

The Truth and Hope of the Gospel

Colossians 1:5-8

All Stand and Read Scripture

Colossians 1:3-8 (NASB)

³ We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, ⁴ since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; ⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel ⁶ which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *of it* and understood the grace of God in truth; ⁷ just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, ⁸ and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

Prayer

INTRODUCTION:

In the first four verses of Colossians, Paul prayed that the grace of God would be with them and was thankful for their faith and love. We learned what it meant to receive the grace of God

In the Bible, grace and mercy are like two heads of the same coin.

Because of God's mercy, I do not receive the judgment of God against my sins.

Because of God's grace, I receive reconciliation back to Him, eternal life and a promise of heaven because of Christ even though I do not deserve them.

Both mercy and grace come to me from God through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is all we need as a Christian.

We also learned from the scriptures that we are to have an active faith in Christ and how we are to have an active love for each other. Paul was thankful for their faith. Faith in and of itself has no value because faith is only as good as the OBJECT it is in. Notice the OBJECT of their faith. Paul was thankful for their faith "**in Christ Jesus**". He was thankful because it was in the RIGHT OBJECT!

Last week I used the illustration,

ILLUSTRATION:

If a man came running in the church and said , “**Pastor, the church is on fire!**”. And I look at him and say, “Alright, I hear you. Just sit down in my office chair and when I am done with what I am working on, we will deal with this.”

If you overheard this conversation, you would probably think that I knew something about this guy that would cause me to disbelieve him. Because, if I **really believed** this guy, I would run through the church and tell everyone to leave immediately! **The church is on fire! Belief would issue an action!**

Belief in Christ is the same way. If we truly believe that Christ is who He says He is and He has done what He has said He has done, **we would act on our belief!**

James 2:17-18 (NASB)

¹⁷ Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, *being* by itself.

¹⁸ But someone may *well* say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

Belief issues forth obedience. This is the type of faith that the Colossians had. It was a faith that was **active and living**.

In the same way, Paul was thankful for the Colossians because of “**the love which you have for all the saints**”.

Biblical love is a **concern for** and a **willingness to** serve others. Love is an action to serve God and man.

1 John 3:16-18 (NASB)

¹⁶ We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

We are told to “love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and to love our neighbor as ourself”.

Love is important because it shows evidence to us that we are serving the Lord.

1 John 3:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

Paul is reminding the Colossians of the **source of the strength or power** that creates this **faith** and **love** in them. That source is our God and Savior who gives strength through His **gospel**.

There are four truths that Paul emphasizes concerning the gospel that I would like to share with you in the next two messages.

1. The Gospel is Truth.
2. The Gospel is Hope.
3. The Gospel is Grace.
4. The Gospel is Power.

BODY:

I. The Gospel is the Word of Truth.

Colossians 1:5 (NASB)

⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel

Paul is thankful for their faith in love in verses 3 and 4, but then he says they have this faith and this love "because of the hope laid up for you in heaven". He continues to say that they received this hope because it was "previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel...from Epaphras".

Paul defines the word of truth as the gospel!

The gospel is the word of truth because it the message of the PERSON of truth.

John 1:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

Jesus himself said

John 14:6 (NASB)

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

Christ is the Truth and the Gospel is the word of truth and it reveals to us Jesus Christ, the person of truth when we read and study His Word.

There is a second sense in which we can call the gospel the word of truth.

Not only is the Gospel the message of the person of truth, but it is a true account of Jesus Christ.

The message in the gospel is true and correct. Paul presented the gospel as something that was absolutely correct and could not be compromised.

Galatians 1:8,11-12 (NASB)

⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!

¹¹ For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. ¹² For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but *I received it* through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

The word gospel means “GOOD NEWS!”

As “NEWS” it is an account of the events that have happened through history. It cannot be “GOOD” or “NEWS” if it not an accurate and true account.

Paul here affirms that the gospel that they had heard from Epaphras is the WORD OF TRUTH and it is true.

So, what is the truth about the gospel?

We obviously do not have time to list everything about the Gospel of Christ, but I would like to share three highpoints of the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (NASB)

¹⁵ Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

What is this Gospel that he preached to them? Well it is summarized it in three points in verses 3 and 4.

³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

1. Jesus is Christ—God in the flesh.
 - a. Paul says that Jesus is the Christ that was prophesied in the scriptures.
 - b. He is the one who became God in the flesh.
 - c. He is the one who came to save His people.
 - d. He came to rescue and redeem.
2. Christ has died for our sins according to the scriptures.
 - a. Jesus Christ has died.
 - b. More specifically, He has died for our sins.

