

5-Day Devotional | Colossians 1:3-8 — “A Stable Church”

DAY 1 — Faith Centered on Christ

Scripture Reading:

Colossians 1:3–4a, John 6:35–40, Ephesians 2:8–9, Hebrews 12:1–2

Paul begins his letter to the Colossians with gratitude—not flattery. He thanks God because he has heard of their *faith in Christ Jesus*. That detail matters. Paul does not celebrate faith in general, sincerity, or spiritual effort. He celebrates faith with a clear and sufficient object: Jesus Christ.

Our culture often treats faith like a personality trait—something you “have” if you’re optimistic or spiritual enough. Scripture treats faith differently. Faith has no power on its own. Its strength is entirely determined by its object. A weak faith resting in a strong Savior is far better than strong confidence placed in the wrong thing.

Saving faith is not belief in belief. It is reliance—leaning your whole weight on who Christ is and what He has done. Paul reminds us elsewhere that salvation is “by grace...through faith,” and even that faith is a gift from God (Eph. 2:8–9). Faith does not earn God’s favor; it receives it.

True faith includes trust, repentance, and obedience. Trust looks away from self and rests in Christ alone. Repentance turns from the old life, changing direction because Christ is better. Obedience follows—not to secure salvation, but because salvation has already been given. This is the ordinary, biblical shape of faith.

If you feel your faith is small, take heart. Scripture never tells us to measure the size of our faith, only the direction of it. The call is not to trust harder, but to trust Christ more fully. The Christian life begins—and continues—by fixing our eyes on Jesus.

Reflection Questions

1. What are you most tempted to trust in besides Christ?
2. How does knowing faith is a gift change how you think about your walk with God?
3. In what ways is Christ inviting you to rest more fully in Him today?

Practical Application

Spend time today naming what you rely on for security. Consciously surrender those things to Christ in prayer.

Prayer

Father, thank You for the gift of faith. Teach me to rest fully in Christ alone, not in my effort, sincerity, or strength. Help me trust You more deeply today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 2 — Love for All the Saints

Scripture Reading:

Colossians 1:4b, John 13:34–35, Galatians 5:6, 1 John 4:19–21

Faith never lives alone. Where faith in Christ is real, love for Christ's people inevitably follows. Paul gives thanks not only for the Colossians' faith, but for their *love for all the saints*. That phrase is easy to read past—but it carries weight.

Paul does not say they loved community as an idea or enjoyed being around people like themselves. He says they loved *all* the saints. Christian love is not emotional chemistry or shared preferences. It is covenantal commitment rooted in grace.

Scripture repeatedly teaches that love is the visible evidence of true faith. Paul says faith “expresses itself through love” (Gal. 5:6). Jesus tells His disciples that love for one another is how the world will know they belong to Him (John 13:35). John goes further: if we claim to love God but refuse to love His people, something is deeply wrong (1 John 4:20).

This love does not come naturally. Paul later calls it “your love in the Spirit” (Col. 1:8). That means it is supernatural—produced by God, not personality. Christian love shows up in patience, forgiveness, service, and perseverance with imperfect people.

We have all known believers who were doctrinally sound, morally upright, and spiritually informed—but unloving. Scripture gives no category for a mature faith that does not result in love. Not perfect love. Not effortless love. But real, growing, costly love.

Loving the church is not always easy. But it is one of God's primary tools for shaping us into the likeness of Christ.

Reflection Questions

1. Who do you find most difficult to love within the church?
2. How does remembering God's love for you reshape how you love others?
3. Where is God inviting you to love more intentionally this week?

Practical Application

Choose one concrete way to serve or encourage another believer this week, especially someone you might normally overlook.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for loving me when I was undeserving. Teach me to love Your people with patience, humility, and grace. Shape my heart to reflect Yours. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 3 — Hope Laid Up in Heaven

Scripture Reading:

Colossians 1:5a, 1 Peter 1:3–5, Romans 8:18–25, Hebrews 6:18–19

Paul places hope last in his list—but not because it matters least. In Colossians 1, hope is the deep foundation beneath faith and love. The Colossians trusted Christ and loved His people *because* they had a hope laid up for them in heaven.

Christian hope is not wishful thinking. It is confident expectation grounded in God’s promises. Paul says this hope is “laid up”—stored, secured, protected beyond the reach of loss or decay. The best parts of the Christian life are not behind us, and they are not even fully present yet. They are ahead.

