

- The Georgia Baptist Convention opened Truett McConnell University in 1946, naming it in honor **George W. Truett** and **Fernando C. McConnell**. Truett was pastor of **First Baptist Church of Dallas** 1897-1944, and McConnell, Truett's cousin, was pastor of **Druid Hills Baptist Church** in Atlanta.



When the Gospel Comes to You

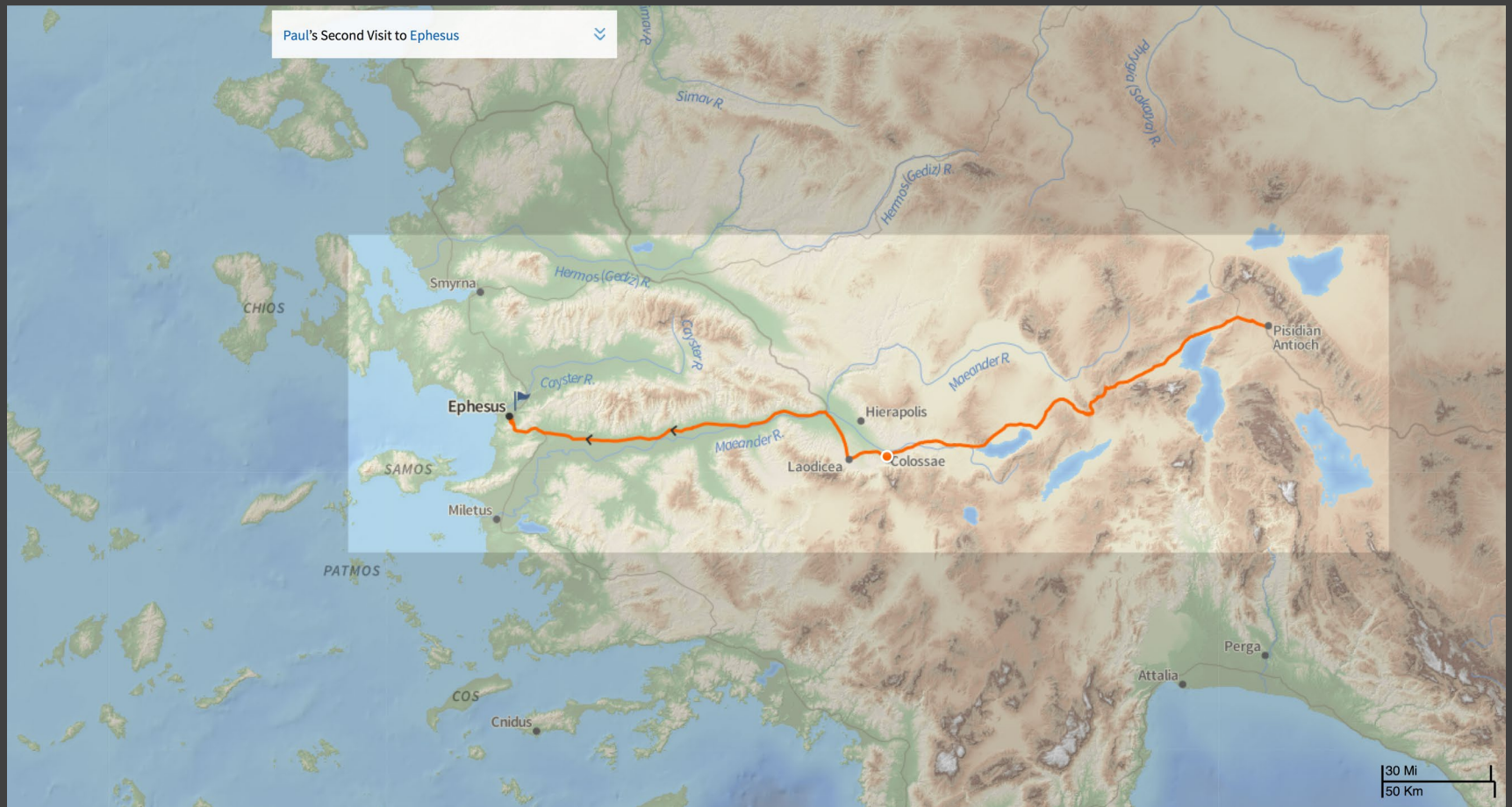
Colossians 1:3-7

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Colossians 1:3-7

Thanksgiving and Prayer

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.



