



Group Guide

Power of the Gospel

February 16, 2025

Main Passage: Colossians 1:1-8

Theological Theme

The gospel message is one of grace, peace, and hope. It is the most powerful message ever proclaimed.

Introduction

- ❓ How did you learn the gospel? How have you seen the gospel grow in our community?
- ❓ In today's reading, we'll see an example of how the gospel spread to new people thanks to the ministry of early church disciples. Can you think of a modern-day example of someone going out and spreading the good news of the gospel similarly?

1. Introduction (Colossians 1:1-2)

In verse 1, Paul identified himself as “an apostle of Christ Jesus by God’s will.” With this establishment of his received authority and divine appointment, the theological contents of his letter carried more weight for his Colossian audience. Paul often strategically wrote his letters for the sake of the spread of the gospel in his ministry, and God used the letters to reach and convert many unbelievers. Paul went on to greet the saints, or Christians, in the Colossian church with his customary greeting of grace and peace.

- ❓ What does grace mean? What does peace mean?
- ❓ Why might Paul so frequently use these greetings in his writings? Why are these appropriate messages for the church in all times?
- ❓ Application: What does Paul's example teach us about how we should approach our call to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20)?

2. Thankfulness (Colossians 1:3)

These verses give us insight into Paul's prayer life: It was active, full of thankfulness, and clearly an important hallmark of his ministry. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, he taught to “pray constantly,” and in Romans, he wrote to “be persistent in prayer” (Romans 12:12). He even asked for prayer himself in Ephesians 6:19-20. Paul knew he—and all other believers—needed prayer. Paul, who never actually met the Colossian congregation in person, had been praying for the church at Colossae and thanking God for them.

- ❓ Why do you think Paul included this note of his thankful prayer so early and often in his letters?
- ❓ Considering Paul never met the Colossians, why do you think he thought it was important to pray for them?
- ❓ Application: What can we learn and apply from Paul’s approach to prayer?

3. Bearing Fruit (Colossians 1:4-8)

This passage paints a picture of the spread of the gospel in the early church. Paul often wrote to churches he personally planted. In this case, he noted that the Colossian church heard the gospel from Epaphras rather than Paul himself. Paul called Epaphras “a fellow servant” and “faithful minister of Christ” (v. 7). To receive such accolades from Paul was a high endorsement.

- ❓ What do you think Paul meant when he said the gospel is “bearing fruit” and “growing”? What does this look like today?
- ❓ What does Epaphras’s example teach us about how we could share the gospel with others? Why is it important to utilize support from others in this goal?
- ❓ Application: What does this teach us about the possible impact we can have when we act as faithful ministers for Jesus as we spread the gospel?

Conclusion

- ❓ What are some small steps you can take this week to put more of a focus on prayer in your life?
- ❓ How do you think God wants to use you to “bear fruit” for the gospel in our community? How can we minister together with this goal?
- ❓ Who is God calling you to share the gospel with this week? How will you respond?