Matthew 20:28 (NASB)

28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Galatians 3:13 (NASB)

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”—

So, we know that Christ died for our sins that we might be reconciled back to God. He died to take on our sin and took the penalty of sin in our place. Now we can be righteous before God by His grace.

3. Christ rose from the dead on the third day according to the scriptures. The scriptures tell us that Christ died on the cross, but he did not remain in the grave, but He rose victorious from the dead. After making a full payment for our sins, he rose from the dead. That is important because we are told that if we are in Christ then there is no more payment left for us to pay. It has been paid in full. We will never need to bear it again. It has been erased and wiped away by Christ.

That is the gospel message and Paul tells us that the Gospel is the word of truth. It actually occurred in history and it happened just as it has been revealed. It is true!

The second truth that Paul emphasizes concerning the gospel is...

II. The Gospel is a Message of Hope.

Colossians 1:5 (NASB)

⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel

Again, we need to understand the Biblical definition of hope. Biblical hope is not like saying “I hope I win a million dollars”.

The faith and love that they have, according to Paul, is “because of the hope laid up for you in heaven”. It is because of this message in the gospel that they have known this hope. They were told of this hope because the gospel was proclaimed to them. **The gospel is a message of hope!**

The hope that Paul refers to is an objective hope. By objective, I mean that it does not depend upon your feelings or wishes. Hope is a real thing that has been accomplished. Paul says it is the hope that is “laid up for you in heaven”. This hope is supremely Jesus Christ Himself!

If you look at verse 27 in this chapter...

Colossians 1:27 (NASB)

²⁷ to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Christ ultimately is our hope.

Hope has many aspects. I would like to highlight 4 aspects of the hope that we have in Christ Jesus.

1. Knowing our sins are forgiven.

Colossians 2:13-14 (NASB)

¹³ When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, ¹⁴ having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Paul tells us that all of our sins have been forgiven through Christ by being nailed to the cross. It gives us hope because we are told that there is no longer any guilt that we will face.

Hebrews 10:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

God says it has been taken care of and I will remember it no more.

A second aspect of our hope is that...

2. We are adopted as children of God.

1 John 3:1 (NASB)

³ See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are.

Romans 8:15-16 (NASB)

¹⁵ For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

The gospel tells us that we have been adopted as His sons and daughters. This is not merely the changing of a last name. It is a heart transaction. We have a perfect heavenly Father who loves us as His sons and daughters.

A third aspect of our hope is that...

3. Christ is Returning Again.

John 14:2-3 (NASB)

² In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also.

Matthew 24:30 (NASB)

³⁰ And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

Jesus is coming back as the victorious King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is coming back to receive those who have been faithful unto Himself.

The gospel is a message of hope because it tells us that

- Our sins have been forgiven.
- We are adopted as children of God.
- Christ is coming again

And fourthly the gospel is a message of hope because...

4. We have an inheritance.

1 Peter 1:3-5 (NASB)

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to *obtain an inheritance* which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

The gospel tells us that if we are children of God, then we will receive an imperishable and eternal inheritance in Heaven.

The gospel is a message of hope because our best life is not now. We have an infinitely better life awaiting for us in Heaven. When this world appears to be crumbling around us; when your personal world is broken and shattered; remember this: you have a hope that cannot be taken away from you in Heaven and the gospel has declared it to us.

CONCLUSION:

We can never out give God. All He asks of us is to have and active faith in Him and serve Him while we are in this short time on earth. The time of our salvation is now. After our life on this earth is done or when the Lord returns again, it will be too late to start serving Him.

Like the Colossians,

- We should trust that God's grace is sufficient for all our needs.
- We should exhibit an active faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We should practice an active love to God and others.
- We should accept the hope of the gospel, the word of truth.

Next week we will look at how the gospel is a message of **grace** and **power**.

Life as a Christian is requires obedience to God's will. The most important offering that we can make is of ourselves. It is not a duty, it is a privilege; it is an attitude of faith.

If you have never turned your life over to Christ, today could be your day of salvation. Christ wants you to start living your life for Him and have and active faith and love in Him. Christ died for all of your sins. Sin separates us from a perfect and Holy God and prevents us from knowing Christ. By God's grace our sins have been wiped away by His Son and we have been made righteous.

He has given us mercy and grace, how can we not give back to God?

If you are need of prayer, or want to become recognized as a member of Greenwood Christian church, please come forward this morning as we sing the invitation hymn.

He is Lord.

He is Lord. He is Lord.

He has risen from the grave and He is Lord.

Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess

That Jesus Christ is Lord.