

## Colossians – Lesson 1

Colossians is a book that answers some of life's questions, such as *Why am I here?* or *What is my purpose?* It also speaks of Jesus' supremacy and sufficiency. I am looking forward to all that the Lord has for us as we dive deep into His Word this fall. Let the Word wash over you each week afresh. Find space to clear your mind and just ask the Holy Spirit to do His work of taking the very living Word and applying it to our hearts and minds for transformation. Let's get a little background before we begin.

Paul did not plant this church in Colossae, nor did he know the Colossians personally; he didn't have a personal rapport and familiarity with them. The tone of Paul's letter to the Colossians was one of encouraging exhortation and thanksgiving. He ultimately would correct them, but he did not use a stern rebuke or confrontational approach, as he did with the Galatians (Gal 1:6-9; 3:1).

Paul wrote this letter to the Colossians when he was in prison in Rome for speaking the gospel. Though for the majority of the book he uses singular references such as "I" and "me," leading us to the conclusion that Paul is the author of this book, Paul included Timothy in verse 1, so that we would know that Timothy is with him.

The opening of the letter describes the ultimate membership offer that God extends to all of us. Paul's greeting served to welcome the Colossians to the family of faith, to celebrate the divine privileges they now shared, and to inspire their faithful service in the gospel mission. This invitation is meant for us too, and it reminds us that as members of God's family, we too have reasons to be glad, to be grateful, and to be generous as we share the gospel with everyone.

This book will open our eyes to what is going on in Christianity today. God will reveal many things that are relevant for us. Pray for this and that God uses His Word to bring transformation through application in our lives. Application is key. Start each day with prayer, asking God to give you wisdom and discernment as you study His word and for the Holy Spirit to guide you into all Truth. Get ready to begin another adventure with God!

The purpose of this first lesson is to get an overview of the entire book. Context always rules interpretation, so Scripture must interpret Scripture. We will look at the book of Colossians as an entire book this week.

1. Read all 4 chapters of Colossians.

a. Mark any references to the author, including pronouns. List what you learn about the author and where he was located.

b. List any references to the recipients of this letter and what you learn about them.

c. Did you notice any important repeated words as you read through the four chapters? If so, list them here and mark them in a special way. (You may want to make a bookmark with the key words and how you are going to mark them throughout the book.) *Christ* is a key word, so make sure to list that and mark it. Then make a list of what you learn from each key word.

2. What was the purpose of Paul writing to the Colossae church? (Colossians 1:28)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. From whom did the Colossians hear the gospel? (Colossians 1:6-8)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. To which two churches did Paul write this letter? (Colossians 1:2 and 4:16)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Even though the people of Colossae were described as growing and grounded, they were being warned about certain things. Take the time and reread all the chapters and mark these warnings in a distinct way. Then make a list of all the warnings below.

6. Do you sense a main theme of the book of Colossians? When I try and think of the main theme, I ask myself the following questions: What is the emphasis of this book? Does it emphasize who Christ is or what we have in Him? Are there warnings and instructions? Then I narrow it down to a central theme. In your own words describe the central theme of the book of Colossians.

7. Now let's try to give a theme to each chapter of Colossians. Identify the main theme for each chapter:

a. Chapter 1

b. Chapter 2

c. Chapter 3

d. Chapter 4

Wow, what a first week! Thanks for hanging in there. All the work you did will pay off as this will give you a strong foundation from which to build.

☞ How has God spoken to you through your study this week?



c. Understanding

3. Considering these definitions, what is Paul asking God to do for the Colossians and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Read Romans 12:1-2. How do these verses compare to the phrase in verse 9, “filled with the knowledge of His will”?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What is the difference between spiritual knowledge and worldly knowledge? How can you tell the difference? From which do you operate?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. If we are walking in a manner pleasing to Him, we will bear fruit in every good work. What is that fruit? Look up the following verses and list any insights.
  - a. Matthew 3:8; 7:15-21

b. Romans 7:4-6

c. Galatians 5:16-25

d. Ephesians 5:15-21

e. James 3:17-18

6. Another significant word that is mentioned by Paul is *power* in verse 11.  
a. Look up the definition and write it below.

b. Paul prays a similar prayer regarding power in Ephesians 1:15-23. Note any similarities below and list anything else you learn about power that is yours as a CHILD OF GOD. Where does this power come from?

