

Colossians - Christ is Enough!

Week #1: The Power of the Gospel

April 28, 2019

The prevailing conditions of the church in the first-century are alarmingly like our own. Self-centered philosophies, pluralistic beliefs in multiple gods, a deep preoccupation with our physical bodies, and an insatiable desire for knowledge easily gain an audience who are looking for answers to life's deepest questions.

Charles Swindoll correctly writes, "anyone who digs deeply into Paul's brief but powerful letter to the Colossians soon realizes that while it addressed specific problems of first-century Christians, its relevance easily bridges twenty centuries of history."¹

That this is true reflects the fact that the human condition is not changed by advances in technology and knowledge. At the core of our lives we, too, continue to ask deep questions of meaning and relevance - questions that modern technology and knowledge are not designed to answer. And as Christians, we are convinced that these questions *are* fully answered in Jesus Christ.

In Paul's letter to the Colossians, we will learn and be reminded that Jesus has life's answers.

Study Questions: *The Power of the Gospel.*

1. The Church of Colossae met in the house of Philemon, a wealthy merchant of the city. What do you think it would have been like to "do church" in a home each week?
 - If you are in a Life Group, you actually are in such a situation ... what are the strengths of getting together in a small group?
 - What would it have been like to receive a letter from the Apostle Paul?
2. Read Colossians 1:1-8.
 - Paul begins by encouraging these people that he has never met, but heard about from their first pastor, Epaphras, who has travelled 1900 km to tell Paul about his congregation. How does he pray for them? Why is this so important for them to hear?
3. Pastor Ken said that the gospel's power penetrates our lives in three stages:
 - Step 1 - We receive it. This underscores an obvious point: Nobody is born knowing the good news of Christ, and people don't discover it on their own. Someone must tell them about Jesus.
 - Who told you about Jesus? When you heard gospel, how long did it take you to really understand it? Since then, how much more have you learned?
 - Step 2 - We believe it. How long did it take you to "believe" the gospel after receiving it? Did you embrace Jesus immediately, or did it take some time? What did you have work through to "believe"? How did the people around you respond?
 - Step 3 - We are transformed. What were the immediate changes that took place within you when you believed in Jesus Christ as your Lord? Who noticed and why?
 - What have been the most recent transforming moments God is working in you?
4. Have you talked with the person you are praying for this year about Jesus? Do they know the good news? What is keeping them from believing? Pray specifically for this in your prayers for them. Pray, too, that you (or someone) will have opportunity to share Jesus with them again.

¹ Swindoll, Charles. Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Vol 9. 2017, Tyndale House Publishers, p. 101.