

THE STUDY OF COLOSSIANS

This study is designed to encourage you to begin to develop a solid foundation for the book or epistle you are studying. In each study you will find a brief background on the book or letter, general themes found in the book, a list of key words found within the chapter and a set of questions can be answered directly from the verse provided at the end of the question.

Please plan to read the book or letter in its entirety first then begin the study. You will need a pen, a note pad, and your Bible. Once you've read through the entire book go back to the beginning and read the first chapter. Circle key words in that chapter. Compare your key words with the key words listed in the study. Now read the chapter again, and mark in your margin, key points. Jot down key points on your own note pad.

Answer the questions for chapter one. You will find the answer in the verse provided at the end of the question. When you have finished the questions, retitle the chapter. The names and subtitles are not divinely inspired but are placed there to give clarity. This exercise will help you develop in your own mind, the important aspects of each chapter. Proceed in this fashion until you finish the course of study. You will find that when the study is repeated you will glean new and fresh revelation each time. Before you begin however, begin in prayer asking the Lord to give you revelation and understanding.

1. Read the entire book or epistle in one day if possible.
2. Next, read the 1st chapter marking all key words.
3. Compare your key words with those listed in the study.
4. Make a note in the margin of the key points in each chapter
5. Jot down the key points on your own note pad.
6. Read the chapter again.
7. Answer the questions for each chapter and retitle the chapter.

Ask yourself several questions after each chapter:

1. How does this apply to my life?
2. How does this apply to the church today?
3. How does this build my faith?
4. What do I need to do to live a life that is reflective of what I read in this chapter?

When you complete the study you should have a solid foundational understanding of what the author was conveying through the power of the Holy Spirit. Encourage a friend to join in and allow time for discussion after each chapter.

Background

Colossians was believed to have been written by Paul when he was imprisoned in Rome about AD 62. (Acts 28:30-32, Col 4:3, 10, 18) The letter was delivered by Tychicus to the Colossians (4:7,8)

Colossae was small town in the province of Asia which was about 100 miles east of Ephesus. It was of mercantile importance and located on the Lycus, in Phrygia about 12 miles above Laodicea.

It has been speculated that Epaphras founded the church and lead the church (Col 1:2, 7; 4:12, 2:1) It is also believed that Paul actually never visited the church there, but instead, that it was an outreach from the 3 years of Paul's work in Ephesus. If he did, it would have most likely been on his third missionary journey to visit the Colossians.

Themes

The central themes of Colossians: Preeminence, Sufficiency, Supremacy, and Christology. Christ is the head. The body is the Church. (central theme of Ephesians)

Plagued with the heretical ideas stemming from Gnostic (Belief that Jesus was not divine, fully God, fully man, but semi-divine being bridging the gap between God and man) and Docetic belief systems (belief that Jesus' form was not real, but just an illusion of being real) the church in Colossae was admonished by Apostle Paul regarding such matters.

Angel worship, asceticism, undue attention on feasts and new moons, circumcision, were thought to be tools to obtaining holiness. Paul makes it very clear that the way to holiness is by putting on Christ Jesus, setting one's affections on Him, and stripping away all things that are contrary to the will of God. (2:20-3:1)

Epaphras went to Rome to consult Paul (1:7-8) Paul sent a letter of reply by Tychicus and Onesimus (Philemon's slave) (4:7-9) In his reply, Paul points out and confronts the errors head on. He expounds on the supremacy of Christ over powers and principalities, (1:13-19), the fullness of His redemption (1:20-23), and their complete position in Christ (2:20-3:4) He encourages them to appropriate the death and resurrection of Christ into practical Christian living (3:5-17)

Supremacy of Christ : The Universal Lordship of Christ

Misleading false teachings (Gnostic, Docetic and pagan occultism) were permeating the church in regards to ceremonialism, Jewish elements (of circumcision, meats, drinks, new moons, fast day)

Sabbaths, vs 2:11-16

Ascetic Elements 2:20-23

False philosophical and speculative element 2:8

Angel Worship 2:18-10

Doctrine of Emanations: the origination of the world by a series of hierarchically descending radiations from the Godhead through intermediate stages to matter¹

