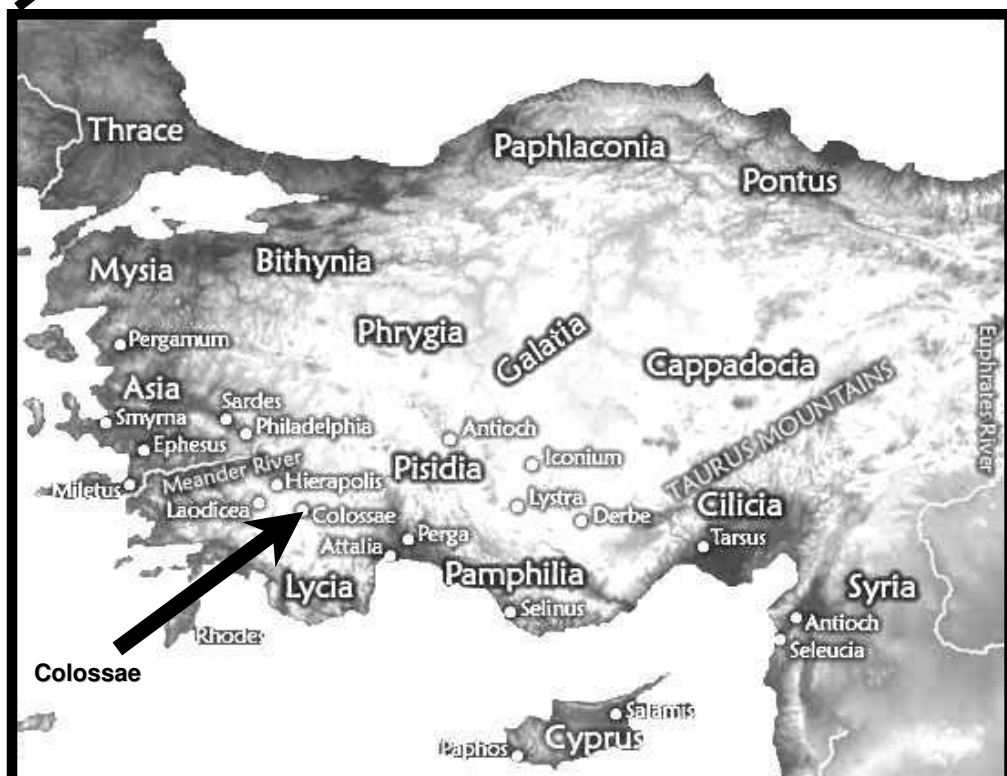


## Why did Paul write to the Colossians?

Paul had never met the Christians at Colossae. It was Epaphras who went there and preached the gospel and has passed onto Paul news of how they are going. Paul is thankful for the news of their growing maturity as followers of Jesus but he is also concerned about the reports of false teachers among them who are trying to *add* to the gospel. While the exact nature of the “*Colossian Heresy*” is not known, it’s clear that the false teachers were saying that the gospel of Jesus Christ was not enough – more was needed to be a *REAL* Christian. It’s no surprise then that Paul’s reply focuses on Jesus. He wants the Colossians to know that *all they need* is found in Jesus, and if they have *received* Jesus as Lord and are *continuing* with Him as Lord then they are already **complete** and they **lack nothing**.

Nothing has changed. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christianity is still under pressure to *add* things to the gospel. This makes Colossians a timely and encouraging letter reminding *us* of the **sufficiency of Christ**.



# Colossians

## 1:1-14



### Read Colossians 1:1-8

What are the two things in the lives of the Colossians that Paul thanks God for?

Where do these two things come from?

How would you describe “the hope that is stored up for you in heaven” that Paul mentions here?

How is the evidence of that “hope” seen in your life?

Is the gospel bearing fruit and growing at Mitchie? If so, what are the signs of that?



What things do we learn about the gospel in **verses 5-8**?

Paul says that the Colossians “**heard**” the gospel, they “**understood**” it, they “**learned**” it from Epaphras. What does this say about how we go about the ministries of our church?

What things can threaten the gospel as the focus of our ministries? How can we guard against that?

*Hearing, learning* and *understanding* can all be hard things to do at times. It takes discipline and hard work at church, in Growth Groups, in family and private Bible study. How can we encourage each other to press on in this?

### **Read Colossians 1:9-14**

What is it that Paul asks God to give these Colossian Christians? (v9)

What is the purpose of this?

How does Paul describe a life pleasing to God?



Can you say that those things are happening in your life?

- Which characteristic do you most need to work on with God's help?
- How can you work on this?

Has there been anything in particular from this study that you have found to be a great reminder of what it is to be a genuine Christian?

**Verses 13** and **14** are a great summary of what God has done for us through Jesus' death on the cross. Reflect on what we have been given and spend time thanking God and praying for each other.

