

Colossians

Lesson 1 - Colossians 1:1-14

Paul has actually never been to Colosse, but his obvious care for them reflects true Christian love. We will see in this letter that the church is facing some problems with false teaching. However, instead of focusing on the problem, Paul spent more time in this letter focusing on the solution which is to know Christ more. Knowing who He is and all He has done for us is the best way to recognize a counterfeit or false teaching, no matter how it is presented to you.

Begin your study with prayer, thanking the Lord for His Word and asking for understanding of it and wisdom in applying it to your life.

Memory Verse – This week’s memory verse:

*“...that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God...”
Colossians 1:10 NKJV*

Read Colossians 1:1- 2.

As we begin this letter, we are given insight into both the sender and those for whom this letter is written.

1. We see in verse 1 that this letter is written by Paul. We know this because in 1st century letters, it was customary in the greeting to give the author’s name first, then the associate or scribe.

a. How is Paul described?

b. Why might this be an important thing to mention at the beginning of the letter?

c. How is Timothy described?

2. Timothy is mentioned by name only once in this letter, but as we read on in Chapter 1, it is clear that Paul has no problem including Timothy as a ministry partner. Timothy is included by Paul when he uses the word “we” in each of the verses below. Read each verse and write what Paul and Timothy, “we”, did together.

a. Colossians 1:3

b. Colossians 1:4

c. Colossian 1:9

3. Paul is certainly the ministry leader, but he doesn't need to draw all the attention to himself. In this letter and many others, he is quick to include those who co-labor with him, as we all should be. We know that Timothy and Paul had a special relationship in the Lord and were a wonderful example of brotherly love in ministry. How do you see the following relationships in the scriptures below?

a. Father - son – 1 Tim 1:2

b. Mentor – Mentee (an example) – 2 Tim 3:10

c. Partner – Rom 16:21

4. What does 1 Corinthians 3:8-9 tell us about the “fellow workers”, like Timothy, in ministry?

5. Now, from Colossians 1:2, who is this letter written to?

a. Who are the *saints*?

b. What does it mean to be a *faithful brethren*?

6. Next we read the greeting to the saints in the second half of verse 2. Write this greeting below.

Note: 12 times Paul uses this in his greeting of a letter – grace to you and peace...
10 times exactly as it is found in Colossians, so this is important to Paul.

a. What is grace?

b. Why do you think peace always follows grace in these greetings?

c. Where is the source of our peace?

Read Colossians 1:3-8.

As you read verses 3-8, notice that this is one long sentence. So that we can fully grasp all that is included in this sentence, we will look at one phrase at a time.

1. Paul starts his address to the people in the church at Colosse by letting them know how much he cares about them. What two things does Paul say they do for them in Colossians 1:3?

- a. To Whom do they give thanks?
- b. When do they pray for them?
- c. What does this mean practically?

2. From verse 4, what two things had Paul heard about the Colossians?

3. We can see in Ephesians 1:15 that Paul was thankful for the same things in the church of Ephesus.

- a. Why would these two observations be so important in the lives of Christians and in the Christian church?
- b. What did Jesus say in John 13:35 about this?

4. In Colossians 1:5 we read that their *faith* and *love* come because of *hope*. In verse 5 we learn two things about this hope. Complete the following phrases from Colossians 1:5 NKJV.

The hope...

- a. ...which is _____
- b. ...of which you _____
- c. What more does 1 Peter 1:3-4 tell you about this hope?

5. Our long sentence continues in Colossians 1:6, talking about the gospel from verse 5.

- a. Who did the gospel come to?

- b. What was the result of the gospel in the Colossians?
 - c. What did they know since they heard the gospel?
6. This is the second time grace is mentioned in just six verses.
- a. From what you know of Paul, why do you think grace might be so important to him?
 - b. Why is grace important to us?
7. What do you find about hope in the following scriptures? Feel free to add more!
- a. Romans 15:4
 - b. Ephesians 2:12
 - c. Hebrews 6:19
 - d. Titus 3:7
8. Knowing that Paul had not visited Colosse, we find in Colossians 1:7-8 who it was that brought the gospel to them.
- a. Who brought the truth to the Colossians?
 - b. How is he described?
 - c. What did he tell Paul and Timothy about the Colossians?

Read Colossians 1:9-12.

Take time to thoughtfully read the prayer in these verses before you begin to answer the questions.

For this reason... When Paul and Timothy heard about the Colossians, of their faith in Christ, their love for the brethren, and their hope (Colossians 1:4-5), they did *not cease to pray* for them!

We find in verses 9-12 a beautiful prayer, one we can pray for others and would love to have someone pray for us!! To get a deeper understanding of all that is in this prayer, we will dig into each verse.

1. We can break Colossians 1:9 into two parts.

a. What do they pray for the Colossians to be filled with in Colossians 1:9?

b. How do they pray they will be filled? (*Hint: In all...*)

c. What is the difference between *knowledge* and *wisdom*?

d. Why is *spiritual understanding* necessary?

2. The prayer continues in Colossians 1:10 by giving four specific things that should come from the *knowledge* in *wisdom* and *spiritual understanding* of verse 9. We have started each one off to help you list all four.

a. *that you may...*

b. *fully...*

c. *being...*

d. *and...*

Note: The word *pleasing* here can be described as preferring the will of another before our own.

3. Verse 10 just gave us a good picture of what it means to *walk worthy*. What more do you find in the following scriptures?

a. Ephesians 4:1

b. Philippians 1:27

c. Now write how you would describe walking worthy to a new Christian.

4. This prayer continues in Colossians 1:11. Complete this verse by filling in the blanks from NKJV.

...strengthened with _____, according to _____
_____, for all _____ and _____ with _____;

a. How does He strengthen us according to Ephesians 3:16?

b. Define patience.

c. What is longsuffering?

d. How does James 1:2-4 apply here?

5. In Colossians 1:12, our prayer continues with *giving thanks*...

a. To whom are they *giving thanks*?

b. For what are they *giving thanks*?

c. What does 1 Peter 1:4 tell you about the *inheritance of the saints*?

6. As you read the next two verses, Colossians 1:13-14, take time to truly consider all that is revealed of what the Father has done for you.

- a. Where did He deliver us from?
- b. Where did He convey us to?
- c. How is Jesus described in verse 13?
- d. What two things do we have in Christ according to verse 14?
- e. In your own life, what do these two things mean to you?

In closing...

1. We have read about what Paul and Timothy were thankful for in this lesson. Now take time to consider what you want to thank the Lord for today, then take the time to write a prayer of thanks to Him below.

2. In this lesson we have seen Paul's prayers for the Colossians, praying without ceasing. Maybe this lesson brought someone to your mind who needs prayer. Stop now and take time to pray for them.

Memory Verse

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