1. Reducing Christianity to legalism
2. Reducing Christ to a lesser god

The Preeminence of Christ

Christ is over all creation

ALL things were created by Him and through Him

All things were created for Him

He is before all things

In all things He has preeminence

ALL fullness dwells in Him

He is able to reconcile all things

ALL fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him

He is the head of all principalities and powers

Is Jesus God, in flesh

Christ: For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, Co 2:8

Chapter 1

Spiritual Attainment

1. Paul calls himself an _____ by the will of _____. Vs 1
2. Paul's apostolic benediction includes what two blessings? Vs 2

¹ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/emanation>

3. Paul heard of their _____and _____and gave _____ to God. Vs 3, 4
4. What is laid up for the believer in heaven? Vs 5
5. What does the Gospel bring forth? Vs 6
6. In the life of the believer, the word will bear fruit, therefore, what should we constantly be increasing in? Vs 6
7. Who was Epaphras according to verse seven? Vs7
8. What did Epaphras declare to Paul's ministry team? Vs 8
9. What did Paul pray for the Colossians? to be filled with _____of His will in all_____, and_____. Vs 9
10. Paul speaks of the knowledge of God's will. Is this possible to attain for the believer? If so, write Rom. 12:1-2 and list those things that will help you to know the will of God. Vs 9
11. Bear _____in good work. Increase in _____. Believers do such things so that they might walk in a manner pleasing to _____? Vs 10
12. How does one walk in a manner pleasing to the Lord? Read Gal. 5:19-25 Vs 10
13. Paul prayed the believers would be _____ with all might, according to His power for all _____and _____ with _____. Vs11
14. God has qualified the believer to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. What does the word "qualified" mean? Vs 12

15. Believers have been delivered from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light according to verse 13. What are the ramifications of this statement? What does the word "delivered" mean
16. Jesus is the image of the invisible God? What does the word "image" mean in the original Greek text? (Use concordance)
17. What does the word "first-born" of all creation? Vs 15
18. What does this mean that He was the "first-born?" Vs 15
19. All things were created for whom and by whom?
Vs 16
20. Who is before all things? Vs 17
21. Who holds all things together? Vs 17
22. Who is the head of the Church, the body? Vs 18
23. Who is the "beginning"? Vs 18
24. Why was Jesus the firstborn of the dead? Vs 18
25. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells where? Vs 19
26. How did Jesus reconcile all things to Himself? Vs 20
27. How did Jesus Christ make peace available for all men? Vs 20
28. We were once alienated from God because of our _____
_____. Vs 21

29. Believers have been reconciled to Christ in His body. How does this affect us as we are being presented to God the Father? Vs 22
30. How will the believer appear before God and why? Vs 22
31. Believers must stand firm till the _____ holding on their their _____ in Jesus Christ. Vs 23
32. Paul rejoiced in his sufferings for Christ. Why? Vs 24
33. For who's benefit was Paul made a steward of the Gospel.? Vs 25
34. What is the mystery Paul mentions in verse twenty-six? Vs 26
35. Since Christ is in the believer, what does this produce in the believer? Vs 27
36. What does Paul proclaim? Vs 28
37. Paul's role was to admonish and _____ men, with all _____, so that every man would be made _____ in Christ Jesus. Vs 28
38. How are we being made complete in Christ?
39. How is Paul empowered to do the work? Vs 29

Key Words

Apostle
Gnosticism
Wisdom and spiritual understanding
Partakers of His inheritance
God's Will

Power of Darkness
Delivered and transferred
Domain of Darkness
Kingdom of Light
Redemption
Image of the invisible God
Firstborn (not as a created being but first in preeminence)
Principalities and powers
Reconciled (satisfied the demand for holiness)
Mystery hidden for ages
Preeminence

Preeminence

Jesus, God the Son, existed as an equal part of the Godhead from all eternity Isa 7:14, 9:6-7, Micah 5:2, John 1:1-2 He 1:8 Rev 1:8-11

Gnosticism

The false belief that Jesus was not fully God and fully man, but a semi divine being bridging the gap between God and man. They claimed special knowledge, practiced asceticism and rigorous discipline as a means of obtaining godliness. The thought was that man could obtain salvation, enlightenment, emancipation or oneness with God through self effort, that all matter was evil, and that "gnosis or special knowledge" would lead to understanding. They did not want to attribute humanity to Jesus because humanity was material, thus evil. The heresy contended that Jesus was only spirit in human form.

