

Colossians #4: Truth Declared (1:6-9)

In reaction to heretical teaching at Colossae, Paul will address them **concerning Truth in five sections: 1st declare it; 2nd define it; 3rd defend it; 4th desire it; 5th display it.** Truth confronts the false teachers and their error.

In vv. 3-8 we see Paul's Praise. We saw that he shows thankfulness for what is good and recognizes the Colossian's faith, love and hope with the faith and love shown to spring from the hope laid up for them. (1 Pt. born anew to a living hope.)

Notice it is not locked up, it is stored up ("It is out of physical sight but not out of spiritual reach")

Faith is based in the past and rests

Love is based in the present and works

Hope is based in the future and anticipates

God has given His people the ability to look forward, in expectancy; look back at the Christ event to find assurance of that hope; and thru that assurance act now in love.

"...the word of the truth of the gospel." Faith, hope and love is what the Colossians learned when they heard the the gospel (Good News). It is the word of truth. Truth is Divine reality (aletheia). When the reality of God confronts the reality of man, remember, it's "Let God be true though every man be a liar."

Colossians 1:6 which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;

It has come to you. It is bearing fruit. It is growing (expanding) 30 – 60 – 100 (blade, ear, full kernel) (When planted it grows) This is Sow and Reap: Jesus taught the word is seed, the heart is soil... Some bears fruit = Bob Lewis story of "I am a fool for Christ." You need to just sow the word and trust God: "Apollos planted, I watered, but God gave the growth."

"since the day you heard the word of truth and knew (understood)"

Notice: not only hearing, but knowing (understanding) is before fruit.

1:6: "the grace of God in truth" (another name for the gospel – the word of truth.

God's declaration of favor to the undeserving

God's declaration of love without merit

It has come to you and does bear fruit when it is understood.

It **is** God's good news – the gospel - and it **is**:

Ephesians 1:13 In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Colossians 1:7 as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,

All of the aforementioned came **by** Epaphras, who was their evangelist, and Paul's fellow servant and **a** faithful minister of Christ. Notice – there is no such thing as a minister of people – the minister of Christ is called to be **a** servant of Christ's body. We minister to Christ by serving His people (e.g., **a** cup of water; Mt 25 = “as you did it to one of the least of these, My brethren, you did it unto Me.”).

Galatians 1:10 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

Romans 1:1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated to the gospel of God

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

The point for bondservants and those who relate to them (the congregation) is seen in Acts 6:4:

Acts 6:4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

Folks don't understand the call of leadership. They think the staff of the church is there to minister to them but they must minister to God who sends them to serve men. They must please God and not men because they would not be ministers of Christ if they were pleasing men.

As a minister, Epaphras prayed constantly for them:

Colossians 4:12 Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

He served them and all the saints even from prison:
Philemon 23 “Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you”

Colossians 1:8 who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

He informed Paul of their love in the spirit which leads into Paul's prayer.

Read vv. 9-14... which **is** that they have experiential knowledge of God. His prayer has five requests: 1. deeper insight; 2. worthier walk; 3. fuller life; 4. growing knowledge; 5. greater strength.

Colossians 1:9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

“do not cease” = habitual; constant. Paul took every occasion and opportunity

Notice, Paul has already thanked God that the Colossians knew grace; now he asks for them to be filled with wisdom and understanding. He already thanked God the gospel bore fruit and was growing; now he asks that they may bear fruit in every good work and increase in knowledge.

Prayer sees grace and calls for more grace. On the basis of favor given, more favor is asked.

What are the requests? Always specific with Paul. Always big requests because of a big God (“filled” - “all”). Your mind picture of God will determine your asking.