:
 - Anything praiseworthy.
 - Areas of accountability.
 - Other prayer requests.