

**“Faithful Brethren”**  
**Colossians 1:1-2**

**Introduction:**

1. Last Sunday:
  - We Began A New Series On Sunday Mornings:
    - Through Paul’s Letter To The Colossians!
    - And We Spent Some Time Last Week:
      - Learning More About The History Of Both The City Of Colosse:
      - As Well As The Church!
  - And So - This Morning:
    - We Are Going To Begin Looking At The Letter Itself:
      - In More Detail - So - Please Turn Back With Me In Your Bibles To:
        - The Very First Chapter - Colossians 1!
2. And Just As We Would Expect:
  - We Find In The First 2 Verses:
    - A Very Common Introduction!
      - It Is An Introduction That Is Found Frequently In The Letters Of The New Testament!
      - But - It Is Also How **Most** Ancient Letters Would Have Begun!
    - The Ordinary Introduction To A Letter:
      - In Roman Times - Which Would Have Been Written On A Scroll - Included 3 Main Parts:
        - Who The Letter Is From!
        - Who The Letter Is To!
        - And A Brief Word Of Greeting!
        - And These Parts Would Be Right At The Top:
          - So There Would Be No Question As To The Author & The Audience!
    - But Even Though Paul:
      - And The Other Apostles:
        - Used This Common & Ordinary Way:
          - To Address Their Letters:
            - Even In Their Introductions, They Made Them Into Something Special!
  - 3. Because - In All 3 Parts:
    - Christ Is Prominent!
      - After All, It Is Christ Who Is The Bond:
        - That Connected Them & Made This Letter Even Possible!
    - So - Think About This:
      - As We Read Together:
        - 1:1-2 - “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, / To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!”
    - Who Is The Letter **From** According To These Verses?
      - Two Men - Paul & Timothy:
        - But Paul, As The Primary Author, Is Writing As:
          - “An Apostle Of Jesus Christ!”
    - Who Is The Letter **To** According To These Verses?
      - Not To The City Of Colosse In General:
        - But To The **Church In** Colosse:
          - Who Paul Describes As “The Saints & Faithful Brethren In Christ!”
    - And How Does He **Greet** Them In These Verses?
      - Instead Of The Usual Greeting:
        - Of The Jews:
          - “Shalom” - Which Means “Peace” - And:
        - Instead Of The Usual Greeting:
          - Of The Greeks & Romans:
            - “Chairein” - Which Meant - “Hail” Or “Rejoice!”
      - Paul Greets This Church:
        - With A Simple Prayer!
          - A Prayer To The Lord:

- **For** Grace – Or “Charis” & **For** Peace!

- What A Beautiful Way:

- For A Christian Letter To Begin!

4. Now - Imagine For A Moment:

- If You Were One Of Those Colossian Christians:

- Living In That Small, Back-Water Town:

- And You Were Waiting For Your Pastor, Epaphras, To Return:

- From An Important Trip He Took - In Order To Get Some Help & Guidance From The Apostle Paul!

- Perhaps It Had Already Been A Couple Of Months:

- And Epaphras Had Not Yet Come Back:

- And You Are Starting To Wonder:

- What Happened To Him!

- Did He Ever Even Get To Rome & Find Paul?

- Well - Finally - Someone Shows Up:

- But Its Not Who You Expected!

- It Is A Man By The Name Of Tychicus - Who Assures You That Your Pastor & Paul Are Fine - But Epaphras’ Return Had Been Delayed - But He Also Brought A Letter That He Is Supposed To Read To The Whole Church!

5. So - You & The Rest Of The Young & Small Colossian Church:

- Gather Together In One Of Your Homes:

- To Hear What The Letter Has To Say!

- And Every Eye Watches Tychicus As He Breaks The Seal Of The Scroll!

- And As He Unrolls The First Couple Of Inches, He Reads The Same Introduction We Just Read!

- This Letter Was **Not** From Their Pastor, Epaphras - No - It Was From “**Paul, An Apostle Of Jesus Christ!**”

- Those Words Would Have Immediately Got Their Attention!

- Because - They Had Only **Heard** Of Paul!

- They Had Never **Seen** Him!

- And They Probably Never Thought In Their Wildest Dreams That Paul Would Write Them A Personal Letter!

