

ActNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Connect Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Connect Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

Colossians (Part 1): The Fruit of the Gospel

Colossians 1:1-14

Rev Adrian Ng

SERMON SYNOPSIS

- **Introduction** – The book of Colossians is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to the Colossian Church in response to the two issues that hindered the church's growth. The first concern was the practice of syncretic polytheism which treated Christ Jesus as one of many gods to be worshipped and angels were worshipped too. The second concern was the observance of the Torah (Jewish law), which made salvation dependent on works rather than on Christ's finished work on the cross.

The Apostle Paul explained that Christ's death on the cross is complete, so believers need not earn their salvation, and they are no longer bound by the old (the Torah) but are granted new life in Christ. (cf. Colossians 1: 19-22, 2:13-19, 3:1-4).

- **There Is Something New About The Gospel – It Is Different**
The Apostle Paul praised God when he heard of the Colossian Church's faith in Christ Jesus and of their love for all God's people because the true message of the Gospel had come to them. The Gospel is different in that Jesus, the Son of God, transforms us unlike any other religious practices as Jesus transforms us into *His likeness* – we take on God's character, values, and perspectives and people around us *see Jesus* in us and in our daily choices and living.
- **The Gospel Releases Hope, It Grows and It Multiplies**
The Apostle Paul used agricultural language when he wrote that the Gospel is alive and will burst forth, bear fruit, and grow throughout the world. This is because Jesus Christ is the hope that transforms us. And when we know the Gospel well and live out what it teaches, it will grow and multiply. Therefore, a healthy disciple or church is identified as one that has the Gospel at the centre, and it releases hope, grows, and multiplies from generation to generation. (Colossians 1:6).
- **The Gospel Transforms and Strengthens Us into God's Holy People**
When we believe and have the Gospel of Jesus in our lives, we can expect power and strength from God to transform us to become His holy people who "live a life worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God". (Colossians 1:7–12).
- **The Gospel Sets Us Free (Forgiveness Of Sins) To Go into God's Kingdom**
Another result when we believe and have the Gospel in our lives is that we are set free from the dominion of darkness *by Jesus* – in whom we have our redemption and the forgiveness

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of sins. This forgiveness sets us free to enter God's kingdom. This is likened to the Exodus, with Christ likened to be the new Moses, freeing us from enslavement to sin (cf. Israelites were enslaved in Egypt) and leading us into God's Kingdom (cf. Israelites entered and possessed the Promised Land in Canaan.) Colossians 1:11–14.

- **Closing** – God delights for everyone to receive the Gospel, be transformed, live a genuine Christian life as His intention is for human beings to flourish and bear fruit. May we as a family in TPMC bring this delight to our Lord our God!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

RELATE

1. In Colossians 1:6 the Apostle Paul said that “the gospel is bearing fruit and growing” from the day the Colossians heard it and received the grace of God. Can you think of a time recently when you saw the Gospel change a person or perhaps even yourself? Where have you recently seen the Gospel producing visible fruit in faith, character or relationship?

REFLECT

2. The Apostle Paul's writing in Colossians reveals a profound truth: the Gospel is the power of God to change lives because it is the living and active Word of God. How do the following Scripture texts deepen your understanding of this truth and help you know God better to live lives to delight Him?

[Verses to help us go deeper: Romans 1:16; Philippians 1:9-11; 1 Peter 1:22-23]

RESPOND

3. *The Gospel is not just information. It is the active, transforming power of God that changes our relationships, minds, character, and actions for His glory!* What specific "fruit" would you ask God to change you through His transforming power for others see today? What steps do you think you need to take for this to happen? Share with your CG the “fruit” you have identified and the ongoing transformation in your next CG Meeting.

PRAYER POINTERS

- Praise the LORD for His abounding love and marvellous grace towards us!
- Thank God for sending His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and for the hope laid up for us in heaven through the word of the truth of the Gospel.
- Ask God to show and teach us in TPMC & CGs always to allow the Gospel to transform and strengthen us with endurance and patience, and bearing fruit in every good work.

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON

“...since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; 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, 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.” [Colossians 1:4-6 NKJV]