



Series Introduction – *Against the Tide*

A series this on Paul's letter to the church in Colosse, it is part of our annual teaching we have been looking at since September about Growing and Going and wraps up our teaching for the year.

Paul's letter was written to encourage the church there in Colosse to provide some foundation teaching principles for living a Christian life in the midst of a non-Christian culture. If we consider what it is like living in Raleigh in the 21st Century we too live in a largely non-Christian culture today so the principles Paul shares here in this letter are relevant to us today!!

As a follower of Jesus our calling is to represent him and his kingdom values where we live, often this will call for us to stand against the tide of public opinion or popular trends. To Live ***Against the tide*** this nine week look at Paul's letter has been designed to help us to do just that. To be a people not swayed by others but totally ***living*** for Jesus... following his leading as he followed his Father's leading 2000 years ago.

Colossians 1 verses 1 to 14: How to Please God (week 1)

Paul's letter to the church in Colosse starts with Paul setting out his credentials to be an apostle. Why do you think he did this?

- Outlined his call from directly from God not his self-determination; but called by God

Have you thought about who called you to be God's representative? How does that make you feel about the task to make disciples (of all nations)?

- Encourage people to share their honest response. It is okay to feel anxious – it's what you do with anxiety that counts

Paul opens with a familiar greeting (read other letters from Paul) "Grace and Peace to you from God our Father." Why do you think he wrote this at the beginning of this letter and indeed others too?

Against the tide – How to please God – Colossians 1: 1 to 14

- Wanted his readers to know that the letter was inspired by God – it was God’s revealed heart to Paul for the church at Colosse (and for us too)!
- Paul wanted his readers to experience, to dwell upon the Grace and Peace that comes from God
- It is important to know we are God’s chosen, we have received Grace (forgiveness) we don’t deserve; and Peace (from Christ) we don’t totally understand but experience in the midst of all circumstances.

Paul prays for the church in Colosse and culminates for a request that they are filled with the knowledge of his (God’s) will through the wisdom and understanding the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

What can we learn about prayer from Paul?

- We need to ask God what it is he is doing
- Seek God’s wisdom and understanding
- Live surrendered lives
- Bear fruit as we step out in faith

Intimacy with God is important – how do you prioritise your time in order to develop your relationship with God?

Do you:

- 1) Spend time with God on your own – asking him to reveal his will?
- 2) Spend time hearing what God has said to others – allowing God to speak through them to you?
- 3) Spend time with others with no agenda – just to be in God’s presence and asking him to speak?

Living a worthy life: a life that pleases God

Paul says the goal is to live a worthy life – one that brings glory to the Lord – and we do this by living in a way that pleases God in every way.

What does living a worthy lives look like?