

Sermon NOTES

Colossians, A Study, Part 2

Colossians 1:1 Edited 2

We continue what we started last week in our demonstrative bible study, examining the letter to the Colossians.

As we journey along, I will make it a point to read the entirety of the chapter that we are studying.

This is for several reasons:

1. It will give you the opportunity to hear the chapter in context.
 - a. This should help you to see and hear the flow of thought of Paul.
 - b. Much danger can come from reading and highlighting isolated verses. So, we will avoid that by reading the entire chapter.
2. It never hurts to hear more of the word of God.
 - a. Your soul benefits from having to slow down and read scripture.

So, with these things in mind, if you have your copy of God word, turn with me to Colossians 1.

(READ COLOSSIANS 1)

Just by way of reminder, when we come to a New Testament Epistle (epistle means *letter*), there are typically three elements that each of them have.

The three elements are:

1. **Intro Author**
2. **Stated Audience**
3. **Bless Announced**

And this is what we have in Colossians

1. We have an **introduction** of the **author**, “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus...”
2. We have the **audience stated**, “**2** To the saints and faithful brothers^[a] in Christ at Colossae:
3. And we have the **announced blessing**, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father.”

So, we will continue to go through this.

Last week, we looked at the introduction of the author.

1 Paul, (Who was Paul? He was a man radically transformed by Jesus! Read Acts 9:1–19.)

an **apostle** (apostle means, “messenger”, “sent one”, “message bearer”. An apostle is someone who has been commissioned on behalf of another to bring forth a message.)

of Christ Jesus (this detail, “of Christ Jesus” informs us of who Paul represents and has been commissioned by. Paul has been commissioned by the one who is the sovereign ruler, creator and sustainer of the universe (Colossians 1:15–20.) Jesus is the one who has all power and authority (Colossians 2:9.) He is God in the flesh (2:9!)

He is the Messiah-King, who gave His life as the full and final payment to accomplish our redemption (1:14!)

Jesus The one who angels worship, saints adore and before whom demons tremble!

This Jesus is the one Paul says he is an apostle for!

So, what this reference to him being an “apostle of Christ Jesus” establishes is the fact that Paul is not coming in his own name and authority, but that He is coming in the name and authority of the Christ he proclaims.

So when Paul speaks and writes, he is doing so with the very authority of God. Therefore, if one chooses to reject the message and teaching of Paul, they are not rejecting Paul, they are rejecting God (1 Corinthians 14:37–38; Thessalonians 4:8!))

by the will of God, this is also seen by the phrase, “by the will of God.” This phrase makes it clear that Paul did not call himself; he did not commission himself; even that he did not volunteer himself. But, rather that he was sovereignly appointed to this office.

He says as much in Galatians 1:1, “Paul, an apostle—*not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father*, who raised him from the dead.”

And we know that one Paul says here is true based off his testimony. Remember Jesus said of Paul, “...he is a **chosen** instrument of mine.”

Paul being a chosen instrument means that his calling to be an apostle did not originate with Paul, but with God!

God chose Paul! God called Paul! God commissioned Paul!

This, again, reinforces the authority of Paul and the authorization he has as an apostle to speak to and instruct the church.

THREE QUICK NOTES:

1. Notice what I am doing as I am working through the text.

I am taking a statement and pulling the truth out of it. Then I am referencing other passages of scripture that support what the text is saying.

Notice that I am asking, “what does the text mean to me?” No one care what the text means to me!

I want to know what Paul meant when he said what he said.

2. You need to familiarize yourself with scripture. Because when you do, the Spirit will bring to mind the other passages of scripture that sheds light on a text that you are studying. So, make sure that you are spending time reading scripture (even if that is reading the same book multiple times in a month.)

3. If you are studying a book by an author who has wrote multiple letters, like Paul, read their greetings because it may shed light on the greeting you are reading.

The example of this is what we just looked at in Colossians Paul simply say that he is an apostle, “by the will of God.” But, in Galatians he expands on what he means by that by saying, “*not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father...*”

So, when you look at one greeting by Paul, you can use the other greetings to maybe gain more insight to something Paul says.

TWO SIDE NOTES:

1. Now, some may be tempted here to make the application: “Make sure your calling is by the will of God.” or “Make sure God calls you and you don’t call yourself.”

Admittedly, that will preach and is a good point, however, that application is not the point of the text.

The point of the text is not for us to discern if our calling is from God (or according to His will.) The point of the text is that Paul's calling was!

Paul is simply indicating to us what certifies him as a legitimate apostle.

So, the point I am making here is to be careful with making unwarranted applications.

Even if a point itself is a good one, if it is not derived from the text, we must not make it part of the text. Does that make sense?

2. Another temptation may be to get excited and want to do a study on the subject "the will of God."

Now, there is nothing wrong with do a study on it, but you have to ask, is this what the text demands or am I just interested in the topic.

There is nothing wrong with being interested in the topic, but just be careful with these sorts of things distracting you from the text.

The interesting thing is, the phrase, "will of God" occurs again in 4:12, and there we will have to look at it.

The difference is context and what we called the **authorial intent**.

Here in chapter 1, Paul is not teaching us about the will of God more so than He is informing us that he was called by the will of God!

In chapter 4, Paul is telling us that Epaphras is wanting them to be assured of the will of God.

This requires us to focus on that will of God, because Paul draws our attention to it and wants us to be assured of it!

As you study scripture more, and the more we walk through this study, you will learn how to distinguish between what is supposed to be focused on or not.