7. In Colossians 1:12 Paul talks about the saints, who are people that are holy and set apart. Read the following verses about those who are sanctified/set apart and list what you learn:

a. Romans 1:6-7

b. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

c. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

8. What a joy to know that God sets us apart! In Verse 13 Paul talks about us coming into “the kingdom of His beloved Son.” Let’s look up some verses about the inheritance of “the kingdom of His beloved Son” shared by the saints. List what you learn.

a. Matthew 19:27-29; 25:34

b. Hebrews 1:1-2 and Romans 8:16-17



c. 1 Peter 1:3-5

9. How do we qualify as a saint according to Colossians 1:12-14?

∞ Does the admonition in Colossians 1:9-14 seem overwhelming? What is just one area you can ask the Holy Spirit for power in which to grow? Pray for this for each other in your group time. You can use these verses as a prayer guide.

What a wonderful Savior we have who gives us the right to become children of God!! Take some time and praise Him for this free gift that He gives. May we live as saints, set apart for His glory.



2. Read Colossians 1:15-18. Jesus is the firstborn of all creation. What does this mean exactly? It means that He existed from the beginning and created all things. It shows that the Son of God has preeminence over all creation; He has first place in everything. Read the following verses and note what you learn about creation and Jesus' relationship to creation: Genesis 1:1, 26; John 1:1-14, 17; and Hebrews 1:8-12.

3. Read Colossians 1:21-23. Verse 23 begins with the phrase "if indeed you continue in the faith." Read the following verses and write down how they confirm or reinforce this statement.

a. Philippians 1:6

b. Hebrews 3:1-6, 14

☞ Being firm in the faith means not being moved away from the hope of the gospel. What is the gospel?

4. The word “church” is used 5 times in Colossians. We often use the word in the context of, “what church do you belong to?” Let’s take a look at what the church is according to the Word of God. Note what you learn about the church from each scripture below:

a. Colossians 1:18

b. Colossians 1:24

c. Colossians 1:25

d. Colossians 4:15

e. Colossians 4:16

f. Ephesians 1:22-23

g. Ephesians 5:22-33

h. Acts 2:46-47

5. If someone were to ask you who or what is the church and its function, what would you say after reading these verses?

The Greek word for church is *ekklesia* which means “a calling out, a Christian community of people on earth or saints in heaven or both; assembly.” A simple definition of “church” is a community of believers—all those who have placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Church is not a building or a property; church is God’s people, called in the Scriptures as the Body of Christ, the Temple of God, and the Household of God. (1 Cor. 12:27; 1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:19)

6. In Colossians 1:24-2:3 the word “mystery” is used three times. How would you explain the mystery?

7. Paul wrote to other churches about the mystery also. Read and list what you learn about the mystery from the following verses:

a. Ephesians 3:1-12

b. Romans 16:25-27

8. Why was it important to Paul to write to them about this mystery? Keeping the context of this book in mind and what Paul was trying to present, can you see how defining this mystery is foundational for them?

☞ The lesson this week was heavy as we skimmed the surface of topics that are theologically deep and complex. In your small groups, discuss why these topics are important.

## Colossians – Lesson 4

This week we are going to be looking at false teaching, which is abundant in our world and has crept into the church just as it did back in the days of the church in Colossae. We are dependent on the Holy Spirit to guide us as we learn.

