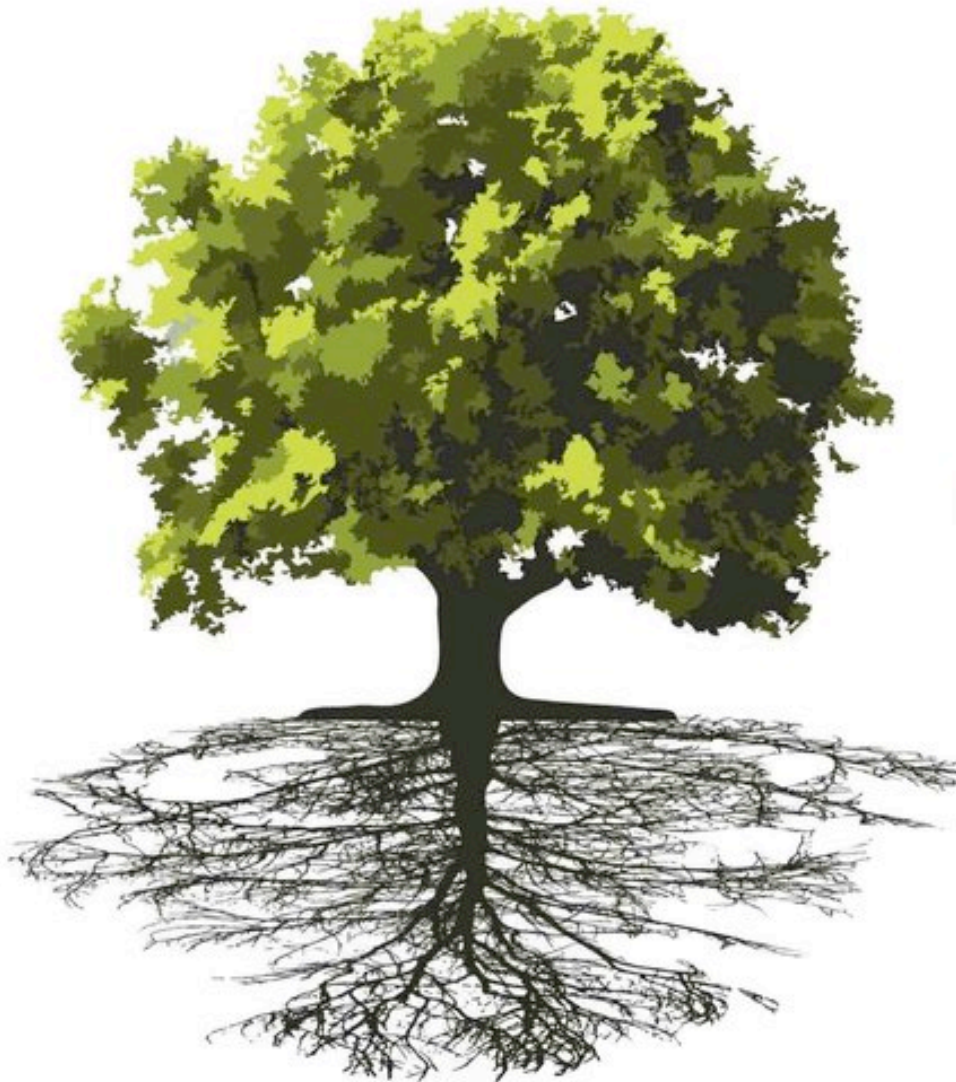


# Paul's Letter to the Colossians



Manitoulin Youth Conference 2019

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*“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”*

*Colossians 1:27*

## INTRODUCTION

Dear young people,

If you were asked to write a letter to a young person you'd never met – how would you encourage them? How would you convey the excitement from the Word of God, the opportunity afforded to us by the work of Christ? How would you introduce yourself, what lessons and exhortations would you draw their minds to?

This is the very challenge the Apostle Paul faced when writing to the Brothers and Sisters in Colossae. This was an Ecclesia located in the Lycus valley, a wealthy city that was in close proximity to Laodicea and Hierapolis, a city which contained both Jews and Gentiles. And having been visited by Epaphras and Onesimus, having learned of the Brothers and Sisters, understanding the Ecclesial climate and challenges, gaining a knowledge of the surrounding areas, Paul wrote the Letter to the Colossians. This letter is one of Pauls' prison Epistles (joining Ephesians, Philippians and Philemon), where Paul, through the Spirit, is writing to an Ecclesia that he had never visited – and yet in 4 chapters, we see a message of joy and comfort, hope and promise.

Throughout this study, we will see an importance placed on the excellency of Christ, a focus on “Christ in you, the hope of Glory” (Col 1:27). Paul uses this letter to the Colossians to lead their minds to their Saviour, he focuses their minds on the reward made possible by his sacrifice and as a result, spends a great deal of the letter highlighting ways to position Christ as first place in our lives. If they could do that, the reward would follow. And yet Paul didn't leave it there, he continued to provide the necessary steps they needed to make in order that they may obtain this reward. Paul addresses each of us in this letter – husbands, wives, sons, daughters, masters, servants. Whatever group we fit into, there is a message in this letter on how we might recalibrate to be like Christ.

We have found the study of Colossians to be one that will strengthen our foundations, and solidify the first principles we know and believe. It's a letter that will cause us to self-reflect, to assess the challenges we face in our discipleship, to work through the dangers of being in this world while called out to be sons and daughters of God. It's a book that will encourage us on our walk to the Kingdom, it will provide us with lessons and practical principles on how to be rooted and built up in Christ. This is a letter all about bringing about a transformation – it doesn't matter where you come from, what your background is, it doesn't matter if you grew up in Colossae or in any city represented by this year's MYC attendees...God can work with you.

May God guide you in your studies and bless you richly in them, that you may grow in the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. We look forward to spending the 2019 Manitoulin Youth Conference with you, God willing.

With love in the bonds of peace,

Bro. Bryan Styles – [bkstyles01@gmail.com](mailto:bkstyles01@gmail.com)

Bro. Stephen Macfarlane – [stephenandrealle@hotmail.com](mailto:stephenandrealle@hotmail.com)

## The Workbook

We have divided this study into five sections. We recommend that prior to working on the questions contained in each section, you first read the chapter or verses pertaining to that section. As this workbook will become the basis for the discussions groups at Conference, we would also recommend writing down a few discussion points upon completing each section – what questions remain, what got you thinking, what proved exciting and encouraging?

The five sections of the workbook are as follows:

- **Part One – Refocusing on Christ** (*Goal & Background*)
- **Part Two – Redeemed in Christ** (*Colossians 1*)
- **Part Three – Rooted in Christ** (*Colossians 2:1-19*)
- **Part Four – Risen with Christ** (*Colossians 2:20 – 3:17*)
- **Part Five – Rewarded by Christ** (*Colossians 3:18 – 4:18*)

The sections are divided according to the themes brought out in the book of Colossians, giving time to first develop the necessary introduction, then working through the themes brought out in each section. There are additional resources provided at the end of the workbook which can be used to aid in your study or be used as Bible marking materials.

## The Importance of Preparation

Preparation is key to the success of Youth Conference. The discussion format at Youth Conference can be an extremely rewarding exercise when everyone has completed the study ahead of time. It proves to be a means of promoting the useful exchange of scriptural principles, and of encouraging one another in their application. The success of this model depends upon all attendees coming to Youth Conference prepared. **Completion of your workbook is essential** to promote profitable discussion.

Our advice would be to:

1. Plan Purposefully – Don't start too late, put a plan in place to give yourself the time needed to get it done.
2. Prepare Prayerfully – Ask for God's guidance as you embark on the study of His word.
3. Pursue Persistently – Set aside time each day/week to complete a set amount of questions.
4. Proceed Positively – These things were written for our learning, we should take comfort in its message.

The following is a suggested schedule for completing the workbook in a timely manner:

- **January** – Read Colossians 1-4 and complete Section 1
- **February – March** – Complete Section 2
- **March – April** – Complete Section 3
- **May** – Complete Section 4
- **June – July** – Complete Section 5
- **July – August** – Review, complete Bible marking, or any further in-depth study on areas of interest

***Please ensure that the workbook in its entirety is completed in advance of the conference.***

## Recommended Resources

- The Letter to the Colossians – Bro. T.J. Barling (book)
- The Letter to the Colossians – Bro. Mark Vincent (short PDF available from <http://www.testimony-magazine.org/back/feb2009/Colossians.pdf>)
- Colossians: Becoming a New Creation – audio classes by Bro. Bryan Styles (available from [christadelphianbibletalks.com](http://christadelphianbibletalks.com))
- Online Bible or E-Sword – free downloadable Bible software programs
- [Blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org) – helpful resource for Concordance/Lexicon work
- The Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge



Below is a compilation of useful suggestions and study tips from the introduction sections of previous Youth Conference workbooks. This can be a helpful reference page throughout your study to ensure you stay on track.

## Bible Study Tools:

1. Your Bible: Questions and references are from the KJV, but a few different reputable translations such as RSV, NASB, ESV, or Rotherham's would be helpful to have around to compare passages with.
2. Marginal References: If your Bible has marginal references, these are great resources. The *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge* provides even more references.
3. Concordance: *Strong's*, *Young's*, and *Englishman's*. *Englishman's* is particularly useful when you have a Strong's number (from *Strong's Concordance* - this is the number that represents the Greek or Hebrew word) and you want to find all the places that word/number occurs and the actual English word translated in every case.
4. Computer Tools: Bible software like Libronix, Online Bible, e-Sword ([e-sword.net](http://e-sword.net)), or [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)

## Study Tips:

This has been a helpful process to follow during Bible Study:

**Step 1** – Find the Facts  
**Step 2** – Establish the Principle  
**Step 3** – Apply the Exhortation



Following this process ensures that we first do a thorough background study ('*finding the facts*'); we then tie together these facts and develop spiritual principles ('*establishing the principle*'); and finally, we consider how these principles apply to and affect our lives ('*applying the exhortation*').

**Pray** - Make sure to begin your studies in prayer.

**Ask Questions** - Asking questions is one of the best ways to find deeper levels in Bible study. The workbook will guide you through a number of questions – but make sure you're constantly asking questions of your *own*, and searching for the answers! Bring the fruits of your own questions with you to Youth Conference.

**Bible Marking** - This helps make it permanent. Don't forget to Bible mark any neat points you discover. You're going to make some amazing discoveries – preserve them in your Bible margin!



This symbol will be used throughout the workbook to highlight helpful Bible Marking items you can put directly into your Bibles. Take the time to make the study permanent!

**Ask for Help** - If you're having trouble answering (or understanding!) a question, mark it and come back later. If you still are unable to make any progress, confer with a friend or ask someone for help! Feel free to contact Bro. Bryan or Bro. Stephen at our e-mail addresses, provided above.

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## Section 1 – Refocusing on Christ

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### Goal & Background

#### Why Study Colossians?

1. Paul's smaller epistles can initially seem somewhat obscure and difficult to understand. In fact, even Peter had some trouble understanding the inspired writings of the Apostle Paul (2 Pet 3:15-16)! Therefore, it should come as no surprise if we find it somewhat challenging to understand at first glance – don't be discouraged! Having the right mindset and expectation as we approach a study of God's word is vital if we want to get the most out of it.
  - a. Take a look at Prov 25:2, what does God do when recording His word for us? Does this make it easier or harder to understand?
  - b. What does He expect us to do? *Remember, we are called to be kings & priests! (Rev 5:10)*
  - c. Using a concordance, look up the word used in Prov 25:2 to describe the action we are to take. What is it?
  - d. What does the meaning of this word imply about the amount of effort God expects us to expend? (*Hint: Gesenius has a good definition that you can find on [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)*)
  - e. Note a similar reference in Prov 2:3-5. What is the search likened to here?
  - f. Why do you think God takes this approach? Find 1-2 verses to support your thought here.
2. Read the letter to the Colossians in its entirety – as you are reading, write down any thoughts and/or questions that come to mind during your initial read of the letter. The goal of this initial read is to gain a general level of familiarity with the letter and its overall content. Focus on what you understand and do not get bogged down by what you do not understand. *Suggestion – it may help to read out loud with a study partner face-to-face or via Skype to aid in your understanding and to promote discussion afterward.*

3. **The Why: Col 1:18** – this is a key verse for the entire book of Colossians and forms the purpose for why Paul was inspired to write the letter to the Colossians.
  - a. What is identified here as the desired outcome of God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Look up the word ‘pre-eminence’ in a concordance. What does the definition mean concerning the place that Jesus should have in our life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. What do you think, then, is the intended outcome of our study in Colossians? What are you hoping to get out of it?
  
4. **The How: Col 1:26-27** – these verses reveal the mystery for ‘how’ we will achieve our desired goal
  - a. What does Paul identify here as the ‘hope of glory’ that we are all striving to achieve?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. It has been said, “God manifestation is us living in a way that others can see God living in us.” How might this quote relate to these verses from Colossians?
  
5. **The What: Thought Question:** As we begin our study together, think about Christ’s position in your life. Is Christ really in 1<sup>st</sup> place in all things in your life? Spend a few moments meditating on this question and identify examples of where he is 1<sup>st</sup> place in your life and opportunities of where he is not currently in 1<sup>st</sup> place. Be specific!
  - a. Positive Examples of where Christ is in 1<sup>st</sup> place in my life:
    - i. What are the contributing factors for why this is the case?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Opportunities where Christ is not currently in 1<sup>st</sup> place in my life:
    - i. What are the contributing factors for why this is the case?

6. The reality is that developing Christ in us takes a lifetime of transformation. Yet for this to occur, we must be squarely focused on Christ every step of the way and encourage each other to do the same. Take a look at how Paul defined success in this regard in 1 Thess 2:19-20. Write these 2 verses below.

a. Who was Paul really focused on in helping get to the kingdom? How did he define success here?

Our goal for the studies then is to personally assess our discipleship that we might:

- be focused on giving Christ 1<sup>st</sup> place in all things,
- be purposeful in developing Christ in us,
- be specific in finding real ways to do this better in our lives,
- be strengthening to each other to do likewise as we await the coming of our Lord.



