

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. ***Enjoy discovering more about Him!***

"A LIFE WORTHY OF THE LORD" | COLOSSIANS 1:1-14 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

- When was a time you felt you were rescued?

"Introduction" Colossians 1: 1-2

Paul start his letter with complimenting the faith of the Colossians and reminding them of God's grace and peace.

- Who is someone you can compliment and encourage even though they've been struggling?

"The Gospel Produces Faith, Love and Hope. It Bears Fruit Everywhere It Goes" Colossians 1: 3-8

Paul is thankful for the faith, love and hope that is evident. The gospel is bearing fruit in their lives and around the world.

- How would you explain how faith, hope and love work together?
- What are examples of the gospel bearing fruit in people today?

"Paul's Greatest Passage On Prayer Requests" Colossians 1:9-12

Paul prays for them to filled with knowledge of God's will and strengthened by God's power.

- How is this prayer different from the way many people pray for their friends and family?
- How does it impact you knowing God empowers His people to do His will?

"Why We Can Live Worthy" Colossians 1:13-14

Paul shares Jesus rescued His people, transferring them to His kingdom. They have redemption and forgiveness in Him.

- How does knowing God rescued you impact how you want to live?

REFLECTION AND APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

The good news for people is that Jesus recued them and transfers them from darkness to light. They can know God's will and receive His power to live a life full of faith, love and hope that is worthy of His grace.

- Is the gospel producing fruit in your life lately?
- How can you seek God's will this week and receive His strength to live it out?
- Pray God will increase your faith, love and hope.

A Life Worthy of the Lord

I. Announce:

- A. Welcome to those watching online 10am.
- B. Slide1-3 AP: FHC. VBS Showcase. Fellowship-Church Beach Day.
- C. Slide4 Prayer for Kosovo team: this team is traveling to Kosovo to support **Pastor Urim** and **his local church** as they minister in a predominantly *Muslim-background community*. Through English as a 2nd Language classes, sports outreach, youth ministry, and encouragement for local women, **the team will seek to practically demonstrate the love of Jesus**. [stand if here - lay hands on]
1. **Prayer:** Lord, Help them to **strengthen** and **encourage** Pastor Urim, to build up the small body of believers. **And** to be a faithful witness to the surrounding community. Lord, help them serve w/humility & compassion. **And** help them encourage the local believers to **boldly share their faith w/ family & friends**.
- D. Slide5 Wed Night 6/24 - Join us as we celebrate **Mike & Lorie** and their 30+ years of **faithful service** in **Asia**. This will be conducted in an **interview style format**, giving Mike and Lorie the opportunity to share stories from their years serving in *hard-access countries* and **reflect on God's faithfulness throughout their ministry**. You'll hear firsthand about *the challenges, joys, and lessons* they've learned while serving among **people with little access** to the gospel.
1. To encourage a more personal and open conversation, this gathering will **not** be livestreamed or recorded. We'd love for you to join us as we celebrate, encourage, **and pray for them** as they begin this new chapter of life and ministry in the U.S. (Goodies/fellowship afterward)
- E. Prayer:

II. Slide6 **BOOK Intro:** *Jesus Is Enough*

- A. Book Theme: The Supremacy and Sufficiency of Christ in Every Area of Life.

B. Big Idea of Colossians: *Because Jesus is supreme over all things, He is sufficient for all things.*

1. **Jesus Christ** deserves **first place** in everything.
2. *Because Jesus is Lord over everything, He is enough for everything.*

C. Paul authored Colossians with Timothy contributing. The letter was written to combat a heresy threatening the Colossian church, which involved distorted views of Christ's humanity and deity, combined with Jewish legalism.

D. The letter divides into **2 distinct movements**:

1. The 1st half presents one of the NT's most profound Christologies, establishing **Christ's Supremacy in all things** (creation & redemption alike)
2. The 2nd half functions as **a mini-ethics course**, progressing from individual conduct to family life, work, and relationships.

III. Slide7 **INTRODUCTION (1-2) A Life Worthy of the Lord**

A. 1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and **Timothy** our brother,
2 To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at **Colossae: Grace to you and peace** from God our Father.

