



Christ in you... the hope of glory

A study in the book of Colossians

*Gold River Calvary Chapel
Women's Bible Fellowship
Winter 2021*

A note from Anne:

My Dear Sisters of Gold River Calvary Chapel – I am so excited that we are studying this great letter of the Apostle Paul to the church at Colossae – and to us today! There is perhaps no better declaration in scripture of Jesus' deity, supremacy and sufficiency than in this book. What greater need do we have today than to rely on that truth! How differently would we think and act if we truly believed in the absolute sufficiency of Christ? How would we view our past in light of that great truth? Our present? Our unknown future? I look so forward to studying this truth together, as we ask the Holy Spirit to make known to each one of us –

Christ in you, the Hope of Glory.

In Him,

Anne Eowan

INTRODUCTION TO COLOSSIANS

Authorship

The apostle Paul identifies himself as the author of this letter to the “saints in Christ at Colossae” (1:1 and 4:18).

Paul wrote Colossians during his first Roman imprisonment (Col. 4:3, see also Acts 28:30-31). This dates the letter around A.D. 60.

Along with Philemon, Philippians and Ephesians, Colossians is commonly referred to as a “prison epistle.”

Setting

The city of Colossae was about 100 miles east of Ephesus in Asia Minor (see map). During his ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19:10), Paul sent Epaphras to spread the gospel in the Lycus Valley, which included the city of Laodicea. Epaphras evangelized and established the church at Colossae (Col. 1:7). Colossae is never mentioned in the Book of Acts because Paul did not establish the church, nor had he ever been there. He had “heard” of their faith (Col. 1:4, 9), but did not personally know the believers there (Col. 2:1).

Although Colossae was a town of much importance during the Persian Wars, by the time Paul penned this letter, Colossae was a small merchant town. The town was primarily inhabited by Phrygians and Greeks, but there was also a significant number of Jews living there. Thus, the church established there was primarily made up of Gentiles, but it also had Jewish members.

Purpose

Paul's purpose in writing to the Colossians was to correct some heretical teachings that had crept into the Colossian church. Epaphras had visited Paul in Rome during his imprisonment and must have asked for his help to refute this heresy. The letter was carried to the Colossians through Tychicus.

While it is not clearly stated what those teachings were, it appears from Paul's corrections that some of the Jewish members were insisting that observance of the Sabbath, kosher eating, and special festivals were necessary in order to be saved, along with faith in Christ. It also appears that some of the Gentile believers were promoting a form of Gnosticism which claimed that Jesus was a higher being but not God. Gnosticism also taught that the material world was evil and thus promoted ascetism.

Paul refutes those heresies by proving the supremacy of Christ. In fact, Colossians provides one of the Bible's fullest teachings on the deity and supremacy of Christ over all creation, including the invisible realm. In addition to stating who He is, Paul also emphatically states what Jesus has done for His people, rescuing them from the kingdom of darkness through the redemption secured for them on the cross, enabling them to participate with him in his death, resurrection and the fullness of life everlasting.



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BIBLE STUDY AIDS

There are many bible study aids that can help you gain more understanding out of your bible reading.

These study aids include bible dictionaries, different translations, maps, timelines, commentaries and other helps.

Some good “one stop shop” sources for all these different aids are as follows:

Study Bibles. A good study bible is an excellent source of these helps. Study bibles provide context, cross references, maps, and commentary and more to help you understand the passage you are reading.

Some study bibles we would recommend include the Nelson Study Bible and the ESV Study Bible.

Bible Study Websites. These resources are free online and are a “one stop shop” to find dictionaries, commentaries (both audio and text), maps, timelines and other study resources that help put the bible in context. Two we would recommend are as follows:

Blue Letter Bible Website

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/>

On this website, you are able to search and look up a scripture by its chapter and verse, or by using words and phrases. You also can choose which bible translation you want (King James Version, New King James Version, etc)

Once a passage of scripture pops up, you will see “tools” to the left of each verse. Click on the tools bar to see a number of study resources, such as the Hebrew/Greek translation of the verse (“interlinear”), cross references, commentaries, versions of the bible, etc. There are audio commentaries that are listed as well as text commentaries.

The audio commentaries are generally a pastor teaching from that area of scripture or topic. The text commentaries are written commentaries that can be very helpful. A good source for both written and audio commentaries are David Guzik and Chuck Smith.

There is a button for “study” at the top of the home page that provides a drop down menu of a number of resources. There is also an app you can download for free on your phone.

Bible Gateway Website

<https://www.biblegateway.com/>

This website is easy to read and access. On the home page, at the left, there are bible study tools that you can click on. There is an app that you can download to your phone as well.

[Get the Bible Gateway App](#)

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STEP ONE EXAMPLE

Each week in this study, you will be given a section of scripture to read in Step One. You will read scripture with better comprehension and understanding if you make notes about what is being stated in the passage. Some simple steps that will help you do that are below.

1. Try to determine the "who, what, where, when or how" of the passage if possible. Make a note in the right column.
2. Look for words that are repeated often. For example, in Colossians, Paul frequently uses phrases such as "in Christ" or "in him." Highlight or circle those words.
3. Circle any other key words and underline phrases that stick out to you. Use the column to the right to jot down any notes, scripture references, or questions you might have.

Example:

Col 1:1-14 Christian Standard Bible [CSB]	
1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will, and Timothy our brother:	who - Paul what - an apostle of Christ Jesus how - by God's will
2 To the saints in Christ at Colossae, who are faithful brothers and sisters. Grace to you and peace from God our Father.	who - the saints where - at Colossae
3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you,	who - "we" = Paul + Timothy + God when - they pray what - thanks
4 for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints	who - we - Paul + Timothy what - their faith in Christ + their love
5 because of the hope reserved for you in heaven. You have already heard about this hope in the word of truth, the gospel	who - all the saints <u>Faith</u> , <u>hope</u> + <u>love</u>