



Week of January 14, 2019: Colossians 1:1-14

Discussion Questions Set #1

“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To God’s holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ: Grace and peace to you from God our Father

In sermon, we discussed how Paul used his introduction to this letter to help quell some fears that might have existed within the Colossian church related to the highly Gentile nature of the church. Quite simply, the early church was significantly Jewish in its initial nature and Gentile Christians had often been assigned a secondary, less central position within the early church.

1. Why do you think this dynamic developed within the early church? Why might Jewish Christians be led to think less of Gentile Christians?
2. Think of the church in 2019. Are there any dynamics similar to the Jew-Gentile dynamic within the church today? Are there certain people groups who might be seen as secondary within the church in 2019?

Discussion Questions Set #2

In service, we borrowed a word picture from author N.T. Wright to help us envision the situation in the Colossian church. We imagined the Colossian church as a garden plot. Five years previously, Epaphras had come with the seed of the gospel and “planted” it in the heart of the Colossian church. The Colossian church proved to be good soil, because out of the implanted good news of Jesus Christ, all kinds of good things began developing. Faith in Jesus began to be evidenced, love for the people of God blossomed, and hope in the heavenly promises of the gospel became apparent. In essence, the garden of the Colossian church was in full bloom.

1. Think of Hillside in 2019 as a garden plot similar to the Colossian church. What would we look like if we were in full bloom? What kinds of things might we see happening within and through the church if the good news of Jesus really began to grow?
2. Think of your own life right now. What might we look like if we were in full bloom? What kinds of things might we see happening within and through us if the good news of Jesus really began to grow?
3. In service, we suggested that a garden only stays in full bloom when it continues to be tended. In many ways, I think we can see Hillside and the people of Hillside in bloom, but how does a church or a person stay in bloom? What practices do you think are important to ensure that our garden remains tended?

Discussion Questions Set #3

“We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.” (Colossians 1:10-13)

We learned in service that we are to **“live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him” (NIV)** or **“to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him” (ESV)** and that Paul gives us four “tests” to determine if we are walking in a manner worthy of the Lord.

1. Personally, what do you think it means to walk in a manner pleasing of the Lord?
2. Discuss the following four tests and talk about how these might be evidenced within a church in 2019. What does a church, or an individual look like who passes these “tests”?
 - a. bearing much fruit
 - b. growing in knowledge of Christ
 - c. manifesting resilience and patience
 - d. evidencing hearts overflowing with joyful gratitude