

# THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST

## The Fullness of Deity Dwelling in Christ

### *The Three Results of Being a Christian*

Colossians 1: 3-6

**Introduction:** As we begin our study of the body of Paul's letter to the Colossians we learn a lot about how to make disciples and how to pray for them. Paul expresses his affirmation of what is good, what is a concern, and explains how he, and his companions, are praying for them.

#### I. The Object and Focus of Prayer

- A. We give thanks—Paul is not alone in his intercession.
- B. We *give thanks*—they begin with expressions of gratitude for what God has already accomplished.
- C. *Praying always for you*—they are consistent and persistent in their prayers. Prayer is not a one time event, but a spiritual warfare in which we appeal to God in the activity for and against His people. It requires persistent vigilance.

#### II. The Core Ingredients and Evidence of Genuine Followers of Jesus Christ

- A. *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus*—following Christ begins with faith, is lived out by faith, and ends with faith. (II Corinthians 5:7)
- B. *and the love which you have for all the saints*—faith in Christ always results in love for one another. (See I John 2:9-11, 3:14-18)
- C. *because of the hope that is laid up for you in heaven*—hope, according to the Bible, is a steadfast confidence and assurance of something we do not yet have, but have no doubt whatsoever that we will have it. It is the confident expectation of heaven that triumphs over fear (Hebrews 2:14-15).

#### III. The Word of Truth—The Gospel

- A. We have received the Gospel—it makes all the difference in the world.
- B. The Gospel (good news) is the *TRUTH* about life and everything important pertaining to life!
- C. This is why the truth is so important. The truth is the Gospel and the Gospel is the truth. If anyone begins to deviate from this precious truth all of the core ingredients begin to erode. Right thinking is essential to right living.

**Conclusion:** So, how is your personal prayer life—your corporate prayer life? Do you see the evidence of new birth in your own life? Do you know the truth about the Gospel? Take some time right now to do an inventory, with the help of the Holy Spirit, of your inner self. How do you measure up to Paul's opening lines of this letter? If you do not measure well, what does God want you to do about it?

*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father. We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth; just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.*

Colossians 1: 1-8  
(NASB)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) What were some of the reasons that compelled the Apostle Paul to continually pray for the churches he helped to plant both directly (e.g., the church at Ephesus) and indirectly (e.g., the church at Colossae)?
- 2) What do we learn from Paul's devotion to praying for the churches? How does this apply to our own life today?
- 3) What are the core ingredients—the three essentials—that mark the life of a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ? Are there other verses of Scriptures that confirm Paul's thesis?
- 4) Why does saving faith in Christ always end up as love for all the saints? Are there Scriptures that come to mind that make a profound case for such a love? Share your thoughts on how this is worked out in the Christian life.
- 5) How would you define or explain “hope” to a non-believer? What role does hope play in your own life as a Christian?
- 6) Why is the Gospel—the Word of Truth—so important to the way we live out our lives in Christ Jesus?
- 7) Reflect on the questions that our pastor has asked in the conclusion section on the previous page. Are there things you would care to share with your small group as a result of your “inventory taking?”

### NOTES

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