

The The 7 Remarkable Traits of a Local Church  
Subtopic: Paul Thanks God For the Church  
Col. 1:3-8

- Not all churches are made equal (v.3).
- In this section, Paul thank God for seven things that he saw in the church. These are the seven marks of a true believer in Christ.
- How can you tell a tree?

1. **Faith** in Christ Jesus. Verse 4 *Because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus*

*Eph 2:8-9, For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of Christ, not of works, lest any many should boast.*

2. **Love** for God's People. Verse 4, *and of the love you have for all God's people—*

*Matt. 18:6 "If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea."*

A person growing in Christ protects and loves new believers.

3. **Hope** for the future. Verse 5 *the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and*
  - a. A true believer loves the coming of Christ.
  - b. He may live his life today the way he will be like in the future.

- c. Hope in the future affects us today.

Romans 5:2-5, 2 *...we boast in the hope of the glory of God.* 3 *Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope.* 5 *And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts...*

4. **Hear** the gospel. Verse 5, *about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel* 6 *that has come to you.*

1 Cor. 15:2 *By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.* 3 *For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance[a]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,*

5. **Live** the Gospel. Verse 5, *In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it*

Is your life bringing others to Jesus Christ?

6. **Study** God. Verse 6, *and truly understood God's grace.*
- A true believer studies the word.
  - It is grace that saves us (Eph 2:8-9), It is grace that makes us move and live forward, 2 Cor.

12:9 *"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness'"* (2 Corinthians 12:9).

7. **Learn** from a teacher/mentor / from one another. Verse 7, *You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant,[c] who is a faithful minister of Christ on our[d] behalf, 8 and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.*

- Why Epaphras? Because he *is a faithful minister of Christ... who will teach you how to love in the Spirit.* When we are looking for those who lead God's flock... when you are looking for teachers of the word and leaders of small groups, look for two things...among others...

Conclusion: May I grow these fruits and characteristics in my life.

- Faith in Christ Jesus.
- Love to God's People.
- Hope for the future.
- Hear the gospel.
- Live the Gospel.
- Study God.
- Learn from a teacher/mentor / from one another.