

A workbook aid for studying

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE  
**COLOSSIANS**

Prepared by:  
William J. Stewart (thestewarts@canada.com)

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# PREFACE

This study book is intended to aid a Bible class in the study of Paul's epistle to the Colossians. The material herein will not take the student on a verse-by-verse analysis of the text, but is intended to bring attention to significant portions of the text. Rather than providing textual insight from the writer, the booklet has been designed with questions to provoke thought and further study on the student's part, so that principles and lessons applicable for the Christian's life can be learned.

The usefulness of the material, and the success of the Bible class is primarily dependent upon the preparation which is given by each participant. Verse references from Colossians are provided with each question. These are given as a starting point for answering the questions. Seldom will a question be fully answered and all the relevant points of a discussion exhausted by the given verses. Students are encouraged to look beyond the designated texts for related passages which will help to answer questions and reveal the lessons to be learned from the inspired record. Some questions given may require diligent investigation on the student's part to completely answer.

It is my hope that the questions provided will touch on all the important lessons which can be gleaned by the child of God today from these books. However, the class should not be limited to these questions. Perhaps segments of text which the given questions do not directly deal with, or detailed points which are found in the text will provoke questions on the student's part. Such questions are welcomed and encouraged. Though the intent of this class material is to benefit us for Christian living today, the class should also be conducted in such a manner that we also come to a better appreciation of the events and customs which are found in the times of old.

May this workbook be used to the glory of God and the strengthening of saints.

William J. Stewart  
thestewarts@canada.com  
www.lookinguntojesus.net

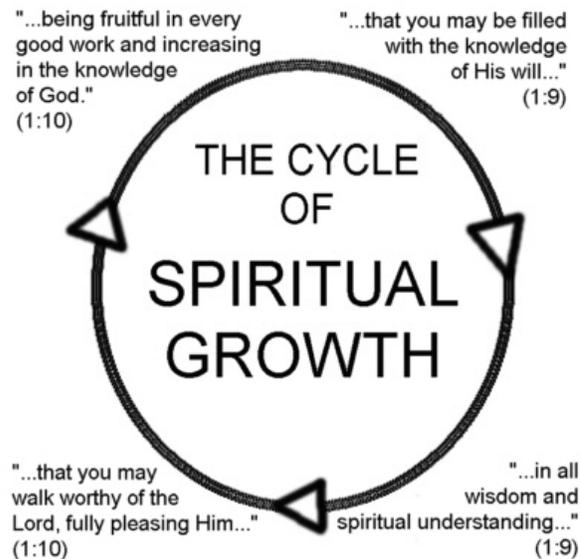
# The Faith Of The Colossians

## COLOSSIANS 1:1-12

"We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints..." (1:3-4)

1. What do the words "...by the will of God..." indicate about Paul's apostleship? Why would he be careful to mention this? (1:1)
  
2. Are we to understand from the phraseology used by the apostle that he had never been to Colosse? (1:4, 7)
  
3. What good things have come to the apostle's ear about the Colossians? Why are these things found among them? (1:4-5)
  
4. Discuss the power exhibited by the gospel. Who is Epaphras? (1:6-8)
  
5. Comment on the faithfulness of Paul in prayer for the saints. (1:3, 9)
  
6. Define the following words and phrases: (1:9-10)
  - "...filled..."
  - "...wisdom..."
  
  - "...understanding..."
  - "...walk worthy..."
  
  - "...fully pleasing..."
  - "...fruitful..."
  
  - "...good work..."
  - "...knowledge of God..."

7. Having looked at the terms which Paul used in **verses 9-10**, now discuss the nature of the spiritual growth cycle presented by the apostle. **(1:9-10)**



8. What measure of strength can the Christian have to accomplish the things spoken of in **verses 9-10**? Where does this strength originate? **(1:11)**
9. Why use both patience (*Gr. hupomone*) and longsuffering (*Gr. makrothumia*) in the text? What's the difference? How do these qualities fit into the context?
10. How have we been "...qualified...to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."? **(1:12)**

**Lessons and principles:**

[List and discuss what we can learn from this study to better our service before the Lord.]