Please pray with me: *Father, we come before You, thanking You for Your Word and for Your Holy Spirit which is guiding us into all truth and knowledge. We pray for wisdom as we study this week and for clarity in understanding. We open our hearts and minds before You to mold and shape our lives by the Word into the image of Your Son, Jesus. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

1. Read Chapter 2 and mark the following key words: *God, Christ, all, faith, dead/died*, and underline any warnings.
2. Paul warned the Colossians about being deluded, emphasizing that all wisdom and knowledge are in Christ Jesus. According to Colossians 2:4 and 2:8, against what was he warning?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 1:17-2:16 and 3:18-23 as it relates to wisdom. On the Scripture pages provided at the end of this lesson, mark the phrases *wisdom of the world* and *wisdom of God* and list below what you learn about each:

a. Wisdom of God

b. Wisdom of the world

4. How do you achieve the wisdom of God according to these passages?



The Greek word *philosophy* means “the love and pursuit of wisdom; wisdom of high learning of the mind.” While the pursuit of wisdom is commendable, you see why Paul was warning the Colossians in verse 8 to guard against the kind of wisdom not based upon Christ.

5. For us to understand more about the spirit of the times and philosophy, read Acts 17:16-34 and answer the following questions:

a. What do you learn about those caught up in it?

b. How did Paul deal with them? What was the result?

c. Can any of this be applied today? Why and how?

6. Let's look at some of Peter and Paul's other writings that speak to the danger of false teaching. List what you learn:

a. 1 Timothy 1:3-11

b. 2 Timothy 2:16-18

c. 2 Peter 2:1-3

d. 2 Peter 3:14-18

7. Jesus also warned against following wrong teaching, specifically against following the tradition of men instead of the Word of God. Read Mark 7:5-13. What do you observe about the traditions of men and the result of holding to them?
8. Have you encountered any of the same philosophical challenges that the Colossians faced? Do you know where to go in Scripture to counter the false teaching?

- ☞ Take a look at these common statements. Can you think of a way each goes against Scripture? You can discuss these in your small groups.
- “You do you and I’ll do me.”
  - “Pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.”
  - “Do what feels good.”
  - “You deserve it.”
- ☞ Now pause and ask God to search your heart and reveal any philosophies of our culture or traditions of men that you are following that seem wise but are not taught in the Word of God.
9. Read Colossians 2:9-10. In conjunction with Hebrews 2:9, 14-18 and 1 John 4:1-4, summarize what these verses teach about Jesus’ relationship to spiritual or invisible rulers and authorities.
- ☞ What are the implications of this fact in your life, that Jesus is head over every kind of ruler and authority, spiritual and earthly? How does this information transform your thinking and your faith?

It is so important what you are doing in studying the Word of God. This is the only authority for our lives, and the more you study, the more the heart of God is revealed. Well done, good and faithful servant!



c. Philippians 3:2-3

3. Paul goes on in verse 12 to talk about "baptism." According to verse 12, what does it mean? (Reference Romans 6:4 which sheds more light on this.)

Dr. Ray Pritchard writes about the meaning of baptism in Christianity.com  
(<https://www.christianity.com/jesus/following-jesus/baptism/what-does-baptism-mean.html>):

"By joining in baptism, we're identifying ourselves with Him. Romans 6:4 says we have been buried with Him through baptism into death. We're now dead to the power of sin. Being raised up out of the water expresses our new life in Christ and our union with Him.

If the meaning of baptism could be summarized to one word, that word would be identification. Baptism speaks primarily of personal, public identification with Jesus Christ.

In Romans 6:3-4 the Apostle Paul puts the matter this way:

*Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

Notice the strength of the expressions, "baptized into Christ" and "baptized into his death" and "buried with him in baptism." Someone may suggest that the primary

reference here is to Spirit baptism. That's true, but at the very least, water baptism is in the background of this passage.”

Baptism is coming into total alignment with Jesus and who He is.

4. Look up Romans 6:1-11 and note how it compares with Colossians 2:9-15. Here are a few questions to get you thinking about this.

- What does baptism symbolize?
- What happens in the spiritual realm after baptism?
- Other than water, what is necessary for baptism?

