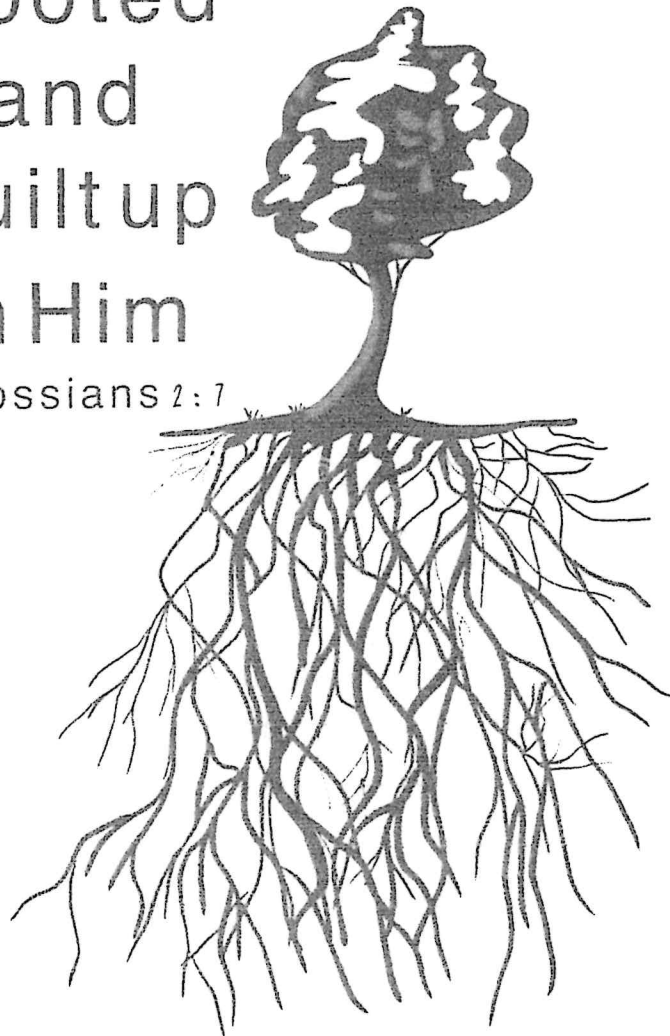


**WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?
A STUDY OF COLOSSIANS**

Rooted
and
built up
in Him

Colossians 2:7



WEDNESDAY EVENINGS 7:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82965576917>

COLOSSIANS

Part 1 - Thanksgiving

We need to talk:

- 1) If Paul were to write a letter to your congregation, what would be its tone?
- 2) Who is Jesus?
 - show me your Jesus, I'll tell you your denomination
- 3) For what are you most thankful? Thankful to whom?

I) What's happening in Colossae

A) Background info on Colossae

- 1) Dates back (possibly) to the Hittite period of 1700's BC
- 2) By the time of the Persian Empire it was a wealthy and influential city
- 3) Located in the Lycus valley in Asia Minor (Anatolia) near Ephesus and Laodicea
- 4) By Paul's day it had dwindled to a relatively minor city (about 10-25,000 persons)
- 5) Known for its woolen industry - *Colossinus* is Greek for "dyed wool"
- 6) Also known for a cult of angel worship in the 1st Century AD
- 7) City was destroyed in the 4th Crusade (1192 AD) and never rebuilt
- 8) Epaphras and Philemon are reported to come from Colossae (1st & 2nd bishops)
- 9) Many different Gospels were circulating at this time (60-65 AD)

B) Greetings from Paul (1:1-2)

- 1) What do you know about Paul (aka Saul of Tarsus)?
- 2) How does he describe himself in this salutation?
- 3) What's the difference between Christ Jesus and Jesus Christ? (Word order matters)
- 4) What is an apostle?
- 5) How did Paul become one?
- 6) Who is with Paul as he writes this?
- 7) What are some other ways "holy and faithful" might be expressed?