## How Colossians is Structured – It's All About Christ

As identified in the previous section, the letter to the Colossians is focused on giving Christ 1<sup>st</sup> place in everything. Therefore, it should come as no surprise to see that Christ features prominently in each of the sections of the letter. A suggested breakdown is shown below.



COLOSSIANS		
VERSES	ELEMENT OF CHRIST IN THE BELIEVER	ASPECT OF HOPE COVERED
1:1 – 1:29	Redeemed in Christ (1:14)	Magnitude of the reward
2:1 – 2:19	Rooted in Christ (2:7)	Threats to obtaining the reward
2:20 – 3:17	Risen with Christ (3:1)	True pursuit of the reward
3:18 – 4:18	Rewarded by Christ (3:24)	Counsel in living for the reward
<b>CHRIST IN YOU</b>		➔ <b>THE HOPE OF GLORY</b>

Each of the sections of the letter forms a building block in constructing a picture concerning the pre-eminence of Christ and what this might look like in the life of a believer. Consider for a moment, how each preceding element builds on the one following.

**Redeemed in Christ (1:1 – 1:29):** In this opening section, Paul builds up the magnitude of the promise that a believer has in Christ. He expresses his care for the Ecclesia, illustrates the superiority of Christ, and outlines the benefit available to believers in Christ. If the Colossians were to be successful, then they had to fully appreciate the magnitude of what was made available to them in Christ. If we fail to truly grasp the significance of the promise, then we will find that we lack the motivation to attain unto it.

**Rooted in Christ (2:1 – 2:19):** Having established the magnitude of the promise, Paul continues on in Chapter 2 to outline the pitfalls to their faith. Paul contrasts being rooted in Christ to being beguiled by the flesh. In so doing, he addresses the specific issues facing the Colossian Brothers and Sisters. Too much emphasis was placed on the external elements of their discipleship without enough focus on the internal transformation God desired. This approach led to a desire for personal pre-eminence and a devaluation of the work of Christ.

**Risen with Christ (2:20 – 3:17):** Rising with Christ meant that they were to seek those things that are above. This portion of the letter defines what it really means to put to death the 'old man'. This is a key first step to transformation. But putting to death an old way of life alone is not sufficient. The putting off of the 'old' must be accompanied by the putting on of the 'new'. Paul challenges the Colossians, and us, to dig deep in examining ourselves and making real changes to how we think, speak, and behave.

**Rewarded by Christ (3:18 – 4:18):** Rising with Christ can be somewhat of an abstract concept...what does this actually mean? In this section of the letter, Paul connects these principles to practical, everyday relationships to show applicability to daily life. Paul draws out the point that no matter where we find ourselves in this life – no matter what position, we are ultimately serving Christ in all things and need to approach our service in this manner. We'll see how these same principles apply to us as we live day-by-day in pursuit of the reward in Christ.

## Background to the Letter – Painting the Scene

One of the best ways to truly experience a study of God's word is to put yourself there. If we can immerse ourselves into the scene, the story comes alive – allowing us to feel and experience it in a way that can evoke real change in our lives. *Be sure to include chapter and verse support for all your answers! It will help you later when reviewing your notes as you participate in the discussion groups.*

- From reading the letter, what clues do we get concerning Paul's whereabouts? – include chapter, verse (*hint: see Col. 4*)
- It is helpful to note the 3 recorded occurrences of this in Paul's life. Complete the table below, some of it has been started for you:



LOCATION	REFERENCES	DURATION	DATE
	Acts 23:23-24, 33-35; 24:27		~AD60-62
	Acts 28:		~AD62-64
<b>Rome</b>	2 Tim 4:6-18	Unknown	~AD66

*It is believed by most scholars that Colossians was written during Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> imprisonment. This would have placed the epistle 4-6 years after the conclusion of Paul's 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey.*

- What was one of the characteristic features of Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> imprisonment concerning visitors?
- From reading Colossians 1, who appears to have been one of these visitors?
- What descriptions does Paul use to characterize this visitor and what might we conclude about him?
- Look up the following words in a concordance, what do they mean?
  - Fellowservant**  
Strong's #4889                      Word: syndoulos                      Meaning:
  - Faithful minister**  
Strong's #4103                      Word: pistos                      Meaning:  
Strong's #1249                      Word: diakonos                      Meaning:
  - Epaphras**  
Strong's #1889                      Word: epaphras                      Meaning:

13. We know from later in the letter to the Colossians that Epaphras was a member from Colossae. Using Google Maps, determine the travel distance and time from Colossae to Rome on foot.
- Distance (km):
  - Time (hr):
14. Assuming that Epaphras could walk 10 hour per day, every day. How many days of walking would it have taken Epaphras to reach Rome from Colossae?
- Days:
  - What does this communicate to you about the love Epaphras had for his Brothers and Sisters?

It can sometimes be easy to overlook Bible characters who are only mentioned briefly in the Scriptures. However, it doesn't take many verses to allow us to construct a picture of what Epaphras must have been like. It is very likely that the letter to the Colossians was a direct result of the visit that Epaphras made to Paul concerning his Brothers and Sisters in Colossae. Never underestimate the impact that 1 person (like you!) can have in helping other people if we are willing to give of ourselves for our Brothers and Sisters.

Look up "Epaphras" in a Concordance ([blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org) also provides this) and find all of the occurrences where "Epaphras" appears in Scripture. Use these occurrences to complete the table below. You may want to add this table into your top or bottom margin as a Bible Summary Box.



<b>EPAPHRAS – A 'LOVELY' EXAMPLE OF TRUE ECCLESIAL SERVICE</b>	
<b>EVIDENCE</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>
<b>Member of Colossian Ecclesia</b>	Col 4:
<b>Founding member – 'as ye have learned of Epaphras'</b>	
<b>Loved his brethren</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spoke positively of them to Paul</li> <li>• Fervently prayed for them</li> <li>• Desire for them to be in the kingdom</li> <li>• Great zeal for Colossae &amp; local Ecclesia's</li> <li>• Traveled a great distance to Rome on their behalf</li> </ul>	Col 1:8  km
<b>Respected by Paul – 'our dear fellowservant'</b>	
<b>Imprisoned while in Rome and unable to return to Colossae</b>	

15. Consider Paul's level of familiarity with the Colossian Ecclesia
- How many times does it appear that Paul had visited the Ecclesia? (Col 2:1)
  - How did Paul learn of the Colossians faith (personal experience, other)? (Col 1:8-9)
    - Which words, specifically, give you this impression?

Imagine that someone traveled for weeks to make a personal visit to you. When they arrived, they had many things that they were anxious to communicate to you. They had a lot of good things to say, but also some real Ecclesial challenges for which you were looking for help. You'd like to help, but there are a couple of complicating factors:

- You've never visited that particular Ecclesia. You know some of the members, but have never actually been there,
- You are unable to travel or personally talk to any of the Brothers and Sisters in that Ecclesia – writing a letter is your only option to personally communicate.

Despite these factors, you are requested to write a letter that will be helpful. This was, essentially, Paul's challenge.

16. Putting yourself in Paul's position, what questions might you ask Epaphras to aid in positioning you to write a helpful letter? *Give this one some thought. You'll find this type of exercise has some real practical benefit.*

## Ecclesial Background

Perhaps one of the elements that you would enquire about is that of the Ecclesia's background. For example, you may wonder how it was that the Colossian Ecclesia was established – where did they learn the truth from? To answer this, Epaphras would direct our attention back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey.

17. Turn back to Acts 18 and read Acts 18:23 – 19:12. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey starts at the beginning of Acts 18:23. If you don't already have this marked in your margin, it is helpful to write a note in about this being the start of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Journey.
18. Where does Paul go first on this journey? Find a map, perhaps in the back of your Bible, and familiarize yourself with the locations of these 2 regions.
19. Where does Paul go next – which city?
20. What were the 2 places where Paul preached the gospel in that city and for how long in each? *Be sure to include references.*
21. How broadly did Paul's audience extend at the 2<sup>nd</sup> place that he preached within that city? *Write the phrase and verse that supports your answer*

It is commonly believed that it was during this time period that Epaphras learned the truth from Paul. As a result of learning directly from Paul, Epaphras would carry the message home with him to Colossae and preach the Gospel there (*it may be worth adding this verse in Acts as a cross reference to Col 1:7*).

22. Using the scale on your map, determine how far away Colossae was from where Epaphras would have learned the truth from Paul. How far?
23. What do you think this reveals about the character of Epaphras?
24. How far will you need to travel to Youth Conference? Take a look at a map or use Google Maps to perform the calculation for you.
25. Why are you willing to travel that distance to Youth Conference? Really think about what you're hoping to accomplish by attending Youth Conference and write the top 3 reasons below with a 1-line explanation.
26. Read the rest of Acts 19 and create a chapter breakdown to summarize Paul's activities in Ephesus. A suggested start is shown below:
- V.1-7 – The Baptism of John
  - V.8-12 – Preaching to the Jews and Gentiles
  - 
  - 
  -



From Ephesus, Paul and his companions traveled up into Macedonia (20:1), down into Greece (20:2), and then began their journey back again through a number of cities as they made their way east to Jerusalem (21:17). On the way back, Paul sent a message to the elders of Ephesus when he was in the city of Miletus. This is recorded in Acts 20:16-38. *Read this section.*

27. What was Paul warning the elders about? (good cross references include Col 2:6-8; Gal 1:6-8)
28. Based on these verses, how long (in total) did Paul spend in Ephesus?
29. How would you summarize the relationship Paul had with this Ecclesial area and its members?

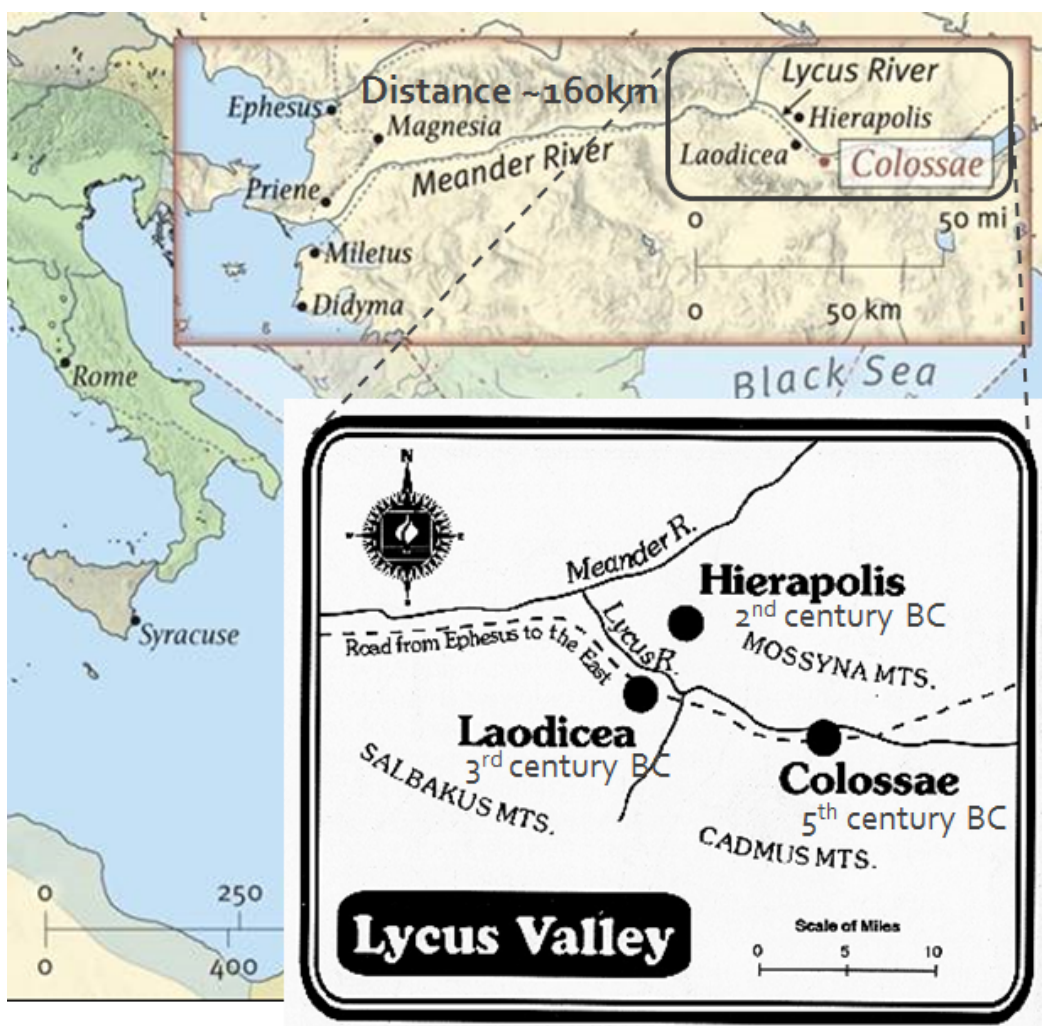
This was a significant section in the ministry of the Apostle Paul. He had committed a long time to teaching the Gospel to this region from the School of Tyrannus. In the process of doing so, he developed many personal relationships with those in Ephesus and the surrounding areas. Some of Paul's final words to his beloved brethren were words of warning concerning what lay ahead. Doubtless, Paul was anxious on their behalf because he would not be present with them to help them face the upcoming challenges. As Paul and his Ephesian brethren parted ways, they all wept sore. As far as they all knew, this would be the last time that they would see each other's faces on this side of the kingdom.

These are the memories that would play in Paul's mind as Epaphras spoke to him concerning the welfare of the brethren in that region. Paul must have listened very intently. Epaphras would have continued on to explain about the Ecclesia of Colossae and its surroundings.

Paul must have marveled as he heard of the far-reaching impact of his preaching and how God had blessed the efforts. It's important for us to be mindful of how our efforts and actions can impact others. This can be for good or for bad. It may be that God uses our efforts to help others whom we have never met. Similarly, it could take years for today's efforts to bear fruit to our Heavenly Father. This was certainly true in the case of Paul.

