

## **Bible Study for July 4-10, 2022**

**Read:** Colossians 1:1-14

### **Notes:**

The best time to solve a problem is before it becomes a huge issue. The city of Colossae had once been a flourishing place, but was on a downward trajectory, and could be considered a bit of a backwater hosting a variety of religious traditions which influenced each other. Apparently, Christianity arrived there by way of someone named Epaphras, a disciple of Paul and native of Colossae. While the congregation appeared to be thriving, Paul had also gotten word that the Christian faith was being diluted by some to the point that Jesus only held the same amount of attention as other gods and beliefs. In other words, there were those in the congregation promoting a self-made religion using a variety of deities.

While Paul had never visited Colossae, this news prompted him to write them from his prison cell, encouraging them to put Christ first and foremost above all else, not because of Jesus power (the way other gods were judged), but because Jesus demonstrates the most love for humans, above all others.

This first part of the letter is an expression of thanks for the faith, hope, and love that mark this community, including a prayer for strength and courage from Paul.

### **Questions to Ponder:**

What attracts you to certain strangers? What qualities do you look for when meeting someone for the first time?

Paul hasn't met this group of believers, yet he is attracted to them. Why might that be?

What qualities of the congregation mentioned here would attract you the most?

If faith, hope, and love are the fruit of the gospel, what does this fruit look like?

How does what Paul prays for in verses 9-12 compare with what he thanks God for?

How is the fruit of faith, love, and hope developing in your life?