6. But As Tychicus Continues To Read:

- You Hear How He Describes Your Church:

- “To The Saints And Faithful Brethren In Christ Which Are In Colosse!”

- And Then - That Prayer! From Him! For Them!

- It Is No Wonder That This Letter Became A Treasure For That Church:

- And Every Other Church That Has Been Able To Read Its Inspired Words!

- But Even Though:

- So Much Of What We Just Said:

- About **This** Introduction - Could Apply To Just About **Every Other** Introduction:

- Of The New Testament - There Is Something Here That Is Quite Unique!

- And That Is - How Paul Chose To Describe The Colossian Church!

7. He Calls Them - In 1:2:

- “Faithful Brethren!”

- Now - The Word “Brethren” Here Is A Generic Word:

- That Encompasses The Whole Church:

- Believing Men, Women & Children Would All Be Included!

- But He Calls All Of Them:

- “Faithful!”

- This Means - First Of All - That:

- They Were “Faith-Filled!”

- That Is - They **Were** Believers In Jesus Christ! After All - This Is The Only Way A Church Begins! Faith Alone In Christ Alone!

- But It Also Means - That:

- They Were “Faith-Ful!”

- That Is - They Were Known To Be Dedicated & Devoted To The Truth Of God & The Gospel!

- To Be “Faithful Brethren” & A “Faithful Church” & A “Faithful Christian” Is Something:
  - Worth Aspiring To - Don’t You Think?
    - And So - As We Look At This Introduction:
      - A Bit More Closely - This Morning:
        - I Want Us To Look At It Through The Lens Of What It Means To Be:
          - “Faithful Brethren!”

\* First - We Can See That It Means You Are:

**1. Faithful To Your Calling!**

- Even As Paul Was Faithful:
  - To His Calling From God:
    - To Be - 1:1 - “An Apostle Of Jesus Christ By The Will Of God!”
      - To Be An Apostle Was A Special Privilege! And It Was A Privilege That Paul Never Got Over!
        - In 1 Corinthians 15:9 - Paul Says - “For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God!”
  - And Yet - In God’s Grace:
    - He Was Personally Called To Be:
      - An Ambassador For Jesus Christ!
        - And This Position Was One Of Great Authority But Also Great Responsibility!
  - But Paul Sought To Be Faithful To His Calling:
    - As An Apostle:
      - By Caring For & Serving *ALL* The Churches, Including The One At Colosse!
        - But Why? Paul Was Faithful:
  - Because Of God’s Claim On Him!
    - Paul Was “An Apostle Of Jesus Christ!”
      - He Was Personally Called & Sent By Jesus Christ Himself!
        - You Can Read About Paul’s Conversion & Call In Acts 9 - Road To Damascus!
    - But Paul Was So Moved:
      - At The Grace & Mercy Of God:
        - To Save Him - Even As One Who Had “Persecuted The Church Of God!”
  - And So - Jesus’ Mission:
    - Became Paul’s Mission!
      - And Jesus’ Message:
        - Became His Message!
  - Jesus Had Staked A Claim:
    - On Paul’s Heart & Life:
      - And So - Paul Could Never Go Back!
        - He Remained Faithful To His Calling! But Also:
- Because Of God’s Choice Of Him!
  - Paul Describes How His Calling Was:
    - “By The Will Of God!”
      - Paul’s Position & Privilege As An Apostle Was Not Based On His Own Abilities Or Gifts Or Nature - Though He Was Very Gifted!
    - His Call Was Based Only:
      - On & Through The Will:
        - And Gracious Pleasure & Choice Of God!
- And So - Paul Is An Example To Us:
  - Of What It Means To Be:
    - A Faithful Christian!
      - He Was Faithful To The One Who Called Him:
        - Not Only For Salvation, But For Service As An Apostle!
  - And You Need To Remember:
    - That If You Have Put Your Faith In Jesus Christ:
      - For Salvation From Your Sin:
        - Then You Too Have A Special Calling From The Lord!
  - God Himself Has Chosen You:
    - To Be Part Of His Family:

- For No Other Reason Than His Grace!
- 2 Timothy - “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began!”
- God Himself Has A Claim On You:
  - Through The Sacrifice Of Jesus Christ:
    - For You And Your Sin!
  - 1 Peter 1:19 Reminds Us That - “Ye Were Redeemed . . . With the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot!”
- Won't You Be Faithful To Your Own Calling:
  - As A Child & As A Servant Of The Living God?
    - This Is What It Means To Be A “Faithful Brethren”:
    - A Faithful Christian!

