

## Devotions for the Week of July 28, 2019

### YOU GOT MAIL: A Journey Through Paul's Letters

#### *Holy - A Letter to the Church in Colossae*

North East United Methodist Church

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### Sunday, July 28, 2019

We have traveled through two of Paul's letters, Romans and Galatians, and today heard his teachings in a third letter, Colossians. Before going deeper into Colossians, take some time tonight to review what we have learned about Paul's letters to the churches in Rome and Galatia. Allow God's Word to sink in, to touch your heart, and to strengthen you for the week ahead. Ask God to speak to you and your situation through His Word in Paul's letters.

- **TRANSFORMED:** Review *The Roman Road*: Romans 3:23; 6:23; 5:8; 10:8-10, 13; and Romans 12:1-2.
- **FOCUSED:** Review the "Marks of a True Gospel" that Paul explains in his letter to the church in Galatia: Galatians 1:11-12; 2:20; 3:14; 3:21-22; 3:26-28; 5:22-25.

### Monday, July 29, 2019

**Read Colossians, Chapter 1.**

Paul never visited Colosse, a small town about 100 miles from Ephesus. The church in Colosse was probably

an outgrowth of Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus about 52-55 AD.

In chapter 1, Paul gives thanks to God for the “*fruit*” that is growing out of the Christians in Colosse “*since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth.*” He lets them know that he continues to pray for them “*that they may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, bring fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.*”

I, too, give thanks to God for the “*fruit*” that is growing out of the Christians in North East “*since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth.*” I praise God for the “*fruit*” being produced as God works through Christians to teach our children, work with our youth, reach out to those who need help in our community, serve on church committees, spend time taking care of the church building God has blessed us with, and oversee missions like Share Your Care, Samaritan's Purse, and “3 Nails” Mission Week. Like Paul, I pray that each servant might be “*strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints of light.*”

Paul continues, expressing how God has “*willed to make known what are riches of the glory of this mystery...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory;*” thus, Paul will continue to preach that all may be presented “*perfect in Christ Jesus.*” Paul writes, “*To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me*

*mightily.*” NLT states, “*That’s why I work and struggle so hard...*”

If Paul struggled, so will we? We will struggle to bear “*fruit*” and to share the Gospel with our neighbors and friends. We will struggle but like Paul we must depend not on our own strength, but “*His working which works in [us] mightily.*”

Do you recognize the great gift God has given you...to “*be partakers of the inheritance of the saints of light?*” Does this knowledge push you to sacrifice and labor, to struggle and strive, to share His Word, to bear “*fruit*” with your lives? Are you depending on God’s mighty strength to accomplish His purposes, to grow “*fruit*” and touch lives? Look at your life. What “*fruit*” is your life bearing today? Is your “*fruit*” fresh or rotten? Pray that God will show you where, with His strength, you can plant, He can water, and the “*fruit*” of the kingdom can grow.

## **Tuesday, July 30, 2019**

### **Read Colossians, Chapter 1: 15-20.**

Some believe these verses to be an early church hymn about Christ’s work. Simply sit with God and read over these words. Reflect on the One who “*is first over all creation,*” who “*existed before all things,*” who is the “*head of the body, the church,*” who “*brought peace through the blood of his cross.*” Give God thanks.

**Wednesday, July 31, 2019**

**Read Colossians, Chapter 2.**

Once again, Paul had heard that there were false teachings in the church in Colosse. Paul reiterates that salvation is not by ritual observance, not found in following the law, in what we eat or drink or handle. Salvation can be found in nothing more than Jesus Christ, Himself. Paul writes, *“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”*

The Spirit Filled Life Bible states:

*Jesus Christ's triumph over sin and evil powers was accomplished in 'it'- that is, in the Cross. This text, joined to and studied besides others (Ephesians 2: 13-16; Galatians 3:13,14; 2 Corinthians 5: 14-17; Romans 5: 6-15; and Revelation 12: 10,11), firmly establishes Jesus' suffering, shed blood, sacrificial death, and resurrection triumph as the only adequate and available grounds for ransom from sin, reconciliation to God, redemption from slavery, and restoration. The Cross is the sole hope and means for full reinstatement to relationship with God...*

Paul makes it clear that religion only has the “*appearance of wisdom*” but “*are of no value.*” Salvation is found in Christ and Christ alone.

Natalie Grant sings the song, “*In Christ Alone.*” Read over the lyrics, take time to reflect on them, and put your faith in Christ and Christ alone. Give God thanks for the gift of His Son.

*In Christ alone my hope is found;  
He is my light, my strength, my song  
This Cornerstone, this solid ground;  
Firm through the fiercest drought & storm*

*What heights of love, what depths of peace;  
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease  
My Comforter, my All in All;  
Here in the love of Christ I stand*

*In Christ alone, who took on flesh;  
Fullness of God in helpless Babe  
This gift of love and righteousness;  
Scorned by the ones He came to save*

*Til on that cross as Jesus died;  
The wrath of God was satisfied  
For every sin on Him was laid;  
Here in the death of Christ I live*

*There in the ground His body lay;  
 Light of the world by darkness slain  
 Then bursting forth in glorious Day;  
 Up from the grave He rose again*

*And as He stands in victory;  
 Sin's curse has lost its grip on me  
 For I am His and He is mine;  
 Brought with the precious blood of Christ*

*No guilt in life, no fear in death;  
 This is the power of Christ in me  
 From a life's first cry to final breath;  
 Jesus commands my destiny*

*No power of hell, no scheme of man;  
 Could ever pluck me from His hand  
 Til He returns or calls me home;  
 Here in the power of Christ I stand*

*I will stand, I will stand;  
 All other ground is sinking sand  
 All other ground, all other ground;  
 Is sinking sand, is sinking sand So I stand*

**Thursday, August 1, 2019**

**Read Colossians, Chapter 3.**

Paul writes, *"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at*

*the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*” Paul goes on to give examples of earthly things such as passion, desire, anger, filthy language, malice, as well as examples of “*things above*” such as kindness, humility, meekness, forgiveness, and above all, love.

Take time to examine your own life. Do you find your mind set “*on things above*” or do you find yourself often walking with “*things on the earth?*” Are you allowing “*the word of Christ [to] dwell in you richly,*” teaching you and challenging you to live your life with your mind “on things above?” Have you “*put on love, which is the bond of perfection?*” Ask God to help you examine your life.

### **Friday, August 2, 2019**

#### **Read Colossians, Chapter 4.**

Paul writes, “*Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving.*” Simply take time in prayer.

Like Paul challenges the Colossians:

- Pray for those who are sharing the Gospel around the world.
- Pray for those who do not know Christ.
- Pray that “*your speech always be with grace.*”
- Pray for your church family.
- Pray for your community.
- Pray for the children who come to our church each day for the Boys & Girls Club.
- Pray that you might “*bear...witness.*”

- Pray that you might fulfill *“the ministry which you have received in the Lord.”*
- Most of all, give God thanks, for *“He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but will have everlasting life.”*

### **Saturday, August 3, 2019**

Read through Paul’s letter to the Colossians in one sitting. Open your hearts to the truth about Christ voiced in Paul’s letter...Hear what Christ has done for you...

**Don’t forget to invite someone to church tomorrow!**

