

COLOSSIANS 1:3-8

THE CHASE: OUR DESIRE FOR ENOUGH & JESUS' PURSUIT OF US

SCRIPTURE & SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE — FEBRUARY 16

OPEN

1. What have you been thanking God for and what have you been asking him for recently?

Paul begins by thanking God for his work in the church and sharing the content of his prayers on their behalf, as he does in many of his letters (cf. Rom. 1:8-15; 1 Cor. 1:4-9; Eph. 1:15-23; Phil. 1:3-11; 1 Thess. 1:2-10; 2:13; 2 Thess. 1:3-4; Philemon 4-7). These passages give us a window into the Apostle's heart and hopes for God's people. READ COLOSSIANS 1:1-14 (though we'll focus on verses 3-8 this week).

DISCUSS

2. The words *faith*, *hope*, and *love* often appear together in Paul's letters (cf. Rom. 5:1-5; 1 Cor. 13:13; 1 Thess. 1:3; 5:8). How does Paul define these words? What's the relationship between them? And how is the gospel related to them?
3. What more does Paul say about the gospel here? What image or metaphor does he use to describe the impact of the gospel?
[If time] There seems to be an allusion (i.e., indirect reference) to Genesis 1:26-28 in the way Paul describes the gospel. What might Paul be trying to communicate through this "hyperlink" or "Easter egg"?
4. In the book of Acts—which depicts the growth and expansion of the church after the death and resurrection of Jesus—Luke provides us with a handful of summary statements. Read and reflect on the following passages: Acts 6:7, 9:31, 12:24, 16:5, 19:20, and 28:31. What stands out to you in these verses? How are you encouraged? How are you challenged?
5. Paul seeks to encourage the Colossians by reminding them that they are part of something bigger than themselves, bigger than even their own community. How might this perspective impact our confidence in Jesus? How can you cultivate a tangible appreciation for the ministry of the gospel as a world-wide movement?
6. Paul reflects on the importance of *hearing* the gospel (verses 5 & 6) and *learning* it from faithful servants and ministers like Epaphras (verse 7). How are you making space to "hear" the gospel on a regular basis? Are you making space to "teach" it to others? What is a next step you can take in speaking "the word of the truth" (verse 5) and "the grace of God" (verse 6) to the people God has placed in your life?

PRAY

Spend some time praying for the larger movement of the gospel of which we are a part: For the other congregations of The Journey. For our city, "from Ballwin to Belleville." For the work of The Journey International and countries like Haiti, India, and Japan. Lastly, for your own community, asking the Lord to give wisdom and courage to engage those who don't yet know Him with the gospel. Lift up the names of people he has placed in the various spheres of your life (family, friends, neighborhood, work, school, etc.).