The city of Colossae was approximately 100 miles to the east of Ephesus. There was a trade route, extending to the east, that connected Ephesus to the rest of Asia. This trade route traveled upstream along the Meander River (shown in the map below). As one traveled eastward along this trade route, they would come to a point where two rivers converged – the Lycus and the Meander joining together. As one continued to travel eastward from this point, the two rivers would separate, with the Meander turning northward and the Lycus turning southward. The divergence of the 2 rivers resulted in a triangular-shaped piece of land that lay situated between the 2 rivers. This region became known as the Lycus River Valley. Contained within this valley were 3 primary cities – Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colossae. It is helpful to read from historical sources about these cities to gain a greater context of the situation.

*Do a bit of searching and reading on these 3 cities. Remember to include citations for where you found the information. This will help you later when trying to reference your studies*



30. When were these 3 cities built?
- Laodicea:
  - Hierapolis:
  - Colossae:
31. In what verse in Colossians are all 3 cities mentioned?
32. Reading the verses directly following this verse, what was Paul's expectation for how they would use the letter he had written?
33. What is the epistle to the Laodiceans that Paul references? Do a little research to see what you can find. *Guidebook to the NT* has helpful information in addition to other sources.
34. What industry were these 3 cities known for?
35. What were some of the false beliefs that Paul needed to contend against?

We've already been introduced to Epaphras as we've thought about his visit to the Apostle Paul. It seems as though Epaphras would have been a well-respected, and perhaps founding, member of the Colossian Ecclesia. Who were some of the other members of the Ecclesia that Paul addresses throughout the letter and what do we learn about them? *Hint: see ch. 4 – you may need to look outside of Colossians as well.*



<b>MEMBERS OF THE COLOSSIAN ECCLESIA</b>		
<b>MEMBER NAME</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION AND/OR RELATIONSHIP</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>
<b>Epaphras</b>	Faithful minister who brought news to Paul in Rome & laboured for the Colossians	Col 1:7-8; 4:12-13

36. **Thought Question for Discussion:** What do you think we can learn from Paul's approach in how we might best approach issues that are brought to us?

37. Why do you think that Paul wrote 3 separate letters at the same time as opposed to combining all the information into 1 letter? What do you think the pros & cons of this approach were?

38. Who delivered the 3 separate letters?

<b>DELIVERY METHOD FOR THE 3 LETTERS</b>		
<b>LETTER</b>	<b>DELIVERY PERSON</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>
<b>Ephesians</b>		
<b>Colossians</b>		
<b>Philemon</b>		

39. Did you find any difference between the 3?

40. If so, why do you think Paul would have chosen this approach? Is there anything for us to learn from this?



## Section 2 – Redeemed in Christ

### Magnitude of the Reward (1:1- 1:29)

Having been educated on the challenges facing the Colossian Ecclesia, Paul would now begin to pen a letter to his Brothers and Sisters in Colossae in an attempt to help them in their struggles. It must have been through much thought and prayer that Paul was guided by the spirit to pen the words that we have recorded for us today. It would seem that there were those within the Colossian Ecclesia who were led to believe that there was more beyond the teachings of Christ. This related back to the issue of Gnosticism that was present within the Ecclesia.

As Paul would have listened to Epaphras, he must have pondered what the root cause would be for some of the Colossians to conclude that the teachings of Christ were incomplete. To value something higher than Christ, must mean that there was a disconnect in truly understanding the magnitude of what the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished. If one actually understood what Christ had accomplished, there would be no way that they could erroneously conclude that another form of knowledge (i.e. Gnosticism) was necessary nor superior. Hence, Paul begins his letter by addressing the fundamental aspect of what being Redeemed in Christ really means and how its magnitude exceeds anything else that they could conceive of.

Paul uses a fair amount of word repetition in Colossians in an attempt to solidify the argument that Christ is the beginning and end of all that is needed for salvation. It is worth coloring in the occurrences where these words repeat within Colossians – *do a concordance search to identify the various occurrences within Colossians*



- **'In Christ' (in/by/for/of/with and Christ/him/whom)**

*Verses:*

- **Elements of learning & knowledge**

- Knowledge – *epignosis, epignosko, gnosis*  
*Verses:*
- Wisdom – *Sophia* = broad and full intelligence  
*Verses:*
- Understanding – *synesis* = a mental putting together  
*Verses:*
- Teach – *didasko*  
*Verses:*
- Mystery – *mysterion* = hidden thing  
*Verses:*
- Truth – *aletheia*  
*Verses:*
- Learn – *manthano*  
*Verses:*

- **Completeness of Christ’s Gospel**
  - All/every  
Verses:
  
  - Complete/fulfil  
Verses:
  
- What do you think God might be trying to teach through Paul’s repetition of:
  - a. “in Christ”?
  
  - b. Elements of learning and knowledge?
  
  - c. Completeness of Christ’s Gospel?

## Chapter Breakdown

It is helpful to read chapter 1 again in its entirety. Put yourself in the audience and paint yourself in the scene. You’re in the house of Philemon, where the Ecclesia met, and you have your Brothers and Sisters all around you. A special Ecclesial meeting has been called at the news that Tychicus has come bearing a personal letter written by the Apostle Paul himself. Excitement and anticipation fills the room as everyone finds a seat and prepares to hear the letter read aloud. You’ve heard a great deal about Paul, the renowned teacher of Ephesus, but you’ve never actually had a personal encounter with him. Now is your first opportunity to hear his writings for yourself.

Just imagine if the Apostle Paul wrote a personal letter to your Ecclesia... would you be excited to hear what it said?

With this mindset, stop reading the workbook here and take a few moments to read Colossians 1 again.

### << **Break to Read Colossians 1** >>

Remember that when Paul wrote this letter, he knew *some* of the Ecclesial members in Colossae. However, he had not personally been to the Ecclesia and there were likely many members who he had not met. As a result, Paul opens his letter in a way that attempts to connect with the Brothers and Sisters in Colossae. Note the overall tone as Paul opens the letter.

1. How does Paul introduce himself? Why do you think he introduces himself in this way?
  
2. Where could you point to in Scripture to find evidence to support the claim in his introduction?
  
3. Who does Paul address the letter “to” in v.2?

4. Look up the Greek used in Paul's introduction in the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence of v.2 and write what jumps out at you.
5. How does this connect to us today?
6. Paul expresses his desire for "grace and peace" to be unto them. How many other NT books/epistles can you find that have this phrase in their introduction? Write the references here.
7. Why do you think that you observe this trend? Why 'grace' and why 'peace'? It is worth thinking about this simple phrase and what we might be able to learn from it.
8. What was Paul doing on their behalf (*verse 3*) and how often?
9. Take a look at the beginning of other NT letters that Paul wrote. Do you see any consistency in regards to what Paul mentions him doing on behalf of others? Write the references here.
10. Think about a typical day in your own life. How effectively do you feel you are in being thankful, mindful, and prayerful for your Brothers and Sisters?
11. Give some thought to what you might do to increase in this aspect of your discipleship. Write a few ideas down.

12. What do you think is currently standing in the way of you doing these things? How could you address this?
13. Paul mentions in v4 that he had been doing this on their behalf since he heard something. What was that something?
14. Did you notice the famous trio in verses 4-5? What is this trio and what tangible element of each does Paul identify? (*Hint: See 1 Thess 1:3*)
- a.
  - b.
  - c.
15. Based on how Paul speaks of each attribute of the trio here, how would you define each attribute individually and what it does for the believer. A suggestion for the 1<sup>st</sup> attribute is given below.
- a. Faith in Christ Jesus → *Foundation*
    - i. The believer's connection to God
  - b.
    - i.
  - c.
    - i.
16. *Optional:* Do a search on an online study tool to find the other verses where these 3 attributes appear together. Write them here. A few have been listed to get you started.  
*1 Thess 1:3, 5:8; Heb 6:10-12...*
17. Do your working definitions that you've formulated above hold true in the context of these other references? What adjustments would you make?

## Parabolic allusion

18. Read v.5 – v.11 carefully. Do you see any allusions to one of Christ’s parables? Which one(s)?

19. Take a moment to create a chart of the comparisons that are being drawn here. One is started for you below  
a. *Hint – you may want to look at all 3 separate Gospel accounts of this parable to complete the table fully*



<b>THE COLOSSIANS – FULFILLING A PARABLE</b>		
<b>LINKING CONCEPT</b>	<b>COLOSSIANS</b>	<b>CONNECTING PARABLE</b>
<b>Hear</b> = <i>akouo</i> <b>Word</b> = <i>logos</i>	<b>Heard...word</b> of... truth of... gospel (1:5)	
<b>Bearing Fruit</b> = <i>Karpophoreo</i>	<b>Bringeth forth fruit</b> (1:6), <b>fruitful</b> (1:10)	
<b>Increasing</b> = _____	Fruitful... every good work... <b>increasing</b> (1:10)	
<b>Endurance</b> = <i>hypomone</i>	Unto all <b>patience</b> , longsuffering with joyfulness... (1:11)	
<b>Process</b>	Day ye <b>heard</b> of it, and <b>knew</b> the grace of God in truth, <b>bring forth fruit</b> (1:6)	
<b>The Colossians were fulfilling the prophecy of Christ... ‘given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof’ (Matt 21:43)</b>		
<b>Danger</b>	Become uprooted from Christ (2:7), have fruit stolen away and lose reward (2:8, 18)	

20. Based on this allusion, what was Paul comparing the Colossians to?

21. If you were sitting in the audience, as a member of the Colossian Ecclesia, would you find Paul’s introduction to be encouraging or discouraging? Cite a few examples (w/ verse reference) to support your assessment

22. Why do you think Paul started the letter in the way he did?

23. How could you implement this principle more effectively in your personal dealings with others?

## Prayer

24. We've already observed (v.3) that Paul was wont to pray on behalf of his Brothers and Sisters. Take a look at vv. 9 – 12 and write down the different words that also communicate this same action.

*Offering effective prayer on behalf of others can be a real challenge. We can find ourselves speaking in general terms or struggling to focus as we stave off distractedness. Note the specificity of what Paul prays for on behalf of his Brothers and Sisters in vv. 9 – 12.*

25. Complete the table below as a mechanism to help visualize a framework for how we might approach prayer on behalf of others.

OFFERING EFFECTUAL PRAYER FOR OTHERS		
ELEMENT DESIRED	ACTION	SPECIFIC DESIRES EXPRESSED
Input (v.9)	<b>Filled</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of His will</li> <li>• Wisdom</li> <li>• Spiritual understanding</li> </ul>
Output (v. )	<b>Walk worthy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruitful unto every good work</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Enabler (v. )		
Attitude (v. )		

**Thought Section:** *Try to spend a bit of time thinking introspectively as you complete the next group of questions. Don't rush through it!*

26. **Input:** What is the significance of being "filled" with the items Paul mentions? Given the issues with Gnosticism, what may Paul have been driving at?
27. Think about the various "inputs" in your life and what it is that you fill your time and mind with. Where do you see alignment with the inputs in the table above and where do you see opportunity for improvement? *Be specific!*
28. Identify 2 specific things that you will change regarding inputs in your life – either removing or adding. Write them here. What do you hope to achieve with these changes?
29. **Output:** Think about your "walk" on a daily basis. Where do you see alignment with the desired output in the table above and where do you see opportunity?

Take a look at Galatians 5:16-26 and read through this section about producing fruit.

30. When you couple Gal 5:16 and 5:25, what does this convey to you about what a winning strategy looks like?
31. Identify 2 things that you will work to change about your walk. Write them here.
32. **Enabler:** What is the enabler that Paul identifies and why is it significant?
33. Read Rom 5:3-5 and Heb 12:2-11. What role do trials have in this enablement process?
34. **Attitude:** What attitude should this develop in us?
35. Think about your attitude as you go about your day. How would you characterize your attitude?
36. As you read v.13, what stands out to you as a reason for why we should have this attitude? What has God done for us?
37. Look up the word “translated” in a concordance. Write the meaning here:
38. What does this actually mean regarding our status as it stands relative to the kingdom? You may want to also read Phil 4:3 and Rev 3:5 as you think about this.
39. How would you explain to someone what the “power of darkness” is?
  - a. Can you find the reference where Jesus uses this phrase? Where?
  - b. In what context does Jesus use it?

- c. Look the Greek word up that is used for “power” in Col 1:13. What is it and what does it mean?
- d. What is the other primary word translated as “power” in the NT. How does it compare to the word in Col 1:13 in its meaning and application?
- e. What is the significance of why Paul was guided to use the one word for “power” vs the other? What is this meant to convey to us?

### Christ the Firstborn (vv. 14 – 20)

Paul began the letter very positively as he wrote to the Colossian Brothers and Sisters. He attempted to connect to his Brothers and Sisters in a meaningful way that conveyed his desire for them to succeed. This was not Paul writing a scathing indictment to a group of poorly behaved Brothers and Sisters. Rather, it was a heartfelt and fatherly appeal of an aged apostle to Brothers and Sisters that he cared deeply for.

Having expressed his desire for them to succeed, Paul saw a very real need for the Colossian Ecclesia to be reminded of what exactly Christ had done for them. If they didn’t fully appreciate the magnitude of Christ’s work on their behalf, then they would not value it properly. Without the proper valuation, they would end up putting other things before Christ and lose out on the reward (Col 2:18).

In this section, Paul seeks to raise up Christ to his proper position in the minds of the Colossians. This is also an opportunity for us to reflect on the position of the Lord Jesus Christ and how this should impact the prioritization of our service to him.

Read verses 14 – 20 *slowly*. Repeat this a few times (*reading it out loud is also helpful*).