- Colossae was about 100 miles east of Ephesus, in the Lycus River valley near Laodicea and Hierapolis in Asia Minor (Turkey).

Overview

- Colossians is one of the apostle Paul's "prison epistles." Along with Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon, it was written about A.D. 60-62 during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, recorded in Acts 28.
- Though he had never visited the church, he had heard about them through his protégé Epaphras.
- What Paul heard gives us a clue to **three things that happen to someone when they accept Christ.**



- Paul opens his letter to the Colossians by thanking God for what their Gospel is doing in their lives.
- Paul also said that same Gospel was bearing fruit in all the world, so whatever it was doing in their lives, **it will do in ours!**

What happens when the Gospel
comes to you?

3 **Εὐχαριστοῦμεν** τῷ θεῷ πατρὶ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν προσευχόμενοι, **4** ἀκούσαντες τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην ἣν ἔχετε εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους **5** διὰ τὴν ἐλπίδα τὴν ἀποκειμένην ὑμῖν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἣν προηκούσατε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου **6** τοῦ παρόντος εἰς ὑμᾶς, καθὼς καὶ ἐν παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ἐστὶν καρποφορούμενον καὶ αὐξανόμενον καθὼς καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν, ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας ἠκούσατε καὶ ἐπέγνωτε τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ· **7** καθὼς ἐμάθετε ἀπὸ Ἐπαφρᾶ τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ συνδούλου ἡμῶν, ὅς ἐστιν πιστὸς ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διάκονος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, **8** ὁ καὶ δηλώσας ἡμῖν τὴν ὑμῶν ἀγάπην ἐν πνεύματι.

- In the ESV, Verses 3-8 are translated as three English sentences.
- In the Greek NT they form a single 102-word sentence.

1. The Gospel brings us to a **saving faith in Jesus Christ.**

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.

- **We are saved by our faith in Christ.**

Ephesians 2:8

For it is by grace you have been saved,
through faith—and this not from
yourselves, it is the gift of God.

- **We also live by faith.**

Romans 1:17

¹⁷ For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

- **Faith views everything in life in relation to God.**

Their faith, love, and hope come from the Gospel, which **bears fruit** and **increases**.

SENTENCE

Of this you have **heard** before in ^jthe word of the truth, the gospel, ⁶ which has **come** to you,