# The Preeminent Christ

## COLOSSIANS 1:13-1:23

“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.” (1:18)

1. Discuss the Bible’s use of darkness and light. What is the “...*power of darkness*...”? (1:13)
2. What is the “...*kingdom of the Son of His love*...”? What are some important conclusions that we can draw regarding the Christ and His kingdom from this text? (1:13)
3. Define the word “*redemption*”. How is the forgiveness of sins affected? (1:14)
4. Jesus is identified as “...*the image of the invisible God*...” What does this mean? (1:15)
5. Discuss Jesus’ relationship to creation. What is meant by the statement “*firstborn over all creation*”? (1:15-17)
6. Discuss Jesus’ relationship to the church. What is meant by the statement “*firstborn from the dead*”? (1:18)
7. What is the “*fullness*” which is found in Jesus? (1:19)

8. What are the “...*things on earth or things in heaven...*” that are reconciled to God through the blood of Christ? (1:20)
  
9. Discuss the former state of the Colossians (and all men), and the manner of words used to describe them. (1:21)
  
10. Three terms are used to describe the condition which the Christian is to be found in. Define:
  - “...*holy...*”
  - “...*blameless...*”
  
  - “...*above reproach...*”
  
11. What importance does the word “*if*” hold in this context? (1:23)
  
12. Discuss the extent to which the gospel had gone forth at the time of Paul’s writing of this epistle. (1:23)

**Lessons and principles:**

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# Paul's Suffering And Service

## COLOSSIANS 1:24-2:5

"...though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ."  
(2:5)

1. What sufferings did the apostle endure on account of the Colossians? What "...stewardship from God..." did Paul receive regarding the Colossians? (1:24-27)

2. Paul mentions "...what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ..." Did the Christ not suffer enough? What does this text refer to? (1:24)

<b>COLOSSIANS 1:24</b>
"I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and do fill up the things lacking of the tribulations of the Christ in my flesh for his body, which is the assembly." (YLT)
"Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and full up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." (ASV)
"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." (KJV)

3. What is "...the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations..."? (1:26-27)

4. Comment on the use of the phrase "every man". (1:28)

<b>The Christian's Pursuit</b>		
DUTY	AUDIENCE	GOAL
' <i>...we preach, warning...and teaching...</i> '	' <i>...every man... every man...</i> '	' <i>...that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus...</i> '

5. Discuss the word "striving". (1:29)

6. Who is doing the work in Paul, the apostle (ie. "...I also labour, striving...") or God (ie. "...His working which works in me mightily...")? (1:29)

7. Discuss the word “*conflict*”. In what way is Paul engaged in “*a great conflict*” for the Colossians and Laodiceans? (2:1)
8. Discuss each of the things which Paul desired for these brethren (2:2):  
 — “*...that their hearts may be encouraged...*”
- “*...being knit together in love....*”
- “*...attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding...*”
- “*...to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ...*”
9. How can “*...all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge...*” are hidden in God? (2:2-3)
10. What is Paul concerned that some with persuasive words might deceive these brethren about? (2:4)

<p><b>BEWARE...</b></p> <p>- “...lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words.” (2:4)</p> <p>- “...lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit...” (2:8)</p> <p>- “...let no one cheat you of your reward...” (2:18)</p>
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**Lessons and principles:**

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# Receive Christ, Not Substitutes

## COLOSSIANS 2:6-2:23

"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ." (2:8)

1. How had the Colossians "received" Christ? What danger is Paul guarding against in this instruction? (2:6-7)

2. What is "philosophy"? How is "philosophy" a danger to the child of God? (2:8)

### COLOSSIANS 2:8

"...beware lest anyone cheat you..." (NKJV)  
"...beware lest any man spoil you..." (KJV)  
"...take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you..." (ASV)  
"...take care lest there be some one who leads you away as prisoners..." (WEY)  
"...see that no one shall be carrying you away as spoil..." (YLT)

3. What is the significance of each of the following statements in relation to "philosophy"? (2:8)  
— "...empty deceit..."

— "...according to the tradition of men..."

— "...according to the basic principles of the world..."

— "...not according to Christ..."

4. Analyse Paul's statement about Jesus' nature. What does this reveal of Him? (2:9-10)

To help in your inspection of Paul's statement, provide synonyms for each word:

"In" —  
"Him" —  
"dwells" —  
"all" —  
"fullness" —  
"Godhead" —  
"bodily" —

5. What was the significance of circumcision in Old Testament times? What is the New Testament circumcision? How does it compare to that of the Old Testament? **(2:11-13)**
  
6. Who does the work in baptism? What is God's part? What is our part? **(2:12-13)**
  
7. What is the "*handwriting of requirements*" Paul speaks of? Who was it "*contrary*" to? **(2:14)**
  
8. How has Jesus "*disarmed*" (spoiled, KJV) the "*principalities and powers*"? What are they? **(2:15)**
  
9. Why might someone "*...judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths...*"? Why can the child of God not be judged in these things? **(2:16-17)**
  
10. How might someone cheat us of our reward? Discuss the practices and philosophies which these follow. Why are these things wrong? **(2:18-23)**

### **Lessons and principles:**

[List and discuss what we can learn from this study to better our service before the Lord.]

