



## *The Epistle of Paul to the Colossians*

Christ in You, The Hope of Glory

### Colossians 1:7-11 | Walking Worthy of the Lord

The apostle Paul, along with Timotheus, wrote this letter to the *saints and faithful brethren* in the Church in Colossae. Paul may refer to two groups of believers. We have to speculate, but it is possible that the *saints* could be those Jewish believers who were from Jerusalem and had scattered after the persecution in Acts 8:1. The *faithful brethren* could be those who believed afterward, perhaps Jews and Gentiles.

In verses 2-6, Paul imparts *grace and peace* and commends the believers for their *faith* in Jesus, their *love* for all the saints (presumably the rest of the believing Jews who were scattered), and the *hope* of everlasting life. These come from the *truth of the gospel*, which is the gift of salvation by grace through faith and not of yourselves...not of works.

#### COLOSSIANS 1:7-11

Verse 7 —

The Colossians were believers in Jesus Christ, and they were *in the body of Christ, which is the ekklesia*. The word *ekklesia* means “assembly.” Paul stated in 1:18,24 that Christ’s body is the *ekklesia*. That is, the body of believers in Him. Jesus prophesied He would build His *ekklesia* in Matthew 16:18; He said, “Upon this rock, I will build my *ekklesia*.” Christ said that He would build it. When did Christ build His assembly? He began at Pentecost in Acts 2. In chapter 2:41, the Jews in Jerusalem who heard the apostle speaking in their own language, received the word of the Lord from Peter, and it says, “*They that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*” Then, in Acts 2:47 it says, “*And the Lord added to the ekklesia daily such as should be saved.*” I take this as being synonymous with building His *ekklesia*.

But Paul was shown a mystery by revelation from Jesus Christ that this body would not only comprise Jews but also Gentiles who would join them, solely by grace through faith and not of anything they might do to become a part of it. That there would be a body (or assembly) built by Christ was not a mystery.

Somewhere along the line, we do not know when; the Colossians heard the truth of the gospel (1:5), and when they heard it, they learned of the dispensation of the grace of God. they also learned this truth of the gospel from a man named Epaphras. Epaphras appears to be a man who was a part of the *ekklesia* in Colossae and he is mentioned in Colossians 4:12 “Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ.” This could mean he was a member of that church, or it could mean *he is just like you, a servant*. But it does not say “like” it says “is.”

Another interesting note is that Epaphras is also mentioned in another of Paul’s letters. Look at Philemon, verse 23, “*There salute thee Epaphras...*” Now look at verses 1,2, “*Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy, our brother, unto Philemon, our dearly beloved, and fellow laborer, and to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the ekklesia in thy house.*”

Was Epaphras a member of the church in Philemon's house? Was Philemon the pastor? If so, since Epaphras is *one of the Colossians*, is the church in Philemon's house, the Colossian church? I think we could make a case for it.

House churches are the Biblical model. This does not mean large mega-churches are necessarily wrong, but there is no model for a giant *ekklesia* in the New Testament. The only case that could be made for a large assembly is in Acts 2:41. But after Acts 8:1, the large assembly was "*scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria...*"

Whoever Epaphras was, he was **a faithful minister of Christ**. He was *diakonos*, which often is translated "Deacon." He was faithful in his service which he did for the church.

Verse 8—

Epaphras **declared**, or revealed to Paul and Timothy the church's **love in the Spirit**. The word Spirit is capitalized, meaning the translators were thinking Paul meant the Spirit of God. The Greek word is *pneuma*, and can also be translated as "spirit" meaning the church had a loving spirit about them. The article *the* is not in the Greek; *love in spirit*. Either way, this was a loving church.

Verse 9 —

**For this cause**, because of your love, **we do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will**. How do we find God's will? Not through music, or reading a book about God's will, or taking an assessment test: Knowing God's will can only come through the knowledge of His word. When you know the word of God, you will not only know God's will, but you will have discernment to be wise and a spiritual understanding.

It is notable that our cultural used to be knowledgeable in the word of God. I am not saying those who came before us were all Christians, but people living 100 years ago or more, at least in the United States, knew God's word. Because of that, they were wiser in many respects. Today, we have godless leaders and world influencers who are frankly idiots and have no wisdom, let alone spiritual understanding. Paul describes them in the Book of Romans as those who professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. We see this so clearly with those who push the religion of the climate hoax.

Verses 10,11 —

The result of knowledge of God's word is that we can walk worthy of the Lord and to please Him.

1. Fruitful in good works.
2. Increasing in our knowledge.
3. Gaining strength in our inner self.
4. Exhibiting God's glorious power in our lives.
  1. Leading to patience (enduring in your faith).
  2. Long-suffering (slow to avenge wrong).
  3. Joyfulness (not necessarily happiness, but gladness of heart).