5. In Colossians 2:13 Paul talks about being “dead in our transgressions” and then being made “alive” because we have been forgiven. Read Ephesians 2:1-10. What were we like when we were dead and how did God make us alive?

6. The definition of *transgressions* is “to deviate from the right way,” and the definition of *sin* from Colossians 1:14 is “to miss the mark.” Look up the following verses and note what God says *sin* is. Are *transgressions* sins?

a. Romans 14:23

b. James 4:17

c. 1 John 3:4

d. 1 John 5:17

7. So, how could a righteous God forgive us our sins and grant us the kingdom of heaven when He clearly stated in Romans 6:23 that the wages of sin is death and in 1 Corinthians 6:9 that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of heaven? Read 2 Corinthians 5:21 for the answer and write it in your own words below.



Wow! Praise the Lord!! We have a gracious and loving God that provides a way for us to be in relationship with Him and have eternal life.

8. What did He do to “the certificate of debt” (Col. 2:14) on our behalf? Look up the following verses about when God disarmed rulers and authorities and triumphed over them. What “ruler” was disarmed and what was the result?

a. John 12:27-33

b. Ephesians 1:19-23

c. Hebrews 2:14-15

☞ Reread Colossians 2:11-14. Do you read this in a different light now? Are there areas in your life that don't look like they have been “circumcised” or “buried in baptism”? Declare them dead and claim new life in Christ!

We have done a lot of work this week looking up and trying to understand some of the teachings and promises in Chapter 2. Next week we are going to complete Chapter 2. I like ending with verse 15 because it gives us a victory shout that He overcame all this for us. This should make us all stand up and shout!!

*“When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.”*

- ✎ Write a note of praise and thanksgiving to God for cancelling our debt and disarming the rulers and authorities over us.

## Colossians – Lesson 6

Pray with me: *Father, as we come before You today, asking for Your wisdom and knowledge in Your Word, we ask for Your Holy Spirit to guide us and open up our minds to the things of You. Help us not to be trapped by traditions and our previous way of thinking that keep us from seeing the new revelation You have for us. We rebuke the enemy from our study time because, like we learned last week, you have disarmed him. Come now, Holy Spirit, speak and guide me today. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

We learned at the end of the last lesson that Jesus triumphed over the enemy. Paul's emphasis in Chapter 2 so far has been what it means to be "in Christ" and to warn us to not be deceived. Keep that in mind as you complete this chapter. Verse 16 begins with the word "therefore," which is a transitional word relating what was just written to what is coming up. Let's dive into this next section and find the connection.

1. In verse 15 Paul states that Jesus has disarmed the rulers and authorities. Since He disarmed them, there is no basis for judging one another. Let's read Paul's next warning about judging each other in Colossians 2:16-17. Then look up the following verses to compare the Law of the Old Testament versus what is written in the New Testament. Record what you learn to help you understand Colossians 2:15-17.
  - a. Leviticus 11:46-47; Mark 7:18-19

- b. Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 2:23-28

c. 1 Chronicles 23:30-31; Galatians 4:8-11 – Note that festivals were celebrated yearly, New Moon Festivals were celebrated monthly, and Sabbath was observed weekly.

d. Hebrews 8:1-13

2. I know this idea of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable can be a very challenging topic in the church. From reading all of the above, explain why no one is to act as our judge in respect to food, drink, feasts, or Sabbath.

The Law was the old covenant, the first covenant. Jesus brought in the new covenant which is not based on the Law. The key to being part of this new covenant is one's heart; Jesus made the Law obsolete because He fulfilled it. Do you feel bound by a set of rules or dos and don'ts? Or do you feel quite free except for the constant restraints others try to put on you? Here is a guideline that helps to discern what you believe and why:

- ❖ What do you believe?
- ❖ How did you come to believe this?
- ❖ What does God's Word say about this?