# Put Off The Old Man...Put On The New Man

## COLOSSIANS 3:1-3:17

“Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to Him who created him...” (3:9-10)

1. When were we “...raised with Christ...”? How, and to where was He raised? How, and to where were we raised? (3:1-2)
2. How have we “died”? What does it mean, “...your life is hidden with Christ...”? What hope do we have because of this? (3:3-4)
3. Discuss the things which the Christian is commanded to put off:
  - “...fornication...”
  - “...uncleanness...”
  - “...passion...”
  - “...evil desire...”
  - “...covetousness...”
  - “...anger...”
  - “...wrath...”
  - “...malice...”
  - “...blasphemy...”
  - “...filthy language...”
  - “...do not lie...”
4. What is special about the “new man” we are to put on? (3:10-11)
5. Discuss the description Paul uses for the child of God (3:12).

6. Discuss the things a Christian is commanded to put on:  
—“...*tender mercies*...” —“...*kindness*...”  
  
—“...*humility*...” —“...*meekness*...”  
  
—“...*longsuffering*...” —“...*bearing with one another*...”  
  
—“...*forgiving one another*...” —“...*love*...”
7. What is the “*peace of God*” spoken of in the context? How shall it “*rule in your hearts*”?  
(3:15)
8. Break down Paul’s statement in **verse 16**. What lessons are there for us?
9. Discuss the scope of Paul’s command in **verse 17**.

### **Lessons and principles:**

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# Christian Character At Home, Work And In Society

## COLOSSIANS 3:18-4:6

“...Wives...Husbands...Children...Fathers...Bondservants...Masters...”  
(3:18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 4:1)

1. What does it mean to “*submit*”? Why specify “*your own husband*” in the context? (3:18)
2. How is a husband to love his wife? Discuss the phrase, “*do not be bitter...*” (3:19)
3. To what degree ought children obey their parents? Why? (3:20)
4. How might a father “*provoke*” his children, and thus “*discourage*” them? (3:21)
5. Discuss the duties of a bondservant to his master:  
—“*...obey in all things...*” —“*...not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers...*”  
  
—“*...in sincerity of heart, fearing God.*”
6. Is this command of any value to those living in a society devoid of slavery? (3:22-23)
7. How does a slave’s service to his master relate to his service to God? (3:23-25)

8. How is a master to treat his bondservants? Why? **(4:1)**
  
9. What are some of the things that Christians ought to pray for? Discuss the Christians attitude toward and in prayer. **(4:2-4)**
  
10. What is the “*open door*” Paul desired? How might God open doors for us? **(4:3-4)**
  
11. How does one “*redeem the time*”? How specifically do we do so with regard to those who are outside? **(4:5)**
  
12. Discuss Paul’s description of the Christian’s speech **(4:6)**.

**Lessons and principles:**

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# Closing Greetings

## COLOSSIANS 4:7-4:18

"This salutation by my own hand – Paul. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. Amen." (4:18)

1. Who is "*Tychucus*"? What function did he serve for the apostle Paul? (4:7-8)
2. Who is "*Onesimus*"? How is it that Onesimus was "*one of you*"? (4:9)
3. What do we know of the following individuals:
  - Aristarchus
  - Mark
  - Jesus (Justus)
  - Luke
  - Demas
  - Nymphas
  - Archippus
4. What relationship did Epaphras share with the Ephesians? Discuss Paul's glowing comments of this man. (4:12-13)
5. The Colossians were to exchange letters with the Laodiceans. What letter written by Paul was at Laodicea? Do we have access to it? (4:16)
6. What is significant about the letter bearing Paul's own hand writing? (4:18)

### **Lessons and principles:**

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## REVIEW

1. Had Paul ever been to Colosse?
2. What is the spiritual growth cycle Paul speaks of to the Colossians?
3. What does it mean, that Jesus is "...the image of the invisible God..."?
4. How is Jesus the "firstborn over all creation"?
5. How far had the gospel reached when Paul wrote this letter?
6. Discuss "...what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ..." (1:24)
7. What dangers is Paul guarding the Colossians against in this letter?
8. Discuss the importance of Paul's statement in 2:9-10.
9. What is the NT circumcision? How does it compare with OT circumcision? How does it differ?
10. Are we subject to the law of Moses? Why or why not?
11. When were we "...raised with Christ..."?
12. What does Paul say about relationships and responsibilities in the family setting?
13. What does Paul say about relationships and responsibilities in a work setting?
14. What does it mean to "redeem the time"?
15. List some of the key verses in the book of Colossians, and briefly describe why they are key.