

God's Work in the World Pt 1

God works independently (Jesus died) God uses others, and we also need to put skin in the game - I don't want to overstate our importance in the mix, but we see in scripture that the lives of so many people are affected by the faithfulness of one person or another.

Col 1:1-12 ESV Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

- An **apostle** by the **will of God** - not just a **title**, but **an assignment** - he lived with awareness of this
- 2Co 10:13 ESV But we will not boast beyond limits, but will boast only with regard to **the area of influence God assigned to us**, to reach even to you.

2 To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at **Colossae**:

What happened in Colossae was a direct result of the faithfulness of Paul → and Epaphras

- It is likely that Paul was never at Colossae in person (Col 2:1) (they didn't see him, he hear about them)
- Because of his apostleship - He WAS in Ephesus for 2 years & all of Asia heard the word
 - Act 19:10 ESV This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. **MAP SLIDE**→ **perhaps Epaphras was one who heard**
- Epaphras (vs 7) - you **learned it** from **Epaphras, beloved fellow servant & faithful minister**

It is the same with us (Dick B and Mike Premo) - God's work is done as people do his will - far reaching

- **Dick Benjamin** - age 34 moved to Alaska to help father in law - started a church ALCC
- **Mike Premo** - early 20's started concerts in the park - that is where I got saved - **only fruit from those**

Saints and Faithful brothers

- called **Saints...holy** (this is something **GOD DOES** - talk more about next time)
- and **Faithful...**(this is something **WE DO**) - v7 Epaphras faithful minister of God, v23 faithful to God
 - Col 1:22-23 ESV he has now **reconciled** in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you **holy and blameless** and above reproach before him, 23 **if indeed you continue in the faith**, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard...

Grace is active in their lives evidenced by FAITH, LOVE and HOPE (three things that last)

Grace to you and peace from God our Father. 3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4 since we heard of your **faith** in Christ Jesus and of the **love** that you have for all the saints, 5 because of the **hope** laid up for you in heaven. Of this **you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, 6 which has come to you**, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing--as it also does among you, **since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth**, 7 just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf 8 and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

- This happened **ONLY** because they heard the word of truth the **GOSPEL** - understood grace of God
- And that happened **ONLY** because Epaphras (a fellow servant) was also a (**faithful minister**)

Now the baton is handed to the Colossians

9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking **that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will** in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so as to **walk in a manner worthy** of the Lord, fully **pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God**. 11 May you be **strengthened** with all power, according to his glorious might, for all **endurance and patience with joy**, 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has **qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light**.

You are a saint, because someone was faithful

→ **now God is calling you to be faithful so someone else can become a saint**

→ **just be obedient to whatever Jesus is telling you to do (you never know how far-reaching it will go)**