

Day 2 Colossians 1:1- 7

Today in our communication formats we don't spend a lot of time in formal greetings. My husband always tells me when I write an email to be brilliant, be brief, be gone - so there is not much effort into formalities.

But in the beginning of the book of Colossians the greeting becomes part of the brilliance, and we don't want to dismiss it. It includes a few challenging and significant truths.

Paul hasn't personally visited the Colossians, so he sets up an introduction. He gets straight to the fact that he is an apostle and his authority for this letter is from God Himself. We can trust this book is not a rant, or an opinion. It is from the heart of God to His people. This kind of legitimacy pulls our interest.

And it gets better. Paul gave us his credentials, but now he gives us ours. He tells us **WHOSE** we are. This is a description into how God sees us. Now we are really listening.

In verse 2 the term used to describe us from God's view is, "God's holy people". In some translations, the word used is "saints", which means to be set apart for God. This amazing significance should not be lost on us as believers. We should allow it to overwhelm us.

The reality in this truth is that the church is God's love, His passion, and is set apart for His purpose. This isn't being accomplished with our ability to be holy, so pressure off. Holiness is not a standard we hold; it is a status we have been brought into as we believe in Christ.

Salvation in Christ is like a massive wave that has brought us to Father. We have been brought to the shores of His kingdom by it.

There is a freedom in knowing that we are not working to be loved by God. Our reality is that God's unconditional love is working in us. And we have in us, as his holy ones, an individual and corporate purpose of reflecting His image to the world.

As much as that thought encourages us it does set up some obstacles for us as well.

Our culture thrives on identity. We all seek to establish that in different ways. Whether it is through political views, our jobs, our sexuality, our good works, our looks, or religion, we strive to brand our own significance.

The problem with our self-assigned identity is we are asking people to validate us through an extremely small lens. That identity can get in the way of the full picture of who we are and dim the light on whose we are.

The truth is we are much more than the names we put on ourselves. We are called by God for Him, accepted by Him, fully known by Him, and have a declared purpose because we are His in Christ Jesus. That is an identity that we will never have to sell or defend.

And as beautiful as that thought is we are ALL challenged by it.

But of this we are assured. Our God is brilliant, but He is not brief when it comes to the heart and designated identity of His people. We are loved beyond who we are. May we focus on whose we are. Almighty God's.