

else. Say, do you see where the Word says that the faith was "heard?" No secret believers at Colosse!

2) Love. The Word teaches that "faith works by love" Gal. 5:6). Here is genuine love amongst the brethren. This is a critical expose of our relation to Christ (1 John 3:14). Of this love Paul had heard! Do they hear this sort of thing about us?

### 3. EXPECTATION v. 5.

The preposition "for" by which this verse begins should be rendered "on account of." It was, therefore, on account of their hope that the faith and love of the Colossians was strong. Ah, beloved, that makes a big difference in the text! You see, it does matter what you believe about eschatology. What is the hope? It is the blessed hope of His soon return. The verb "laid up" is one which signifies safe keeping. No insecurity about this. But what compulsion it had on the lives of His own! God give us this spirit today.

Conclusion Here's a wonderful word in these days when men need a goal. It's glorious just to get into the Word and see what He did for the Colossians back yonder in the first century. This is what He does for all who trust Christ right now. Let's not be ashamed of Him who has pardoned us and made us rich in Himself! Soon we shall see Him--oh, what glory. Does this mean something to you?

## THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS "The Gospel of Christ" Colossians 1:1-5

### Introduction

1. It is absolutely thrilling to read of the work of God at Colosse. Paul did not found the work, but he heard of it and that was enough to excite his heart about it.

2. Colosse was one of a triangle of cities, the other two being Laodicea and Hierapolis. It was a wool center and a thriving pleasure resort.

3. The city of Colosse lays claim to world account because of its use as the home of the Essen a legalistic religion which gradually fused with the mysticism of the orient and philosophy of the intellectuals of Greek thought. This false system later became known as Gnosticism.

4. But the Gospel came to Colosse. With this some wonderful things took place. The Gospel there fore, brought about: -

### 1. SALUTATIONS vv. 1-2

Four major designations are here: -

- a. Paul. He speaks of himself as an "apostle." This gives authority to what Paul writes, but it particularly affirms that he was commissioned (Luke 6:13)!
- b. Timothy. Here is a true Christian relationship! Let's not broaden it. There is no such thing as a world brotherhood, save by virtue of humanity's sourcing in God our Creator. Timothy is called "the brother" and this helps to point out something

about him. What a man he must have been.

- c. Colossians. They are "saints." This doesn't mean anything special, but points out they were separated people. Brother, how we need to press this today. It is true of every believer by virtue of his faith.

They acted in the power or their realized new life in Christ, hence are called "faithful bretheren." This phrase describes their relation to both God and man. Would to God all were steadfast and trustworthy. (cf. Acts 16:15; Luke 12:42).

Don't fail to see that these people had a twofold environment: in Colosse and in Christ. They were mill of the run people and had the same problems and perplexities we all have, BUT they were also in Christ. Every Christian has these two areas of operation.

- d. Gifts. Two are mentioned: grace and peace. The former is the ground of all else. Peace is the outcome of the grace provided in our wonderful Lord Jesus. Here, however, Paul only notes it is from God the Father (Greek). This is a direct attack on the Gnostics. He is not so removed that He can't communicate with us. Holy and blessed is His eternal Name.

## 2. APPRECIATION vv. 3,4.

Galatians is the only letter which Paul wrote in which thanksgiving is not found. He rejoiced to see the work of the Lord in the various centers where the Lord was

pleased to open hearts. Ought we not to have more of this same spirit? Four questions are answered in this section:-

- a. To whom? Here is the Gospel Name of God. This is the message of John 3:16. It is a fuller and richer name than that of Exodus 3:6, 16. Thanks in this Gospel Name singles Him out as the God Who pardons.
- b. For Whom? It is simple--He gives thanks for "you". Let it be said that the one who gives thanks to God for himself must also give thanks to God for others. The interest of other believers must be our interest.
- c. How made? Prayer is the big item here. This petition. Prayer is linked with thanksgiving. They are twins of one divine birth in the Spirit. Thanksgiving is always the promoter of largeness in prayer. The verb used here is generic in sense.
- d. For what? Two factors are listed in the Word: -

1) Faith. Three prepositions are used with faith. In some verses He is the object of faith (unto). In others He is the foundation of faith (upon). Here He is the sphere of faith (in). This was the first and most important item for which Paul gives thanks. Some would feel that emotional relationships are to receive priority, but this is not the case. Faith is absolutely essential. It does not exclude, but it does form the foundation and ground for all