

**TITLE: PAUL'S EXPECTATIONS OF CHRISTIANS**

**TEXT: COL 1:3-14**

**THESIS: The purpose of this sermon is to teach the characteristics Paul prayed would be in the Colossian brethren.**

**I. THANKSGIVING (v. 3-8):**

- A. Paul did not establish this congregation
    - 1. **2:1** – “have not seen my face in the flesh”
    - 2. **1:4** – “we *heard* of your love...”  
They had faith in Christ and love for the saints through their hope, which came from the gospel, which Epaphras taught.
  - B. Epaphras came and taught (**1:7; 2:7**) the word of the truth of the gospel (**1:5**)
  - C. They obeyed the gospel and it brought forth:
    - 1. (**v. 5**) Hope, which is laid up for them in heaven. Through this hope, they developed:
      - a. Faith in Christ Jesus (v. 4)
      - b. Love to all the saints (v. 4)
    - 2. (**v. 6**) Fruit  
Every good work (v. 10)
- It started with someone knowing the truth and teaching it (Epaphras)!

**II. REQUEST (v. 9-14):**

- A. (**v. 9**) Knowledge of His will
  - 1. “Epignosis” (experiential knowledge; precise / correct knowledge)
  - 2. How? Through the spiritual gifts of some. Today – through study of Scripture
  - 3. In all *wisdom* and *understanding* (cf. Gnosticism-knowledge of Christ is greater than the *Gnostic's* “knowledge”)  
**James 1:5** – ask God for wisdom (not knowledge)  
This knowledge will cause us to B) walk worthy...
- B. (**v. 10**) Walk worthy (live worthy)
  - 1. Being fruitful in every good work
    - a. What does it mean to be fruitful? Fruit is in doing good works (edification, evangelism, benevolence – **Acts 11**)
    - b. The gospel brings forth fruit (**v. 6**). It equips us for every good work (**2 Tim 3:16-17**)
  - 2. Continuing to increase in the knowledge of God (circular effect – knowledge brings a worthy walk)
- C. (**v. 11**) Strengthened in all power/strength (i.e., having all the strength you need)
  - 1. According to the strength of HIS glory
    - a. This shows us a different definition of strength...it is HIS, not ours.
    - b. This strength is used in a different way than people understand ‘strength’ today...
  - 2. Unto (with a view toward; expected results being...)
    - a. Patience (endurance)
    - b. Longsuffering (forbearance)
    - c. Joyfulness!? – I’m given strength, but can’t use it!? Strength is supposed to make me powerful! But what does he say? *Unto* all patience and longsuffering, doing it with joyfulness.
- D. (**v. 12-14**) Giving thanks
  - 1. To whom? God the Father
  - 2. Why?
    - a. (**v. 12**) He made the unfit fit. He made us sufficient / fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints of light.  
**Rom 8:17** – “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”
    - b. (**v. 13**) He delivered us from darkness into the kingdom of Christ (the church). Yes, the kingdom *has* come!
    - c. (**v. 14**) And in Christ we have forgiveness of sins!

**CONCLUSION:** Paul said nothing negative about these brethren in this prayer. Everything he says about them sounds positive. Yet he still prayed that they would continue to grow in these areas (knowledge, wisdom, spiritual understanding, strength, joy, thankfulness, etc.). Surely this is a message to us as well. How strong do you think you are? How well do you know the scriptures? Regardless of how you answer these questions, keep working at it! The church needs strong, wise, knowledgeable, loving members! This is what we *all* should be.