

COLOSSIANS 1:3-8

REVIEW...

- **THE OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS...**
 - 1st – Paul's greeting to the church – **Colossians 1:1-14...**
 - 2nd – Paul addresses the false teachings in the church - **Colossians 1:15 - 2:23**
 - 3rd – Paul gives practical teachings on how to live for Jesus – **Colossians 3-4**
- **COLOSSIANS 1:1-2...**
 - Paul was an Apostle by the will of Jesus Christ...
 - He was sent out to tell the world about the Good News – the Gospel message...
 - Paul also wanted to establish his authority to deal with the false teachings in the church...
 - Paul was writing to the saints in Colossae – and all who were faithful to Jesus...
 - We are called to be saints – called out of the world to be different from the world...
 - So that we can be a light to those who do not know Jesus Christ!

THANKFUL FOR THE SAINTS... VS. (3 THINGS)

- **1ST - PAUL WAS ALWAYS PRAYING FOR THE CHURCH... VS. 3**
 - 1st - Paul prayed because - he was thankful for the saints...
 - Paul was not praying because they had problems - but because things were going well...
 - **To often in life we only pray when things are falling apart - trial / troubles...**
 - **Yet the reason why we face trials - is because we get our eyes off Jesus...**
 - **Why wait till everything has gone wrong - pray while things are going right...**
 - **That way we keep our eyes on Jesus - and avoid having to go through the trials!**
 - 2nd - It was not an occasional prayer - it was CONSTANT prayer...
 - The typical view of prayer is coming to God with a list - needs / wants / ect.
 - It is treated as a ritual - part of what God expects a Christian to do...
 - **As if somehow if we recite some words to God once or twice a day - it is enough...**
 - **Rarely do we take the time in prayer to listen – it is a one-way conversation...**
 - **It makes you wonder - if no one is answering - is anyone listening - Luke 18:11**
 - 3rd - Prayer should be a conversation with our Father in heaven...
 - **How can we have a relationship with God - if we never get a chance to talk to Him...**
 - **Telling Him about our day - getting to know the God who created us...**
 - **Taking the time to listening to the wisdom He has for our lives!**
 - **When we have a good day / when we have a hard day / when things go right...**
 - **When we do not know what to do next – find a quiet place and pray!**
 - **Prayer is not something we do - it is the definition of how we live our life...**
 - **I Thessalonians 5:17 - “Pray without ceasing...”**
 - 4th - It was not a repeated prayer...
 - **Matthew 6:7 - “When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do.”**
 - Its Ok to repeat a prayer - Jesus asked the Father 3 times to take away cross...
 - It is OK to ask for the same thing more than once - the persistent widow - **Luke 18:1-8**

- But the idea of scripted prayers is just silly - that is a speech - not a prayer...
- Imagine if a 'friend' came up to you the same time every day and said the same thing...
- Never any variation - never waiting around for a reply - no relationship!
- When we simply repeat ourselves out of habit there is no conversation...
- o 5th - Paul did not pray to change God's mind...
 - God sees the end from the beginning - everything – knows` what is best for our lives...
 - So it is only logical for us to desire 'God's will' for our lives...
 - **Luke 22:42** - "Nevertheless not my will, but Your will, be done."
 - Prayer is not about changing God's mind - getting Him to agree to our plans...
 - Prayer is about God changing our mind - getting us to line up with His plans - His
- 2ND – PAUL WAS THANKFUL FOR THE CHURCH... vs. 4-6
 - o 1st – Because Paul heard of their faith in Jesus... vs. 4
 - The saints did not just have faith – we all have faith – their faith was in Jesus...
 - It is not enough to just have faith – every one of us has a lot of faith...
 - But our faith is only as effective - as the abilities of the one we put our faith in!
 - We can have faith in money – that we can buy everything we need...
 - We can have faith in a government - that they will make our lives better...
 - We can have faith in a person - that they will give us help when we need it...
 - We can have faith in a 'faith healer'- that they will heal us when we are sick...
 - The problem with all of these is that they can let us down - they are not faithful!
 - Governments fail - friends and family (*might mean well*) but they let us down...
 - Faith healers are frauds and cannot even help themselves - much less others...
 - And money seems to disappear as quickly as we get it – and there is never enough...
 - **Ecclesiastes 5:10-11** - "Those who love money will never have enough. How absurd to think that wealth brings true happiness! The more you have, the more people come to help you spend it. So what is the advantage of wealth--except perhaps to watch it run through your fingers!"
 - But only God has all the power - never fails - only God's Word is absolutely true...
 - When we put our faith in God and His Word - our faith is powerful!
 - o 2nd – Because Paul heard of their love for all the saints...
 - The saints in Colossae did not just love the 'lovable' people...
 - They loved ALL the saints – all those who followed after Jesus Christ...
 - And the honest truth is – there are a LOT of people who are difficult to love!
 - But if you love those who are loveable - even sinners do that...
 - Those who do not know Jesus - will still love those who love them back...
 - Even the worst criminal takes care of his kids - his family...
 - **I John 4:7-8** – "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God."
 - Godly love loves even those who are mean and cruel to us...
 - Because loving the 'unlovable' - that the world NEVER would never do!
 - God is our example of Love – who is kind to the unthankful and evil...

