**Colossians:** What is the Gospel?

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| 06.28.15 | Grace | Part 1 | Col 1:1-14 | The Gospel is: inheritance, freedom… | 35 Min. |

**Introduction**

Attn: The great welcome I’ve receieved from Grace. TP’d. “Suffer for the Gospel” ☺

Them: **What is the Gospel?** **The Good news or a great secret?** Most c’s can’t state it.

Rlv: Staying focused on Christ requires an unapologetic resolve to love & live the Gospel

Struct: Today we start our series on Col. Why here? b/c this is about Jesus. We are about

**Who was Paul?**

* V1: **Paul was a man called by God to do God’s will**. He was intentional to show humility and submission to God while also conveying authority by which he speaks.
* **Timothy** was also writing this letter. An active mentoree and partaker in the ministry
* **This letter was written from PRISON.** Along with Philippians, Ephesians and Philemon. Written from Rome with a soldier attached, yet never shrinking back.

**A LOVE FOR THE GOSPEL RESULTS IN OBEDIENCE TO GOD’S WILL**. 1-2

**Who were the Colossians?** People that lived in Colossae, but this letter specifically mentions, “**To the saints and faithful brothers”** – ato a Christian audience

* Located on the Lycos River, 100 miles E of Ephesus. (Today near Khonai, Turkey)
* Not as influential as near city of Laodicea on the trade route: crossroads of culture.
* Probably a large Jewish population but Greco-Roman (gentiles) as well.
* There was a significant earthquake in A.D. 60, two years before this letter written.
* **Grace and peace** was extended as a simple greeting but a sweet statement of where all hope comes from, even if you are writing from a prison cell or post earthquake.

**A prayer of thanksgiving for God’s work in the people:**

* V3 – **Thanks to God, the father of our Lord JC** is beginning to build the case for Christ’s supremacy. An attitude of gratitude for what HE is doing in them.
* V4-5a - **Faith, love and hope (v. 5)** are significant themes in Paul’s writing (Rom. 5:1-5; 1 Cor. 13:13; Gal. 5:5-6, Eph. 4:2-5; 1 Thes. 1:3; 5:8). The chaplain at Littleton
  + **This is the foundation of the Christian life**—when our faith is correctly placed in God, we can’t help but have it expressed in hope and love.
* **V 5b** – **The word of truth, this Gospel –** the “Good news” of God is TRUTH. It is the baseline from where we make all moral judgment and compassionate action.
  + **The Word of truth** begins the contrast of false teaching that Paul will address
  + V6 - You understood **the grace of God in truth** – this is the Gospel!

**THE GOSPEL IN US RESULTS IN GOD’S LOVE SHOWN THROUGH US**. 3-8

* **V6 - Which has come to you** (Gospel) to save and make them new. God’s grace!
* The Gospel is **bearing fruit** in them and around the world (even in a prison cell).
  + The Gospel is not just information it is transformation! Janitors more than profs
* **God gave them the gospel through a man named Epaphras -** The fact that Paul is not speaking about “what I taught you” but what you **learned from Epaphras.** 
  + **Epaphras was saved in Acts 19** when Paul was in Ephesus. “G spread widely”
  + **He is mentioned in Philemon 23** b/c it was Philemon’s home where they met
* **V 7 – This word “Learned”** is more than just getting it information/knwlg, but rather carries the same meaning as disciple. Their entire life should be transformed.
* **How was their love made known? (v8) by the spirit!**  Christians have a way to impact that word that can go far beyond just a meaningful relationship.

**A prayer of Request for the people –** what did they pray?

1. **That they might be filled with all spiritual wisdom and understanding**.

* He prayed for **knowledge and wisdom and understanding** b/c of the false witnesses that have risen up in their midst. We don’t seek worldly wisdom.
  + **He is making a case against human knowledge and Gnosticism**. Knowledge itself is empty but knowledge of God brings wisdom for life.

1. **That they would bear fruit while growing in the knowledge of God.**

* **To walk** was a Jewish metaphor for how a person lived their life.
  + Paul calls believers “to walk” not according to the oral traditions of Judaism but in a way that is **fully pleasing to** the Lord Jesus Christ.
* **Every good work** is here viewed as the fruit of salvation in the life of a Christian, not as the prerequisite for entering a relationship with Christ.
* Notice the result of Good works – **increasing in the knowledge of God**. This is the payoff! When we serve Him we know more of Him in our life.
* TO BE A MISSIONAL church is to be a church that loves the knowledge of God and acts on it, only to once again increase in knowledge. All about HIM!

**GSPEL GIVES SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, PATIENCE & JOY** 9-11

* V11 – The longing for **spiritual power** was a big deal in the Greco-Roman world. They would involve gods and spirits to try and get wealth, influence, fertility.
  + Paul is making it clear that he was praying for **God’s power according to his glorious might**. No power besides God’s power.
* The pay off of having God’s glorious might in our life is **endurance and patience with joy.** No matter the circumstances, we can have this in our life.
* **Patience is the ability to with stand change, trial and opposition**. You don’t have to live more than a day to learn that life requires patience to service.
* **Joy is beyond happiness**. The ability to rest in the sovereign purposes of God when nothing else makes sense. Tell stories about counseling: depression, affair, etc.

**WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?** (vv.12-14)-Gospel in 2 min: God, Man, Cross, Res, Respnse

* **Inheritance:** the inheritance of the saints, which comes only through the grace of the Father. **“Behind Calvary's cross is the throne of heaven.” ― James Stewart**
  + The idea of inheritance was normally only for the Jewish people, speaking to what it is that they have received as their covenantal right now for all people.
  + **2 Cor 5:21, “The idea of inheritance was normally only for the Jewish people, speaking to what it is that they have received as their covenantal right”**
* **Freedom (v 13):** This is freedom from the power of Satan, sin and judgment.
  + **TRANSFERRED** to the kingdom of God. This is freedom (Gal 5:1).
  + **Nothing to fear** means brought safely into God’s covering (Acts 26:18).
  + **Col 2:15, “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”**
* **Eternal life: “Kingdom of the beloved son”** is the kingdom of God which JC talked so much about. The Gospel means we are adopted into this kingdom!
  + **Eph 1:5-6, “he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.”**
* **Redemption:** We were enemies of God**, redeemed into a relationship by JC**
  + **Heb 9:12, “he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.”**
* **Forgiveness:** A prices paid on our behalf. Not saved from Sin, saved from wrath.
  + **Eph 1:7, “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace”**

**OUR RESPONSE:**

* **Faith:** living as if this is true or I’ll fall flat on my face. All in. Total surrender.
* **Repentance:** “Doing life differently.” To WALK in am manner pleasing to him.

GIVE THE GOSPEL CALL TO SALVATION