Docetism

The doctrine according to which the phenomenon of Christ, his historical and bodily existence, and thus above all the human form of Jesus, was altogether mere semblance without any true reality. It is the belief that Jesus only seemed to be human, and that his human form was an illusion. The

doctrine implies that the sufferings of Christ were apparent and not real and that after the crucifixion he appeared in a spiritual body.

Key Points

Paul draws a clear delineation between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness, as well as who is supreme over all things. Angelic hosts both (good and evil) are highly organized in structure with different levels of power and authority. Micheal, the chief angel, was the leader in spiritual warfare Dan. 10:13 and assigned on behalf of God's people. Christ is the head of all.

Christ: in universal government

The visible image of God v 1:5
The agent of creation v 1:17
The sustainer v 1:17
The head of the Church v 1:18

Christ: in reconciliation

Pleases the Father v. 1:19
Reconciles us through His death vs.1:21-22
Christ in us, Our hope of Glory v. 1:27

God's Will:

And the world is passing away , and the lusts of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever.. I John 2:17

His Will is to be done on earth, as it is in Heaven

That no man should perish
That we are to be sanctified
That believers are to produce fruit
That believers are to make disciples

That believers are to walk in the Spirit
That we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds
That we are to present our bodies as living sacrifices
That we are not to be conformed to this world
That believers are not to seek their own will, but His will
That we believe in Jesus, baptized in Jesus and raised with Jesus
That we be sanctified by Jesus He 10:9-10
That believers take care of the widows the orphans and the poor
That believers forgive, fast, pray, and tithe

Chapter 2

Debt Canceled

1. Paul had struggles on who's account? Vs 1
2. Was he speaking about only those who he had personally met face to face? Vs 1
3. Paul's hope was that their _____be knitted together in-_____. Vs 2
4. He prayed that they would attain all the _____that comes from the full _____of understanding, resulting in the true _____of God's mystery that is, _____. Vs 2
5. Where are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden? Vs 3
6. Why was Paul saying these things? Vs 4

7. Paul was _____ in the body, but _____ in spirit. Is this possible? Vs 5
8. Paul acknowledged their good _____ and the stability of their _____ in Christ Jesus. Vs 5
9. Since the believer is in Christ, we should also walk as He walked. What does this indicate to you personally? Vs 6
10. Paul acknowledged the believers were _____ and now being _____ up in Him, thus _____ in their faith. Vs 7
11. What caused these believers to be rooted, built up and established in their faith? Vs 7
12. Paul warned them to be careful and not to be taken captive through _____ and empty _____, through the traditions of _____. Vs 8
13. Some of the confusion came from traditions of _____. Vs 8
14. Paul warns about being taken captive to empty philosophies. What does he mean about "elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ?" Vs 8
15. Where does the fullness of the Deity dwell? In what form Vs 9
16. In Him believers have been made complete. What does this mean? Vs 10
17. Christ is the head over all _____ and _____. Vs 10

18. In Christ Paul teaches, we have been circumcised without hands.
Explain
19. One puts off the body of the sins of flesh by the _____ of Christ. Vs 11
20. If you are buried with Christ in baptism, you are _____ with him through _____ in the working of God. Vs 12
21. Believers were once dead in their _____. Vs 13
22. Believers were once uncircumcised in their _____. Vs 13
23. When buried with Him, we are then made _____, having forgiven is _____ our _____. Vs 13
24. Believers have been buried with Christ in Baptism and raised with Him through _____. What happened to the certificate of dept owed for the penalty of our sins? Vs 14
25. Our dept was nailed to the _____. Vs 14
26. Christ _____ the rulers and authorities? Vs 15
27. Christ made a _____ having _____ over them. Vs 15
28. Believers are to let no one act as their _____ in regards to food, _____, festival days a _____ or _____ day. Vs 16
29. How can a Christian be defrauded? Vs 15, 20-22