- **Romans 5:7-8** – “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
 - While we were still sinners - unthankful / evil - God showed His love for us...
 - So when we do the same - we show we are also sons of the most high...
 - **John 13:35** - “All will know you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
- o 3rd – Because they had the hope of heaven... vs. 5
 - The church of Colossae had faith and love – because they knew they were going to heaven!
 - The saints were not focused on the business and cares of this life...
 - They were focused on the eternal life God had waiting for them in paradise!
 - And because the saints were focused on the eternal – they were a blessing here!
 - If we get our eyes off of Jesus – that is when we lose faith / love in our lives...
 - Too often we focus on the negative - and as a result miss what God is doing...
 - If we focus what is happening around us: money (or lack of) / or our job (or lack of)...
 - We are bound to be overwhelmed – filled with doubt and fear...
 - Anytime we get our eyes off Jesus and onto our circumstances we are in trouble...
 - We will lose the faith and love that God desires to give to us...
 - But when we keep our eyes on Jesus that we see this great truth...
 - Our troubles are only for a moment – heaven with Jesus is forever!
 - **II Corinthians 4:18** – “So we don’t look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen [Jesus]. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.”
- o 4th – The saints Faith / Hope / and Love all came from the Word... vs. 6
 - The same Word of God that has gone out into the whole world...
 - And wherever the Word of God goes – it changes lives / bring good fruit!
 - When people hear the Word of God – they are saved / forgiven of their sin...
 - **Romans 1:16** – “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believe...”
 - The only way have Faith / Hope / Love - is to be in God’s Word...
 - **Romans 10:17**– “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God...”
 - That is why we take so much time studying God’s Word – simply teaching the Bible
 - Six days a week we have Bible studies all over the mountain...
 - That is why we put the Word of God out on the Radio - so everyone can hear...
 - The Kids Summer Camps / Vacation Bible School / Baptisms...
 - Are all done in an effort to get the Word of God out to the community!
 - Faith in Jesus / Love for others / the hope of heaven – comes from the Word!
- 3RD – PAUL WAS THANKFUL FOR EPAPHRAS... vs. 7-8
 - o Epaphras was the Pastor of the church in Colossae... vs. 7
 - He taught the church that met there in the house of Philemon – **Philemon 1:2**
 - Epaphras came to Paul while he was in Prison in Rome to get his help...
 - He wanted to get answers to the false teachings that were popping up in the church!
 - o 1st – Paul was thankful to Epaphras because he taught the Word...
 - Epaphras was making disciples out of the saints there in Colossae...

- It is not enough to give people the Gospel – we need to teach them to follow Jesus...
- People think their job is done once someone believes in Jesus – it is just starting...
- You would not leave a newborn infant to ‘fend for themselves’
- We are not called to just tell people about Jesus – we are to make disciples!
- **Matthew 28:19-20** - “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you...”
- There are three things involved in making disciples of Jesus...
 - First we have to go and tell people about Jesus Christ...
 - Most often people are not going to come to us and ask about Jesus...
 - So it is our responsibility to go to them - reach them where they are!
 - If they are hanging out at the store - we can go hang out with them...
 - If they are wandering around the plaza - wander with them...
 - Next we need to baptize them in the name of Jesus...
 - Water baptism does not save you – the thief on the cross – **Luke 23:43**
 - It is the outward confession of what takes place when we believe in Jesus...
 - If you have a diploma – the paper does not give you any more knowledge
 - But the paper represents the time and effort that went into earning that diploma
 - In the same way we baptize to show that someone has been saved!
 - Finally we need to teach them the Word of God...
 - The biggest problem in the world today - people do not know the Word of God...
 - They do not know the dangers of hell - or the reward of heaven...
 - About the coming judgment of God - or His amazing Love and salvation!
 - They do not know Jesus - because they do not know His Word!
 - And the ones who should be teaching them - the leaders - do not...
 - **Hosea 4:6** - “My people are being destroyed because they don’t know me. It is all your fault, you priests [pastors], for you yourselves refuse to know me.
 - Pastors need to teach the Word - faith comes by hearing the Word!
- 2nd – Epaphras was a faithful servant...
 - Epaphras was a servant in the church – literally a slave for Jesus Christ!
 - A Godly leader should not be telling others what to do – but shows them...
 - Godly leader does not tell you to serve – he serves as an example...
 - Sad to say the church has lost sight of that today – ‘Pastor’ has become a title...
 - Rather than working hard for God – it describes someone who tells others what to do!
- 3rd – Epaphras was a faithful minister...
 - The word minister is the word ‘deacon’ – the picture is that of a ‘table waiter’...
 - We do not think of a table waiter – being something to be thankful for...
 - When we think about how God could use us we think BIG / IMPROTANT...
 - Not the person who empties the trash / cleans / he is just a servant!
 - We would call that person ‘nothing special’ – but God calls them the ‘leader’!
 - **Matthew 20:36** – “Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant.”
- 4th – Epaphras told others about the love of the church...
 - And he had good reason to boast – because the church was full of Jesus!
 - Too often pastors are critical of the people in their churches...

- Then beat them up – telling them how sinful and rebellious they are...
- But the honest truth is a church is a reflection of the pastor who teaches them...
- If the people in the church have no Faith / Love / Hope – nothing to boast about...
- It is likely because the pastor not teaching / serving / and ministering to the people!