B. Paul begins **not** with *commands*, **but** with **grace**. Before he tells us what to do, he reminds us of what God has already done. *That's the rhythm of the NT: the indicative before the imperative, identity before activity, grace before growth.*

C. *How do you know if something is truly alive? A tree bears fruit. A child grows. A healthy marriage deepens. Living things grow.*

1. *The same is true spiritually.* Christianity is not merely making a decision years ago; it is experiencing continual transformation.
2. Paul wants the Colossians to know that **the gospel** doesn't simply *get us into heaven* - it **changes us here and now!**

D. Big Idea: **The Christian life** begins and grows through **the grace of God**.

E. **Colossae** was a small *insignificant* city, overshadowed by its larger neighbors, **but** it was home to a thriving church planted through the ministry of *pastor Epaphras* (7).

1. Slide 8a/b 4:13-16 Hierapolis & Laodicea. 3-holes bowling ball in Asia Minor.
 2. Paul hadn't planted this church nor had he likely ever visited the church personally, yet he deeply loved them. Having heard of their faith, he writes to encourage them and prepare them against false teaching.
- F. Notice what Paul does first. He doesn't begin by *confronting error*. He begins by *celebrating the work of God already happening among them*.
1. That's good pastoral ministry. Always notice **grace** before addressing **growth**.

IV. Slide 9 1. THE GOSPEL PRODUCES FAITH, LOVE, AND HOPE (3-5)

- A. 3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4 since we heard of your **faith** in Christ Jesus and of the **love** that you have for all the saints, 5 because of the **hope** laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel ...
- B. Thanks & Prayer - All but 1 of Paul's letters start with Thanksgiving. And with thanks comes prayer. 2 wings of a bird enabling it to soar!
1. 3 reasons for these 2 wings (thanks/prayer): **Faith** in Christ Jesus, **love** for all the saints, and **hope** laid up in heaven.
 2. The Christian life rests upon these 3 pillars: *Faith. Love. Hope*. Paul uses repeatedly [**faith** rests on the past. **love** works in the present. **hope** looks towards the future].
- C. **Faith** looks upward to Christ.
1. We trust Him. Not ourselves. Not religion. Not morality.
- D. **Love** looks outward.
1. **Faith** that never produces **love** is *questionable faith*.
 2. **Love** is the *evidence* that **grace** has reached the heart.
 - a) Jesus said, *By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*
- E. **Hope** looks forward.

1. The Christian has **an anchor** beyond this world. Our inheritance is secure. Thus we **live** differently, because **our future is secure**.
2. **Illust:** A fruit tree has **roots**, a **trunk**, and **fruit**.
 - a) **Faith is the root:** it is unseen, **but** it connects us to Christ, our source of life.
 - b) **Hope is the trunk:** it gives stability, direction, and strength, lifting our eyes upward **and** holding everything together through life's storms.
 - c) **Love is the fruit:** it is *the visible evidence* that the tree is **alive** and **healthy**.

V. Slide10a **2.THE GOSPEL BEARS FRUIT EVERYWHERE IT GOES (5-8)**

- A. **5** because of the **hope** laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, **6** which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is **bearing fruit** and **increasing**—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the **grace** of God in truth, **7** just as you learned it from **Epaphras** our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf **8** and has made known to us your **love** in the Spirit.
- B. The gospel is unlike every philosophy. **Ideas** can *inform* people, *the gospel transforms* people.
 1. **It changes:** *marriages. priorities. language. spending. forgiveness. purpose. and eternity.*
- C. **Notice the progression:** They heard. They understood grace. **Then** fruit appeared.
 1. **Grace** always produces *growth*.
- D. **Epaphras** - Paul commends Epaphras, the **faithful** pastor who first shared the gospel with them. (He wasn't *famous*. He simply preached Christ **faithfully**).
 1. **Slide10b** *God delights in *ordinary servants* who *faithfully proclaim* an *extraordinary Savior*.

