

## Colossians 1:1-14

Something that we might easily overlook while reading Scripture is that Paul **takes joy and ownership in the ministry God has called him to**. This is a consistent pattern throughout his decades-long ministry, as we see in passages like Romans 1:1, 1 Corinthians 1:1, 2 Corinthians 1:1, Galatians 1:1, and Ephesians 1:1. Paul makes it clear that his identity is deeply connected to the ministry God has entrusted to him. This connection between identity and ministry is a biblical truth, and it's something Paul models for us to embrace in our own leadership.

As youth leaders, we should not see the ministries we participate in as “small tasks” done once a week or month. Rather, they are places where we **find identity and joyfully serve**. Many students look to hobbies or extracurricular activities for meaning, but the impact of faithful ministry — serving kids on Sundays, discipling students, or investing in homes — far surpasses that. Those who serve on Sunday mornings reflect Christ's love and compassion, especially for children who may not experience it at home. Likewise, **you as a youth leader get to be a consistent light** for students from different backgrounds, home lives, and spiritual walks. The influence you have is a lasting investment with exponential returns for the next generation of the Church. Model this for your students, and take joy in the ministries they participate in at church, at school, or at home.

In Colossians 1:4, Paul notes not only that the Colossians have faith in Christ but also that they **love one another and the churches known to them**. This was not universal in the early church — many churches, such as those in Rome and Galatia, struggled because believers were not loving one another. But in Colossae, love was evident and remarkable; it prompted Paul to offer a prayer of thanksgiving. This love models Christ's command in John 13:34-35: **we are to love one another, and the world will know Christ through that love**.

What made the Colossians especially remarkable was that their love extended **beyond their local church**. They cared for all believers — the Church Universal. They modeled a concern for brothers and sisters around the known world. As youth leaders, we can encourage our students to grow in this kind of love, even for those far away, through supporting extended ministry partners and mission efforts.

Another key point in Colossians 1:9-14 is Paul's prayer that believers would be **“filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.”** This is crucial for students who often feel uncertainty about the future — college, careers, or life decisions. Many focus on secondary concerns and neglect seeking God's guidance in their relationship with Him. Your role as a youth leader is to help students **see that God speaks clearly through His Word**, and that learning to live out verses 10-14 now is more important than rushing ahead to answers about

the distant future. Encourage them to seek God's will in their everyday life and ministry first, and trust Him with what comes next.