

YOU ARE
COMPLETE
in
HIM.
COLOSSIANS 2:10, NKJV

A new creation focus through Colossians ...

God Bless Faithful Brethren

No congregation can exist for very long or accomplish anything of much value without a core of faithful brethren and sisters in Christ. Furthermore, the kingdom of Christ cannot advance in the world without the establishment and strengthening of local congregations. Hence it is that Jesus and His scriptures always encourage the movement of the new Christian from worldly values and commitments to the faithfulness of brethren who are totally committed to Christ and to the work of the local church. Without that successful transition, the great and lofty plan of the Savior of

the world will fail. We welcome, then, the opportunity to examine these precepts through the letter of Paul to the church in Colossae.

- **Greeting** — Paul is writing this letter, and includes Timothy in his opening greeting, Timothy, as the apostle noted in his epistle to the Philippian brethren, was of “kindred spirit” with him, and Paul added him in his salutation when the younger man was accompanying his mentor in Christ. “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,” says he to the congregation, “and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father” (Colossians 1:1,2). The Holy Spirit, speaking through Paul on this occasion, always reinforces the positive image of the Christians, emphasizing that they are saints and not sinners.
- **Paul’s apostleship** — When Paul (initially listed as Saul by the beloved physician Luke in the book of Acts), with Barnabas, was sent out on the first missionary journey from Antioch of Syria, he (along with Barnabas) was an apostle of the church at Antioch. Later (as Luke noted in changing the listing of his name from Saul to Paul), Paul was designated as an apostle of Jesus Christ, sent out by Christ’s direct authority. Often, then, in opening comments in his epistles, he will use this appellation to communicate to the brethren he is addressing his authority in dealing with internal matters and doctrinal issues arising in these congregations. No exception here, as he writes, “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God.”
- **Faithful brethren** — It is often said that for every front line soldier in war, there are seven support personnel. There is a somewhat parallel situation in the spread of the gospel; it takes many support personnel behind the front line men like Paul. The point is; there is a tremendous amount of work to be done at every level within the functioning of the congregations, and it takes people who can be counted on to get it done. One of the really frustrating and challenging issues for employers, for example, is having members of the their crew not showing up for work. All of a sudden, the team is short-staffed, and the reliable members are burdened with extra work and extra hassle because of the dereliction of the “no-shows.” The same is true in the functioning of the local congregation; if the members are unreliable, there is simply a lot of important work that goes undone. The leadership has a more difficult time in planning things for the edification of the body when many do not attend the functions and classes, and it is much more challenging to build the momentum of the congregation in aggressively taking the spiritual battle into the teeth of the forces of darkness.
- **Grace and peace** — The prayers and greetings of the authors of the New Testament writings often center around “grace and peace.” The saints need the grace of God in assisting them in overcoming sin and weakness in their lives, but they also require the power stemming from the riches of God’s grace to supply their physical and spiritual needs in fighting the good fight of faith. They need the inner peace that comes from reconciliation with the Father in order to focus on each individual step in their walk of faith.

It is exciting to think of the faithful brethren in Colossae. They were actively building the local congregation and prepared to work hard in spreading the gospel and supporting the truth-telling preachers and teachers of their day. Those same needs exist today. God bless the faithful brethren!

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JAY WILSON