

THANKSGIVING (HOLD FAST!) — CHRISTUS VICTOR WEEK 6 — *Colossians 1:3-8 (NIV)*

I. OUR _____ (_____)

³ We always thank God,

the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

when we pray for you,

⁴ because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus

and of the love you have for all God’s people—

⁵ the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven

and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel ⁶ that has come to you.

II. OUR _____ (_____)

In the same way,

the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—

just as it has been doing among you

since the day you heard it and truly understood God’s grace.

III. OUR _____ (_____)

⁷ You learned it from Epaphras,

our dear fellow servant,

who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf,

⁸ and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

THE BOTTOM LINE

_____ to _____ to _____.

...by _____ your _____ on your _____.

...by _____ on the _____ in the _____ and in _____.

...by _____ the _____ your _____ Christian _____.

Some Comments on “the Gospel” in 1:5

Because church folks today understand “gospel” more in terms of how to get saved or simply the saving message, it is especially important for us to refocus our energies on the texts that really do define gospel in the New Testament, which themselves are anchored in Isa 40:9; 52:7; 60:6, and especially 61:1. Those texts begin with 1 Cor 15:1-8 (or 15:1-28), the gospel sermons in the book of Acts (2:14-39; 3:12-26; 4:8-12; 10:34-43; 11:4-18; 13:16-41; 14:15-17, and also 7:1-53; 17:22-31), and the stubborn reminder that the first four books of the New Testament were called the Gospels because they are in fact the gospel itself. One should also take a look at the simplest of gospel statements in all of Pauls’ letters: “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel” (2 Tim 2:8). In short, the gospel of Jesus and the apostles was the announcement that Jesus was Israel’s Messiah, the true Lord who saves by making all things right, and that this Messiah lived, died, was raised and exalted, and will come again to establish the eternal kingdom (the new heavens and the new earth). Salvation is entailed in the gospel, but the gospel was first and foremost an announcement about Jesus in which the resurrection played a central role. Hence, I am fond of saying, when it comes to gospel, first [Christ] and second [salvation]. When the latter is first, Christ becomes a means; when Christ is first, the message is about him (and the salvation he brings). This Christ vs. salvation is not an either-or but an issue of which comes first (Scot McKnight, *Colossians*, 97).