



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: The Impact of the Gospel

Date: April 7, 2024

Scripture Text: Colossians 1:1-8

Notes:

Today we kick off a study of the book of Colossians. Colossians is a letter written by the Apostle Paul; one of four he wrote during his first imprisonment in Rome. The Colossian church was established by a co-laborer of Paul's named Epaphras. Paul sent him while he was ministering in Ephesus. Colossae was a mostly Gentile area, but some Jews lived there as well. There were heavy Hellenistic influences that eventually affected the Colossian church. This letter was written to address those issues.

I. A Word of Introduction (Col. 1:1-2)

As is typical of a letter from Paul, he introduces himself and his capacity within the church, as an apostle. This establishes his authority for what he addresses with the letter. The letter is clearly written to the "saints" (Christians). This letter was not intended for those who were not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, but to those professing to be His followers. The expectation would be for them to heed what Paul had to say.

- How does Paul identifying himself as an apostle establish his authority within the church?
- Are the words of Paul any less authoritative now than they were when they were written?
- Is there any less expectation that they will be obeyed as they were when they were written?
- What is implied by Paul when he addresses the Colossian Christians as "faithful brethren"?
- How would you describe a faithful brother (or sister)?
- Why is it important to demonstrate faithfulness in Christ to:
 - 1) those within the church?
 - 2) the lost who aren't part of a church?
 - 3) Jesus?

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II. A Word of Commendation (Col. 1:3-8)

Paul was thankful when he heard from Epaphras of the Colossian Christians faith in Christ and the love they had for one another. Paul describes in this passage, the impact they had on the gospel. The gospel was *reported by the saints* ([vs. 7](#)), *received by sinners* ([vs. 4a](#)), *resulted in change* ([vs. 4b-5](#)), and was *reproduced* ([vs. 6](#)). These impacts described how the Colossians responded to the gospel, but it is how we respond to the gospel today as well.

- The news of the Colossian Christians gave Paul reason to be grateful for them and how they responded to the gospel. How can we report the impacts of the gospel to other Christians giving them reason for thankfulness also?
- Why does the acceptance of the gospel result in change?
- What are examples of how *passions* are changed after someone is saved?
- What are examples of *perspectives* changing after someone is saved?
- What are examples of the fruit Christians produce after they are saved?
- What are examples of fruit you are producing?

“As Paul looks at the young church, what he sees is what God is doing: for, in personifying ‘the gospel’, he is really using a paraphrase to refer to the divine action through the gospel (and, of course, through its proclaimers, as in [v. 7](#)). The gospel has come to you: God has reached out to them, has visited them with his saving power, as indeed all over the world this gospel is producing fruit and growing. From his perspective as a converted Pharisee the important point was that the salvation promised in the Old Testament had now been unleashed upon the world irrespective of geographical or racial barriers. His own missionary activity was an embodiment of this truth, as Ephesians 2:11–3:13 indicates. It is in that sense that the individual churches are ‘representatives’ of the Gentile world as a whole. They were for Paul a sign and promise of the universal scope of God’s saving purposes and hence of still greater things to come.”

Wright, NT.