C) Thanksgivings (1:3-14)

- 1) What is Paul thankful for?
- 2) How does he know about this?
- 3) Where do expressions of faith and love come from?
- 4) What has been happening to the gospel throughout the known world?
- 5) What might still be lacking in Colossae?

6) What does “a life worthy of the Lord” look like?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

7) What is “the inheritance of the saints”?

8) What does Paul mean by “the dominion of darkness”?

- how is a dominion different from a kingdom?

9) What does it mean to be redeemed?

GOYB (Get off your butt) exercises for this week

1) Send a thank you card / note / email to someone

2) Pray for our leaders and our nation (kingdom)

3) Bear fruit - do something in keeping with the faith into which you were called

Next week: Colossians 1:15-2:5

How do we “see” Christ?

Paul’s labors for the church

COLOSSIANS 2

How we view things

We need to talk:

- 1) How do eyeglasses work?
- 2) What is the “lens” through which we view Christ?
- 3) What is “onboarding”? Why is it important to onboard Christians?

II) Christ's person and work & Paul's person and work

A) The “Christ hymn” (1:15-20)

- 1) In what way(s) is this hymn-like? How is it not?
- 2) What does it mean to be “the image of God”?
- 3) What truth(s) do we learn about Jesus in 15-17, 19?
- 4) How is Christ *the head of the Church* (18)?
- 5) Does this understanding of Christ and church affect church governance?
- 6) Why is it important that Christ is *firstborn* from the dead? (18)
- 7) How does this speak to our inheritance as children of faith?
- 8) What is reconciliation (20)?
- 9) What are some other ways of describing this reconciliation?

B) A cautionary note on reconciliation (21-23)

- 1) What had previously separated the Colossians from God?
- 2) What effect did this reconciliation have on the Colossians? On us?
- 3) “If, then, goto” - What does Paul caution the Colossians against?

C) Servant of the Gospel (1:24-2:5)

- 1) What brings great joy, even if it comes with / through suffering?
- 2) What are some of the ways Paul has had to suffer for the Gospel?
- 3) What are some ways we might be called on to “suffer” for the Gospel?
- 4) What does it mean to “fill up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions”?
- 5) What is Paul's commission according to these verses?
- 6) What is the “end game” of Paul's labors?
- 7) What is making this struggle harder for Paul in 2:1?

- 8) How does reconciliation (above) extend to more than just us and God?
- 9) How are the Colossians being “deluded”?

GOYB Exercises for this week:

- 1) What are your duties and responsibilities as a Christian and as a member of a congregation?
 - Make a “duty roster” by activities, frequency, or any metric that works for you
- 2) How have (or are) you suffering? How can this be the work of transformation into the Image of Christ?
 - pick one (and only one) way in which you suffer
 - What is it’s cause? (Old age, consequence of sin / behavior, faithfulness to the Gospel?)
 - Read Romans 5:3-5
 - How might God be using this suffering in a *transformative* way?
 - Rather than pray that “this cup may pass from me”, pray that you may rejoice in this suffering and that it may be a way of becoming more and more like Jesus.
- 3) Draw a picture of your congregation with Christ as the head - what does the body look like?

COLOSSIANS 3
Rooted in our Identity
Colossians 2:6-23

We need to talk:

- 1) What does it mean to “put down roots”?
- 2) What do roots do for a tree? For life?
- 3) What is *legalism*? How is it practiced today?

III) Growing deep

A) Rooted in Christ (2:6-8)

- 1) What does it mean to say “Jesus is Lord”?
- 2) How do we remain rooted in Christ?
- 3) What is the benefit of “sinking our roots” into Him?
- 4) How can a philosophy take one captive?
- 5) What competing philosophies / worldviews vie for the Christian’s attention?
- 6) Are human traditions bad?
- 7) What are “the basic principles of this world”?

