



IN CHRIST ALONE

A STUDY OF COLOSSIANS

(PART 2)

The church at Colossae was under attack from false teachers who wanted to add to the message of the Gospel that Epaphras had taught and which they had believed (1:3-8). Paul begins by making Christ front and centre, explaining his supremacy over all things (1:15-19). It was Jesus death on the cross that had transformed them (1:21) and they were now citizens of his kingdom, forgiven subjects with a future hope that should shape the rest of their lives (1:12-14). As Paul continues to write, he wants the believers to understand that Christ is all they will ever need.




Colossians 1:24-29

²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, ²⁵ of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶ the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. ²⁷ To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Mystery - that which, being outside the range of unassisted natural apprehension, can be made known only by Divine revelation, and is made known in a manner and at a time appointed by God, and to those only who are illumined by His Spirit. (Vines Dictionary)

Colossians 2:1-3

¹ For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, ² that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge

Read Colossians 1:24-29 Mark "I, me" with a  and "Christ, him" with a  Mark the word "mystery" with a 

V24-26 What was the focus of Paul's ministry?

Jesus sacrifice was complete but its message must be revealed. Paul's ministry "filled up what was lacking" as he suffered for the gospel, declaring the message of the cross and making its implications known.

V26-27 List all you learn about the "mystery". What one phrase sums it up?

V28 How does Paul describe his ministry - who is its focus and what is its goal?

V29 How do Paul and God work together as Paul fulfils his calling?

"When we have begin to grasp the greatness of Christ, and then grasp the closeness of the union we may have with him, he in us and us in hm, we can ask for no more." Dick Lucas

Read Colossians 2:1-3 and mark as above.

V2-3 What did Paul desire for the believers?

V3 What does Paul say is hidden in Christ?

What links riches and treasures and Christ? How does this relate to Colossians 1:28?

Colossians 2:4-7

⁴ I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.


⁶ 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.

“good order” and “firmness” - military terms referring to being in position and standing together in rank.

Colossians 2:8-15

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwell bodily ¹⁰ and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. ¹¹ 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. ¹³ 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 cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Paul has made it clear - when we have Christ there is nothing more we need. Everything is found in him. He now deals with four ways that this truth is challenged.



Read Colossians 2:4-7. Mark “you” with a  and underline the words “no one”

V4 What is Paul’s first warning?

Reflect on the words “delude” and “plausible”

V5 What encourages him about this church?

V6-7 How does he instruct them in order not to be deluded? Note and reflect on the details in v6-7.

Read Colossians 2:8-15. Mark “you” with a  and underline the words “no one”. Mark references to Christ (him) with a 

V8 What is Paul’s second warning to this church?

What is the contrast at the end of v8?

It is believed that false teaching was impacting this church and it seems they were adding to the gospel.

V9-10 What does Paul remind them of and why?

V11-13 How does circumcision represent what is true of us in Christ? Note the words “with him”.

V13-15 What did this accomplish for us?

Why does all of this mean that we need not be taken captive by human wisdom and thinking?

In what ways can we be taken captive by human ideas and the world’s philosophies? How does an understanding of Jesus Christ and our union with him set us free?

Colossians 2:16-17

¹⁶ Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

Colossians 2:18-23

¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, ¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

²⁰ If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations - ²¹ "Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch" ²² (referring to things that all perish as they are used) - according to human precepts and teachings? ²³ These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

Colossians 1:9-10

⁹ And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Use the words of this prayer and personalise it in response to what you have studied.

Read Colossians 2:16-17 Mark Christ with a and underline the words "no one".

What is Paul's third warning to the Colossians?

When are the practices in v16 looking back to?

*How does Christ supersede these observances?
Think about the contrast between a shadow and substance.*

In what ways can this happen today?

Read Colossians 2:18-23. Mark Christ with a and underline the words "no one".

V18 What is Paul's fourth warning in this section?

*Disqualify - 2603 - decide as umpire against you, defraud you of your prize
How is this person described in v18 and 19?*

V23 how does this way of thinking appear good?

What is it powerless to do?

V20 Why does it not make sense to believers?

V19 What is the key to not being disqualified?

Paul has issued 4 warnings :

- Let no one delude you
- Let no one take you captive
- Let no one pass judgement
- Let no one disqualify you

The key is a right understanding of who Christ is and what our union with him means for us.

Read Colossians 1:9-10.

How does Paul's prayer for the Colossians relate to the challenges he knows they will be facing?

In what ways are you aware of these challenges in your own life?

About this study...

This resource has been designed to allow you to jump into God's Word and study it closely. It requires no preparation, and provides you with a structure to study a passage, with questions to help you think and reflect on it.

This study gives you a small insight into the world of inductive Bible study through three key parts:

Observe - What does the text say?

Understand - What does the text mean?

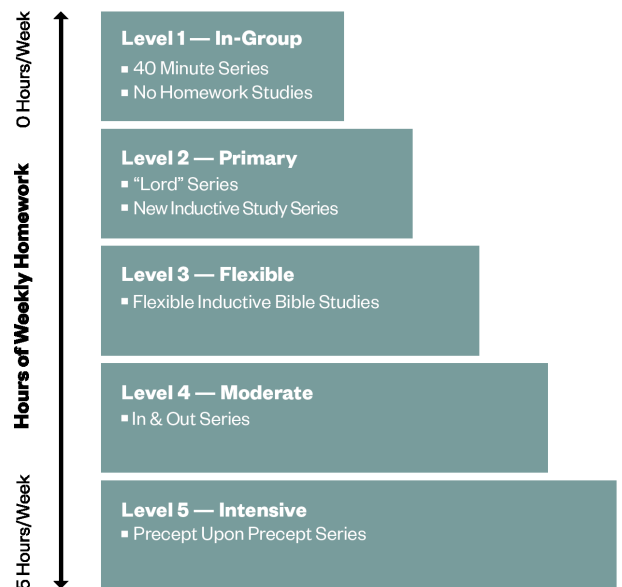
Apply - What does this mean for me?

By using this approach, we can study the Bible in a way that allows us to know God deeply, and to live differently.

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