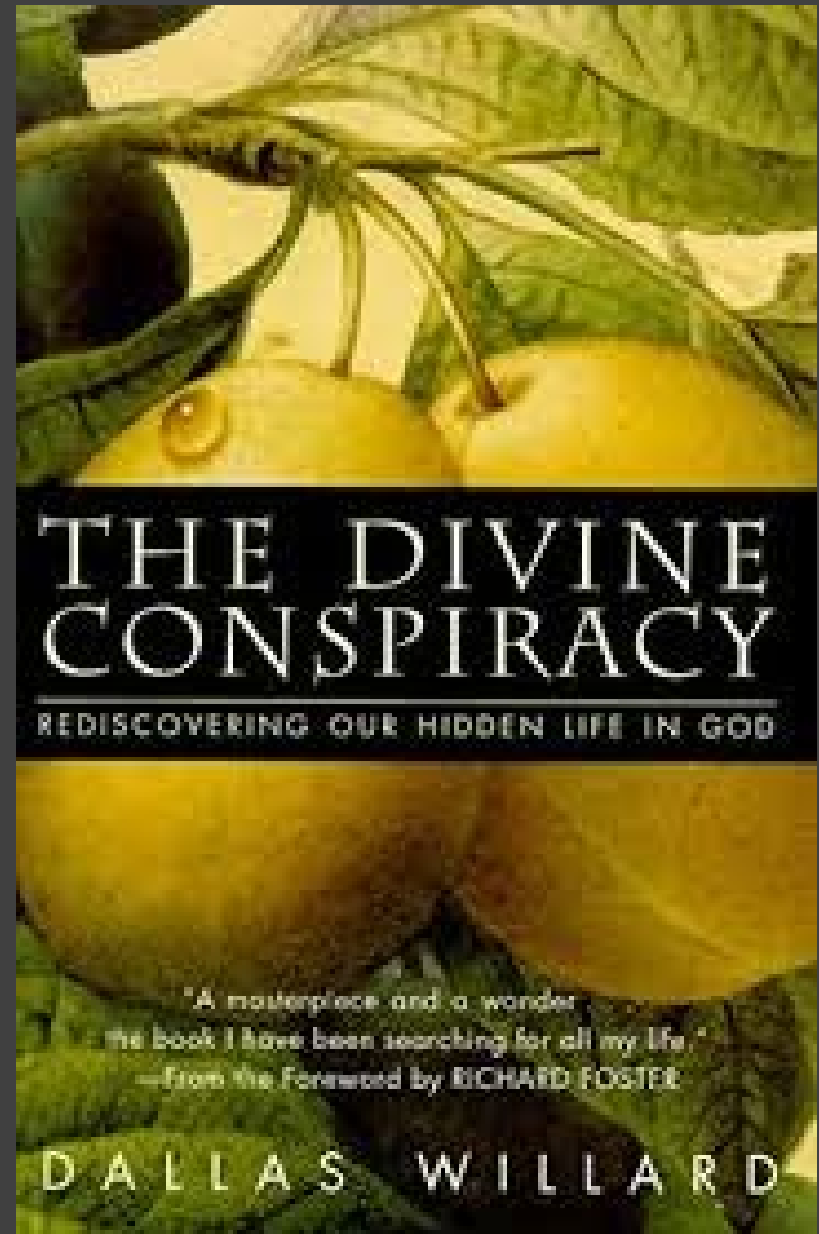
SUB-POINT

as **indeed** ^kin the whole world it **is** ^lbearing fruit and **increasing**—

SUB-POINT

as it **also does among you**, since the day you ^m**heard** it and **understood** ⁿthe grace of God in truth,

- Dallas Willard gives a wonderful definition of faith: *“To believe something is to act as if it were so.”*
- The challenge of the Christian life is not getting people to *do* what they *believe*.
- It’s getting them to *really believe* what they *say* they believe.





If you *believed* that this building was on fire, no one would have to *persuade* or *pressure* you into getting out.

In the rest of Colossians, Paul will give their faith plenty to do.

Put On the New Self

3 ^bIf then you have been **raised** with Christ, ^cseek the things that are above, where Christ is, ^dseated at the right hand of God. ² ^eSet your **minds** on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For ^fyou have **died**, and your life is **hidden** with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ ^gwho is your ¹life ^h**appears**, then you also will **appear** with him ⁱin glory.

⁵ ^jPut to **death** therefore ^kwhat is earthly in you: ² ^lsexual immorality, impurity, ^mpassion, evil desire, and covetousness, ⁿwhich is idolatry. ⁶ ^oOn account of these the wrath of God is **coming**. ³ ⁷ ^pIn these you too once **walked**, when you were **living** in them. ⁸ But now ^qyou must **put** them all away: ^ranger, wrath, malice, ^sslander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹ ^tDo not **lie** to one another, seeing that ^uyou have **put off** ^vthe old self ⁴with its practices ¹⁰ and ^whave **put on** ^xthe new self, ^ywhich is being **renewed** in knowledge ^zafter the image of ^aits **creator**. ¹¹ ^bHere there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, ⁵free; but Christ is ^call, and in all.