\* Second - It Also Means That You Will Be:

**2. Faithful To Your Companions!**

- Because When You Are Called To Christ:
  - You Are Also Called To His Church!
    - You Have A New Family:
      - With Many Brothers & Sisters In Christ!
  - And This Is Why:
    - Timothy - In 1:1 - Also Wanted To Send Along His Greeting:
      - Because He Too Was Their “Brother!”
  - Now - We're Not Entirely Sure Why:
    - Timothy Is Mentioned Here:
      - But He Must Have Been Somewhat Familiar To The Colossian Christians As Well!
        - Had They Met Before? Or, Like Paul, Had They Only Heard Of Timothy As Paul's Faithful Companion & Fellow Laborer?
  - Not Sure - But One Thing We Do Know Is That:
    - There Was:
- An Agreement:
  - As A Brother In Christ!
    - Timothy Is Included As An Author Of This Epistle:
      - Likely Because It Was His Hand That Wrote It!
        - As Paul Spoke, Timothy Wrote, And So Paul's Words Became His Words!
  - And They Were In Complete Agreement!
    - But There As Also:
- An Affection:
  - As A Brother In Christ!
    - Timothy Had The Same Deep Care & Interest:
      - In The Colossian Church - As Paul:
        - And He Wanted Them To Know Of His Affection - As **Their** Brother!
- And So - Timothy Too Is An Example For Us:
  - Of What It Means To Be:
    - A Faithful Christian!
      - He Was Faithful As A Christian Brother!
  - And This Is How:
    - We Need To See Ourselves & Each Other:
      - More & More!
        - There Is To Be A Special Relationship & Companionship Within Our Church!
  - And This Relationship:
    - Is Meant To Go Far Deeper:
      - Than Any Other Organization That We Might Be A Part Of:
        - In This World!
- Are You Being Faithful To Your Own Companions:
  - Within The Church God Has Placed You?
    - This Is What It Means To Be A “Faithful Brethren”:
    - A Faithful Christian!

\* I Also Think That This Means That You Will Be:

2. **Faithful To Your Cleansing!**

- In 1:2 - Paul Also Describes The Colossian Christians:
  - As **“Saints!”**
    - Now - This Word Can Stand On Its Own:
      - Or - If It Is Used As An Adjective - Can Also Be Translated: “The **Holy** Brethren!”
  - Here - Paul Is Describing:
    - Their Own Position & Privilege:
      - As A Children Of God!
        - They Have Become Saints!
        - This Means That They Have Been:
- Separated Unto The Lord!
  - This Is What The Root Of The Word For “Saint” Means!
    - As Christians:
      - They Were No Longer **Of** The World:
        - And No Longer **Of** The City Of Colosse:
          - Even Though They Remained **In** The World!
  - This Was Their New Position:
    - Before The Lord In This World!
      - Now - Even Though The City Of Colosse, By This Time, May Have Been Small:
        - And The Church Smaller Still:
          - They Had Been Elevated To This Supreme Position By God’s Grace Through Faith In Jesus!
  - Now - They Were:
    - As Peter Describes - In 1 Peter 2:9 - “A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light!”
      - But To Be A “Saint” Also Means That You Are Being:
- Sanctified By The Lord!
  - As Christians - They Were - And We Are:
    - Being Made Holy!
      - As God Is Stamping His Own Holy Image Deep In Our Hearts!
        - So That - More & More - We Will Be Like Jesus!
  - Those Colossian Christians:
    - Were Likely Very Proud Of Their:
      - Ancient History & Heritage - Just Like The Rest Of Their Neighbors!
        - But Now - Their Truest Identity Had Changed!
  - They Were Now Known:
    - Not By Their Natural Relationships:
      - But By Their Spiritual Relationship:
        - With God & With His Church!
- And So Are We!
  - As Christians - We Are God’s “Saints!”
    - He Has Separated You:
      - Unto Himself!
    - And He Is Sanctifying You:
      - To Be More Like Christ!
  - And This Is Your New Identity!
    - As We Are Told In 1 Corinthians 6:11 - “But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God!”
- And So Now - Be Faithful To Your Cleansing!
  - Live Out The Cleansing That You Have Been Given Within!
    - Because - This Too Is What It Means:
      - To Be A “Faithful Brethren”:
        - A Faithful Christian!