B) I’m a new man / woman (2:9-15)

- 1) What does verse 9 tell us about the person and nature of Jesus?
- 2) What is *fulness* of life in Christ? (See also John 10:10)
- 3) How does Paul describe our new identity in Christ?
- 4) What would happen on the 8th day of life for a Jewish boy?
- 5) Does verse 12 remind you of something else Paul wrote? (See Romans 6:4)
- 6) Since God “cancelled the written code” do we still need God’s law?
- 7) How does the cross “disarm” the powers and authorities of this world?

C) Slaves to the Law (2:16-19)

- 1) What were the Colossians being judged by?
- 2) What are shadows?
- 3) Reread verse 18. How was this done in Colossae and how is it done now?
- 4) What is asceticism?
- 5) How do these things disconnect us from the head? (1:18)
- 6) So are special Sabbaths or self-denial practices bad things?
- 7) How is the body image of verse 19 connected to the tree image of verse 7?

D) Freedom in Christ (2:20-23)

- 1) When did we die “to the basic principles of this world”?
- 2) Why is it so easy to slip back into them?
- 3) What were some of the “taboos” some tried to impose on the Colossians?
- 4) Should the Church of regulations or a “conduct code” for its members?
- 5) Why would “following the rules” have the appearance of wisdom?
- 6) What are “Christian disciplines”?
- 7) Do they have any value in “restraining sensual indulgence”?

GOYB Exercises:

- 1) “Touch grass”, “Take a hike”, “Go play outside”
 - * Spend 30-60 minutes this week out in nature
 - * Look at the variety of plants God has made
 - * Think about how we only see 2/3 of a tree (1/3 of tree’s mass is root)
 - * What does Creation teach us about where / how we “put down roots”?
- 2) Google “Slavery 2025”
 - * Where in the world is slavery still practiced?
 - * How is slavery still a aprt of 21st century America? (We just don’t call it that)
 - * How can you exercise your freedom as a Christian?
- 3) “Trad wives” / “Trad dads”
 - * What’s behind this new (really not so new) cultural movement?
 - * Make a list of traditions you follow - try to come up with at least a dozen
 - * Which of these are helpful? Which might need alteration? Which need to be dropped?
 - * What new tradition / habit could you start to help stay rooted n Christ?

Next week: Living a Holy Life (3:1-17)

COLOSSIANS 4

Out with the old, in with the new
3:1-17

Let's Talk about this:

1) If you could change any 2 things about yourself what would they be:

To be less _____ and more _____

To be less _____ and more _____

2) What is stopping you from making said changes?

3) What is "Holiness"?

IV) Rules for holy living

A) The power to change (3:1-4)

- 1) What difference does being "raised with Christ" make in daily living?
- 2) What is such a raised person going to do?
- 3) What does it mean to be "at the right hand of God"?
- 4) What are "the things that are above"?
- 5) How did we "die"?
- 6) How do verses 3-4 take us back to 2:12-13 (or Romans 6:4)
- 7) When will verse 4 happen?

B) Out with the old (3:5-11)

- 1) What gets better with age? What gets worse?
- 2) How do we put to death what is earthly in us while still living?
- 3) Why is covetousness a form of idolatry? Doesn't it have it's own Commandment?
- 4) What are some of the things that need to go to the spiritual "trash heap"?
- 5) What things didn't make Paul's list but should have?
- 6) How does Paul paint a picture of what the Church is to be in verses 10 & 11?
- 7) What does it mean to "walk" in these sins and what is the result (vs. 6)?

C) In with the new (3:12-17)

- 1) How does verse 12 show the *how* of verse 11?
- 2) Is Paul encouraging Christians to "play dress-up"?

3) How does “putting on Christ” go more than skin deep?

4) What are some of the characteristics of someone who is in Christ?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5) How does Christ’s Word “dwell” in us?

6) How is this indwelling Word expressed?

7) What are to make of Paul’s “Whatever” in verse 17?

