

COLOSSIANS

Suggested verses to memorize

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. -Col 1:15-17

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. -Col 2:6-7

And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. -Col 2:13-15

In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. -Col 2:11-12

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. -Col 3:1-3

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. -Col 3:5-6

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another -Col 3:12-13

And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. -Col 3:14-15

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. -Col 3:16-17

Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. -Col 4:5-6

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS

The book of Colossians is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to the “saints and faithful brothers in Christ” in Colossae. It is widely believed he wrote this letter from a prison cell in Rome around 60 A.D.

The main reason Paul writes this letter is to warn Christians about falling into the Gnosticism of the day. Gnosticism was a false belief system that became a collection of thought, combining Greek knowledge of philosophy, paganism that was prevalent in their time, and Jewish culture into Christian doctrine. The problem with this chaotic and open-minded mentality was that each of the elements were considered equally important and relevant. The obvious struggle with this is that each of these stand in direct opposition to one another. This confusion threatened to undermine Jesus' authority and supremacy. Paul stood strong for the ONE truth of the gospel which set out to present Christ as Deity, God in the flesh and the ONLY path to forgiveness, eternal life, and peace.

The main emphasis for this letter is to hold up Christ as the supreme authority and for all Christians to find comfort in this fact. This emphasis is perhaps best articulated in 2:10-11, “For in Him all the fullness of the Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority.”

Within the letter Paul writes to the Colossians he details the preeminence of Christ and the inheritance we have when we are baptized into Him, putting to death the old man and putting on the new man. Paul explains the blessings of setting our minds on heavenly goals and cleaning up our behavior. Paul reminds us of our family responsibilities and the importance of doing our best, no matter what we pursue in the Lord. Our speech and conduct are to be used as a tool to make every opportunity for influence powerful and effective.

COLOSSIANS 1

The Preeminence of Christ

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER 1

- I. Christ's Preeminence Declared
 - A. In the Gospel message (1:1-12)
 - B. In the cross (1:13-14)
 - C. In creation (1:15-17)
 - D. In the church (1:18-23)
 - E. In Paul's ministry (1:24-29)

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Explain what Paul is referring to when he says there is a “hope laid up for you.” (v. 5)

What is your understanding of the “Gospel?” (v. 5-6; also compare to 1 Cor 15:1-4)

How does the Gospel bear fruit and grow? (v.6-8)

Read verse 10 and share your thoughts about what it means to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

COLOSSIAN GOSPEL

Finding Obedience in the Epistle of Colossians

1:15-20; 2:6-10

Christ is above all, in Him all things fit together. He is the fullness of God in bodily form and worthy alone to be obeyed

1:21

Colossians were once alienated, hostile in mind, separated from God in sin

1:3-6

The Colossians had heard of Jesus and build a strong foundation of faith when they received the message

2:11-13

They raised from the dead in Christ through spiritual circumcision and baptism in the powerful working of God. Received forgiveness

3:1-17

They “put off” the old man and “put on” the new man. They rid themselves of impurities and chose to embrace holiness and godly behaviors as they represent Christ.

4:2-3

They prayed earnestly for open doors that the gospel might be spread.

CONNECTING DOTS

The Harmonious Teachings of Colossians & Ephesians

Ephesians	Colossians	Topic
1:1-2	1:1-2	Introduction
1:7	1:14, 20	Redemption, forgiveness
1:10	1:20	All-inclusive Christ
1:15-17	1:3-4, 9-10	Intercession for the readers
1:18	1:27	Riches of glorious inheritance
1:21-22	1:16-18	Christ's domain
2:5	2:13	You he made alive
2:12-13	1:21-22	Aliens brought near
2:15	2:14	Abolishing the commandments
3:1	1:24	Paul, the prisoner
3:2-3	1:25-26	Divine mystery made known to Paul
3:7	1:23, 25	Paul, minister of the universal gospel
3:8-9	1:27	Paul to make known the mystery to all
4:1	1:10	Lead a life worthy of your calling
4:2	3:12-13	With all lowliness, meekness, patience forbearing one another
4:15-16	2:19	Christ unites members of the Church
4:22-32	3:5-10, 12	Put off old nature and put on new nature
5:3-6	3:5-9	No immorality among you
5:15	4:5	Walk wisely and make the most of time
5:19-20	3:16-17	Sing songs, hymns, and spiritual songs, giving thanks to God
5:21-6:9	3:18-4:1	Household Duties: husbands, wives, children, parents, slaves, masters
6:18-20	4:2-3	Paul the prisoner exhorts persistence in prayer
6:21-22	4:7-8	Tychicus sent to inform church about Paul and to encourage them

Try to absorb the concept of “preeminence.” Use your own research tools (Google, Bible app, etc. . .) and jot down what this term means and also a quick summary of verses 15-20

Paul says that because the Colossians were hostile in mind, doing evil deeds that they were once alienated from God. How does verse 22-23 provide confidence for them (and us) for eternity?