40. Write down the questions that come into your mind after reading this section.
41. What words or themes did you see repeated? Write them here:
42. How many times did each of these come up? Is there any significance in this? *You may want to color these if you haven’t already.*
43. What would you conclude is the main point of this section?
44. What does the word ‘redemption’ mean in v.14?  
 Strongs #629                      Word: apolytroxis                      Meaning:



- 
45. Think about the most valuable thing that you have, what was its price?
46. What does v.14 tell us was the price of our redemption? Also use 1 Pet 1:18-19; Heb 9:12-22 to fill out your understanding.
47. What perspective do you think Paul is trying to give the Colossians regarding the value of being 'in Christ' compared to anything else?
48. How does 'the forgiveness of sins' provide redemption? Consider Rom 6:23
49. We are told in v.15 that Christ is the 'image' of the invisible God. What is this word?
50. This is the same word used in the Septuagint in Gen 1:26; 5:3; 9:6. Based on these references, what does it mean to say that Christ is the 'image of the invisible God'?
51. Find the 2 places in 2 Corinthians where this word is used and read 5 verses on either side of it. How does Christ as the 'image of the invisible God' translate to expectations of us?
52. Was Jesus the actual 'firstborn' (v.15) of every creature?
53. In what sense was Jesus the 'firstborn'? *Take a look at Psa 89:24-30; 1 Cor 15:19-23; Col 1:18*
54. What were the rights of the firstborn?
- a.
    - i. Supporting verses: Num 3:12-13; 8:14-18; Ex 13:2*
  - b.
    - i. Supporting verses: Gen 49:3; 2 Chron 21:3*
  - c.
    - i. Supporting verses: Gen 25:31; Deut 21:15-17*

55. Was the firstborn guaranteed these rights regardless of behavior? Gen 49:3-4; 1 Chron 5:1-2; 26:10

56. What do you think these rights, as the firstborn, were meant to convey to the rest of the family concerning the position of the firstborn?

57. If Christ is the firstborn ‘of every creature’, what is this meant to convey concerning his position relative to the rest all other living creatures?

When looking at this section, it is helpful to chart out the What, Who, When, Where, Why, and How of this creation. This section is interpreted by many Christian denominations to be referring to the Genesis creation. As you chart out the facts for yourself, you’ll need to make an assessment on if you believe this to be referring to the Genesis creation or to something else. Once you finish this section, you may find it helpful to Bible mark the facts and any conclusions that you draw to help you in future discussions. The table has been started for you below.

In addition to Col 1:14-29, other helpful references to read when completing this section include:

- 2 Cor 3:10 – 4:7; 5:14-21
- 1 Cor 15:16-23
- Rom 5:1-12
- Eph 1:7-12



<b>CHRIST, THE FIRSTBORN OF...</b>		
<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>SUPPORTING INFO</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>
<b>What</b> <i>is being referred to?</i>	A new creation in Christ	
<b>Who</b> <i>is included? Requirement?</i>		
<b>When</b> <i>did it start?</i>		
<b>Where</b> <i>does it apply?</i>		
<b>Why</b> <i>was it done... purpose?</i>	Pre-eminence of Christ in all things Praise of God’s glory	
<b>How</b> <i>does it achieve this?</i>		Rom 5:10; Col 1:20-22; Col 1:18

58. Look up the word ‘pre-eminence’ from Col 1:18 in a concordance/lexicon. What does this word mean?

59. What is the position that Christ needs to hold in our life?

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Think about how this looks in practical life... for Christ to have pre-eminence in 'all things' in your life. Take a moment to write 1-2 sentences about what this would look for each of the following categories:

- Schooling:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Friendships:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Relationships / choosing spouse:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Interactions with parents:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Free time:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Job/career:
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Other:

60. How effectively do you feel like you're doing in these areas presently? What might you change to improve? *Be specific!*

61. Do you believe that this is referring to the Genesis creation or something else? Why?

62. How might you explain this passage to an interested friend in a way that they can understand? Write the key points that you would make below:

## “And you...” – Benefits for us (vv. 21 – 29)

Having established that Christ is above everything, the letter now transitions to the personal relevance of this fact. If Christ was to have pre-eminence over all, what was the practical application of this? It was one thing to talk about Christ, but God wanted to be sure that the Colossians did not miss the point in what this was supposed to produce in them. Hence, Paul is led to transition the focus of the letter in a way that is intensely personal. This would help the Colossians see the personal benefit to them of the Lord Jesus Christ’s work.

63. Paul begins this section with the words “and you”. Read this section and write down the occurrences of where personal pronouns appear in this section. It is also helpful to write down the associated action identified. *You may find it helpful to circle or color these.*

64. In verse 21, Paul says that the Colossian believers were once ‘alienated’. There are different thoughts concerning what causes alienation from God. Look up the meaning of this word and find the other places where this word is used in the NT. In each case, write down the element identified as causing alienation.

Reference	Cause of alienation
Col 1:21	

65. Despite their past, what does Paul identify as their current status (v.21)?

66. The root word for ‘reconcile’ is *katallasso* (G2644) which means ‘to exchange as coins for others of equivalent value’ (Thayer). What is our equivalent value as identified in these verses?

67. Explain, in your own words, what v.22 means to you

68. Is there a contingency identified here (v.23)? What is required from the Colossians to obtain the benefit?

69. How does this compare to a ‘once saved, always saved’ message?

*Paul goes on to explain what it means to ‘continue in the faith’ by using the phrase ‘grounded and settled’.*

70. Look up this word ‘grounded’ and find where the Lord Jesus Christ uses this word. Write down the references here and the specific circumstance where Christ talks about it

71. Read the context of Christ's words and write down the 3 steps Jesus identifies as necessary for being 'grounded'
72. Read about the man who does not have this foundation. What is the differentiator in this parable?
73. Why is this significant? Is this what you had previously thought was the differentiating factor?
74. Look up where else the word for "grounded" is used in Paul's writings. What attitude must we have if we are to be properly 'grounded'?
75. In addition to action and attitude, Paul tells the Colossians they must be 'settled'. What does it mean to be settled?
76. Think about the natural surroundings and environment of those living in Colossae. Why would the message of being 'grounded and settled' have particular relevance to them? *Provide historical evidence*
77. In v.23, Paul warns about being 'moved away from the hope of the gospel'. Based on your answers to the above questions, what are different ways that we can be 'moved away'? Identify 2-3 practical applications that relate to each of these different ways.
78. How was it possible for Paul to rejoice in his sufferings (v.24)? This would seem to be a contradiction as 'rejoicing' and 'suffering' do not naturally coexist.
79. It is really important that when we identify insights like 'rejoicing in suffering' that we think about how these apply to us. What is the practical application of this in our lives as believers? How is it possible for us to rejoice in our sufferings?

80. Re-read v.24. Paul is highlighting the fact that in order for Christ's sacrifice to be complete and fulfilled, something else or someone else was required. What was missing or lacking from the perfect work and sacrifice of Christ that Paul was being called upon to fulfill?
- a. In v.25, do you have a marginal note by "fulfill the word of God"? If so, what does it say and how might this relate? *It is helpful to read Eph 3 and also Paul's specific commission from Christ in Acts 9:15-16.*
81. What is this 'mystery' (v.26, 27) that Paul speaks of here? Is it something that remains unknown? *Provide supporting references. There is also a helpful section in Elpis Israel (Part Second, Chapter 1) on this topic.*
82. What is identified in this section as the 'hope of glory'? What does this actually mean?
83. Based on v.28, how broadly does this opportunity extend?
84. Why do you think that this phrase is repeated 3x?
85. Can you think of anywhere in the Gospel accounts where this type of inclusivity is preached by Christ?
86. How should this impact who we decide to share the truth with on a daily basis?
87. What was Paul's purpose in preaching to everyone he encountered? (v.28; 1 Thess 2:19-20)
88. Do you feel that this life mission guides all of your choices as it did Paul's?
- a. How might you get closer to truly pursuing this mission?

*This 'hope of glory' is what everything is working toward in the life of a believer. It was the reason for Christ's sacrifice, the reason that Paul was willing to joyfully suffer for others, and what we are aspiring to achieve in our service to Christ. It is interesting to note that a pattern of thought is being developed in this section to help the Colossian Brothers and Sisters fully appreciate the magnitude of what has been done on their behalf.*

**Table: Process to help believers fully grasp and appreciate Christ's work on their behalf**

<b>CHRIST'S SACRIFICE AND THE BELIEVER</b>			
<b>THEME</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>ELEMENT</b>	<b>EXHORTATION</b>
<b>Superiority of Christ above all</b>	vv. 15, 16, 16, 17, 17, 18, 19, 20 'all', 'every'	Establishes <u>perspective</u> on all elements of our lives	The fact that Christ is above all needs to translate into how we view other priorities in life – Christ must come first!
<b>Significance of price paid</b>	v.14: 'through his blood' v.20a: 'blood of his cross' v.22a: 'through death'	Establishes <u>appreciation / thankfulness</u>	
<b>Magnitude of what has been done for us personally</b>	v.14: 'we have → redemption' v.21: 'you...alienated → reconciled' v.22: 'present you → holy, unblameable, unprovable' v.23: 'If ye → continue in the faith' v.24: 'for you → sufferings' v.25: 'for you → minister' v.27: 'Christ in you → the hope of glory' v.28: 'every man → present perfect in Christ Jesus'	Establishes <u>personal value</u> and benefits of what Christ has done for us	
<b>Method for inclusion</b>	vv. 14, 16, 16, 16, 17, 19, 20, 20, 27, 28 'in whom', 'by him', 'for him', 'in him', 'in Christ Jesus'	Establishes <u>requirement</u> of us to receive these benefits	Entering into covenant relationship (i.e. baptism) and developing Christ 'in us' is required to receive the benefits of Christ's sacrifice for us.

89. How does it impact our daily walk when...

- We fail to have the right perspective of Christ in relation to the other priorities in life?
- We don't fully appreciate the significance of the price that was paid?
- We don't grasp the magnitude of what has been done for us personally?
- We don't fully understand the method for inclusion in receiving these benefits?

*Through the Spirit, Paul could see that the Colossians needed help in each of these key areas. There were a number who were faithful. But at the same time, there were those who were struggling heavily and in danger of losing out on the benefits of Christ's sacrifice. This is where the message of the letter goes in chapter 2...*

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## Section 3 – Rooted in Christ

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### Threats to Obtaining the Reward (Col 2:1-19)

In his introductory remarks, Paul laid out the foundational element of being Redeemed in Christ. Epaphras had given a good report to Paul concerning their love of the truth. As such, Paul began by building up and encouraging the Brothers and Sisters in Colossae. He saw parallels between their situation and the Parable of the Sower. Drawing on the fertility of the Phrygian soil, he likens them personally to the good ground of Christ's parable – ground that produced fruit to their Heavenly Father. He wanted to acknowledge their hard work and effort to this point.

In a systematic fashion, Paul then laid the groundwork for why Christ is superior to anything else that they may experience. God intended that Jesus Christ was to have pre-eminence (i.e. first place) in their lives. As such, Christ is the firstborn of all those who take part in a new creation. The efficacy of Christ's sacrifice extended to each of them in moving them from a state of alienation from God, to being reconciled to God (v.21).

For this to occur, however, a lasting commitment was expected and required from them. They needed to continue in the faith and Paul was there to encourage them in this regard. In fact, Paul was appointed, by Christ, to be a minister of the work by sharing the Gospel message with the rest of the world. Paul was so committed to this work, that he joyfully endured suffering on their behalf so that the Colossians might have the opportunity. It was all about developing 'Christ in you', as he told the Brothers and Sisters in Colossae. It was an amazing opportunity (and is for us too!) to have the hope of being presented as 'perfect in Christ Jesus.'

Despite this amazing opportunity, there were some who were in danger of being uprooted and slipping away. In chapter 2, Paul will outline the threats to obtaining the reward to help the Colossian Brothers and Sisters remain rooted in Christ.

Try to think about the modern-day equivalent of these threats to our faith as you go through this section. Remaining rooted in Christ is a real challenge in the world in which we live. Personalizing this section to our own walk will help us significantly in this regard.

Take 15-20 minutes to read chapter 2 a few times. Really give yourself ample time to soak in the message and to listen to the still, small voice of God's word.

Write down any initial observations, questions, and/or themes that surface from reading through chapter 2.



## The Great Conflict

In the previous chapter, we saw the inclusivity of the Gospel message – it is available to ‘every man’ (3x in 1:28). Despite the inclusive nature of Christ’s sacrifice, it was possible that ‘any man’ could steer them out of the right way. Paul uses the phrase, ‘any man’ and ‘no man’ to highlight this very real danger in chapter 2. The occurrences of these phrases in chapter 2 form the natural landmarks that serve to segment the warnings of the apostle. As such, they form a convenient breakdown for the chapter at hand.

1. Find the occurrences of ‘any man’ and ‘no man’ in chapter 2. Write them here (*it may be helpful to mark these*)
2. Each of these occurrences comes with a specific warning. Identify these to create a suggested outline for chapter 2

<b>WARNINGS TO THE FAITH – OUTLINE OF CH. 2</b>	
v.1-3	Desired State – unity in Christ’s love
‘ANY MAN’, ‘NO MAN’	<b>SPECIFIC WARNING</b>
v.	
v.	
v.	
v.	

3. What does the word, ‘conflict’ in v.1 mean and what is it commonly used to depict?  
Strong’s #73                      Word: agon                      Meaning:
4. Who else was included in Paul’s concerns?
5. What does this tell us about Paul’s level of personal interaction with many of the Brothers and Sisters in those 2 locations?

*Paul outlines the benefits of the gospel message available to them in Christ in v.2*

6. ‘Hearts might be comforted’
  - a. What is the Greek word for ‘comforted’?
  - b. This is the verbal form of *parakletos* (i.e. the comforter). Where does Jesus speak about the comforter?
  - c. Based on this usage and Paul’s usage here, how would their hearts be comforted?

- d. How does the Gospel message provide comfort to your heart in a meaningful way?
7. 'Knit together in love'
- What is the Greek word for 'knit together'?
  - What is the Strong's definition?
  - What does this tell us about what the love of Christ should result in? Based on the definition of the word, would this naturally occur without the love of Christ?
  - What type of 'love' is this based on the Greek word?
8. 'full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery...'
- What is Paul driving at here?
  - How confident should we be about our hope?
  - Do you feel this confident that you have the truth? Why or why not?
  - Note the occurrence of 'understanding', 'acknowledgement', 'wisdom', 'knowledge' (v.2-3). Why the emphasis and seeming repetition here?

