

Colossians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,  
1:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colosse: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
1:3 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,  
1:4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints;  
1:5 because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,  
1:6 which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;  
1:7 as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,  
1:8 who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

[From today's sermon]

Today we begin the book of Colossians. The following words come to mind from today's passage.

"And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13)

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but only faith in Christ Jesus that has power." (Galatians 5:6)

Paul was active in spreading the good news of God's salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ throughout the Mediterranean world. In the course of his work, he felt the reality and truth of the gospel, the good news, with all his being.

"This gospel has been proclaimed in every corner of the world, and it has also come to you. Since the day you heard it and understood God's grace, it has been bearing fruit and growing." And this verse contains an important truth. The truth of the gospel brings salvation and hope, but we cannot partake of its power simply by hearing it. It is only "since you heard it and knew God's grace," "since you truly understood God's grace" (New Common Translation), "since you came to know and understand God as truth, as reality, and as something you can rely on" that it bears fruit and grows.

In this way, those who believe in God's grace as a reality are filled with hope and love. You can tell the quality of a tree by its fruit.

(Matthew 7)

Good morning, everyone.

August is finally coming to an end with only a little over a week left. They say that the heat and cold will continue until the equinox, but although the sound of crickets can be heard at night, the heat during the day remains unchanged. I hope you have been well.

Now, I would like to begin reading Colossians. This is Paul's epistle from prison. We may have read it together a little while ago, but let us read this four-chapter epistle together again.

The following words come to mind from today's passage:

“And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.” (1 Corinthians 13:13)

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but only faith in the power of God.” (Galatians 5:6)

1:1 From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy, a brother,

Paul and Timothy became apostles who preached Jesus by the will of God and by His desire. There was God's guidance in this. These words do not speak of their authority as appointed by God. It is recorded that Paul, who was in prison, considered that he was now in this position not by his own will but by the will of God, whether in times of strength or weakness, in times of prosperity or adversity, and that this was his support.

1:2 To the saints in Christ who are in Colossae, faithful brothers and sisters. Grace and peace to you from our Father God.

“Faithful brothers” can also be understood as “brothers who believe, who have faith.” We believe together. What do we believe? We believe in Jesus, who gave His life for us and became our redemption. We believe in the grace and love of God who sent Jesus. Therefore, we are saints in Christ and brothers and sisters. Our faith cannot be spoken of without Jesus Christ. What we believe in is not salvation through our own strength, achievements, or offerings, but faith in Christ.

1:3 We always pray for you and give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In prison, we cannot go anywhere, meet with you, talk with you, encourage you, or help you, and we are in agony. However, we have the means of prayer.

1:4 This is because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints.

This was precisely why Paul was so happy to hear news of the church in Colossae while he was in prison, as he prayed for them.

3-4 We always pray for you and give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints.

Faith and love. The word “hope” also appears later, but these are the things that will endure forever and never disappear.

The Lord will continue to bless us, forgive us, and love us forever. Therefore, our faith will never fail.

1:4 This is because I have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all the saints.

So what is faith? Faith begins when we believe in the Lord of love and forgiveness as our Savior, but that faith should grow and evolve, and the Bible tells us that this kind of faith is important.

“Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but only faith that works through love” (Galatians 5:6).

Faith that works through love. What is that?

Galatians 5:13 Brothers, you were called to be free. But don't use your freedom to do whatever you want. Instead, serve one another in love.

5:14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one thing: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

5:15 But take care or you will be destroyed by your enmity.

5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

5:17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is contrary to the flesh. These are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do what you want.

5:18 If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

5:19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,

5:20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions,

5:21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, so now I tell you that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

5:23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

5:24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

5:26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

To believe in Christ is to respond with our whole being to the salvation of the One who gave His life for us, is it not?

1:4 This is because I have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints.

“Love for all the saints”

The word “all” catches our attention here. It can be difficult for us to love all the saints. We may get along well with some people but not with others, or we may understand one person but not another.

The people of the church in Colossae demonstrated “love for all the saints” because of their “faith in Christ Jesus.” Hearing this, Paul said, “We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1:5 This love is based on the hope stored up for you in heaven, and you have already heard about it in the gospel message that was preached to you.

The Bible tells us that hope is stored up for us in heaven. On this earth, we often feel stuck or hopeless, but when we look to heaven, we see that our hope is stored up in abundance. This is a very interesting statement. And we have heard this through the truth of the gospel. The gospel, the good news, is the gospel of truth. In other words, this good news is true, real, and exists.

The words we hear are true, correct, real, and full of truth.

1:6 And just as it has been doing everywhere, this gospel has also been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace.

However, in order for “this good news is true, real, and real” the words we hear are true, correct, real, and full of truth.“ In order to make this our own, as it says, “since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God,” we need to reach out our hands and receive these words directly from God as His words of grace given to us personally.

The New Common Translation translates it as follows.

“This gospel that has been preached to you has also borne fruit and grown among you, just as it has in the rest of the world, from the day you heard it and truly understood God's grace.”

The New Revised Standard Version translates it as follows:

"This gospel has been preached to you, and just as it has been heard by you, so it has also been heard by them, and they have believed in the Lord who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. That is how the gospel came to you.“

A direct translation from the Greek would be: “From the time you came to know and understand God's grace as truth, reality, and something you can rely on, it has borne fruit and grown.

We want to know and understand that God is truth, reality, and something we can rely on. If we truly understand this, we will understand God's grace and love, and we will be able to love all saints, and even those who do not know the Lord, and even those who oppose and persecute us. And in this way, faith that works through love is the most precious thing.

1:7 You learned this gospel from Epaphras, our beloved servant, who is also a servant of Christ on your behalf.

1:8 He has made us know the love you have for God, which is in the Spirit.

When we walk in the way of Jesus, who became a servant as the servant of Christ, grace and love overflow from believers. And the truth of the gospel is revealed. The Holy Spirit teaches us love. First, He loves us, protects us, and envelops us, and through His grace, He enables us to live in love.

Matthew 7:9 Who among you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

7:10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

7:11 If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

7:12 So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

7:13 Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

7:14 But the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and few find it.

7:15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

7:16 You will know them by their fruits. Do people pick grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles?

7:17 Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

7:18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

7:19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

7:20 Thus, you will know them by their fruits.

7:21 Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only those who do the will of my Father in heaven.

7:22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'

7:23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

7:24 Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

7:25 The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

7:26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them is like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.

7:27 When the rain came down, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, it was not broken, because it had been founded on the rock.

7:28 When Jesus had finished these words, the crowd was amazed at his teaching,

7:29 because he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

We also hope to bear good fruit and bear witness so that God, our trunk, will be praised.

◇Prayer: **Heavenly Father**, we thank you for today's worship. We thank you for the grace of God who has made us **those who receive the gospel, the good news full of hope and salvation**. **From the day we truly understood God's grace, how did we come to know that God sent Jesus**

to be crucified, and how did love and gratitude toward God and those around us arise within us? Please lead all those who are suffering into God's salvation and peace. Bless our families and those in our community. Use us. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.