\* But We Can Also See A Fourth Meaning In 1:2 - And That Is To Be:

4. **Faithful In Your Commitment!**

- Your Commitment To The Lord!
  - And We See This In That Simple & Common Prayer:
    - For Them By Paul - "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!"
  - Paul's Prayer:
    - Really Ought To Be Our Own Prayer:
      - As We Realize That - In Order To Be Faithful In Our Christian Lives:
        - And Faithful To Our Calling & To Our Companions & To Our Cleansing:
          - We Can't Do It On Our Own!
  - Instead - We Must Depend Completely:
    - On The Lord:
      - To Provide Us Everything We Need In Order To Be Faithful!
        - Because - As We Learn From 1 Thessalonians 5:24 - "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it!"
  - And So - Be Committed In Your:
    - Dependence On The Lord!
      - This Is What It Means & Demonstrates:
        - When You Pray!
          - That You Can't Do Anything That God Has Called You To Do:
            - Without Him!
      - Remember What Jesus Said:
        - In John 15:5 - "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing!"
          - And So - As Paul Prayed To The Lord, We Must Pray To The Lord!
            - Because He Is The Source Of All That We Need!
      - Are You Depending On:
        - "God Our Father & The Lord Jesus Christ?"
          - You Can Tell By Looking At Your Own Prayers & Your Own Prayer Life!
      - Be Committed To Prayer!
        - But Also - Be Committed In Your:
          - Desire For The Lord!
            - Over & Over Again - In The Letters Of The New Testament:
              - We Find This Prayer:
                - That "Grace & Peace" Might Be Provided:
                  - By God To His People!
              - But Instead Of Being Something Common & Trite:
                - This Prayer Request:
                  - Encompasses The Very Best Of All Of God's Blessings For His People!
              - Matthew Henry Describes Them:
                - As The "Two Great And Comprehensive Blessings, Fitly Joined Together, Because There Is No Good And Lasting Peace Without True Grace!"
              - And So - We Must Never Get Over:
                - Our Need For:
                  - Both "The Favor Of God And Its Fruits!"
                    - That Is - God's Grace & God's Peace!
    - Is This Your Desire Today?
      - Many Times - We Want Other Things!
        - But The Most Important Things:
          - Are Not Physical Or Material:
            - But Spiritual - "Grace & Peace!"
      - And God Is Ready & Able:
        - To Provide All His Blessings:
          - To Those Who Desire Them:
            - And Depend On Him For Them!
              - For His "Grace & Peace!"

**Conclusion:**

1. This Prayer & These Words:

- Written By The Apostle Paul:
    - Were For Those “Faithful Brethren In Christ!”
      - And It Is Clear - That They Sought To Be Faithful:
        - To Their Own Calling!
        - To Their Own Companions!
        - To Their Own Cleansing!
        - And To Their Own Commitments!
2. But What About You:
- Today?
    - Could You Be Included:
      - Not Only As:
        - A “Faith-Filled” Christian:
      - But Also As:
        - A “Faith-Ful” Christian?
  - Is There A Devotion:
    - And A Dedication:
      - To The One Who Has Called You:
        - Out Of Darkness & Into His Marvellous Light?
3. If Not - Then:
- Return To The Lord:
    - With Paul’s Own Prayer In Your Heart!
      - Pray For God’s Own Grace & Peace:
        - To Be Multiplied In Your Life:
          - So That You Might Become - Like Those Colossian Believers:
            - “Faithful Brethren!”
              - A Faithful Christian!

***Grace Baptist Church  
Stephen Elmer, Pastor  
4245 North 200 West  
Greenfield, Indiana 46140  
317-326-2362  
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace  
www.growatgrace.org  
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com***