*Thus, a true application of oneself to the gospel should bring comfort, a loving unity, and an absolute confidence that we have the truth of God.*

9. After reading v.4, why is it that Paul was reminding the Colossians of the benefits of the Gospel?
10. In the KJV, the phrase 'beguile you with enticing words' is used. What Bible echo does this take your mind back to? Provide the reference here
11. What were the enticing words spoken at that time?
12. Was anyone beguiled by those words? If so, who? (*Chapter/Verse*)
13. What was the result?



14. Paul has just spoken about the ‘treasures of wisdom and knowledge’. What was the subject matter of the enticing words in this Old Testament echo?
  
15. Think about the benefits of the gospel message that Paul has just outlined. In contrast to these positive elements what was the result of following the previously spoken enticing words?
  - a. Benefit: Hearts might be comforted
    - Result: Heart filled with?
  
  - b. Benefit: Knit together in love
    - Result: cast from God’s presence, separated by sin and eventually death (reference?)
  
  - c. Benefit: full assurance of hope
    - Result:

*By alluding to an analogous situation, Paul is highlighting that this is really nothing new. It is a lie that has existed since the beginning of creation. And if that lie is listened to, it will result in a systematic undoing and reversal of all the benefits available in Christ.*

16. In v.5, Paul states that though he was absent in the flesh, that he was with them in the spirit. Thinking about the echo back to Genesis, is there an analogous reference in the OT account that carries this same concept concerning God? (*Hint: Stay within the early chapters in Genesis*)
  
17. Paul seems to be developing a consciousness of his presence in their lives. Applying this to God, why might it be important for us to develop a consciousness of God in our lives?
  
18. Do you think Adam and Eve would have sinned in the Garden if they were truly conscious of God’s presence with them in the Garden?
  
19. Think about having an angel visibly present with you throughout your day. How would this change your behavior?
  
20. What attitude does Paul attribute to his presence among them in v.5? What does this reveal about Paul’s motivation toward them and their success?
  
21. When you imagine God’s presence with you, do you attribute this same motivation to God? Does imagining God’s presence with you inspire fear, confidence, other?

22. What attribute is ascribed to the angels when we repent and ask for forgiveness (Lk 15:7, 10)?
  
23. What is this meant to convey to us regarding God's desire for us to succeed?
  
24. How can you better convey to others that you have a genuine desire for them to succeed in their walk to the kingdom?
  
25. Look up the Greek words for 'order' and 'steadfastness' found in v.5 and write them and their meanings here.
  
26. Why might Paul use words with a clear military application? What was he trying to convey?
  
27. Consider the application of these words in 1 Cor 14:40 and in 1 Pet 5:9. If we are to be successful, what must we do? (also consider Col 2:6)
  
28. Based on Paul's description in v.5, what do you think the Ecclesial dynamic was like? Were most being enticed by the beguiling words or resisting?
  
29. Recalling the earlier allusion to the Parable of the Sower in Col 1:5-11, how might Paul be referencing that in Col 2:7? What type of ground?
  - a. Note 'receive' in Col 2:6 and 'rooted' in 2:7 when comparing to Mark 4
  
30. Write down what the Colossians were expected to be rooted in. What does this actually mean? Consider Eph 3:17 when constructing your response.
  - a. Also, look up Heb 12:1. What is the alternative?
  
31. Thinking about how roots work, how does this practically impact our lives and what is one way that we can tell what we are rooted in? (Matt 7:16-20)

32. Think about things that you spend time on throughout the week. These are the things that you are putting your roots into and taking input/nutrient from. In this analogy, consider that the size of the root increases based on the amount of time that you spend on that element. Write down your 'roots' below and rank-order them based on largest to smallest based on the amount of time you spend on each during the day / week.
- a. Is your current root structure aligned to produce the fruit you desire?
- b. How might you better align your root structure?

### Beware... (vv.8-19)

33. What was Paul concerned that the Colossian Brothers & Sisters were putting their roots into instead of Christ (v.8)?
34. Look up the word 'spoil' that is found in Col 2:8. What does this word mean?  
Strong's #2071                      Word: esomai                      Meaning:
35. Consider the elements listed here that would spoil them. Look up their meanings and share why you think this could spoil a believer.

<b>SPOILERS OF THE BELIEVERS</b>		
<b>Element</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>How it leads captive</b>
Philosophy		
Vain Deceit		<i>Gen 3:4?</i>
Tradition of Men		<i>Mk 7:6-13?</i>
Rudiments of the world	<i>Col 2:20</i>	<i>Col 2:23?</i>

36. A number of these 'base elements of the world' come up in Colossians 2. What were they and what specific lessons were they intended to teach?
- a. (v.11):
- b. (v.16, 21):
- c. Holy Days (v.16): meant to create framework to enable godly living and devotion
- d. (v.22-23):

37. What did God intend that the various parts of the law would lead them to realize (Gal 3:22-26)?
38. How do the various pieces of the law compare to Christ (Col 2:9)?
39. Look up for the word 'complete' in Col 2:10. Write down its meaning.
- Write down the references in Ephesians and Colossians where it is used. What can you piece together about its meaning/application?
  - How can we be 'complete' on this side of the kingdom? How does this work?
40. Note again the emphasis here: “**all** the fulness” (v.9), “**complete** in him” (v.10), “head of **all** principality and power” (v.10). Why might there be this repetition?
41. What did Christ accomplish through his life, death, and resurrection? Compare Col 2:8-10 to Eph 4:8; Psa 68:18
42. What is the 'circumcision made without hands'? You may find it helpful to look at the following passages when formulating your answer (Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4; 6:10; Rom 2:28-29).
43. How successful did God's people tend to be at making this connection? (Acts 7:51)
44. What is the danger with rituals?
45. Does this mean that all rituals are bad? Why or why not?

46. Is there an application for our day where rituals can help in our discipleship? If so, give some examples where you have seen benefit. If not, why not? *Be prepared to discuss*

Paul, through the Spirit, is systematically building a case for what the sacrifice of Christ was meant to accomplish and its total superiority over the law. Consider the sentiment expressed in Rom 8:2-4 and then complete the summary below. *You may find it helpful to color these 2 subthemes in different colors to help them stand out.*

**Removal:**

• v.11: 'putting off'	→	Complete removal
• v.12: 'buried'	→	Permanent disposal
• v.13: 'dead'	→	
• v.14: 'blotting out', 'nailing it to his cross'	→	
• v.15: 'spoiled', 'triumphing over'	→	Defeating it



**Result:**

• v.10: 'complete'	→	Filled
• v.12,13:	→	Brought back to life
• v.13:	→	Extension of grace
• v.14:	→	Removes barriers inhibiting our walk

47. Based on this language, what part of our former lives, prior to putting on Christ, should remain?

This is the danger of a 'yes and' approach in our worship to God through Christ. We commit to serving Christ 'and' we continue to feed the flesh. Remnants of the old man live on due to the fact that we have only cut off a piece of our former lives to make room for God. Yet, if we are still feeding the old man, he will not die! God requires a complete transformation and that we offer ourselves as a whole burnt offering (Rom 12:1).

*Col 2:14 provides detailed information on exactly how Christ's sacrifice related to the law. Some accused Christ of coming to destroy the law (Matt 5:17). Let's see how Christ's work, in the context of the Law, is laid out.*

48. Look up the following words in a concordance/lexicon and write down their meanings (*suggested tool: Thayer's Lexicon on [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)*)

a. 'blotting out':

b. 'handwriting': (*note the metaphorical application Thayer calls out specifically for Col 2:14*)

- Explain this metaphorical application in the context of verses like Gal 2:16; 3:10-11

- Thinking about the parable in Matt 18:23-35 (specifically v.24), what is the size of the debt that we owe God? How long would it take to repay it?

c. 'contrary':

- How is this word translated in the KJV in Heb 10:27?
- Read Rom 7:6-25 and explain how the Law is an adversary to us
- Does this mean that the Law is bad? Why or why not?

49. Based on this analysis, what was it that Christ actually 'nailed to his cross' (Col 2:14)? Was it the Law itself or something else?
50. Circling back now, consider Christ's words in Matt 5:17-20, 'think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.' How did Christ's work fulfil the Law in this context as it pertains to us?
51. In addition to Christ's work for us, we read in v.15, that he also overcame the 'principalities and powers'. Who were these people in Christ's day?
- a. Find other places where these 2 Greek words are used together to help support your answer
52. Where does v.15 tell us that Jesus triumphed over them? The AV reads, 'in it', but what does the margin say?
53. What does this tell us about where the battle was actually taking place for Jesus? Was it external or internal primarily?
54. Have you identified this to be the case for yourself?
55. Where do we tend to put the blame or attach responsibility when dealing with other people? How could we apply this same principle used by Christ if we want to be successful?
56. V.16 begins with the next "no/any man" section. What were these men attempting to do?



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57. When looking at the ministry of Christ or the Acts of the Apostles, who were these men? *Provide reference(s) to support your answer*
58. What are the similarities between all of the elements brought up in this verse?
59. Paul connects v.16 to the verse(s) preceding it with the word ‘therefore’. How does the line of argument in verse 16 connect to the verse(s) before it?
60. Compare v.16-17 to Heb 9:9-15 and Heb 10:1-25. How do these rituals under the Law relate to Christ?
61. Based on these references in Hebrews, what was the purpose of these rituals?
62. What rituals do we have today as a part of our worship to God?
63. What purpose do these rituals serve?
64. Are any of these rituals, which we have today, ones that God and/or Christ have ordained? Which ones?
65. Based on these verses in Colossians and Hebrews, should we have rituals? Why or why not?
- a. What are the benefits?
  - b. What are the dangers?
66. In v.18, Paul begins the next ‘no/any man’ section. What is the focus here in Paul’s warning?

67. The same Greek word appears 3x in this verse. What is it and what does it mean? (*Hint: G2603*)
68. What metaphor is being employed by usage of this word? (*see Thayer's Lexicon on [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)*)
69. What does this mean about the position that the Colossian Brothers and Sisters were elevating others to?
70. Was this a good thing or a bad thing? Explain.
71. What criteria were these other people introducing?
72. Did it align with God's criteria or was it different? If different, in what way?
73. In the KJV, the phrase 'voluntary humility' is used in v.18. What does this mean? (*it may help to look at other translations, including the ESV*)
74. In v.23, Paul highlights the fundamental problem with this approach. What is it? *Consider looking at other translations (e.g. ESV)*

*Historical Context and Fulfillment: If you look up the Phrygian Heresy, you will find specific instances of where this warning was validated.*

75. When looking at v.19, what position will such an approach place us in as it pertains to the head of the body (compare with Col 1:18)?
76. The phrase 'knit together' is used in Col 2:19. Where else has that phrase appeared in Colossians and what is meant to 'knit' the believers 'together'?
77. In Col 2:19, the word 'bands' is used. What is a 'band', where else does it appear in Colossians, and what attribute does this 'band' represent?

78. The connection between 'knit together' and 'bands' is interesting. What is the common theme that Paul is driving the Colossian believers to think about?
79. We are told at the end of v.18 that the 'no/any man' approach results in being 'puffed up'. Why would this alternative approach lead to an outcome of being puffed up?
80. Who is the focus really on with such an approach?

It is worth pausing to consider what it is that our approach to worshipping God produces in us. When we are regular in study, prayer, and active in ecclesial life, what does this produce in us? Do we see our level of involvement as a differentiator from our Brothers and Sisters? Or does it produce in us a closer affinity toward our Brothers and Sisters and a stronger desire to see them in the kingdom? Without realizing it, we may find ourselves slipping into the trap of self-promotion and find ourselves disconnected from Christ. The counsel here is to continue to reach for Christ. We do this by actively connecting to our Brothers and Sisters, in love, as fellow members of the body of Christ. **Pay attention to your motivation!**

81. Recall from v.18 that the same Greek word was used 3 times. You will find that the same root word appears in Colossians 3. What verse does it appear in?
82. As an alternative to allowing 'any man' to play this role in our lives, what should be taking this place?
83. How might we, in our day, find ourselves in the position described in Col 2:18?
84. Have you ever felt discouraged from your service to God because of the example of others?
85. If yes, this is essentially elevating 'any man' to the position of being our judge and to disqualify us from the reward. Does any man actually have this authority? Who has the responsibility of judge (Rom 14:3-4, 12-13)?
86. *Thought Questions:* Is there any relation between Col 2:16-23 and the counsel given in Romans 14? How can we understand these sections of Scripture properly in their context?

87. In v.22, the phrase ‘commandments and doctrines of men’. This hearkens back again to Mark 7:6-13. From reading these 2 sections, how deep do the commandments of men penetrate?
88. What does this approach fail to reach?
89. When contrasting this approach with true discipleship, Paul speaks of ‘increasing with the increase of God’. Where has this idea of ‘increase’ appeared in Colossians already and what, specifically, is it intended to produce?
90. When we think about ‘increasing’ it conjures up the idea of proactive behavior... producing something. What is the focus of the ‘any man’ approach in Col 2:21?
91. What is your approach to serving God? Do you tend to focus more on the things that you can’t/shouldn’t do or on the things that you should be doing?
92. Will the stopping of those things alone mean that you are producing fruit?
93. Are the things that you are trying to stop doing merely symptoms, ‘no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh (ESV)?’ Or do you feel that they are really getting to the heart of the matter?

It is worth checking the alignment between how we define success in our worship versus how God defines success (Colossians 3:1 – 4:6). Pay attention to this as you go into the next section of the workbook. We want to make sure that we define success the same way that God does and that we are not merely practicing a ‘self-made religion’ (ESV). A very thought-provoking exercise indeed!

