



Introduction

The epistle (letter) of Colossians was written by Paul the Apostle. Even though Paul had likely never visited this church, it was believed to be planted as the direct result of his ministry. Among other things it was written to address a concern that had arisen due to a merging of the beliefs from the local folk religions with Christian truths, which had an oppressive effect upon the believers. Paul was intent on pointing out that Jesus is all they truly need, and to encourage them to live in light of Him. To submit our minds, wills, and hearts in an ultimate sense to any alternative philosophy, teaching or religion actually oppresses us, keeping us from the fullness of life and freedom Jesus provides through the gospel.

In spite of Paul's concerns, the first eight verses are filled w/ praise to God and gratitude for this community of saints because of their faith in God, love for others and their hope of heaven which was being revealed within the world.

Observation/Interpretation

- Read Col. 1:3-8. Why was Paul so thankful for the Colossian believers?
- Paul wrote that the Colossians had learned about Jesus through a man named Epaphras (Col 1:7). Whom did God use to share Jesus with you? Who are the people in your life which God may want to use you to be like Epaphras, and share Jesus with them?

Application

- In Col 1:6, Paul uses the phrase, "heard...and understood the grace of God...". What was it like for you when this first heard and understood the grace of God? Explain how the grace of God impacted you.
- Paul describes the, "the word of truth, the gospel" as "bearing fruit and increasing" (Col 1:6) within the Colossian believers. What are some of the ways in which the gospel is "bearing fruit" in your life?

Prayer

- Ask God to help you (and your Community Group) to increase in your impact of the gospel through your life, by "bearing fruit".

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION

- **Information:** Read the passage/answer the questions.
- **Transformation:** Being honest/transparent, discuss how God through the gospel intends to change you.
- **Mission:** Pray together. Surrender to God's mission.

FAMILY DEVOTION DISCUSSION

- **Information:** Have your child read the passage.
- **Transformation:** Make it personal. Help them to see God's love through what He's already done for them.
- **Mission:** Pray/sing together, give yourselves to God.