

THE MARKS OF A BLENDED CHURCH
COLOSSIANS 1:1-7

Introduction:

1. Once again, we have heard the cry of “racism” throughout our land.
2. I understand that there is still racism happening around our country, but I believe this cry has been taken hostage by extreme radicals posing as concerned citizens, and I’m afraid that their concern is not for our country, but an attempt to overthrow our government.
3. These radicals want to divide the races and pit them against one another, thus assuring the downfall of America. Their desire is to see a race war.
4. When I look at this letter that Paul sent to the church at Colosse, I see God’s remedy for the prejudice and hate that human’s can harbor in their hearts against other races.

I. THE BLENDING OF THE COLOSSIAN CHURCH. **v. 1** *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother...*

- A. Christianity blends the strangest elements. It is a foe to all national hatred and prejudices.
- B. Paul, half Jew and half Gentile, Timothy, a Grecian, and the Colossians, a mixture of several races, are here united in a holy and faithful brotherhood. **Cf. Acts 10:28** *Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.*
- C. It was here in Colosse that the Gentile met the Jew whom he had been accustomed to regard as an enemy of the human race. It was where the Roman met the lying Greek sophist.
- D. In Jesus they met with one another and became “brethren.” **1 John 3:14** *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.*

II. THE SAINTS AND FAITHFUL BRETHERN. **v. 2a** *To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colosse...*

- A. “Saints” shows that they had a personal relationship with Jesus.
- B. “Faithful brethren” shows a godly union with one another. **1 John 4:7** *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*
- C. They embraced a common faith, and held steadfastly together in the face of false teachers and the defections of those who were wavering.
- D. Christians are brethren in spite of their degrees in knowledge and faith, because they are brethren in Christ. **Galatians 3:26** *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*

III. THE THREE MARKS OF A BLENDED CHURCH. **vv. 3-5** *We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel...*

- A. Faith in Jesus. **Galatians 5:6** *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.*
- B. Love for all saints. **1 Thessalonians 4:9** *But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another...*
- C. Hope that is laid up in heaven. **Galatians 5:5** *For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.*

IV. THE POWER OF THE COLOSSIAN CHURCH. **vv. 6-8** *...which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; as you also learned from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.*

A. This power brings forth fruit in the lives of the church members. **John 15:8** *By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.*

B. This power is given by the grace of God. **2 Corinthians 4:15** *For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.*

C. This power is learned through the preaching of the Word of God. **Romans 10:17** *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

D. This power to love others is found in the boldness that is delivered through the Holy Spirit. **Romans 5:5** *Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

Conclusion:

1. Love is the leading characteristic of the gospel.
2. It is announced as a message of God's love to every human being no matter what their color, no matter what their ethnicity, no matter what their background, and its object is to produce love in every believing heart.
3. The church at Colosse was a perfect example of what a church should be. Like Jesus, we should look upon the inward person and not the outward person.