## Section 4 – Risen with Christ

### True Pursuit of the Reward (2:20 - 3:17)

Paul spent a great deal of time on the importance of being rooted in Christ. And he has given the warning and concern of being rooted in anything other than Christ. Consider what Paul put forward by way of example in chapter 2 (which we have already studied) – these all reflected incomplete types of Christ. And if you were to summarize these examples into a sentence, a descriptor of what the shortcoming was as it pertained to their approach:

- Circumcision – reduced to external action without an internal change
- Rituals – doing the motions but missing the meaning
- Asceticism – rigorous self-denial leading to prideful self-promotion

And yet with each incomplete example, Paul contrasted this with the ‘fulness’ that was available through Christ:

- Circumcision – **Complete Fulfillment** – Christ put off ‘body of the flesh’ (v.11) ‘in himself’ (v.15)
- Rituals – **Complete Image** – Rituals were an imperfect foreshadow, the body itself seen in Christ (v.17)
- Asceticism – **Connection to Head** – Pride disconnects the body from the head, must increase with God (v.19)

What Paul has put forward for the believers in Colossae, and for us as the reader, is to effectively identify and illustrate the points of deficiency. These are incredibly helpful things for us to be aware of, and to steer clear of. These are all things we are expected to not do...so what then are we expected to do? Paul is going to model this after the example of Christ. In so doing, Paul will define and illustrate the true pursuit of the reward, the actions and pathway that lead toward true discipleship. The believer isn’t to dwell on what has been left behind, but instead of what lies ahead.

### The Danger of the Doctrines of Men (vv. 20 – 23)

1. In verse 20, define the following words – ‘rudiments’ & ‘ordinances’:

Strong’s # 4747                      Word: stoicheion                      Meaning:

Strong’s # 1379                      Word: dogmatizo                      Meaning:

2. While the Colossians were free from the ordinances of the law having been baptized into Christ, through the philosophies of the day they were being seduced back into what they had previously left behind.

a. In what way can we be influenced by the philosophies of our day?

b. It is one thing to identify them, another to avoid them. Write down 1-2 suggestions on avoiding a similar trap outlined here by the Apostle Paul.



3. The phrase “touch not; taste not; handle not” is put forward as the mark of the teachings and regulations of men. This is clearly illustrated in the chapter in the Old Testament dealing with the treatment of leprosy. Turn in your Bibles back to Leviticus 13 and highlight all the occurrences of the words “look, looketh, sight, seen, see”.

- a. As Paul has illustrated, this way of thinking leads to an incomplete type of Christ. Consider the events of Matthew 8:1-4, what is done differently here? Why is this significant?
4. It can be a helpful exercise to consider other translations of the Bible, if only to assist us in obtaining a more complete understanding of a verse or its context. To help with the warning of these verses, write out verse 23 from the following translations ([www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) can be of assistance):
  - a. English Standard Version (ESV):
  - b. New International Version (NIV):
  - c. Weymouth New Testament:
5. What are the 4 components that make up the “commandments and doctrines of men”?
6. Some of these components, by themselves, wouldn’t seem to be to the detriment of the believers (ex. humility, self-discipline through neglecting of the body), and yet they are put forward here as a stark warning. Why are these components included in this list of the doctrines of men? To assist, consider the verse in its entirety.
7. What is the exhortation put forward in verse 23? (*Hint – use other translations for assistance*)

### Things Above (Colossians 3 vv. 1– 4)

It is an encouraging exercise to envision yourself in the time of the Kingdom. This is where we all aspire to be, it’s what we’re all working towards and is a practice consistently alluded to in Paul’s letters. Beginning this 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter, Paul elevates the mind of the Colossian Brothers and Sisters to consider what has been made possible by the Lord Jesus Christ...but only if a pre-requisite has been accomplished. For each of us, these early verses should cause us to reflect on what Christ accomplished in the past, reminding us of what we must do then in the present, while encouraging us towards the future reward.

8. In your own words, summarize verse 1-4.

9. In verse 1, what does the word 'risen' mean?  
Strong's # 4891                      Word: synegeiro                      Meaning:
10. What does it mean in v1 to be 'risen with Christ'? Find 1-2 verses to support your answer. (*Suggestion – consider the other verse in Colossians where this same Greek word appears*)
- a. Why is it fitting to speak of baptism as a burial?
11. There is clearly an importance on seeking "things which are **above**". The words in 1 Peter 1:3-4 can assist us in rounding out our understanding for what this phrase means. From 1 Peter 1:3-4, what would constitute "things which are above"? Write down any other supporting verses for what this phrase refers to.
12. By stating that Christ sits on the right hand of God, Paul is not saying that Christ is equal to God. This understanding is a fundamental first principle, a critical distinction from many religions today. Provide verses that demonstrate this belief and understanding (*hint: Mt 22:44; 1 Cor 15:24-28*).
13. In verse 2, what does the word 'affection' mean?  
Strong's # 5426                      Word: phroneo                      Meaning:
14. This same Greek word is used 37 times in 21 verses across the New Testament. Read through the following references which all contain this Greek word:
- Romans 12:16
  - Romans 15:5
  - 2 Corinthians 13:11
  - Galatians 5:10
  - Philipians 2:2
- a. What word occurs in each of the references listed above? What is the lesson from the use of this Greek word in these verses?

15. The way we ‘exercise our mind’ is often a good measure of our spiritual development. It was Bro. John Carter who said that the mind is insensibly affected by the train of thought passing through it. This means that the things we think about affect us longer than just the initial thought – there is a lingering effect. Summarize the following passages on the theme of what our minds should be focused on.

- Romans 8:5 –
- Proverbs 12:1 –
- Proverbs 27:5 –
- Proverbs 29:1 –
- Revelation 3:19 –

a. In what ways can we ensure that we keep our minds focused on ‘things above’?

16. Using Scripture, define what Paul means when he states that ‘ye are dead’ in verse 3. How is this accomplished, what are the implications?

17. In verse 3, what does the word ‘hid’ mean?

Strong's # 2928

Word: krypto

Meaning:

18. How is our life “hid with Christ in God” as we see in Colossians 3:3? Support your answer with references. (*Hint: 2 Corinthians 5:17-18*)

19. Given the enormity of this phrase and what it represents, how are we to show our gratefulness and appreciation for what has been accomplished on our behalf?

### Put the Flesh to Death (Colossians 3 vv. 5 – 9)

20. In verse 5, define the word “mortify”:

Strong's #3499

Word: nekroo

Meaning:

21. Given what it meant to be ‘risen with Christ’ in verse 1 – why might the word ‘mortify’ be suitable for this verse? Consider what it implies when something is dead.



22. The list in verse 5 becomes eye-opening when we understand how these things still surround us in 2019. Complete the chart below using a Concordance or an alternate version of the Bible to assist with a clear understanding of the word or phrase. Then write out how this may manifest itself in our day and age – what are the 21<sup>st</sup> century equivalents to these phrases (Ex. Movies, Video Games, College Parties, Consumerism, etc.):

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>DEFINITION OR ALTERNATE VERSION</b>	<b>MODERN DAY DANGER</b>
'fornication'		
'uncleanness'		
'inordinate affection'		
'evil concupiscence'		
'covetousness, which is idolatry'		

The list in verse 5 is meant to invoke a response from the reader – we see two aspects becoming clear:

- These things are to be mortified, they are to be dead – left behind.
- These things are 'upon the earth', a distinction to 'those things which are above' in verse 1

We are left to consider these two aspects in our own lives. Have we left these things behind in our lives, have we cast off these characteristics so they make up no part of who we are as believers? Are we elevating our minds from the things on the earth, looking towards the things above, where Jesus sits on the right hand of God, preparing to return to establish His Kingdom? It's been said that in our lives we have two options, make progress or make excuses. As it relates to these things, let's ensure we are making progress towards being accepted in that coming day, towards becoming sons and daughters of God.

23. Why is covetousness referred to as idolatry?

- Can you think of other examples in Scripture where covetousness is exhibited – list them below: (Consider who is involved, what is the context, is there a punishment, how is covetousness linked to idolatry?)
- What lessons can be drawn from these events?
- What are some of the ways given by God to combat covetousness – write down 3-4 verses to support your answer. (*hint: look at the use of the word 'covetousness' in Scripture*)

24. Write out the definition for the word “disobedience” in verse 6:  
Strong's #543                      Word: apeitheia                      Meaning:
- a. How many times is this same Greek word used in the New Testament?
  - b. Who are the “children of disobedience” in verse 6?
  - c. Consider how this same word is used in Hebrews 4:6-11, what is the lesson for us to ensure we do not “fall after the same example of unbelief” and end up as children of disobedience?
25. There is a connection drawn between the list in verse 5, and the Colossian believers in verse 7 (to see this clearly, circle the personal pronouns in v7). What can we learn from the language used in verse 7 as it relates to our own walks before God?
26. We see a consistent theme in the Word of God around our “walk”. There is an emphasis on moving forward, on pursuing the goal set before each of us. Action leads to accomplishment, and throughout the Word of God this idea is brought forward using the language of walking.
- a. Locate the 4 references in Colossians related to a “walk”. What do you notice? Are there any connections? Is the reference in Colossians 3 unique?
  - b. List out 4-5 additional passages from elsewhere in the Bible that follow the theme of walking.
  - c. What lessons can we take away to apply into our lives today?

27. Complete the following table connecting Colossians and Ephesians as it relates to our “walk”. We see a clear distinction being drawn between which way we will choose to walk in our lives before God. How is this theme picked up in each of the references below?



<b>WHICH WAY TO WALK?</b>	
<b>WALK OF SEPARATENESS</b>	<b>WALK OF SIN</b>
Colossians 1:10 –	Colossians 3:6-7 –
Colossians 2:6 –	Ephesians 2:2 –
Colossians 4:5 –	Ephesians 4:17 –
Ephesians 2:10 –	
Ephesians 4:1 –	

28. Define the phrase “put off” in verse 8 and verse 9:

Strong's # 659

Word: apotithemi

Meaning:

Strong's # 554

Word: apekdyomai

Meaning:

- a. How is this same Greek word (G659) used in Acts 7:58? What is being “put off”?
- b. What imagery is used for this process that Paul is outlining in verses 8 and 9?
- c. Write out Ephesians 4:22 from the English Standard Version (ESV).

God is making it clear for the Brothers and Sisters in Colossae, and for each of us. The language that is used is not language that leads us to believe that they could go back to this way of life they were being told to “put off”. When something is dead it is gone forever, you cannot go back to it. The old man belonged to their **former manner of life** – keep it in the past God is telling them, that is where this behaviour, this character belongs, it is to make up no part of a true disciple. So how are we progressing in laying aside, putting off these things in our lives?

29. When something is dead, it is gone forever. This must be our attitude once we pass through the waters of Baptism. That former way of life is non-existent, we will leave it behind. In what ways can we be exhibiting this type of behavior and attitude in our lives today (baptized or not)? Consider practical ways to improve this desired state (ex. Removing influences, reducing unhelpful distractions, etc.):

30. Words to live by as we work diligently in our lives towards putting off these things are found in Psalm 101:3 – “I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.” This must become our attitude towards the characteristics listed here in Colossians 3. In Gesenius’ Lexicon, the word ‘cleave’ in Psa 101:3 means ‘to be glued to’.

a. How is the word “cleave” used in Gen 2:24?

b. We see in its usage that what we are glued to, what we cleave to, we will become. Identify some of the things we may be ‘glued to’ today that we would do well to put away:

31. We have come across a familiar principle in Colossians 3:3-9 that is found throughout Scripture, it is often termed “the cross before the crown.” We read time and again this idea that there will be struggle before triumph, that there will be suffering before glorification. In verse 5, 8, and 9 of Colossians 3, we are told to put to death a former way of life, the “old man”. If we can go through that process (which at times will be a struggle), then we can look forward to the reward of verse 4. In the box below, identify the aspects of this principle in the verses listed:



<b>THE CROSS BEFORE THE CROWN</b>	
<b>SUFFERING</b>	<b>GLORIFICATION</b>
Matthew 16:21 – ‘suffer many things’	Matthew 16:21 – ‘raised again’
Matthew 16:24 –	Matthew 16:27 –
Matthew 16:25 –	Matthew 16:25 –
Acts 2:22-23 –	Acts 2:32-33 –
Acts 10:38-39 –	Acts 10:40,43 –
1 Peter 1:11 – ‘sufferings of Christ’	1 Peter 1:11 – ‘the glory that should follow’
1 Peter 1:19-20 –	1 Peter 1:21 –
1 Peter 3:18 –	1 Peter 3:22 –
1 Peter 4:13 –	1 Pet 4:13 –
1 Peter 5:1 –	1 Peter 5:1 –

## Assume the Character of Christ (Colossians 3 vv. 10 – 17)

There is a line in the sand drawn between vv. 8-9 and vv. 10-14. God makes this clear by using similar, yet opposite phrases. In both verse 8 and 9 we read the phrase “put off”, this is contrasted in verse 10, 12, and 14 with the phrase “put on”. We read of the “old man” in verse 9, again contrasted with the “new man” in verse 10. God is consistent in His requirement, there is one way to serve Him, there is one way to be found acceptable – and that is shown in this section beginning in verse 10. We often read in Scripture of decisions that need to be made (Ex. Lot in Gen 13:9, Ruth in Ruth 1:8-9, Daniel in Dan 1:8), decisions that have a tremendous impact on a person’s life, on their walk before God. Here now, in Colossians 3 we read of a similar decision – a fork in the road. Will we remain as the “old man” or will we present ourselves as the “new man”?

Before working on this section, write down in your own words what these two phrases mean to you:

- “the old man” –
- “the new man” –

32. Define the word “renewed” in verse 10:

Strong's #341

Word: anakainoo

Meaning:

*This word only occurs in one other verse in the New Testament – 2 Corinthians 4:16. We see here the ‘inward man is renewed day by day’, again we see highlighted how this is a process and it will take time, it is not an overnight accomplishment, it takes time, energy and help from God. It may not be easy, but it will be worth it.*

33. It is critical for each of us to be renewed, or to grow in knowledge. This growth is to be towards taking on the image of God, just as Christ is in the image of God (2 Cor. 4:4). We are to turn into a new creation, a new man or woman. To illustrate this change, Paul uses imagery of different parts of the body that are essential to develop in a true disciple. Can you identify the language used in each verse listed below and how this fits into the idea of becoming a new man or woman?

