

Series: *Colossians: The Supremacy and Sufficiency of Christ*

Lesson: *Themes for Thanksgiving*

Text: Colossians 1:1-8 (L1)

Date: Sunday, January 8, 2012

Colonial Hills
Baptist Church

INTRODUCTION

Paul's letter to the Colossians starts out quite positively, as he issues one lengthy sentence (vv. 3-8) of thanksgiving to God for His work in and through the Colossian believers. Paul often started his letters with praise to God and prayer for the believers to whom he was writing, and this letter follows that pattern. These believers had experienced the sufficiency of Christ in salvation (vv. 4-5), and that reality was being increasingly experienced by them (v. 6). So Paul thanks God for graciously opening their understanding to the gospel.

In this first section of Colossians, Paul offers three themes for thanksgiving, three reasons for which he gave thanks to God when he considered the Colossian believers. For every child of God, these themes become tremendous fuel for the fire of our heavenly praise.

THEIR _____ IN CHRIST (vv. 4-5)

1. _____ *in Christ*
2. _____ *for believers*
3. _____ *about eternity*

Application:

THE _____ OF THE GOSPEL (vv. 5-6)

1. *What the gospel is doing*
2. *Where the gospel is doing it*

Application:

THE _____ OF GRACE (vv. 7-8)

1. *Epaphras was an* _____.
2. *Epaphras was an* _____.

Application:

CONCLUSION

The sufficiency of Christ controls Paul, and in the first section of his letter to the Colossians, that reality spills out of him in a run-on sentence of thanksgiving. In these six verses, Paul considers three themes for thanksgiving that are as great a cause for rejoicing today as they were 2,000 years ago. We should thank God for our maturity in Christ through our union with Him; the message of the gospel that sparked our faith and continues to satisfy; and the ministers of grace who led us to Christ in the first place and who continue to point us to Christ (cf. 1:27-29).