30. Delighting in self-abasement, worship of angels and being puffed up because of visions were a means of _____-believers, not proof of godly behavior but works of the flesh. Vs 18
31. What holds the whole body together? the _____ and what should believers hold onto? the _____. vs 19
32. Who brings growth to the Body? _____ Vs 19
33. What was the Colossians being warned against? Vs 20
34. List some of those elemental principles of the world. Vs 21
35. What things are destined to perish with use? And are an example to the _____ and the _____ of men? Vs 22
36. Self abasement, severe treatment of the body, rituals of man all have an appearance of _____, but have no _____ against _____ indulgence. Vs 23

Key Words

Philosophy and empty deceit
Elementary Principles, Elements
Fullness of Deity
Taken Captive
Buried and Raised with Christ
Certificate of Debt
Spiritual Circumcision
Disarmed principalities
Defraud

Self-abasement
Worship of Angels
Self-imposed Religion

Key Points

The fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ and we are complete in Him. He is the head of all powers and principalities. We, as believers have been circumcised in Him with a spiritual circumcision (inward sign of a heart in obedience to God, being part of the body of Christ) We have been buried and raised with Him, made alive in Him with all records against us now erased. We are complete and need nothing else: Christ alone. Therefore let no one judge you or cheat you with empty deceit.

Chapter 3

Set Your Mind

1. Where is Christ seated? Vs 1
2. What are believers to seek after? Vs 1
3. Believers are to set their minds on things _____. Vs 2
4. For the believer, his life is hidden in Christ with God. What does this mean? Vs 3
5. Who is our life, as a believer? Vs 4
6. When Christ is revealed, the believer will also be _____. Vs 4

7. Believers are to consider the members of their earthly body as being dead to sin: immorality, impurity, passion, and evil desire, greed, which amounts to idolatry. Therefore, these sins come under subjection to the obedience of Christ. Is this possible? Why? Vs 5
8. The _____ of God will come on the account of what things? Vs 6
9. You once walked in those things. Make a list from that list, of the things you used to walk in. Be honest. Vs 7
10. What are we supposed to put aside? All, _____, _____, _____, _____ and abusive _____ from your mouth. Vs 8
11. Define slander.
12. Do not _____ to one another since you laid aside the old _____ with its _____ practices. Vs 9
13. Put on the new _____ who is being _____ to the true _____ according to the image of the One who created you. Vs 10
14. Paul lays down some rules for practical living. Put aside anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech. Do not lie to one another. He is teaching the believer to put off the old man and put on the new self. How do we accomplish such a work? Vs 10
15. There is now no distinction between Greek and _____, circumcised and _____, barbarian, _____, _____ and free-man, but _____ is all and in all. Vs 11
16. Believers are _____ of God, _____ and _____. Vs. 12

17. Believers should put on a heart _____, kindness, _____, gentleness, _____, forbearance, _____ one another. Vs 12
18. Believers are to forgive just as _____ forgave us. Vs 13
19. Believers are to put on _____ which is the perfect bond of _____. Vs 14
20. We are to let the _____ of Christ rule our hearts. Vs 15
21. We are to let the _____ of Christ dwell in us. Vs 16
22. We are to teach, admonish one another, sing _____ and _____ and spiritual _____ with _____ in our hearts to _____. Vs 16
23. Whatever we do in word or deed, we are to do all things in the _____ of the Lord giving _____ through Him to _____ the _____. Vs 17
24. Believers are to work and act as Christ followers. What should our attitude be towards that work? Vs 17
25. Wives should be subject to whom? Why is this important? Vs 18
26. Husbands are to _____ their wives and are not to _____ their children. Why is this important? Vs 19
27. Children are to be _____ to their parents in all things because this is _____ to the Lord. Vs 20

28. Why should fathers not exasperate their children? Because they might _____ . Vs 21
29. Slaves are to _____ their masters with a _____ heart. Vs 22
30. Believers are to work as unto the Lord and not as unto men. How will this affect our work? Vs 23
31. Who will reward us for our good work and what do we receive? Vs 24
32. When working, who is it that we really serve? Vs 24
33. If we do wrong we will receive the _____ for that _____ and without _____. Vs 25

