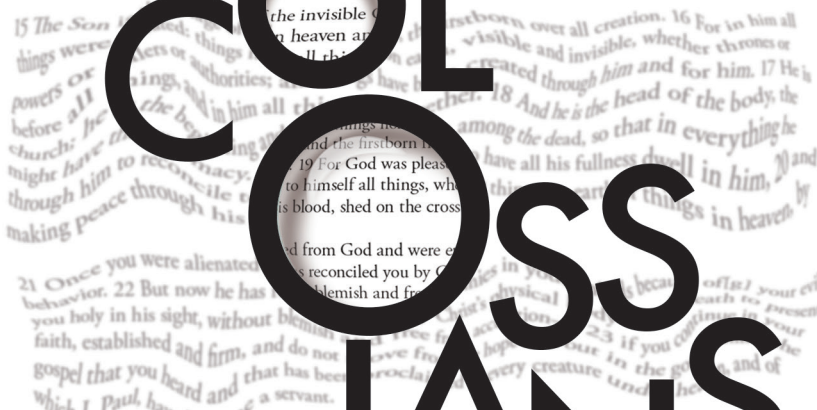



COLLOSSIANS



15 The Son of God, the invisible God, who created all things, whether visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 16 For in him all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is the head of the church, the body of which he is the head, who saves the church with his blood, shed on the cross. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church, which he saves with his blood, shed on the cross, so that in everything he might have the church glorify him, who is the church's head, who has saved the church with his blood, shed on the cross, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without stain or wrinkle or anything of the kind, but holy and blameless. 19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by the blood of his cross. 21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies, because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by his cross, through the blood of his cross, to present you to himself in splendor, without stain or wrinkle or anything of the kind, but holy and blameless. 23 If you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not leave from the hope that you have proclaimed, you will receive the life of God. 24 And of the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed in every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, have become a servant.



TRUTH IN
TRUTH OUT

SMALL GROUP STUDIES

<i>STUDY 1</i>	COLOSSIANS 1:1-14	PG4
<i>STUDY 2</i>	COLOSSIANS 1:15-23	PG7
<i>STUDY 3</i>	COLOSSIANS 1:24-2:5	PG9
<i>STUDY 4</i>	COLOSSIANS 2:6-15	PG11
<i>STUDY 5</i>	COLOSSIANS 2:16-23	PG13

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INTRODUCTORY NOTES

The church at Colossae was not planted by the Apostle Paul but most likely by Epaphras (1:7, 8; 4:12, 13). It is likely that Epaphras was even a native of Colossae as it is read in Col 4:12 "one of you."

Colossians 2:6-8 seem to be the central verses of this letter. They were in danger of being influenced through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than Christ. What the false teaching was is not explicitly pointed out in the letter.

STUDY 1: (COLOSSIANS 1:1-14)

TRUTH IN

"We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people." Colossians 1:3-4.

1. Read Colossians 1:1-14. Paul writes to the people in this city as God's holy people (or saints). On what basis are the people in the church at Colossae called God's Holy People (or saints)?

2. In verses 4 and 5 what is the relationship between faith, love and hope? Where do people today find their hope?

3. Who brought the gospel to the Colossians? What attributes does Paul say this person has? Can you think of someone in whom you have seen these attributes?

4. What does it mean that the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the world (verse 6)?

5. In verse 13-14 say that the Colossian Christians have been "rescued from the dominion of darkness and brought into the kingdom of the son he loves." What does Paul pray for those being brought into the kingdom of the Son? What is Paul's expectation for whom he prays?

GOING DEEPER

6. In verse 7 we are told that Epaphras brought them the gospel. Why do you think Paul includes this in the letter? Why is it important that we know where the gospel, that transforms us, comes from?

7. The Kingdom of God is described in two ways in this passage. What is significant about the descriptions used?

8. From where does the knowledge of God's will come? What is the result of being filled with the knowledge of his will (verses 10-12)? Why is this the result (verse 13)?

TRUTH OUT

9. If Jesus stores up hope for us how should we then live? Why does hope effect the way we live?

10. In what ways do we please God in every way?

11. What things do you compromise on when it comes to pleasing God?

STUDY 2: (COLOSSIANS 1:15-23)

TRUTH IN

He is...

