

INTRODUCTION:**Greater: a 4-week study on the book of Colossians**

- Colossians was written by the Apostle Paul while in Roman prison circa 60-64 AD to the predominantly gentile (non-Jewish) church in Colossae. The church was experiencing pressure to follow the Jewish law as some people were adding extra rules and false teachings to the faith.
- It was written in order to remind the church in Colossae of the true gospel they have heard, of the true Jesus they profess, and who they are to be in light of those truths.

Colossians: Chapter 1

- o Thanksgiving & Prayer (v.1-14)
- o The Supremacy of Jesus (v.15-23)
- o Paul's Labor for the Church (v.24-29)

PAUL'S LABOR FOR THE CHURCH—WHY AND HOW HE LIVES**Colossians 1:24-29**

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- Rejoice in suffering. Why? For the church and to present the word of God in its fullness.
 - Proclaim and teach the truth about Christ. Why? To present everyone mature in Christ.
 - Strenuously contending with the energy of Christ in him. Whose energy? Not his own.

What did Paul present to them as the fullness of God's word?

THANKSGIVING & PRAYER: PAUL SHARES THE TRUTH ABOUT THE GOSPEL**Colossians 1:1-14**

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- Faith and love for God and others comes from hope from having heard the true gospel.
 - The true gospel bears fruit everywhere when it's heard and God's grace is understood.
 - The true gospel has already been shared, and heard, and is:
 - o from the Father, who...
 - o qualifies and rescues us into the kingdom of Jesus. Who qualifies us? God does.
 - o In Jesus, we have redemption—the forgiveness of sin.
 - Paul prays they would be:
 - o filled with knowledge, wisdom and understanding. (v. 9) Why? In order to...
 - o live a life worthy and pleasing to Jesus, bearing fruit in every good work (v. 10)
 - o growing & being strengthened by His power to have endurance and patience, giving joyful thanks. (v. 11-12)

**THE TRUE GOSPEL BEARS FRUIT—THE CHARACTERISTICS
OF LOVE—IN THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO HEAR AND BELIEVE.**

What did Paul present as the truth about Jesus Christ?

THE SUPREMACY OF JESUS: WHO JESUS REALLY IS

Colossians 1:15-23

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- Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God. (v. 15)
 - In him, through him and for him all things have been created and in him all things hold together. (v. 16-17)
 - He is the head of the church, not separate from it. (v. 18)
 - He is the firstborn of the dead, the first to overcome death, so in everything He has supremacy. (v. 18)
 - God's fullness dwells in Jesus, and through Jesus, and it pleases God. (v. 19)
 - God reconciles all things to Himself through Jesus' death and blood shed on the cross. (v. 20)
 - Once alienated and enemies in mind and evil behavior, we are now reconciled and presented holy, without blemish, and free of accusation if we continue in firm and unmoving faith in the gospel. (v. 21-23)
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APPLICATION:

- Who is Jesus to you? Is there a version of Jesus you have created that isn't true?
- What gospel have you heard and which one do you believe?
- How does your life reflect the gospel and the Jesus you believe in?
- What decision can you make today to grow in your faith and life as a result of hearing God's word?

QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

Passages to consider: Colossians 1:1-14 and Colossians 1:15-29

- Share what was significant to you from the sermon.
 - Did you get a chance to read Colossians 1 this week? If so, what stood out to you?
1. What is something that usually inspires you and might even bring a sense of hope and joy—maybe a movie, a place, a song, a work of art, a memory?
 2. Read Colossians 1:15-20. What does it say about who Jesus is and what He has done? A) What picture/image of Jesus does it give? B) How does that fit with how you normally think of Jesus?
 3. How would you explain who Jesus is to someone? *Think that they are truly interested and not opposed to Jesus, but curious.*
 4. Read Colossians 1:21-23. What does this passage say about God? What does it say about those who have faith in Christ? A) What makes this good news? (note: gospel means good news ☺)
 5. What is the hope that Jesus and His good news have given you? A) How do you practice continuing in your faith in the good news of Jesus? B) What can be challenging to continuing well in practicing this faith?
 6. What role does Jesus have in your life in this season? How is He impacting your relationships at home, at work, with strangers?

Passages to prepare for next week: Colossians Chapter 2—Colossians 2:1-12,13-23

This week, read through/listen to:

- o Colossians chapter 2 a couple of times
- o Bonus: Colossians (it is 4 chapters long) once

Ask a couple of questions:

- a) What is the passage saying about God, people, and how the world works?
- b) What questions do I have about/from this passage?
- c) What stands out to me?

Bonus: Use the YouVersion app. Find a reading plan for Colossians. Do it together with your small group, friends, or family.