Lives Of Faith, Love & Hope

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday October 29th, 2023

Text: Colossians 1:3-8 Scripture Reading: Colossians 3:12-14

### Intro

1. I Corinthians 13:13: Faith, Hope & Love abide until Christ’s 2nd Coming.
   1. *I Corinthians 15:58; Heb. 10:32-39:* We need steadfastness to abide in faith, hope & love.
2. The letter to the Colossians provides a good look at what faithful brethren look like.
3. It also tells us why there are faithful brethren in Colossae: the gospel.
4. The church at Colossae wasn’t perfect (what church is?) and they suffered many problems:
   1. Human philosophy – Colossians *2:8*
   2. Judaism – *Colossians 2:11-17*
   3. Asceticism (Self-denial to extreme; self-abasement religiously) – *Colossians 2:18-23*
5. Colossians 1:3-8: Paul, in thanking God for them, reminded them what the gospel had done for their lives.
   1. The gospel was effective in their faith, their love, and their hope! (I Corinthians 13:13)
   2. Paul knew this group of brethren and commended them for their faith, love & hope.
6. Being steadfast in faith, love, and hope we proclaim the gospel as effective in our lives!

#### Faith

* 1. Colossians 1:4 *(I Corinthians 13:13):* Paul had heard of their faith – faith manifests itself *(James 2:14-26: Faith without works is dead;* *I Peter 1:6-9: The result of faith: “the salvation of your souls!”).*
     1. Not hid in a corner *(or under a basket – Matthew 5:15).*
     2. They were obedient to Christ’s command to let their light shine *(Matthew 5:13-16).*
     3. *Heb. 11:1: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”*
  2. The gospel leads to faith in Christ – Nature of Christ (Colossians 1:13-18)
     1. He has a kingdom – 1:13 (Thus, a King – I Tim. 6:15; Matthew 25:31-34; John 18:37)
     2. He is the Son of God – 1:13
     3. He is the Redeemer – 1:14
     4. He is the One in whom we have forgiveness of sins – 1:14
     5. He is the image of God the Father – 1:15
     6. He is the Creator – 1:16
     7. He is the Head of the church – 1:18
     8. He is risen from the dead – 1:18
  3. The gospel will produce faith in Christ that leads to obedience *(Colossians 1:5; Mark 16:15-16).*
  4. The gospel will produce saving faith (I Peter 1:6-9: The result of faith: “the salvation of your souls!”)
  5. Application: Us – How will we be known for our faith?
     1. Reuben Southall: Faced a chronic illness and an organ transplant with the kind of faith I want to emulate should I ever face that possibility!
        1. Reuben says the faith he had before the transplant doesn’t compare to the faith he has now: It is stronger now!
        2. He says it was truly refined by fire (I Peter 1:6-7). There was testing and refining but going through the fire took his faith to new heights.
        3. I and many others here have Type 2 Diabetes and could face that possibility.
     2. There are many who have struggled with chronic illness and maintained their faith in God!
        1. There are many cancer survivors with us and their faith encourages us!
     3. There are many who have gone through the trial of losing a loved one and maintained their faith.
     4. There are many among us who are great examples of faith!
  6. The gospel has given us faith in Christ that will lead to the salvation of our souls!

