

Called To Be Faithful Saints

“Colossians – Together for Christ”
Colossians 1:1-2

April 8, 2018

BIG IDEA

Within Paul’s customary greeting, he expresses his God-given authority as an Apostle. He loved and respected this church and desired that they have grace and peace through the power of God. Like believers in Colossae, we can be faithful saints that grow in our relationship with Jesus in order to reach our city with the gospel.

THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE

Context:

Paul is writing while imprisoned in Rome. He wrote this book at roughly the same time that he penned Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. The letter is meant to steer them away from false teaching and draw the church in Colossae toward Jesus. This greeting would set the stage regarding Paul’s authority and love for them.

Colossians 1:1-2

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, ²to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

MAIN IDEAS

The book of Colossians focuses on these themes:

- Jesus is the preeminent being in the universe.
- Jesus has secured redemption for those that place their faith in him.
- We can participate in a new life with Jesus.
- We can have victory because Jesus has victory.
- We are called to live in maturity with Jesus by cultivating Christian values.

By embracing the truth of this book we can move out together and have an important impact for Christ.



1. Colossae – A City Unnoticed by Many but Loved by Paul

Colossae was once a major city in Asia but by this time had become a small outpost. It was surrounded by larger cities such as Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, and Ephesus. Yet Paul loved these believers and saw great potential in them.

The church was healthy but in danger. A heresy had arisen that focused on worshipping angels in order to defeat evil spirits. Paul penned this letter to help them focus on the pre-eminence of Christ and to give them tools to become strong believers.

- a. **Ridgewood is surrounded by mega-churches. It's easy to feel irrelevant. What does Paul's focus on a church within a small city tell you about God's plan for our church?**

- b. **What modern-day heresies do you see that threaten the Church of Jesus Christ? How does an acknowledgement regarding the Lordship of Christ help us to stay true to our faith?**

2. Paul Held God-Given Authority

Colossians 1:1 - Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother.

Paul indirectly planted this church. He may have not been known to his readers. Thus, he underlines his apostolic authority. He was an apostle—not by his own choosing, but of the will of God. This happened when Jesus met him on the road to Damascus and changed his life. Like Paul's words, all scripture contains the authority of God.

- a. **Do you see the Bible as the ultimate authority in your life? Why or why not?**



b. How would you defend the authority of the Bible to a non-believer?

3. Paul Was an Unusual and Wonderful Choice for Apostleship

Acts 9:15-16 - But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

Paul was a murderer and persecutor of the Church, yet God saw him as the perfect agent to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. Thus, the Apostle became the greatest evangelist of all time.

a. Can God use broken people?

b. Is it possible that God *prefers* broken people? Why or why not?

4. Paul Respected the Faithful Nature of This Church

Colossians 1:2 - To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

Saints and faithful brothers are not two distinct groups; the terms are equivalent and are used generally for those that have walked faithfully with Jesus. These terms refer to separation from a sinful lifestyle and being set apart as a servant of God.

a. These believers were faithful to their calling and they drew the admiration of Paul. Does this motivate you to be a faithful saint?



b. How can you get there?

5. Paul Reminded His Readers that God is Good

Eph. 1:3-6 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

Rom. 5:2 – Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Titus 2:11-12 – For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.

God offers **grace**, which is the source of blessing for all believers.

Luke 2:14 – “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

Rom. 5:1 – Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:17-18 – And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

Peace denotes all of the blessings that are experienced by mankind.

a. Do you desire that others taste this goodness and grace? Who could you talk to today in order to share the gospel?



b. Please take a moment and pray. Thank God for all of his good gifts.

6. Practical Takeaways

a. We must live under the authority of the Bible.

b. Your deep love for God has Ridgewood poised for action.

Ridgewood is full of people like you that love and seek God. We are on the edge of a huge breakthrough!

c. Trust God's grace.

He loves you. You are in his hands. You have nothing to fear.

PRAY

Dear Lord, thank you for men like Paul. He was a man of great authority, yet he loved his people. I want to love like that. Help me to be like the believers in Colossae. Help me to be true to what I say I believe. Help me to walk with you in integrity and run the race well. Amen.

DIG DEEPER

For further study this week:
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- [*Insights on Philippians, Colossians, Philemon \(Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary\)*](#) – a book from Chuck Swindoll (Tyndale)
- [*Colossians and Philemon \(N.T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides\)*](#) – from N.T. Wright (InterVarsity Press)
- [*Colossians and Philemon: Completion and Reconciliation in Christ*](#) – a book from John MacArthur (Thomas Nelson)

NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA

“Together for Christ” continues: Colossians 1:3-12. Paul prays that these believers might have greater knowledge of God so they can live joyfully.

