

THE WAY TO YOUR BEST YEAR

Colossians 1:1-8

- **During our 21 DAYS OF PRAYER/FASTING we are pursuing deepening our relationship with the Lord and asking Him for direction, help and provision for our lives, families and ministry throughout 2025 (www.celebrationchurch.org/prayerfasting).**
- ***What would I like to see happen in my life in 2025, and what steps would I be willing to take to see those things happen?***
- *"This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy. We are writing to God's holy people in the city of Colosse, who are faithful brothers and sisters in Christ. May God our Father give you grace and peace."* (Colossians 1:1-2)
- **Epaphras became a Christian during Paul's ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19-20), and then started the Church in Colossae with a small group of people (i.e. *Life Group*).**
- **The Church in Colossae was primarily composed of Gentiles, and in this letter we find the Apostle Paul affirming the congregation and addressing some challenges they were experiencing.**
- **Paul wanted the Colossian Christians to experience God's best (Colossians 1:9-10), which would require them rising to a new level of faith and commitment in their lives.**
- ***What is it going to take for me to rise to a new level of faith and commitment to the Lord so that 2025 can be one of my best years ever ?***

Making 2025 Our Best Year Ever Will Require:

PURSUING HOLINESS IN OUR LIVES

- *"We are writing to God's holy people in Colossae."* (Colossians 1:1-2)
- *"Paul . . . to the Saints who are in Colossae."* (Colossians 1:1-2 NKJV)

- **Christians being the Lord's "Saints" means that: 1) we are special to Him, and 2) He has a significant work for us to do.**
- **Living a Holy Life involves living a *Surrendered Life*.**
    - *"Give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind He will accept. When you think of what He has done for you, is this too much to ask?"* (Romans 12:1)
    - **We must dedicate every facet of our lives to living a holy life.**
- **Living a Holy Life involves living a *Separated Life*.**
    - *"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think."* (Romans 12:2a)
    - **We're to be "thermostat Christians" who are changing our environments rather than "thermometer Christians" who are reflecting our environments.**
- **Living a Holy Life involves living a *Spirit-led Life*.**
    - *"Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good, pleasing and perfect His will really is."* (Roms 12:2b)
    - ***What changes do I need to make to live a "holy life" in 2025?***

Making 2025 Our Best Year Ever Will Require:

DEMONSTRATING <u>FAITHFULNESS</u> IN OUR LIVES

- *"We are writing to God's holy people in the city of Colosse, who are faithful brothers and sisters in Christ."* (Colossians 1:2)
- **Faithfulness is a quality that people admire, but also a quality that the Lord wants us to continually demonstrate in our lives (1 Corinthians 4:2).**
- **God wants us to be faithful in *Daily Spending Time in His Presence*.**
    - **We spend time in the Lord's presence through praying to Him, worshipping Him, and studying His Word.**
    - **Our *21 Days Of Prayer/Fasting* Devotions will help us to get off to a good start with this spiritual discipline.**
    - *"In Your presence is fullness of joy, at Your right hand there is pleasure forevermore."* (Psalm 16:11 NKJV)
- **God wants us to be faithful in *Weekly Connecting with Other Believers*.**
    - *"In the Temple <u>and in people's homes</u> the early Christians continued teaching and telling the Good News."* (Acts 5:42)
    - **Being involved in a *Life Group* enables us to: 1) Grow stronger as we learn from God's Word and others, 2) Encourage and mentor other believers, 3) Be involved in a network of care and support, 4) Partner with others to minister to hurting people, and 5) Have godly friends who are helping us minister to our non-Christian friends and family.**
- **God wants us to be faithful in *Regularly Pursuing Spiritual Growth*.**

    - *"You must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* (2 Peter 3:18)
    - ***What are some activities I could participate in that will help me to grow in my faith and relationship with Jesus in 2025?***
- **God wants us to be faithful in *Faithfully Giving to His Work*.**
    - Jesus – *"It is more blessed to give than to receive"* (Acts 20:35)
    - **Giving faithfully to the Lord brings provision, protection, joy and peace to our lives (Malachi 3:10-12, 2 Corinthians 9:6-11).**
    - **God doesn't need our money, but tithing to His work indicates our trust in and commitment to Him (Deuteronomy 14:23, Matthew 6:33).**
    - *"God loves a person who gives cheerfully. And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others."* (2 Corinthians 9:7-8)
- **God wants us to be faithful in *Purposefully Displaying Love to Others*.**
    - Jesus – *"Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world you are My disciples."* (John 13:34-35)
    - **We demonstrate love for others by: 1) telling them, 2) showing them, and 3) sharing our faith with them.**
    - *"Let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions."* (1 John 3:18)
- **At the end of our lives, we will be judged and rewarded according to our faithfulness (Matthew 25:21).**
- ***What changes do I need to make to live a faithful life in 2025?***

- ***What are the benefits of living a holy and faithful life?***
- *"May God our Father give you grace and peace."* (Colossians 1:2)
    - **"God's grace" is what we need but do not deserve.**
    - The Lord – *"My grace is all you need. "* (2 Corinthians 12:9)
    - **"God's peace" is an inner tranquility and assurance that enables us to overcome any adversity or difficulty that comes our way.**
    - *"God's peace . . . is more wonderful than the human mind can understand."* (Philippians 4:6-7)
- **We should want to live holy and faithful lives simply because the Lord has demonstrated His love for us (1 John 4:9-11).**
- ***What is the Lord communicating to me through this message, and what commitments do I need to make in order to respond to it?***