3. The next warning is in Colossians 2:18-19. The Greek word translated *defraud* is “to give judgment against,” “to decide as an umpire against someone.” *Self-abasement* means “false humility.” According to these verses, how might someone defraud us?
  - ✎ Is there an area of your life that you are living bound by the unnecessary and legalistic expectations or judgements of others? Has someone misguided you in an unbiblical way? This could be an important topic to discuss with a godly mentor or with your small group.
  
4. Let’s turn now to talk about the spiritual realm. We will start by looking at angels. Some in the Colossae church were worshiping angels and being deceived to think this was right and spiritual. Do you see why Paul was warning them? We should not be worshipping angels. After reading each of the verses, write what you learn.
  - a. Hebrews 2:1-3 (this is in regard to the Law and the Old Covenant)
  
  - b. Hebrews 1:1-7, 13-14

c. Galatians 1:6-8

d. 1 Corinthians 6:3

e. Romans 8:38-39

5. The warning in Verse 18 also speaks about visions. Some were teaching false doctrine, using their visions as the basis for it. But Paul reminded them that Christ is the head and that all things should lead to Christ. Read the following verses and note what you learn.

a. Deuteronomy 13:1-5 (How should visions be handled?)

b. Acts 2:17

c. 2 Corinthians 12:1-6

6. Read Ephesians 4:11-16. This is a parallel passage to Colossians 2:18-19 about growth in the body of Christ. List what you learn.
  
7. As we conclude Chapter 2, read verses 20-23. Then look up 1 Timothy 4:1-8. As you compare the passages, describe what Paul and Timothy are warning against.

Since the birth of the church the enemy has been trying to wiggle his way in to deceive the followers of Christ. According to Colossians Christ has won and the enemy is doing all that he can to delude and woo people away. He started in the garden with doubt, "Did God really say...", and he uses those same methods today.

Don't let anyone deceive you about Jesus. He is the head of the Church. He has created all things and is in you. Hold fast to His Word, which is the plumb line for all our lives. Ask God for eyes to see the subtle ways and tactics that the enemy uses, and then stand firm on His Word. If it doesn't bring you closer to Christ and is not in the Word, then it is not of HIM; flee from it. I'm so excited to see what is in store for us in Chapter 3. I am praying that our eyes will be open and that He will continue to transform us from the inside out.

## Colossians – Lesson 7

We are now halfway through the book of Colossians. Remember to start your study today in prayer. This week we will be focusing on Chapter 3 and will discuss the “putting on of the new self” and the remedy for our sinful desires. We will be diving deep into the first 4 verses as they are very dense. Remember, context is always key, so keep in mind the context of what Paul has already told us in the earlier chapters. (Remember, the original text did not have chapters; it was one continual writing.) Paul is now turning to the answer of controlling our flesh, but it comes after he laid down a great foundation of Christ.

1. We have learned that controlling our flesh does not come through severe treatment of the body, self-made religion, or self-abasement. Let’s look at some verses that explain how this works.

- a. Matthew 26:41

- b. Romans 13:14

- c. Galatians 5:16-25

- d. 1 Corinthians 6:18



e. 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22

2. In Colossians 3:1-4 Paul calls the believer to remember their position in Christ, remembering that we have not only died with Him, but we have been raised with Him as well. Therefore, we are to “seek the things above” where Christ is seated. We are to “set our mind on things above rather than on the things of this earth.” Reread verses 3 and 4, and then list why we are to do this.

3. Remembering where Christ is right now and what He’s doing, let’s look at some verses and record what this means in our life.

a. John 14:2-3

b. Romans 8:34

4. Now let’s turn slightly and see what our “reality” is according to the following verses:

a. Ephesians 2:4-6

b. Romans 8:1, 29-30

c. 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

Our life is hidden with Christ; Christ is our life. This is what God's Word tells us and is the key to living life. What makes the difference between living in victory or defeat each day? It is recognizing that Christ is our life and that we are to live by His Spirit not our flesh.