<b>GROWING THE NEW MAN/WOMAN IN KNOWLEDGE</b>	
<b>VERSE</b>	<b>ASPECT OF THE BODY</b>
<b>Colossians 1:18; 2:19</b>	
<b>Colossians 3:15</b>	<b>One body</b> – our calling as believers
<b>Colossians 3:15, 16</b>	
<b>Colossians 3:16</b>	<b>Inside us</b> – where the Word of God dwells
<b>Colossians 2:19; 3:14</b>	
<b>Colossians 3:12</b>	

Ephesians 4:15-16 (NET) – “But practicing the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head. From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body grows in love.”

34. The phrase “put on” in v10 and v12 means ‘to array, or to clothe (used of sinking into garment)’. Write out the following verses where the same Greek word is used (hint: use a Concordance to identify the Greek word):
- Romans 13:14 –
  
  - Galatians 3:27 –
35. What principle is established with the use of the Greek word in the verses listed above? What is required to truly “put on Christ”?
36. God reveals in verse 11 that everyone has this same opportunity, God is not a respecter of persons and has offered this message to anyone who would hear, and follow His word. We see included in the group listed in v11 the “Scythians”. Conduct research on this group – who were they?
- a. Given their ancestry, what might be the reasons behind including them here?
37. What is meant by the phrase “the elect of God”? Consider how this word is used elsewhere in Scripture – what emotions does it draw out in us given what it implies?
38. Paul now outlines the alternative to the lists previously put forward in v5, 8 and 9. Using the box below, write out the vices to be avoided (that we have already considered), and the virtues to be developed (that Paul now introduces):



<b>THE ESSENCE OF DISCIPLESHIP</b>	
<b>VICES TO BE AVOIDED</b>	<b>VIRTUES TO BE DEVELOPED</b>

*From the first word in this list of the virtues to be developed we see the critical component. Paul, through the Spirit, instructs the Colossians to put on “bowels”. It’s a word that speaks of the intestines, of the innermost parts of the human body. The point being illustrated is that it wasn’t enough to focus on **showing** these characteristics, they had to learn to **become** these characteristics. It has to become so innate within each of us that it makes up who we are internally, not just what we outwardly demonstrate.*

39. From verse 13, in what manner are we to forgive one another?
- Read Psalm 103:12 – what does this verse reveal to us about the forgiveness made possible through Christ?
  - How does this impact the attitude we should show towards the forgiveness of others?
  - Consider Matthew 18:23-24, how important is it to understand forgiveness and to forgive others? Explain your answer.
  - Write down 2-3 additional verses that demonstrate the importance of forgiveness.
40. What are we to put on above all of these things?
- Define the word “charity” in verse 14.
41. How is love the “bond of perfectness”? Support your answer with additional references if necessary.
42. In your own words, define what the “peace of God” is speaking about.
- Consider the following verses related to the peace of God, summarize each in a few words:
    - Romans 5:1 –
    - Colossians 1:20 –
  - Do these verses alter your understanding of the peace of God in the context of Colossians 3:15? If so, how?
43. Where is the peace of God supposed to rule? Why should it rule in this place?
- How many occurrences of the word “heart” are there in the Bible?

*Thayer's Bible Dictionary states that 'the heart is the organ in the body which is the center of the circulation of our blood, and hence, was commonly regarded as the seat of physical life'. Life comes from the heart, it is the gateway for all of our bodies functions.*

44. What does the word “rule” mean in verse 15?

Strong's #1018

Word: brabeuo

Meaning:

- a. How else is this same idea brought out in the Bible – consider where else this word is used.
- b. Discuss the possible lessons for us brought out from the use of this word.

45. Describe practical ways in which we can let the peace of God rule in our hearts? Consider how this can be applied while at school, work, in relationships, our conversations, etc.

46. Verse 15 concludes with a reminder to “be ye thankful”. What does the word “thankful” mean?

Strong's #2170

Word: eucharistos

Meaning:

*This is the only occurrence of this Greek word in the Bible, and here we see it used in the adjective form. We see again that the advice is not just to show this, but to **become** this – to truly be thankful, truly a part of who we are.*

47. Consider the words of Philippians 4:11-13, write in the key missing words that highlight the emphasis picked up by Paul here in Colossians 3:

“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_ state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

- a. How does this verse shape our own attitude towards thankfulness?
- b. Consider the words found in 1 Timothy 6:5-12. What does this section add to the idea of thankfulness and contentment?

*The word “dwell” in verse 16 is taken from the Greek word ‘oikeo’ which means to dwell or to occupy a house. We see that the commands of God, the life of Christ must live within us, occupying us as we see in 1 John 2:24. We see in Scripture that there are 2 houses, 2 dwelling places- imagery made clear in Proverbs 9 as identified through Wisdom & Folly.*

*On the next page, complete the following exercise looking at the 2 dwelling places identified in Proverbs 9.*



<b>DWELLING 1 - WISDOM</b>		<b>DWELLING 2 - FOLLY</b>
Proverbs 9:1	<b>The House</b>	Proverbs 9:14
Proverbs 9:2 'prepared'	<b>The Feast</b>	Proverbs 9:17 'stolen'
	<b>The Call</b>	
Proverbs 9:3	<b>The Way to Hear</b>	
	<b>The Offer</b>	Proverbs 9:16
Proverbs 9:5-6	<b>The Decision Required</b>	
Life	<b>A Clear Difference</b>	Death

*The lesson is simple – there are 2 houses that request our stay, and while we decide where we will reside, God wants the word of Christ to  **dwell**  within us, so that we might manifest Him. So where will our dwelling be?*

48. In what ways can we allow the word of Christ to dwell within us as we read in Colossians 3:16?

“This word, which is defined to be ‘the law and the testimony’ is the great instrument of holiness and purification. It changes men’s minds; loosens their attachment to earthly things; causes them to place their affection on things above; creates a new and right spirit within them; diffuses the love of God abroad in their  hearts ; separates them from sinners; leads them unto Christ; and develops in their lives, fruit characteristic of that repentance which needs not to be repented of...It is by this word that an individual is renewed or renovated...”

Bro. John Thomas – Elpis Israel, pg.52

49. Look up where else the Greek word for “richly” appears in Scripture. What do you notice – is this something that comes from man or God? What does this reveal to us about the way we go about accomplishing this?

50. What is the difference between “psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs”?

- a. What does this verse reveal to us about the purpose of Spiritual music?
- b. Read Ephesians 5:19. This verse adds another aspect in that Paul writes “ **speaking to yourselves,** ” Paul would have considered that this was an effective way of letting the word of Christ dwell within us. How are you using Spiritual music to assist with this development? Are there any changes that you could make in your life to better achieve this outcome – if so, write a few suggestions down and be prepared to discuss to help others along the same journey.

51. Describe ways in which we can “do all in the name of the Lord Jesus”. Compare with Philippians 4:13 and 1 Corinthians 10:31.

*Paul has used the example of Christ to illustrate to the believers, and to each of us, the pathway to true discipleship. The issue was stated in clear terms in Colossians 2:4-19, the issue was in the savoring of the things of men and not the things of God. The issue was that man’s definition of service is merely external and ineffectual in creating any real, lasting change. So, what is the solution? God has now described this in Colossians 3, change must take place on this inside, it must fuel every aspect of who we are, this is the only way to implement real, lasting change. Turn in your Bibles to Matthew 16:23-24 and consider the words from Christ to Peter.*

52. What are the 3 elements Christ issues to Peter, and the disciples, for becoming a true disciple?
53. Using the box below, identify the common elements from Christ’s words in the gospel of Matthew to those that are then alluded to in Colossians 2:20 – 3:17.



<b>THE PATHWAY TO TRUE DISCIPLESHIP</b>	
<b>MATTHEW 16:23-24</b>	<b>COLOSSIANS 2:20 – 3:17</b>
Criteria 1 from Matt 16:24 •	(Hint – Col 2:20-23) •
Criteria 2 from Matt 16:24 • <b>“take up his cross”</b>	(Hint – Col 3:1-9) •
Criteria 3 from Matt 16:24 •	(Hint – Col 3:10-17) •

#### A Helpful Summary from Bro. John Thomas

“But how can this body of sin be **put off**? The apostle tells us in these words: ye are circumcised by the circumcision of Christ. This is getting a little nearer to the point. But seeing that Christ is in heaven, how is a man upon earth to be circumcised by his circumcision? “In whom, says Paul, ye are circumcised.” It is obvious the believing, repentant sinner, must **get into Christ**, or “**put him on**” so that being “in him,” he may be “complete in him.” If a man **put on** a garment, he is in that article of apparel; and he appears to the eye, not as a natural, but as an artificial man; so, if a believer in the covenant and testimonies of God **put on Christ**, he is **in Christ**; and appears in the eye of God as “covered with the robe of righteousness,” in which he appears not as a natural man, but as Christ himself. Having the same faith and hope as Jesus had, being animated with a like spirit, and clothed with him as with a garment, he becomes another Christ in all but his personality; and hence he is called a Christian.”

*The Mystery of the Covenant of the Holy Land Explained – Pg. 48-49*

## Section 5 – Rewarded by Christ

### Counsel in Living for the Reward (3:18 - 4:18)

Throughout the letter to the Colossians, Paul has spent a considerable amount of time laying out what faith in Christ is supposed to look like – developing Christ in you, ensuring Christ is first place in their lives. Paul, through the Spirit, had shown specifically what Christ had done for them, and the magnitude of the promise was illustrated clearly for them. There has been a focus in this letter on the internal changes required to become a true disciple, a demonstration of what it means to follow Christ and become a new creation. Paul worked in this letter to define the criteria, to identify the characteristics and show how to bind the body together in one functional unit, leading everything to the head, which is Christ.

And yet Paul realizes that the Colossians might still be struggling with what this looks like in everyday life – how do we contextualize this and now put this into action? This can be something we all struggle with. There may be times in our own lives when we feel invigorated by the word of God, we feel enthusiastic towards a week at Bible School, and yet struggle with the next steps.

What Paul will now do in the next section of verses is use 3 examples, pulling from different areas in everyday life, Paul will show where these attributes, these behaviours of Christ come to bear. The 3 different examples he will examine are:

- Wives & Husbands → Marriage
- Children & Parents → Family
- Servants & Masters → Work

How can we live in Christ as shown through these 3 aspects of everyday life...this is what we will look to discover together in this next section.

### Practical Counsel for Everyday Relationships (3:18 – 4:1)

1. Define the following words related to the individuals in each relationship. Beside each definition, write in your own words what this means to you. *Consider writing the definitions in your margins directly.*



WORD	DEFINITION	OUR OWN THOUGHTS
“Submit” – Col 3:18		
“Love” – Col 3:19		
“Bitter” – Col 3:19		
“Obey” – Col 3:20		
“Provoke” – Col 3:20		
“Discouraged” – Col 3:21		
“Eyeservice” – Col 3:21		
“Just” – Col 4:1		

2. Consider the language used throughout the New Testament related to the role of the wife – what is the common element in these verses? (*Circle or highlight the common word*)
  - Ephesians 5:22, 24, 33
  - Colossians 3:18
  - 1 Timothy 2:12
  - Titus 2:5
  - 1 Peter 3:1,5
  
3. In what ways can the wife show submission or subjection? Can you think of 1-2 Scriptural examples of this?
  
4. This is not a new principle being established here, turn in your Bibles to Genesis 3:16. How is this principle shown here in this verse? (Consider the context, the event, the characters)
  - a. What does the word “rule” mean in Gen 3:16?  
 Strong's #4910                      Word: mashal                      Meaning:



*Consider the words of Genesis 3:17 and the accountability of Adam in this event. The principle of hierarchy is established back in the garden of Eden and shown in the words of Romans 5:12 – “wherefore, as by **one man** sin entered into the world...” This is an important principle and one the world often confuses or distorts.*

“The idea of submission carries almost entirely negative overtones in modern culture. The long history of the oppression and abuse of women at the hand of males has deserved this in considerable degrees of course, but it is important not to be swayed into apologising for (or worse, denying) scriptural teaching on this matter. With modern cultural norms pushing down on us it is tempting to assume that submission must be something negative and repressive and therefore to want to ‘explain away’, minimize or sweep these passages under the carpet. But we need to realize what we are doing if we take that step...

We are very grateful to God for positioning the earth the precise distance that it is from the sun (not too close so that we fry, not too far so that we freeze); we are thankful to Him for establishing the physical constants of the universe, such as the gravitational constant...

We admire His skills in these areas, His artistry and power seen in all aspects of creation. We are grateful to Him and don’t debate whether He knew what He was doing or whether He has done the right thing in these matters...Yet when it comes to the submission concept we can be tempted to start doubting. We can begin to second guess Him, to think that He must have been somehow mistaken or that we have now become more enlightened than He. If we are prepared to allow Him to be the Expert of the cosmos...why would we not allow Him to be the Expert of relationships? If He made us and perfectly understands us then why wouldn’t we trust Him to know how relationships stand the best chance of working effectively? His model is the model of male headship, and for this to be even remotely possible the wife has to practice submission.”

Bro. Mark Vincent – For Better, For Worse, pg.56-57

5. Colossians 3:18 ends with the phrase “as it is fit **in the Lord.**” Consider if a marriage union is formed between a believer and an unbeliever – would this phrase and the principle of v18 be easier or harder to achieve?
- a. Consider the challenges the wife may face in obeying the husband in the way Paul meant if this was the case. What are some of the possible challenges that this marriage may face? (Ex. Sunday School, discipline, daily readings, etc.)
6. What do you notice with respect to the order of who comes first in each of the relationships used by Paul in Colossians 3:18 – 4:1?
- a. Why might this be the case?
- b. Calling to mind the words of Colossians 3:1 and the focus on seeking the things which are above, how does Paul help to elevate the minds of the 3 individuals that are identified first in the respective relationships?
7.  If we took the viewpoint of the mind of the flesh, the advice to husbands would be around dominance and power. But that’s not how God designed it at all. Consider the language used in the following verses, what word occurs in each of these verses related to husbands? (*Circle or highlight this repeated word*)
- Colossians 3:19
  - Ephesians 5:25
  - Ephesians 5:28 (*word occurs twice*)
  - Ephesians 5:33
8.  The love of a husband for his wife is to be modelled after what? *In the verses listed, circle the word “as” in your Bibles: Ephesians 5:22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29, 33*
- a. What does this teach us as to how the love of the husband for his wife should be modelled?
- b. In practical terms, how can this be shown? Provide any references that may support your answers.