Now, getting back to the text...

and Timothy our brother, Paul concludes the first portion of this greeting by including Timothy, who is described as "our brother"

What is typical in Paul's greeting is an inclusion or reference to an associate or co-laborer in the gospel.

These references usually occur because the churches would have known of the other gospel workers and that Paul was most likely with these individuals as he wrote the letter.

Depending on the letter, the person who is mentioned in the greeting, may have an important role in the church.

For example, Paul mentions Timothy in the greeting to the Philippians.

Then he mentioned him again to briefly describe the work he would do.

But here, in Colossians, it appears that Timothy is mentioned as one who would have been known and loved by the Colossian church and one who was probably with Paul at the time the letter was written.

This is the Author...Now we turn to look at the audience. (This answers the question, “Who was this letter written to”? Or “Who was the recipient of this letter?”)

We see plainly that the audience (or the recipients of this letter) was believers in Colossae.

But, note how he refers to them. This is helpful to examine

2 To the saints...first he refers to them as “saints”

The word “saints” means holy one; those who are set apart for God and by God.

So, to be a saint means that you have been cleansed and made holy by God!

To be a saint is to be one who is sanctified.

Side Note: Because words have meaning, it is very *important* that you learn the meaning of words used in scripture.

Of course, the natural question, “how do I learn the meaning of words?” Great question!

I will show you a way to learn the meanings of words. That will help you in your study of scripture.

and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: in addition to Paul calling them saints, he calls them “faithful brothers”

The word “faithful” means trustworthy or right-minded. It deals with the reality of their committedness to the truth of the gospel.

They are faithful insofar as they have dedicated themselves to God; they have continued in the faith that they professed.

Them being called, “brothers” is significant too!

It reveals the glorious reality of the fact that Christ has made us heirs of God and co-heirs with Him!

To say is another way: **Christ purchased and secured the adoption of the people of God!**

Now, this is when we come to a very important part of studying scripture: The application.

It is here that we can apply what Paul says about them to us.

This point of application is easy because Paul has simply described who they are in relationship to God.

Notice that Paul says, they are “in Christ”...this is Paul’s favorite phrase in his letters which indicates the source, foundation of a believers union with God!

And just as these saints are “in Christ”, *so are we!*

And because of this, the things that are said about them *can be said about us!*

Because of the finished work of Christ, we too are saints!

We are those who have been set apart, sanctified and devoted unto God!

Christ has made us holy!!

Because of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit He has given us, we are faithful!

Because of Jesus, His life, His death, His resurrection, He has given us the right to become children of God!

We are adopted sons and daughters of God!

This is audience...the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae.

The final part of this greeting is the blessing/salutation.

Salutations are commonplace with the New Testament Epistle.

Especially in Paul's letter. In some form or fashion there is a reference to the grace, peace, mercy of God.

And this is what we have here.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father, this salutation is one that reinforces the glorious reality of what God, the Father has done through our Lord Jesus Christ!

There is no possible way that we could ever experience the grace and the peace of God apart from the saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ!

This salutation is one that seeks to remind the saints that the grace and peace they have comes from God.

“Grace” is the unearned, unmerited favor of God.

“Grace” is being the recipient of God's lavish kindness.

“Grace” speaks of God's dealing with us according to the kind intention of His will!

We receive from God that which we do not deserve!

We receive grace and peace!

We deserve judgment and wrath!

We receive favor and kindness!

We deserve divine vengeance!

Paul also says we are recipients of peace.

This peace is undisturbed confidence in God!

This is a settled assurance of calm and harmony (or even union) between you and God!

And would you notice the source or origin of this grace and peace!

It is from God, our Father.

What this reveals is two things:

1. The fact that grace and peace come from God!
2. That God delivers His grace and peace to His children; to those who are covenantally bound to Him through faith in Christ!

The God of eternity, the God who is incomprehensively holy, is to you a Father!

And if you are floored by thought, let this settle on you:

You Father has given to you as a very present possession HIS GRACE AND HIS PEACE!!

Be shocked and amazed!

Stand in awe and be overwhelmed by the sheer blessing of God that He poured out to you!

Now, did you notice what I did: I looked at the text, saw what was there, explained what was there, then I applied to us!

That's what you do in faithful bible study.

You are primarily asking three questions:

1. What does the text *say*?
2. What does the text *mean*?
3. How does the text *apply*?

And when you do that, you can glean some of the glory that we gleaned from the intro!!

In the time we have left, I am going to show you one way to learn the meaning of words.

Trust me, this is not beyond your ability to do.

It is simple, but will require you to learn something new if you are not use to dealing with technology.

And if you do not want to deal with technology, I have some books for you to purchase (all this info will be in the notes that will be posted on the website.)

USING A WEBSITE:

There are many websites to use, but a simple one, for now, is Bible Gateway.com

1. Go to the website
2. Choose your translation
3. Type in your passage
4. Right above your passage, to the right, is a symbol that looks like two papers.
5. Click that and another translation of the scripture should appear
6. (When the translation appears), choose “Mounce Interlinear New Testament”.
7. When you do this, you will see the English on the top and Greek on the bottom. That’s ok, you do not need to know Greek. Find the English word and it will highlight the Greek.
8. Click the highlighted word and it will give you the definition.

That is the most basic way of doing a word study online.

A Biblical Definitionary you can buy is:

Mounce's Biblical Dictionary

<https://www.amazon.com/Mounces-Complete-Expository-Dictionary-Testament/dp/0310248787>