5. The reality that as Christians we died with Christ and now live in Christ should impact how we live. Look up these verses and note the impact of this truth on our lives:

a. Romans 8:9-17

b. Galatians 2:20; 5:24; 6:14

c. Philippians 1:20-21

## d. Philippians 3:8-11

☞ Explain in a practical way what it means that YOUR life is hidden in Christ.

6. Colossians 3:1-2 uses the phrases “keep seeking” and “set your mind on.” They are both in the *present tense*, which means a continuing action, and in the *imperative mood*, which means a command. How does this information affect how you understand these verses?

7. What do you think “seeking the things above” in Verse 1 means? Look up the following verses and list what you learn about the “things from above.”

- a. Revelation 4

- b. Revelation 21

c. Psalm 73:25

☞ Is there a specific way you can change your focus to “seek the things above”?

8. Colossians 3:4 talks about how we will be “revealed with Him in glory.” Wow! What a statement! What will it be like? “Glory” means “judgment, view, splendor, brightness.” How does this relate to our life in Him?

9. When Christ returns at His second coming, believers will be revealed. List what you learn about this from the following verses:

a. 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 51-54

b. Philippians 3:20-21

c. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

d. 1 John 3:2-3

☞ 2 Corinthians 13:5 says, “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus is in you – unless indeed you fail the test?” In light of this scripture take some time to reflect upon whether your life stands the test. Are you a new creature in Christ? Do you have the power of the Spirit so that you can say no to the flesh? Are you continuing in the faith, steadfast and not moved away from the hope of the gospel? Don’t let doubt creep in as you do this. This is to reaffirm to you the standing you have IN CHRIST. Ask the Lord to search your heart (Psalm 139:23-24) and ask Him to reveal to you what your mind is set on. What occupies your mind, energies, goals and desires the most? Write out what He reveals to you and then end with a prayer of thanksgiving to Him.

If you are not sure about your standing with Christ, then today is the day to declare and enter into the assurance of salvation through Christ. His Word says in Romans 10:9-10, "That if you confess with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

So, it is simple. If you believe, then confess it to God and ask Him to forgive you, and He will come and fill you with His Spirit and live with you. If you have done this for the first time, please reach out and tell someone so we can celebrate your new birth in Him and give you some resources to help you in your journey!

## Colossians – Lesson 8

I read something recently that caught my eye. I had to read it a couple times to let the very simple concept sink in. It said something along the lines of this: *We forget that the inward experience with God is to transform the outward experience with man.* We are going to look at “old self” and “new self” this week as we continue in Colossians Chapter 3. Keep on praying.

1. Since we have another “therefore” in verse 5, we need to remember what we learned last week as it relates to what we are going to study this week. Compare Colossians 3:5 with Romans 6:11-13 and write any insights. To what are we to consider our earthly members dead?
2. What are the 3 commands in Colossians 3:5-10, and what are the reasons for these commands?
3. In Colossians 3:8 Paul adds more to the list of things that have to go. List them below.

☞ We can hardly keep going without pausing for reflection here! Do you feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit in any area? Have you experienced deliverance in any of these areas?

4. That is quite a list of evil practices! Where do such evil practices come from? What has happened to this part of you? There are only 3 places that the term “old self” is used. I’ve listed the other 2 places below. Read and record what each says about the old self and the new self. What are the results of our actions? How are we to live?

a. Romans 6:5-11

b. Ephesians 4:17-32

5. What does Colossians 3:10-11 say about the new self?



6. How does God describe the believer in Colossians 3:12?

7. In Verse 12 Paul calls us *chosen of God*, which means “picked out,” and *holy and beloved*, which means “set apart to God or by God...consecrated.” Look up the following verses and list what you learn about what it means to be “chosen of God.”

a. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

b. 2 Thessalonians 2:13

c. 2 Timothy 2:10

d. 1 Peter 1:2; 2:9-10

e. Revelation 17:12-14

8. What are we to “put on” according to Colossians 3:12-14?

9. Colossians 3:13 talks about forgiving. Do you realize how essential this is? To not be forgiving is serious. Look up the verses below and list what you learn about forgiveness and perhaps the unwillingness to forgive.

a. Matthew 6:9-15

b. Matthew 18:21-35

c. Luke 23:34

d. Ephesians 4:32

☞ Why are we to forgive, according to Colossians 3:13? Take some time this week to reflect on any unwillingness you may have to forgive. Have you held a grudge? Are you bitter? Perhaps you need to forgive yourself. Ask God to reveal it, and then remember as we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us. Write out any thoughts or prayers as you need to.