¹² ^d**Put on** then, as ^eGod's chosen ones, holy and **beloved**, ^fcompassionate hearts, ^gkindness, ^hhumility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ ^h**bearing** with one another and, ⁱif one **has** a complaint against another, ^g**forgiving** each other; ^gas the Lord has **forgiven** you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on ^jlove, which ^k**binds** everything together in ^lperfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let ^mthe peace of Christ **rule** in your hearts, to which indeed you were **called** ⁿin one body. And ^o**be** thankful. ¹⁶ Let ^pthe word of Christ **dwell** in you richly, **teaching** and **admonishing** one another in all wisdom, ^q**singing** psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, ^rwith thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And ^swhatever you **do**, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, ^t**giving thanks** to God the Father through him.

2. The Gospel gives us **a love that looks outward to others.**

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.

- Love is listed as **the first fruit of the Spirit.**

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control.

- Jesus said that our love for one another was **the true mark** of our being his followers.

John 13:34-35

³⁴ “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”



And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”

—Matthew 22:35-36

Matthew 22:37-40

³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall **love the Lord your God** with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall **love your neighbor as yourself**. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

3. The Gospel reorients all of life to **a hope that is laid up heaven.**

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.**

- The Christian hope not just a vague wish, but a **confident expectation**.
- The assurance of **forgiveness** and **salvation**.
- The fact of an **eternal life**.
- Becoming **full partakers** of the **divine nature and life** of Christ.



1 John 3:1–2

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. . . . ² Beloved, we are God’s children now, and **what we will be has not yet appeared**; but we know that when he appears **we shall be like him**, because we shall see him as he is.”



“It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. . . . There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal.”

—C.S. Lewis

The Weight of Glory

- There is a sense in which the hope laid up for us in heaven is **already at work** in the lives of believers.
- God's immeasurable power works in the present life of the believer from our conversion until we reach our final perfected state.

Colossians 3:1-4

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For **you have died**, and **your life is hidden with Christ in God**. ⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

- Your real life is now **hidden with Christ** in God?
- So, **where** is that?
- Colossians 3 says Christ is “**above**”—**in heaven**.
- A parallel passage in Ephesians says that after God raised Christ from the dead, he “**seated** him at his right hand in the heavenly places,²¹ **far above** all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.²² And he **put all things under his feet** .
..

—Ephesians 1:19-22

“Under his feet”

- In ancient times, the foot represented the **power exercised by a person**.
- A subject addressed himself to the feet of the mighty or the superior.
- A conquering king placed his foot on the neck of his defeated enemy.
- God has exalted Christ and placed all power in him, placing the whole created universe, including enemies, in subjection to him.



The next time you feel
overwhelmed by anything,
remember:
Whatever is over your head
is under his feet!

Ephesians 2:4–7

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and **raised us up with him** and **seated us with him in the heavenly places** in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Where I
live and
where I
work are
real places.



But there is
some deep and
real way that I
am also here:
“seated with
him in the
heavenly
places.”



Application

- *Do people thank God for you?*

Colossians 1:3

³ We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you .

..

- Do you have the kind of faith, hope, and love that people will talk about?

Colossians 1:4

. . . we have heard of your faith . . . love . . .
hope . . .

- Paul had never met the Colossian Christians (2:1).
- And when he writes this letter, he's in Rome, a thousand miles from Colossae.
- So **how** did he know about their faith, love and hope?
- **It was worth talking about.**

- Is the Gospel bearing fruit in your life?

Colossians 1:6

All 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.

- Does your faith in Christ make a difference?

When you accept the Gospel, you receive a saving **faith** in Jesus Christ, a **love** that looks outward to others, and the complete reorientation of your life to a **hope** that is laid up in heaven.

- Remember Dallas Willard's definition of faith: *"To believe something is to act as if it were so."*
- The challenge of the Christian life is *really believing* what you *say* you believe.

