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Study Page: Col. 1:3-8

The Good Work of Epaphras

Reading Colossians 1:3-8

From the time of Paul's conversion to the Lord, he was "always" thankful to God, and always encouraging his brothers and sisters to be thankful. It wasn't, for Paul, a routinely worded prayer three times a day with meals. Embedded in Paul's character was this strong presence of gratitude to God, for his salvation, his opportunities, his heavenly future and his abilities to tell the good news of Christ.

Another strong element of Paul's character was, his prayers for his brethren. He prayed for every Christian he knew, if not by specific name or group, there was an inclusive scope in praying for all Christians universally.

Paul "heard of" the faith and love of the saints in Colossae. And he knew, their faith and love was produced by **"the hope laid up" for them "in heaven."** (They heard about all of this when they listened to gospel preaching!)



Colossians:

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To the Colossians and to "the whole world," the gospel had been preached, before Paul wrote this letter. Not only had the gospel been preached, it was "bearing fruit and growing."

This is what the gospel does! It conveys the hope of heaven and promise of forgiveness. When hearers believe, repent and obey, their lives bear fruit. This enables them and others to understand "the grace of God in truth."

The Colossian Christians had learned the gospel through the good work of Epaphras, a fellow servant with Paul. Of Him, Paul said, "He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf."

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Verse 8: “and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.” Epaphras not only delivered the gospel to Colossae, he had reported back to Paul of the good results. Specifically, their love in the Spirit.

This text reminds us of how the gospel enlightens and changes people. That reality should prompt us, not only to preach the gospel, but to be permanently thankful to God for His grace and for those who serve Him.