GOYB Exercises for the week:

1) Put your favorite sin to death

- * Look again at Paul’s list in 3:5, 8-9 Which of these do you struggle most with?
- * Write it 7 times on a piece of paper (or a banana peel works too)
- * Find a spot outside and bury the paper (hold a mock funeral for it if you wish)
- * DO NOT resurrect it on the 3rd day - let it die and rot in the ground

2) Take on a new hobby - Christian Virtues

- * Hobbies take time, effort, attention, and often financial investment
- * Which of Paul’s “new life” characteristics could you devote these resources to?
- * Pick one and focus on spending time this week being patient, humble, forgiving, etc.
- * Put a post it note on your bathroom mirror to remind to be _____ today

3) Singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs

- * Take a perusal through your hymnal (borrow one from church if you don’t have one)
- * Find A favorite hymn (I know, I know, it’s hard to pick only one)
- * Look at the bottom right corner of the page - what’s there?
- * Look up those verses and see how they were used or apply to the hymn selected
- * What other *motifs* or Scriptures might also be part of this particular hymn

Bonus GOYB exercise: Write a hymn or spiritual song

- * Take the list of virtues or vices from this lesson
- * Pick a melody you know by heart (or an earworm)
- * write a hymn using Colossians 3:xx-xx as your base text

COLOSSIANS 5

It's time to say Good-Bye

3:18-4:18

We should talk:

- 1) What are the qualities of a good wife?
- 2) Why is prayer needed? (Doesn't God know everything anyway?)
- 3) How do you feel about "group projects" and why?

V) Final instructions

A) The stations of life (3:18-4:1)

- 1) What is the biggest problem facing families today?
- 2) How does 3:18-19 echo Ephesians 5:25-33?
- 3) What are wives supposed to *do*?
- 4) What are husbands supposed to *do* and *not do*?
- 5) What does it mean to "obey your parents in everything"?
- 6) Does Paul's guidance for slaves still apply to us today?
- 7) How are masters to treat their slaves?

B) Devote yourself to prayer (4:2-6)

- 1) What does it mean to be devoted to something?
- 2) What / How are the Colossians to pray?
- 3) How are prayer and witness linked?
- 4) Are Christians "wise in that way you act toward outsiders"?
- 5) How are we to make the most of every opportunity?
- 6) What does it mean to have conversation "seasoned with salt"? Salty talk?
- 7) What does this have to do with his earlier instructions on prayer?

C) Everyone here says "Hi" (4:7-18)

- 1) Who are the Colossians who are with Paul?
- 2) Where else do we see Onesimus?
- 3) Who is currently under house arrest along with Paul?
- 4) What is Epaphras busy doing?
- 5) Who do we meet again in verse 14?

6) Where do we find the letter to Laodoea in the New Testament?

7) Why does Paul make a point of writing "in my own hand"?

For Further Insight: Read the letter to Philemon

GOYB Exercises:

1) Family Time:

- * Plan a family event / time; even if only two in your family
- * Thanksgiving isn't that far away
- * Use that together time to talk about what it means to be a family?

2) Pray without ceasing:

- * Fill out the chart below
- * Where do you need to grow in your prayer life?
- * Implement a plan for strengthening the weak areas and celebrate the strong ones?

	Agree Strongly	Think So	Really Not Sure
1. Prayer changes things.			
2. My prayers change things.			
3. God hears and answers prayers.			
4. God hears and answers my prayers.			
5. Made-up prayers are more meaningful than ones read from a book.			
6. I put as much into my prayers for others as into those for myself.			
7. Prayer involves watching and listening as much as speaking.			
8. Prayer should involve specific words and thoughts.			
9. Thanks should always be part of prayer—even in crises or tragedies.			
10. Praying with others is as important as praying for others.			
11. It is important to believe strongly when you pray.			
12. I love to pray.			

3) What are two ways you can share your faith this week?