Key Words

Raised with Christ
Wrath of God
Sons of disobedience
Put off old man
Put on new man
Forgive
Love, the bond of perfection
Family relationships
Husband, wife, children, slaves
Receive the reward of an inheritance
No partiality
Teach, admonish, sing

Key Points

Christ is our life. We are hidden in Him. Since we are buried with Him, raised with Him seated with Him in heavenly places, we should walk like Him. We should set our minds on heavenly things, not temporal things. We are to put to death things of the flesh: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, covetousness (which is idolatry) because the wrath of God is coming to the sons of disobedience. Paul lays out proper order in the home and stresses the importance of working as a service to God and not only to man.

Chapter 4

Knowing His Will

1. How should masters treat their workers? Vs 1
2. Masters also have a master in _____. Vs 1
3. Paul encourages believers to devote themselves to prayer. What does the word "devote" imply? Vs 2
4. What should be the attitude we should have in prayer? Vs 2
5. Paul uses words like earnest, vigilant, with thanksgiving. How should this be representative of our own prayer life? Vs 2
6. Should we too, pray for opened doors or opportunities to share the Gospel? Vs 3

7. Paul prayed that he could make it clear what he was to speak. Therefore, who gave Paul the power to share the message of the Gospel? Vs 4
8. Paul was imprisoned for the sake of the _____. Vs 3
9. What is the mystery of Christ? Vs 3
10. How should the believer conduct themselves toward outsiders and why? Vs 5
11. A believer should be careful what they say and how they say it. Why? What does it mean to be "seasoned with salt?" Vs 6
12. Tychicus was a _____ brother, a faithful _____ and a fellow _____ in the Lord. Vs 7
13. Tychicus was to bring the Colossians _____. Vs 7
14. Paul sent Tychicus to them so they would know of Paul's _____ and that he might _____ their hearts. Vs 8
15. He also sent _____ who was a beloved _____ and one of their _____. Vs 9
16. Onesimus is one of them. Vs 9 What do you know about His background? What was he accused of doing (Philemon) What does this demonstrate to us today?
17. Aristarchus was a fellow _____ of Paul's. Vs 10
18. Jesus or Justus was a fellow worker of the _____ and a great _____ to Paul Vs 11

19. Epaphras was one of their _____ a _____ of Christ and earnestly I _____ for them in his prayers, that they may be perfect and fully assured in all the _____ of God. Vs 12
20. Praying for the believer will help to ensure that they will hear the will of God for their lives. We see this in Paul's statement regarding Epaphras. How will this affect your own prayer life? Vs 12
21. Epaphras had great _____ for the Colossians. Vs 13
22. Luke was a beloved _____. Vs 14
23. Were women an important part of Church growth in the early Church expansion? Vs 15
24. Where is the letter to Laodicea? Vs 16
25. What was Paul warning Archippus (a member of Philemon's household) to be sure to do? Vs 17 What does this say to our response to the call of ministry in our own lives?
26. "Remember my chains" Why would Paul want the church to remember his chains? Vs 18

Key Words

Masters
Fellow workers, brothers and bondservants
Praying earnestly
Walk in wisdom
Conduct yourselves
Redeeming the time
Speech seasoned with salt
Laodicean letter

Key Points

Paul encourages the believers to be wise, prayerful, thankful, and to pray for his ministry for opened doors. He encourages others to fulfill their ministry call.

Application

1. Hold fast to the Head
2. Don't let anyone defraud you
3. Don't let anyone judge you in regard to food, drink, or days
4. Set your mind on things above not on earthly things
5. See that no one takes you captive through empty deceptions
6. Walk in Christ knowing you have been made complete "in Him"
7. Consider your earthly body as being dead to sin
8. Reflect His image
9. Put off old and on the new self: do not lie.
 - a. Put off anger, malice slander wrath, abusive speech
 - b. Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness
10. Put on love
11. Let peace rule your heart

12. He who does wrong will receive consequences for the wrong
13. Do not fall into heresy-with visions, angelic visitations: in other words-do not build a new doctrine because of such things
14. Let the Word of God dwell in you
15. Do it in the name of Jesus whatever you do in word or deed, giving thanks
16. Work as unto the Lord.

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