1. (v1) "Paul, and apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God"

This opening answers the criticism and challenge to Paul's authority to speak.

"By the will of God" - (Acts 9:13-16; Galatians 1:11-12)

2. "And Timothy our brother"

Paul and Silas meet Timothy, and he joins them: (Acts 16:1-3)

Timothy is with Paul in Rome, and Paul will send Timothy back: (Philippians 2:19-24)

3. (v2) "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colossae"

"Saints" - "faithful brethren in Christ;" physically alive; Christians alive in the city.

Really? Does a person need to be dead, proved to perform miracles while alive, merit a so-called beatification process, and then declared a "saint" by a pope?

4. (v3-6) THINGS ABOUT THE "SAINTS AND FAITHFUL BRETHREN IN COLOSSAE"

1) (v3) "We give thanks ... praying always for you"

(Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 2 Thess. 3:1) Let us do that, too.

2) (v4) "heard of your faith in Christ Jesus"

It's about relationship: I am His and He is mine. Reference to their fidelity to God as they continue to walk "in Christ Jesus"

3) "And of your love for all the saints"

Demonstrated faith because of their adherence to God's word: (1 Peter 1:22-23)

4) (v5) "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"

(Romans 15:13; Hebrews 6:19; Titus 1:2) Hymn #538 My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less

5) (v6) "... And is bringing forth fruit" - (John 15:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:8)

5. (v7-8) "As also you learned from Epaphras"

Epaphras also brought the gospel to Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, and (Philemon v23) "Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you"

"dear fellow servant ... faithful minister ... declared to us your love"