10. In conclusion for today read Colossians 3:16. How does this verse relate to Paul's purpose for writing Colossians (Col. 1:28-29) and how does it encourage you?

## Colossians – Lesson 9

The second part of Colossians 3 holds many challenges for us today. Paul taught that being devoted to Christ meant that Christians had a new way of looking at relationships with spouses, children, masters, and slaves. Those relationships reflect our devotion to God. Pray now and ask for God’s wisdom as you study this week.

1. Read Colossians 3:18-4:1. As you read, consider the following definitions:

- “Be subject” is a *present middle imperative* verb. “Middle voice” means the subject initiates the action and participates in its results. “Imperative” means it is a command, and “present tense” means it is something to “keep on” doing. The Greek word for “subject” is *hupotasso* and means “to arrange under, to subordinate, to submit to one’s control.”
- “Love” is a *present active imperative* verb. The “active” voice means the subject initiates the action. The Greek word is *agapao* and means “to love dearly...to be well pleased...contented at or with.”
- “Embittered” is a *present passive imperative* verb. The “passive” voice means the subject receives the action. The Greek word is *pikraino* which means “to produce a bitter taste in the stomach, exasperate, irritate.”

2. Remember that in the Jewish and pagan cultures women were often valued only as something that would bring pleasure to man. Naturally, that would be very hard on a woman, and men often would not even stop to consider how a woman felt. So, Paul speaks to husbands and wives to remind them of how they are to behave toward each other. Look up the following verses and then write out what the Word of God says about this foundational relationship.

- a. Genesis 2:18, 22-25

b. Ephesians 5:22-33

c. 1 Peter 3:1-7 – Take note of what 1 Peter 2:21-25 says to see what “in the same way” actual means.

3. Now compare Colossians 3:20-21 with Ephesians 6:1-4. Then list what the responsibility of children is to the parents, and parents to the children.

4. Read the following Scriptures and write what you learn regarding the parent-child relationship. Look for the commands and encouragement in these scriptures.

a. Proverbs 6:20-23

b. Proverbs 23:22-25

c. Psalm 78:1-4

☞ Where is the challenge for you personally in the verses you read?

5. Colossians 3:22-4:1 talks about the relationship between slaves and masters. They address how slaves and their masters should conduct themselves. What do these verses teach?

a. Ephesians 6:5-9

b. 1 Timothy 6:1-2

c. Titus 2:9-14

6. As you read this do you see that God never tells the slave to seek to be free from slavery? I know slavery is an illegal and condemned practice in our country today, but think about how to apply these principles to an employee/employer relationship. Consider what an employee is to do if his employer is not living according to the Word of God or if the “master” was cruel. Read 1 Peter 2:18-25 and list what you learn.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Now read Colossians 3:23. How can you summarize how all these relationships apply to you?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Read the book of Philemon. (Don’t worry! It’s just one chapter long!) Note who wrote the book, who it was about, and the purpose of Paul in writing the letter. (There will be further discussion on this during the lecture.) How does what you’ve observed in Philemon compare with what you learned about slaves and masters in Colossians?

9. Consider the following from Philemon 20: How can you refresh the hearts of others? Is your heart to do more than just obey?

☞ As we end today, let's let these principles simmer. Where can you apply them?

Examine your relationship to your spouse. Notice I said YOUR relationship to them, not theirs to you. When your spouse refuses to honor your relationship in obedience to God's Word, remember that your behavior is the only thing you have the power to change. The way to change them is through prayer.

