

- What does Paul look back on with thanks?
- What changes do we see in our life that we can give thanks for?
- What does Paul look forward to in prayer?
- What will going on with Jesus look like for us (i) this week, (ii) this year?

Preparation for next study:

- Read Colossians 1:1-23 and reread 1:11-23 twice
- Identify all the repeated words, phrases and ideas in verses 15-20
- How would you summarise in a couple of sentences what 1:11-23 is all about?
- Spend some time in prayer responding to Jesus about what you see in these verses

COLOSSIANS FOUNDATIONS

STUDY 1: COLOSSIANS 1:1-12 LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

Preparation:

- Read the book of Colossians twice (it takes 15 minutes to read straight through)
- Each time note down anything that stands out to you
- Read 1:1-12 and pray for each person in the group based on what Paul and Timothy pray for their readers

Start by praying for your study

Feedback from Preparation:

- What stood out for you as you read through Colossians?
- How did you find praying for the group based on verses 1:1-12?

Read the following passage in the group:

Colossians 1:1-12 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,² To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.³ In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,⁴ for we have 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. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel⁶ that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God.⁷ This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,⁸ and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,¹⁰ so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God.¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.

What stands out to you from these verses?

LOOKING BACK WITH THANKS 1:1-5A

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,² To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.³ In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,⁴ for we have 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.

How did Paul know that the Colossians had really met Jesus?
Where can you see these things in your life?

Take a moment to thank God for something he's done in your life

THE GOSPEL THAT IS GOING EVERYWHERE 1:5b-8

You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel⁶ that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God.

What do we learn about the gospel in these verses?
What is needed for people to meet Jesus?

⁷ This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,⁸ and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

How did the gospel come to each of us?

LOOKING FORWARD WITH PRAYER 1:9-12

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,¹⁰ so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God.¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.

What does Paul want for those who've started to follow Jesus?
How does this help us to pray for each other?
What words and themes does Paul repeat here from verses 3-8?