VI. Slide11 **3.PAUL'S GREATEST PASSAGE ON PRAYER REQUESTS (9-12)**

- A. **9** And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be **filled with the knowledge of his will** in all spiritual wisdom and

understanding, **10** so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; **11** being **strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might**, for all endurance and patience with joy; **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

B. This is one of the richest prayers in the NT. - Paul doesn't pray for their: *Safety. Prosperity. Comfort.* - He prays for their **Maturity**.

C. C.F.D. Moule (NT Anglican scholar) writes, "**Prayer makes 2 great requests: It asks for the discernment of God's will, and then for the power to perform that will.**" (11).

1. (#1) Filled with the knowledge of God's will.

- a) **Not** secret knowledge. **Not** mystical experiences. **But** knowing **God's** revealed will through His Word.
- b) **God's will** is less about finding the perfect job **and** more about *becoming the right person*.
- c) **In prayer** we're **not** trying to make God listen, **but** making ourselves listen to Him. **In prayer** we are **not** trying to *persuade God to do something*, **but** to **find out what He wants us to do**. [so, the 1st order of prayer is to **listen not speak**]
- d) **Then** knowing His will we'll be able to: *walk worthy, please Him, & bear fruit*
 - (1) **Walk**/daily conduct **Worthy of the Lord** - *doesn't* mean earning God's favor. It means **living consistently** with what God has already done.
 - (a) Imagine receiving the Medal of Honor: You would want to **live worthy** of that calling. **How much more should we live worthy** of being a child of God?
 - (2) **Please Him, & bear fruit** - **Healthy Christians** reproduce spiritual fruit. **And character** changes. **And people** are loved. **And the gospel** spreads.

2. (#2) Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might.

- a) *God doesn't simply **tell us to** obey, He **empowers us to** obey. If God only told us **what** to do, that would be *frustrating!* **But** He also empowers us to do it.
 - (1) His power enables **endurance & patience**, a steady perseverance, **not** flashy miracles.

(2) Life's greatest problem is **not** to know **what to do**, **but doing it**.
(putting it into action). [we need **Power** & it comes by **Prayer**]

D. The rest of this section continues with/The Father (13,14); **but** next week The Son (14-20). [i.e. the most *Christological statement* in the NT] Theology relating to the *person, nature, & role* of **Christ**.

VII.Slide12 **4.WHY WE CAN LIVE WORTHY (13-14)**

A. **13** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness **and transferred us** to the kingdom of his beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

B. Paul now reminds us of *the gospel* itself. [from - to]

C. Notice the **verbs**: He has **delivered** us. He has **transferred** us. We have **redemption**. We have **forgiveness**.

1. This is God's work from beginning to end.

2. The Christian life begins with **rescue**.

3. The picture is one kingdom conquering another. **We once belonged to darkness. Now we belong to the kingdom of God's beloved Son.**

a) This is **not self-improvement**. This is **divine rescue**.

D. ***Saints You are Qualified!!!** - The Father *qualified us* due solely to **His Grace**.

E. **You are been Transferred** - *Transferred*, moved from one place other another.

1. **A word used in the ancient world when one empire took over another. They would *transfer it* to the conquerors land.**

F. **Slide13** So all bel's have been transferred from what - to what? 4 ways:

1. Transferred from **Darkness to Light** (13a)

2. Transferred from our **Enemies Kingdom to the Kingdom of the Son** (13b)

3. Transferred from **Incarceration to Redemption** (14a)

4. Transferred from **Condemnation to Forgiveness** (14b). **Forgiven**, so no longer *a condemned criminal*, **but** a lost son that has **come home!**

a) Ps: There are **no 2nd class citizens** in heaven.

G. WRAP UP

H. Is my **faith** growing deeper? Is my **love** becoming more evident? Is my **hope** shaping my priorities? Is the gospel producing **fruit** in my life? Am I content with conversion **or** am I **pursuing maturity**?

1. The goal of Christianity is not simply *to get people into heaven*. It is to **make people increasingly like Jesus**.
2. **Grace** saves us, **grace** grows us, **and grace** will one day bring us home!

I. **Slide14** CM saints, **Don't settle** for simply being saved. **By God's grace, pursue a life that is increasingly - worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.**

J. Keywords: Faith, Love, Hope.