Now apply this examination to the parent/child relationship and employee/employer relationship too. Where is the Holy Spirit convicting you in these relationships? In what way(s) can you honor God in these relationships?



## Colossians – Lesson 10

We are nearing the end of our study together. As usual please pray and ask God's Spirit to direct you and show you all that He has for you this week. It has been a joy to journey in Colossians together. This book has showed us Jesus and His supremacy and sufficiency. It has taught us what it means to be IN Christ and has shown us warnings and commands. We have seen ways we are to live and not live and not judge one another. The book concludes with prayer and introductions of some people that ministered with Paul, fellow bond-servants of Jesus Christ.

1. Read Chapter 4 and mark the words *prayer*, *speak/speech*, and *encourage*. Also mark all the names of the people Paul mentions.
  
2. Paul tells us to “devote” ourselves to prayer. The Greek word “devote” is in the *present active* (active voice indicates the subject produces the action) *imperative* verb. This makes it a command to continue the action. The word means to “continue to do something with intense effort.” Based on this information, list below what you learn in verses 2-4 and verse 12 in regards to prayer.
  
3. Read the following verses and note what you learn about prayer and some of the things that are commanded along with prayer.
  - a. Matthew 26:41
  
  - b. Ephesians 6:18

c. Philippians 4:6

d. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

e. 1 Timothy 2:1-4

4. Next we will look at some verses to help us determine the effectiveness of prayer. According to the following verses, what are the “guidelines” surrounding prayer? Don’t just rewrite what each verse says, but record what each verse says you must do if you are going to live according to that truth.
- a. John 15:7 – (For example, what comes before asking for something?)

b. John 15:16

c. 1 John 5:14-15

5. How does Colossians 4:5-6 relate to what Paul asked in Colossians 4:3-4?

6. What do you learn from verses 5-6 regarding your relationship with the lost?

7. What do you think Paul means by “with grace, ... seasoned with salt” in Verse 6? Read Ephesians 4:29 for insight.

☞ Let's pause to reflect on these verses for a moment. What place would you say prayer has in your life? Is there anything new about prayer that you learned? What is a specific way you can commit to growing in prayer?

☞ What is your relationship to the lost like? Are your words seasoned with salt? How do you see "opportunities"? Is there a way the Spirit is leading you to grow in this?

8. We can always learn valuable lessons from others. Read Colossians 4:7-17. As Paul references some fellow co-laborers, list what you learn about each. I have listed some cross references for some to give a little more information.
- a. Timothy (from Colossians 1:1) – Acts 16:1-3

b. Tychicus – Acts 20:4; Ephesians 6:21-22; 2 Timothy 4:12

- c. Onesimus – Philemon 10-18
  
- d. Aristarchus – Acts 19:29; 20:4; Philemon 23
  
- e. Mark – Acts 12:12, 25; 2 Timothy 4:11
  
- f. Jesus (Justus) – no other reference
  
- g. Epaphras – Acts 20:4; Philemon 23
  
- h. Luke – 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 23
  
- i. Demas – 2 Timothy 4:10; Philemon 23
  
- j. Nympha (no other reference)

k. Archippus – Philemon 2

- ∞ We were created for relationship and to encourage one another in the faith. What can you learn from reading about the people Paul mentions at the end of Colossians? Paul was showing us a picture of living out our faith with others. Do you have others around you with whom you live out your faith? If not, consider reaching out to one person and start today.

You have finished Colossians! We rejoice over your faithfulness to continue to “run the race set before you” and to “study to show yourself approved.” May all that God revealed to you continue to grow in your heart and mind to bring transformation to you daily. What a blessing to study His Word together!

**Psalm 19:8-11**

The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart.

The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living.

Reverence for the LORD is pure, lasting forever.

The laws of the LORD are true; each one is fair.

They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold.

They are sweeter than honey, even honey dripping from the comb.

They are a warning to your servant, a great reward for those who obey them.