This truth reshapes how we live. If suffering is temporary, endurance makes sense. If glory is coming, sacrifice is not foolish. If Christ will appear, patience is wisdom, not weakness.

The Colossians lived in a world that promised fullness now—deeper experiences, secret knowledge, spiritual shortcuts. Paul gently but firmly reminds them that Christianity does not work that way. Most of what Christ has won for us will be revealed when He returns.

This is the “already and not yet” rhythm of the Christian life. We are forgiven now, but glorified later. We are adopted now, but transformed fully at Christ’s appearing. Hope keeps us from demanding heaven’s rewards on earth’s timetable.

Hope also binds believers together. Sharing the same future anchors us in love and steadies our faith. We are not competitors in this life, but siblings who will share together in eternal glory.

Reflection Questions

1. How does your view of the future shape how you handle hardship today?
2. Where are you tempted to demand “fullness now” instead of waiting?
3. How does eternal hope strengthen your love for others?

Practical Application

When faced with frustration today, consciously remind yourself of the future God has promised you in Christ.

Prayer

God of hope, lift my eyes beyond the present. Teach me to live patiently, faithfully, and joyfully as I wait for what You have promised. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

DAY 4 — Grounded in the True Gospel

Scripture Reading:

Colossians 1:5b–6, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 15:1–4, Galatians 1:6–9

Paul reminds the Colossians that their hope came through “the word of truth, the gospel.” This gospel was not hidden, elite, or incomplete. It was the same message being proclaimed throughout the world—and it was bearing fruit everywhere it went.

The gospel is not simply good advice or spiritual inspiration. It is truth—absolute, final, and sufficient. Paul makes no distinction between “good news” and doctrine. The gospel is good news *because* it is grounded in historical truth: Christ died for our sins, was buried, and was raised on the third day (1 Cor. 15:3–4).

False teaching often does not reject the gospel outright. It adds to it. It suggests growth comes from moving beyond grace into something more advanced. Paul says the opposite. The gospel that saved you is the gospel that sustains you.

True gospel ministry produces fruit. Lives are changed. Love grows. Hope deepens. Not because the message is clever, but because it is powerful. The gospel is “the power of God for salvation” (Rom. 1:16).

If you are trusting Christ, loving His people, and hoping in His promises, you have not missed anything. Growth does not mean graduating from grace. Depth does not mean complexity. Maturity looks like deeper dependence on the same gospel that first brought you life.

Reflection Questions

1. Where are you tempted to look beyond the gospel for growth?
2. How has the gospel continued to shape your life since you believed?
3. What fruit of the gospel do you see growing in you?

Practical Application

Revisit the basic truths of the gospel today. Thank God for them as if hearing them for the first time.

Prayer

Gracious Father, thank You for the gospel that saves and sustains me. Guard my heart from believing I need something more than Christ. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

DAY 5 — Faithful Messengers, Faithful Living

Scripture Reading:

Colossians 1:7–8, Romans 10:14–17, 2 Timothy 2:2, Matthew 28:18–20

Paul closes this section by pointing to Epaphras—the faithful servant who first brought the gospel to Colossae. Though salvation is entirely God’s work, God uses ordinary people to proclaim extraordinary truth.

The Colossians learned the gospel. That word matters. The faith they possessed was not shallow or accidental. It was taught, explained, and applied. God’s grace came to them through human obedience—through a man willing to speak, teach, and shepherd.

Paul commends Epaphras as a faithful servant of Christ. Faithful ministry is not flashy. It is steady. It does not innovate the message; it delivers it clearly and consistently. God delights to use such faithfulness to produce lasting fruit.

Epaphras also reported the Colossians’ “love in the Spirit” back to Paul. Their faith had not remained theoretical. It was visible, tangible, and relational. This is what the gospel does—it forms communities marked by faith, love, and hope.

We share that same calling today. We are recipients of grace—and messengers of it. God uses our words, our lives, and our faithfulness to bring others into the same hope we have received.

Reflection Questions

1. Who first shared the gospel with you?
2. How has God used others to strengthen your faith?
3. Where might God be calling you to speak or live out the gospel more boldly?

Practical Application

Pray for one person God may be inviting you to encourage or share the gospel with this week.

Prayer

Lord, thank You for faithful servants who have pointed me to Christ. Use my life and words to reflect Your grace to others. In Jesus’ name, Amen.