## 9. Write out Colossians 3:18-19 from the ESV (English Standard Version):

*What becomes clear to us after studying this first relationship is that Godly subjection and self-sacrificing love are the key elements for making two into one flesh.*

As has been noted previously, there are multiple connections between the letter to the Ephesians and the letter to the Colossians. The counsel provided for these everyday relationships is brought out in both letters, although with evident differences. Consider the verses below found in Ephesians 5 (left hand column). In the right column write out the verses from Colossians that match.

<b>EPHESIANS 5</b>	<b>COLOSSIANS 3</b>
<p>21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.</p>	

## 10. What differences do you notice? Why do you think there is a difference between the two letters?

11. The principle of obedience to parents is another important Scriptural truth. What is this relationship meant to teach us? Support your answer with 1-2 references.
  
12. Having already defined the word “obey”, why do you think God only includes 1 piece of instruction to children, that being the importance of listening? Think about what the parent/child relationship points forward to, why might the aspect of listening be so paramount?
  
13. From its definition, the word “children” is not specific to young or little children. Given that this can be applied to many (if not all of us), think of ways this principle of obedience can still be acted out in our lives, whatever your current situation.
  
14. This same principle is brought up back in the Ten Commandments, found in Exodus 20:12. If this was disobeyed, what was the punishment? (*Hint – Exodus 21:17*)
  
15. Ephesians 6:1 adds to this same principle by stating that honouring our parents is the “first commandment with promise”. What does it mean to be “with promise” and why is this called the “first”?
  
16. Taking into account the definitions already completed for “provoke” and “discouraged” in verse 21 – write down ways to avoid these types of interactions. Think about your dealings with young Sunday School students, nieces and nephews, etc.

*There is evident danger in having a child led towards discouragement, or becoming broken hearted. If in our dealings with others, people merely sense frustration (or provocation), instead of feeling instructed, they may feel crushed. They will feel as if they cannot succeed and possibly give up altogether. How impactful then is the **way** in which we deal with others, how careful we should be in the **words** we choose to use.*

*One of the critical elements of verses 20-21 is to understand that we will not be judged on whether or not our parents follow the commandments of God. We will be judged on whether or not **we** follow God's commandments, the scriptural principle of obeying our parents being one clearly outlined in the pages of Scripture.*

17. How do you interpret the phrase in verse 22 concerning servants obeying masters “**according to the flesh**”? Consider the overall message from Paul in this letter.
  
18. There are a number of components for how servants should obey their masters. How would you summarize verse 22?
  
19. What does it mean to give your master “eyeservice”? How might this type of behaviour occur today? Why is this bad in the eyes of God?
  
20. The final advice for servants in verse 22 relates to “fearing God”. Consider how this aspect is used in Proverbs (1:7 & 9:10). How might these verses impact the way we perform our working roles today?
  
21. Think about those who worked in the service of God (ex. Noah, Nehemiah) – in what way did they do it “heartily”, how was this attitude developed? *Put forward 3 examples with detailed explanation.*
  - 
  
  - 
  
  -
  
22. Verse 23 is a repeated phrase taken from verse 17 – why might this phrase be repeated here? What is contained between these verses? Is this significant, why or why not?
  
23. The letter to the Colossians has spoken before about an “inheritance” as we read of again in 3:24. Where was this reference? Why might this language be applicable in the advice here towards servants?
  
24. Masters are told to rule with righteousness and fairness (“just and equal”), can you think of 2 examples in the Bible of where ‘Masters’ exhibited this type of behaviour. What was the situation, how did the result demonstrate this type of character?
  - 
  
  -



25. In what ways can this type of behaviour be shown today – think of aspects in life where a hierarchy is evident (ex. work, school)?
- a. The Greek word for “equal” only occurs in 1 other verse in the New Testament – where is this found?
26. There are many passages that speak to the relationship between servants and masters. Read through the following verses and summarize the main points.
- 1 Timothy 6:1-3 –
  - 1 Peter 2:18-20 –
27. What is the greater lesson being put forward in this relationship? (*Consider 1 Corinthians 7:22-23*)
- a. The importance for masters is placed on being fair or consistent. Have you ever worked for an unfair boss, felt that how you were treated at school or work was inconsistent to those around you? How does the greater type give us confidence in the God we serve?
28. When the comparison was made between the advice given to husbands and wives in Ephesians and Colossians, it was clear that more information was given in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. Comparing Ephesians 6:1-4 with Colossians 3:20-21, again there is more added in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. What do you notice when comparing the advice to servants and masters in these 2 letters? (*Hint: Compare Eph 6:5-9 with Col 3:22-4:1*)
- a. This section related to the servant/master relationship seems to have particular relevance to Colossae. Where was the Ecclesia located within the city? Was there a servant/master relationship in this Ecclesia? If so, who were the characters? (*Provide proof where appropriate*)
- b. Why then might this be an important relationship to spend time on?
- c. What is the lesson for us given that this letter was sent to an Ecclesia and not just to the individuals with which the issue may have resided?

29. Fill in the box below as a summary of the 3 relationships considered by the apostle Paul:

<b>RELATIONSHIP</b>	<b>ROLE 1</b>	<b>ROLE 2</b>
<b>Wife &amp; Husband (3:18-19)</b>	Wife •	Husband •
<b>Child &amp; Parent (3:20-21)</b>	Child •	Father •
<b>Servant &amp; Master (3:22 – 4:1)</b>	Servants •	Master •

While we may see ourselves in 1 specific category of those mentioned in these verses, the Word of God shows that we must properly demonstrate all of these principles in our relationship with Him.

- With respect to the marriage relationship, we have the words of Ephesians 5:27
- With respect to the family relationship, we have the words of Hebrews 12:5
- With respect to the working relationship, we have the words of Colossians 3:24

Any true believer of God will work in their walk to establish these same principles. While we may not see ourselves in each category when reading through the letter to the Colossians, God wants us to see how as the future Bride of Christ, we must be developing aspects of each of these relationships in our lives today.

### Concluding Counsel (4:2 – 4:6)

*Paul begins to draw the letter to a close by drawing the minds of the Colossians to a few helpful reminders by way of concluding counsel. These verses form the basis of what they could do moving forward – taking the next step as they worked to develop the character of Christ.*

30. Summarize in your own words verses 2-6.

31. Define the word “continue” in verse 2:

Strong's #4342

Word: proskartereo

Meaning:

a. Given its meaning, what does the use of this word demonstrate to us about prayer?

b. Provide an example of someone who showed this type of attitude with respect to prayer? Include scriptural proof for your answer.

- c. Verses 2-3 reveal the importance of praying for others, a common element found throughout the New Testament. Consider the verses listed below, why is this such a critical component of prayer?
- Eph 6:18; Phil 1:19; 1 Thess 5:25; 2 Thess 3:1; Heb 13:18

32. “Watch in the same with thanksgiving.” We are told on many occasions to “watch”, and this word is often in the context of the return of Jesus to set up God’s Kingdom. Make a list of some of the things we can be watching (ex. In world events, in Ecclesial life, etc.), providing scriptural references where applicable.

33. The prayers conducted by the Colossians were done in hopes that “God would open unto us a door of utterance” as Paul wrote in Colossians 4:3.

- a. How is the Greek word for “utterance” used elsewhere in Scripture? Think about its usage in the Gospels, what is it related to?
- b. What does this tell us about what Paul is encouraging the Colossians towards? Notice the context of verses 2-3 before this phrase is mentioned.
- c. Can you think of an example of where verse 3 was accomplished? (*Hint: prison & earthquake*) What does this reveal about the power of prayer, about preaching?
- d. How can we take the same encouragement in our lives? Consider in what ways we might struggle to open the door of utterance.



- e. **Bible Marking Exercise:** Put the following cross-references in your margin beside Colossians 4:3 → Eph. 6:19; 1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12

*The phrase “redeeming the time” in verse 5 is taken from the Greek root word “agorazo”, this is in reference to the Agora or the marketplace, a place to buy and sell. The word speaks to the aspect of ‘buying up’ or ‘rescuing from loss’. God is putting forward instructions to the Colossians here related to time. Buy up time as you would a rare commodity, Weymouth translates the phrase as “buy up your opportunities”.*

34. Break down your typical day using the time slots below – account for sleep, school/work, etc.

12-2AM	3-5AM	6-8AM	9-11AM	12-2PM	3-5PM	5-8PM	9-11PM

- a. Where does Spiritual activity fit (ex. Reading, meditation, study, visiting Ecclesial members, etc.)? What are other “things that are above” that can make up more of a contributing factor in our lives?
  - b. Do you believe you are giving adequate time to God? Is it quality time or just time that is remaining? Think of ways you can improve so that time is treated as a rare commodity, bought up in the service of God and the truth? Think about creative ideas to leverage time at school or work towards time given to God.
35. Paul, through the Spirit, now focuses on their speech, instructing them to “be always with grace, seasoned with salt.” How is salt used in the Bible? Write down 2-3 passages to support your answer.
- a. How are we supposed to understand the phrase in Colossians 4:6 with respect to our speech being seasoned with salt?
  - b. What are ways in which you can season your speech with the word of God?
36. Select 3 items from the list of the concluding counsel in verses 2-6 that can be improved upon in your own walk. Write down a plan of improving these aspects as you work to develop Christ in you.

### Farewell and Final Salutations (4:7 – 4:18)

*The epistle now concludes with final words given to specific individuals, serving as a final encouragement to many of the Brothers and Sisters.*

37. The first individual called out by name is Tychicus. Track down the other 4 references to this man in the Bible – where are they found and what else do we learn about him?
38. The language used to describe Tychicus is incredibly similar to that used of Epaphras in Colossians 1:7. Fill in the following box to uncover these shared qualities.



<b>TYCHICUS</b>	<b>SHARED QUALITY</b>	<b>EPAPHRAS</b>
<b>Colossians 4:7</b> ( <i>write out below</i> )	<b>Common Quality #1</b> Greek Word: Definition:	<b>Colossians 1:7</b> ( <i>write out below</i> )
	<b>Common Quality #2</b> Greek Word: Definition:	
	<b>Common Quality #3</b> Greek Word: Definition:	
	<b>Common Quality #4</b> Greek Word: Definition:	

39. Define the word “minister” in Col 4:7.

Strong's #1249

Word: diakonos

Meaning:

a. How is this word used in 1 Timothy 3?



b. What does its usage there reveal about the character of Tychicus?

40. Paul now turns his attention towards adding credibility to another member of this Ecclesia, Onesimus. Where else does Onesimus appear in Scripture – provide the reference.

a. Under what circumstance does this reference occur?

b. Taking into consideration the events surrounding Onesimus, why might Paul have chosen to include him in this letter? Is the way he is recorded here in Colossians interesting? If so, why?

- c. Having drawn special attention to this man, speaking of him specifically in this way to assist in the acceptance of him by the Ecclesia – there is certainly an admonishment for us when someone has gone through a difficulty and is seeking to come back to the Ecclesia. Read through the following passages (Matt 5:22-24; 1 John 2:9-10; 4:20-21) and then put your own thoughts down on how we should receive those who show a spirit of repentance when seeking to return to the Ecclesia.

41. What event had Aristarchus already gone through that we have recorded for us? (*Hint: follow your margin*)
- a. To now be recorded as a “fellow prisoner” in v10 and as a “fellow worker” in Philemon v23 – what lesson can we learn from experiencing trial in our lives, and the resulting attitude coming out of it?
42. Aristarchus, Marcus, and Justus are all referred to as those “who are of the circumcision”. What does this phrase mean?
- a. Why is it significant to include these 3 men in this way? (*Hint: Look at the events in Galatians 2:12*)
43. Who else in the Bible is given the same title of “fellowworkers” as seen in v11? Write out their names below.
-  44. Epaphras is described as “always labouring fervently” so that the Colossians may “stand perfect and complete”. Epaphras was exerting energy on behalf of others – struggling, competing for a prize as the phrase means...that ultimately others would achieve. Conduct your own study on verse 12 and write out a summary of the character of Epaphras. Once that is complete, put down 2 recommendations for how you can become more like Epaphras.
- Summary:
  
  
  - Personal Action Plan:
-  45. Circle the words “you” and “ye” in Colossians 4:12-13. What does this show about where the mind of Epaphras was? In what way can we show a similar attitude in our lives in the truth?

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46. Epaphras is said to have had great “zeal” for the Ecclesial family in Colossae. Look into the use of the word “zeal” in the following passages – Numbers 25:11-13 and John 2:17. What lessons can be learned from its application in a believer? How can we manifest this behaviour in our life today?
47. Nymphas housed an Ecclesia as we see in v15. Who else had an Ecclesia in their own homes? Provide the references used to support.
48. There is specific instruction for the epistle to be “read among you” in v16. This follows the same advice seen in 1 Thess 5:27. Why might this have been the desired medium given by the Apostle Paul? (*Think about the difference between reading a book yourself compared to when someone provides you a synopsis*)
49. What were the Colossians to do with the letter once they had read it?
50. Why might Paul have asked them to “remember my bonds”? Hebrews 13:3 & Matt 25:36 may be helpful here.
51. Having looked into the character of many of the individuals who would have made up the Ecclesia in Colossae, describe what you think a Sunday would have been like at this Ecclesia.
- a. How can you take the strengths of this Ecclesia and its members and apply it into your own Ecclesial/CYC environment?

## Conclusion

We study the word of God so it can change our lives. How is your life going to change as a result of your study of the Epistle to the Colossians? Make a list of spiritual principles you've learned from this study.

