

Building Communities of Hope

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Introduction (Colossians 1:1-14 NIV)

Faith, Hope, and Love (Colossians 1:1-6 NIV) ¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, ²To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father. ³We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints—⁵the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel⁶ that has come to you.

A Christian's Hope

Hebrews 6:19 (NIV) *We have this hope (the promises of God) as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.*

A Christian's Faith

Hebrews 11:1 (NIV) *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*

A Christian's Love

Romans 5:5 (NIV) *And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*

Ephesians 5:1-2 (NIV) ¹Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children² and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Who should be the recipients of our love?

We are to love our families.

We are to love our Christian brothers and sisters.

John 13:34-35 (NIV) ³⁴"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

We are to love our neighbors.

Galatians 5:14 (NIV) *The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*

A Christian's Fruit (Colossians 1:6-8 NIV) ⁶All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. ⁷You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, ⁸and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

A Christian's Good Works (Colossians 1:9-12 NIV) ⁹For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. ¹⁰And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV) *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Conclusion (Colossians 1:13-14 NIV) ¹³For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

William Booth's Vision of the Lost

"You must do it! You cannot hold back. You have enjoyed yourself in Christianity long enough. You have had pleasant feelings, pleasant songs, pleasant meetings, pleasant prospects. There has been much of human happiness, much clapping of hands and shouting of praises - very much of heaven on earth.

Now then, go to God and tell Him you are prepared as much as necessary to turn your back upon it all, and that you are willing to spend the rest of your days struggling in the midst of these perishing multitudes, whatever it may cost you."