#### Love for Brethren

* 1. Colossians 1:4 *(I Corinthains 13:13; John 15:12):* Along with their faith, Paul also heard of their love for “all the saints.”
     1. Love = *agape (G26):* Love seeks the welfare of all (Vine) – *I Corinthians 13:4-7*
     2. Colossians 3:12-14: Saints put on “Love” & Forgiveness, and share traits with deity (Jesus)!
  2. Faith in Christ and love for the brethren go hand-in-hand.
     1. John 13:34-35: Jesus said the world would know His disciples by the way they loved one another (John 15:12).
        1. Paul heard of their love – *Colossians 1:4, 7-8 (reported by Epaphras)*
     2. I John 4:7-8, 11-12, 20-21: Cannot love God and not love our brethren.
     3. I Peter 1:22: Peter wrote that saints after obedience to the gospel are to “fervently love one another from the heart” (III John 5-8)
  3. Application: Us – How will we be known for our love of the brethren?
     1. Richard & Cindy Foy: We were strangers when we moved here 6 years ago from Alaska and the Foy’s took us in and let us live in their upstairs and placed our pets (at the time: a dog and 3 cats) in Cindy’s garage.
        1. In similar situations we have seen an arrangement like that go south!
        2. But the Foy’s made us feel like family and provided a home for us until the sale of our house in Alaska. They called us their “Upstairs Family.”
        3. We lived with them for over 5 months and we only grew closer.
        4. When we left there were tears all around. For a while after we moved into a house of our own, the often still called us their “Upstairs Family.”
     2. There are many here who demonstrate their love for the brethren!
     3. Love requires one to “put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience…love” (Colossians 3:12-14).
  4. Application: Us – How will we be known for our forgiving others as Jesus forgave us?
     1. Zuberi Mwakyami: A great example of forgiveness!
        1. On the way to the river to baptize his son Ambwene, we ran into the man who tried to rape his then-3-year old daughter Abigail (now 4 years old) last year. The man was 68 at the time and Zuberi didn’t want him to die in prison so he and his family chose to forgive the man!
        2. Zuberi greeted him but the man ignored us. Zuberi said the man has ignored him ever since!
        3. That is truly forgiving as Christ forgave! (Colossians 3:13)
     2. I know there are many here who have had to forgive out of great loss and pain.
     3. Jesus says when we forgive others from our heart we will be forgiven (Matthew 18:35; Ephesians 4:32)
  5. These aren’t just words but ***actions*** that express our affection for one another!
  6. The Colossian brethren were great examples of faith and love! (Colossians 3:12-14)
  7. May we ever be known for our love for “all the saints!” & forgive others from our hearts!

#### Hope of Heaven

* 1. Colossians 1:5 *(I Corinthians 13:13; Hebrews 6:18-20):* The gospel had caused faith and love in their lives because of the hope of heaven!
     1. Colossians 1:5-6: The gospel message of hope in heaven spread not just to Colossae but to *“all the world,”* that those who hear the truth may have the same hope!
     2. The gospel provides that hope in Christ who was raised from the dead *(1:18).*
     3. Romans 8:24-25; II Peter 3:10-12: We hope for what is not seen and eagerly wait for it!
  2. Heaven identified:
     1. Colossians 3:1-3: Where Christ is *(just as He said He would go to prepare a home for His disciples – John 14:2-3).*
     2. I Peter 1:3-4: Future home of the saints – “reserved in heaven for you.”
     3. Hebrews 6:18-20: This hope is an anchor for the soul, sure and steadfast!
  3. Application: Us – How will we be known for our hope of Heaven?
     1. Lori Salle & Norma Niemela: Both of these dear sisters faced the possibility of death and their imminent departure with unwavering hope!
        1. They both spoke of “going home” to “be with the Lord.”
     2. It is not a morbid thought but a glorious one, to face the inevitable outcome of life with the hope the gospel gives: to see Jesus and be with Him forever!
     3. There are many here who have lost loved ones or came close to death’s door themselves and are great examples of hope!
  4. In the gospel we have the hope of an eternal home in Heaven with God!

## Conclusion

1. Again, Paul knew these brethren just as we know one another and can think of personal examples of each member here giving us strength to face our own trials because of their faith, love and hope!
2. Others ought to see the effective work of the gospel in our lives through:
   1. Obedience to the truth (Colossians 1:5-6; Mark 16:16)
   2. Faith in Christ (Colossians 1:4)
   3. Love for the brethren (Colossians 1:4)
   4. Hope of Heaven (Colossians 1:5)
3. We need to be teaching it so that it can spread throughout all the world *(Colossians 1:6)!*
4. Despite the problems the church at Colossae faced, the members were strong in the faith.
   1. Colossians 2:5-7: Theirs was a stable and established faith.
   2. Paul had ***heard*** of their faith & love!
5. We must make sure the gospel has taken hold of our lives so that we are living proof of it!
6. Let us proclaim the gospel in the way we live our lives and be examples of faith, love & hope! *(Colossians 1:2: “To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae”)*
7. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized!
8. If a Christian in sin, don’t wait till it’s too late! Repent!
9. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!