The image of the invisible God.

The firstborn over all creation.

Creator.

Before all things and holds them together.

The head of the church.

The beginning and firstborn among the dead

1. Read Colossians 1:15-23. In what ways is Jesus the image of the invisible God?

2. What has been reconciled to God? Why do all things need reconciling?

3. From this passage is there anything that surprises you about Jesus? How should we treat Jesus knowing these things about him?

4. How does this view of Jesus compare with your own view? How does it compare with the way unbelievers think about Jesus?

GOING DEEPER

5. What do you think it means in verse 19 when it says that "God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him?"

6. Verse 23. What is the hope held out in the gospel?

7. What do you think is the image of God?

TRUTH OUT

8. In what ways do we fail to submit to Jesus?

9. What does it mean that Jesus is Lord of our lives? How is this displayed in your life?

STUDY 3: (COLOSSIANS 1:24-2:5)

TRUTH IN

"There is a wisdom of the head and wisdom of the heart"
-Charles Dickens.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.." Proverbs 1:7.

1. Read Colossians 1:24-2:5. How does Paul describe the church?
2. What do you think it means to present the word of God 'in its fullness?' What is another word used for God's word in this letter?
3. In verse 26 what do we learn about the content of Paul's message?¹
4. What is Paul's goal in preaching the gospel?

¹ Taken from study "Complete Christian" by Tony Payne and Phillip Jensen (Matthias Media)

5. How can we be deceived?

GOING DEEPER

6. What does it mean that Paul filled up in his flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions?

7. Why was Jesus a mystery?

8. What do you think "Christ in you, the hope of glory" means?

TRUTH OUT

9. What fine sounding arguments do we hear today? How are these arguments presented?

10. How can we protect ourselves from being taken in by fine sounding arguments?

11. Do you find it difficult to remain disciplined? Why or why not?

STUDY 4: (COLOSSIANS 2:6-15)

TRUTH IN

*"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."
Colossians 2:6-7.*

1. Read Colossians 2:6-15. What does it mean to receive Christ Jesus as Lord?

2. What do hollow and deceptive philosophies do to us? How do we see evidence that this has happened?

3. Which powers and authorities is Jesus over? How is this possible?

4. What is our condition if we are not in Christ (verse 13)? Why do you think Paul uses this kind of language? What does Paul mean when he says "in the circumcision of your flesh?"

5. To whom do we have a "legal indebtedness" (verse 14)? How is this debt paid?

GOING DEEPER

6. In these verses we see phrases such as "in Christ", "by Christ", "with Christ." What do you think it means to be "in Christ"?

7. What does it mean that all the fullness of the deity lives in bodily form (verse 9)?

8. In these verses what sentences or phrases point to God's grace?

TRUTH OUT

9. Can you think of any deceptive philosophies you face? How would answer these things? How might you avoid becoming captive to them?

10. What things can we do to continue to live our lives in him (verse 6-7)?

11. How should we respond to the message of verses 13-15?

STUDY 5: (COLOSSIANS 2:16-23)

TRUTH IN

1. The false teachers were urging the Colossians to observe certain religious practices as a way of progressing spiritually. Fill in the following table, showing Paul’s answer to these practices and (if you can) listing some 21st-century equivalents.²

	Verses	Paul’s Answer	Modern Equivalents
Circumcision			
Austere regulations (about food, drink etc)			
Religious Festivals			

² Taken from study “Complete Christian” by Tony Payne and Phillip Jensen (Matthias Media)

2. What are the signs of false humility (verse 18 and 23)?

3. From where does false humility and an unspiritual mind stem?

GOING DEEPER

6. Is there a place for visions and spiritual phenomenon today – if so how do we guard against a sense of superiority for those who might have them??

7. We're big on our doctrine/truth/facts and very tentative about 'experiences/feelings', but is there room for both without those experiences taking us away from Christ?

8. In what ways do we still submit to the rules of the world (verses 20-21)?

TRUTH OUT

9. Can you give examples of modern day concerns for people that can lead us astray?

10. In what ways can we avoid false humility?

11. In what ways do we stay connected with Jesus?



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