Share your thoughts about verse 23 with regard to God’s expectations for us.

Both Ephesians and Colossians discuss the great “mystery.” What was it and why would this have meant so much to the people of Colossae? (v. 24-27)

According to verse 29, what gave Paul the strength to keep teaching God’s message of love? How might this apply to you?

COLOSSIANS 2

The Preeminence of Christ Defended

OUTLINE FOR CHAPTER 2

- I. Danger: Christ's Preeminence Defended (2)
 - A. Beware of empty philosophies (2:1-10)
 - B. Beware of religious legalism (2:11-17)
 - C. Beware of man-made discipline and asceticism (2:18-23)

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The fact that Paul is in prison means that he understands the concerns, fears, and anxieties of the Christians in Colossae who may have been discouraged by persecution. How do you think it effected these people, knowing that Paul's mind was centered on their faith development? (v. 1-5)

Verse 6-7 says to continue to walk in Him (Jesus), being firmly rooted in Him. In your mind, what does "walk in Him" really mean?

In the introduction on page 1 of this study guide, a brief synopsis is given of the multiple philosophical influences on the people of Colossae. How does this help you understand his warnings to the church in verse 8?

Explain how verses 9-10 helps a Christian "see God" in the body of Christ.

Share what Paul reveals about these individuals and their special ministries as well . (v. 10-17)

Aristarchus:

Mark:

Justus:

Epaphras:

Luke:

Nympha:

What other church was local to the area of Colossae? (v. 15)

What does verse 16 reveal was in existence that we may not have access to today regarding Paul's writing?

What was Paul's final encouragement to Archippus? (v. 17)

Why do you think Paul had to say that this letter was written "with my own hand?" (v.18)

What was Paul's final request of them? (v.18)

COLOSSIANS 4

Continuing in Steadfastness, Walk in Wisdom

I. Duty: Christ's Preeminence Displayed (4)

- A. In daily work (3:22-4:1)
- B. In Christian example (4:2-6)
- C. In Christian service (4:7-18)

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Masters had a responsibility to take care of those that served under them in a proper way. Why does Paul say, “knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.”? What does he mean to communicate to Masters? (v. 1)

Prayer was to be a huge part of the Christian life. In what ways does Paul encourage prayer in verses 2-4?

Paul wanted Christians to model good Christian behavior to those outside of Christ. In what way did he mention we could do this? (v.5-6)

How does Matthew 12:34-37 help us understand this concept in a deeper way?

List two special men and their special ministry to the Colossians according to Paul. (v. 7-9)

Verses 11-12 speak of a connection between the physical act of circumcision, (historically required by Jewish custom) though it says, “without hands” and the spiritual response To Christ in baptism. Spiritually speaking, what “flesh” must be put away in obedience to Christ? (See also Rom 6:1-4)

What is our situation today, both before and after our submission to Christ in baptism? (v. 12-13)

Before

After

Corresponding to this thought process, how does the content of verses 13-15 help us move away from adherence to the old customs and to move toward a full assurance of Christ? In other words, what did Jesus do for us with regard to the old law?

Twice Paul tells the Colossian Christians, “Don’t let anyone. . .” in verses 16-18. What was he warning them against?

Paul warns them that some ideas that people pursue philosophically may have an “appearance” of value or wisdom but that these things are ultimately empty pursuits. Can you think of some philosophical belief systems today that may “seem” to have some valuable content but fall short of following Christ? What are they and why do they fall short? (v. 20-23)

COLOSSIANS 3

Being Raised with Christ, Put on the New Self

I. Duty: Christ's Preeminence Displayed (3)

- A. In personal purity (3:1-11)
- B. In Christian fellowship (3:12-17)
- C. In the home (3:18-21)
- D. In daily work (3:22-4:1)

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There is an obvious allusion to being raised up in Christ after our immersion (see 2:12) with Him. (v.1) Help explain what is meant by seek those things which are "above." (v. 1-4)

Paul uses stronger language when he says that Christians should "put to death" certain things. Make a quick list of those items and your understanding of what that involves in "putting it to death." (v. 5-9)

Verses 10-11 indicate that our new self is strengthened with a better understanding of who Christ is. How does verse 11 unite us all?

List the admirable qualities a Christian must "put on" as God's chosen ones. (v. 12-15)

Paul challenges the Colossians to be filled with the word of Christ and to share their wisdom with each other with their voices. (v. 16) What were they to sing and with what attitude?

What common approach to life can be taken from verses 17 and 23-24?

According to these two thoughts, in Whom should our desire to be pleasing be focused?

How does this change your motives for working hard?

Verses 18-22 help illustrate God's plan for the family with regard to relationships. Jot down your findings about each.

Wives

Husbands . . .

Children. . .

Fathers . . .

Those who Serve . . .

Masters (actually in 4:1). . .

Based on verse 24-25, what guarantees can we find with regard to both good and evil? (see also 2 Cor 5:10)