

Colossians

Lesson 2 - Colossians 1:15-29

The section of Colossians Chapter 1 that we will look at this week gives us a clear picture of who Jesus is and what He has done for us. Whatever the error being taught, the answer is knowing Jesus. Paul wastes no time in giving the Colossians, and all who read this letter, this very important teaching on Christ. Whether this lesson is a reminder or a revelation, take these truths to heart.

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:

*“To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”
Colossians 1:27 NKJV*

Read Colossians 1:15-18.

1. In Colossians 1:15 we are given two descriptions of Jesus. Let’s consider the first one here:
“He is the image of the invisible God.”

The word translated *image* (the ancient Greek word *eikon*) expressed two ideas.

Likeness, as in the image on a coin or the reflection in a mirror.

Manifestation, with the sense that God is fully revealed in Jesus. (David Guzik)

- a. What do you find in the following scriptures that applies to this truth?

1. 2 Corinthians 4:4

2. Philippians 2:6

3. Hebrews 1:3

4. And in Colossians 1:19...

b. Consider Phillip's question in John 14:8-9, then write the truth in the answer Jesus gave him below.

2. Now, again from Colossians 1:15, consider the second description of Jesus:
“...*the firstborn over all creation.*”

Firstborn refers to priority and supremacy.

Priority, as in being first before all created beings.

Supremacy, as in rank, similar to being *head* over the church in verse 18.

a. What does John 1:1 have to say about the *priority*?

b. What more do you find about His *supremacy* in John 1:14?

3. Colossians 1:16-18 adds to the truth of Jesus being, “...*the firstborn over all creation.*” Read these three verses in your Bible and underline the words “*all things*”.

a. How many times did you find it?

b. Looking at the description in Colossians 1:16 of *all things*, what do you see?

4. Notice in Colossians 1:16-17 it says, *by Him... through Him... for Him... and in Him...* What does this tell you?

a. What does John 1:1-3 add to this?

b. Again from Colossians 1:16, why were *all things* created?

c. Considering your previous answer, why were you created? What does this mean to you?

d. As you are thinking about this, write Revelation 4:11 below.

5. What does it mean to you when Paul said that “*in Him all things consist*” in verse 17?

6. Read Colossians 1:18 again.

a. Complete the last phrase below from NKJV:

“...*that in all things* _____.”

b. Define preeminence.

Read Colossians 1:19-23.

The previous verses described Jesus, but now Paul describes what Jesus has done for us. Let these verses be a reminder and a chance to take time to understand more of the work of the cross.

1. From Colossians 1:20, define the word *reconcile*.

a. What is the reconciliation described in this verse?

b. How is this reconciliation accomplished?

The blood of the cross speaks to us of the real, physical death of Jesus Christ in our place, on our behalf, before God. *That literal death in our place, and the literal judgment He bore on our behalf, is what saves us.* (David Guzik)

2. Colossians 1:21-22 describes the reconciliation even further by describing the place we were and the place we are now in Christ. Complete the three phrases below from these verses.

a. And you, who once were _____

b. yet now, He has _____

c. to present you _____

3. Consider that last phrase. This is how God sees you because Jesus died for you. How does this make you feel?

4. We could not reconcile ourselves, only Jesus could, but the last verse in this section reminds us what we do need to do once we have been reconciled through Christ.

Below, list the things we must do according to Colossians 1:23. (*You may find 3 or 4.*)

...if indeed you...

1.

2.

3.

Read Colossians 1:24-29.

In the last six verses of Chapter 1 we read of Paul's ministry and a mystery revealed.

1. As you read Colossians 1:24, keep in mind that Paul is writing from a Roman prison as he says, "*I now rejoice in my sufferings for you...*"

a. How does someone rejoice in their suffering?

b. What do the following scriptures have to add to what Paul said here?

1. Matthew 5:10-12

2. Acts 5:41

3. Acts 9:16

4. Romans 8:18

5. Philippians 3:10

2. As we read on in Colossians 1:24, the meaning can be a little confusing, so let's look closer. Consider the translations and quotes below, then write your thoughts on the meaning of Paul's words.

Colossians 1:24 NLT: *I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for his body, the church.*

Chuck Smith: "...Paul certainly did not mean that in his suffering there was any atoning effect for the church. ...Through his suffering Paul was actually suffering the reproach of man against Jesus. Paul recognized the suffering he experienced wasn't toward him as a person, but it was toward Jesus Christ, directed at Paul because Christ was dwelling in him."

W. L. Lane: "The term 'afflictions of Christ' is never associated with the redemptive suffering of Jesus upon the cross. It speaks, rather, of those ministerial sufferings which Paul bears because he represents Jesus Christ."

Your thoughts:

3. For whom did Paul say he suffered in the last phrase of Colossians 1:24?

4. From Colossians 1:25-26, what do you see about how and why Paul became a minister?

5. The *mystery* is revealed in verse 27.

a. What is this mystery?

b. Why was this a mystery before and why is it so important to us?

6. In Colossians 1:28, Paul explains what he and those who serve with him do in this ministry. He begins by saying what they do: preach, warn, teach.

a. Preach – Who does Paul preach and why is this so important to the Christian *church*?

b. Warning – What previous warning do you find in Colossians 1:23?

c. Teaching – How does Paul teach and what is his source?

7. The last phrase of Colossians 1:28 states the goal of his ministry.

a. Complete this last phrase below:

“...that we may _____.

b. Find a Biblical definition for *perfect* and write it below.

c. How is it possible for us to be made *perfect*?

8. As a reminder that none of us have the power to do any of this on our own, what does Colossians 1:29 say about Paul’s *labor* in ministry?

In closing...

1. Thinking back over this lesson, what did Paul want to make sure the Colossians knew about who Christ is?

2. How does knowing this truth help us to avoid being deceived by false teachers?

3. It is so important that we never forget or take for granted what Christ has done for us!! Write what Paul described of the work of Christ in this section.

4. Take time to write a prayer of thanksgiving for all the Christ did for you on the cross.

Memory Verse

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