



## What Holds us Together?

### Col 1.2

*To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae:  
Grace to you and peace from God our Father.*

**The Point:** A church is established in the name of Jesus to be a living example of his grace and peace.

**The Question:** What holds any congregation together?

**What is Colossae, and who were the Colossians? 1.2**

**What is an authentic Christian church?**

Faith: 1.4

Love: 1.4

Hope: 1.5

**What does an authentic Christian Church do?**

Please God in every way 1.10

Bearing fruit 1.10

Growing in 1,10

    Knowledge 1.11

    Strength 1.11

    Patience 1.11

    Joyful thanksgiving 1.12

**They walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Following him out of the domain of darkness and into the kingdom of his Son. 1.13**

**What makes all this possible? 1.17**

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Colossae was once a thriving city and a layover spot on the trade route from Ephesus to the Euphrates river until Rome moved the highway 10 miles and built Laodicea. When Paul wrote to them, it was a small town of little importance. However, there is a body of believers there, and Paul writes to encourage them to grow and fellowship with the church in nearby Laodicea. You will find familiar names in his letter to Philemon. The church is only three to five years old in AD 60. The site of the former city is known but buildingless and deserted.

An authentic Christian Church has three characteristics; all three are attributed to the Colossian church in the first chapter. The first is faith in God, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The title God applies to all three and is used ten times. Father is used three times. Son, Christ, or Jesus ascribed to God's Son ten times and Spirit for the Holy spirit once. Paul documents their faith in verses 2 and 4. I get a sense of applause.

Second, an authentic church loves its fellow believers in all congregations, and this love is noticed in the world. God calls us to love our neighbors; Jesus calls us to love each other and to love our enemies. Lev 19.18 Matt 5.43-45, John 13.34-35. Don't think the world doesn't notice our behaviors—the camera is on and recording 24/7. Lastly, a church of Jesus Christ has a confident hope in an eternal home with God.

What are the characteristics of an authentic church? Their first thought is to please God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) in **every way**. We find what pleases God in the Scripture. We bear fruit through our good works. Through his word and conversations with seasoned saints, growth in knowledge of God provides strength for every trial, patience, and endurance in all circumstances. An authentic congregation knows how to celebrate victory in Jesus with all this in mind. Why?

Because the Father has transported us from the domain of darkness, a domain is a seat of authority. Satan has authority over that dark place. A domain is not a kingdom! Christians are members of the kingdom of God's Son. In him, all things hold together: churches, ministries, families, saints, and fellowship. The key is this—in Him.