

# Under Pressure

## GROW Colossians



by Rev Dan Balsdon, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020 | read online at [www.revdanbalsdon.com](http://www.revdanbalsdon.com)

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This month the Methodist communities I serve in Bognor Regis, Felpham and Westergate are going to be studying the letter to the Colossians, and my Sunday reflection videos are going to take a sneaky peak too.

This week we're looking at Colossians 1:1-23, which forms something of the trailer for what's to come in the rest of the letter. It sets the scene for us.

The Colossian Christian community have been coming under pressure. Colossae had been a busy riverside city, a centre of trade – but other cities had overtaken them and Colossae had become a bit of a has been place.

As a result, there was a lack of hope, there was uncertainty in the community. And pressure was building from many corners of their society. All vying for attention, cults presenting themselves as truth and hope and salvation.

Paul, who writes this letter from prison, and has never met the Colossian Christians face to face. He's heard of their faith, and he writes to them. Much like me speaking to a camera right now, hoping that you who are watching will be encouraged in your faith, Paul wanted to encourage them.

And so he writes:

*3 In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, 5a because of the hope laid up for you in heaven.*

Paul writes to encourage and affirm the Colossian Christians in the faith they have...

'you're doing good'

Keep at it...

Despite the pressures around you, keep at it.

Keep focused on Jesus.

There's much more Paul wants to say about Jesus – and why keeping focused on Jesus gives hope – and we'll come back to that more next week.

But this week – I want to encourage you.

Life is full of pressure and uncertainty right now.

And here in the UK we're in a patchwork of restrictions across the country, there's very live debate about whether the restrictions are going to far, or not far enough, what the scientific evidence is...

There's so much vying for our attention.

Some much competition for truth.

Just as Paul encourages the Colossian Christian community to keep on keeping on, despite the pressure around them, my encouragement to you is to keep on keeping on.

If you a Christian – keep at your relationship with Jesus.

Paul goes on to celebrate the truth that the Colossian community's faith is bearing fruit and growing among them (1:6).

Church – keep growing, keep praising, keep praying, keep encouraging one another in faith. Keep asking questions and looking to God for answers.

If you're not a Christian, then I want say to you – that despite all the noise around us, and around you, presenting itself as truth and hope – there is one true source of hope that will be faithful to you, and never leave you – Jesus.

Jesus is hope, and truth, and light.

Jesus has, and continues to make such a difference to my life.

Jesus is the one certainty, the one truth, we can hold onto.

We'll look at more on how Paul presents the hope Jesus gives next week.

For now, keep on keeping on.

Despite pressure and uncertainty,

Looking to Jesus,

Grow and bear fruit.