

“Not Your Average” Bible Study
Being like Jesus
8 Weeks in the Beginning of Colossians

WEEK 5 (April 3-9)

FROM SLAVE TO BROTHER

- **Read Colossians 1:1-2:5 in one sitting.**
- **Reflect on Colossians 1:3-8.**

PRAY THAT THE SPIRIT WOULD HELP YOU GIVE THANKS – EVEN IN TRIALS.

For whom is Paul thankful (Col 1:2-3)? *Who* does Paul thank? *When* is Paul thankful? *Why* is Paul thankful (Col 1:4-5)?

What have the Colossians “heard before” (Col 1:5)? What “has come” to the Colossians (Col 1:6)? What is “bearing fruit and growing”?

What do we learn about the Colossians’ relationship with God at the end of Col 1:6? This tells us what type of people Paul is addressing.

Who ministered to the Colossians and told Paul about them (1:7-8)? Did Paul personally know the Colossians, or does he only know them through “word of mouth”? Before drawing a conclusion, read the book of Philemon (especially Philemon 5 and 19). Remember, Philemon was part of the house church the letter to the Colossians was sent to; he was likely the host.

Paul was not only elderly and imprisoned (for his belief in Christ) when he wrote this letter, he was also in a difficult position: arguing for a close friend’s freedom from indentured slavery. Why was he so bold?

Christ has freed all of us. Paul was fighting a spiritual battle on all fronts, but he gave thanks in everything. Thanksgiving is the cure to bitterness and more often than not, depression. What can you be thankful for today? How could thankfulness change your outlook?

WEEK 6 (April 10-16)

“I HAVE IT UNDER CONTROL.” SURE YOU DO.

- **Read Colossians 1:1-2:5 in one sitting.**
- **Reflect on Colossians 1:9.**

PRAY THAT THE SPIRIT WOULD REVEAL GOD’S WILL FOR YOUR LIFE.

Paul turns his focus from thanksgiving to prayer in Col 1:9. Prayer is a natural result of thanksgiving – thankfulness makes us stop focusing on ourselves, and start focusing on God.

What does Paul ask God for on behalf of the Colossians (1:9)?

How can you be “filled with the knowledge of God’s will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding”? (Read James 1:2-18 and 3:13-18. Why do you need God’s wisdom? What areas of your life currently require godly discernment? What do you need to give up for Christ to be the center of these areas of your life – for Christ to take control?)

WEEK 7 (April 17-23)

SEPARATION ANXIETY: SEPARATED FROM CHRIST, SEPARATED FROM JOY

- **Read Colossians 1:1-14 in one sitting.**
- **Reflect on Colossians 1:10-12.**

PRAY THAT GOD WOULD TEACH YOU TO “WALK” LIKE CHRIST.

What type of “walk” does God require of us (1:10)? What does it mean to “bear fruit”? (Read Gal 5:16-26 and Psa 1.) Colossians 1:11 echoes Gal 5:16-26. Which “fruit” is mentioned in both books? Why does Paul highlight these attributes?

Many times we think of “walking with Christ” as hard work, and it can be. But we are called to walk with Christ “with joy” (1:11). Someone who is joyful is optimistic about life because of what Christ has done for them, despite their circumstances (e.g., Paul in prison). Do you exude joy? Colossians 1:12 tells you how to have joy. Living “with joy” is tied to Christ’s ability to strengthen us “with all power” (Col 1:11). Once again, Christ is the center.

In what activities do you struggle to have joy? Work? Family? Friends? Church? How can more joy be brought to these areas of your life? How can Christ dwell in these activities?

WEEK 8 (April 24-30)

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

- **Read Colossians 1:1-14 in one sitting.**
- **Reflect on Colossians 1:13-14.**

PRAY THAT CHRIST WOULD SHOW YOU WHAT IT MEANS TO BE REDEEMED.

Who is the “he” in 1:13? Is it Jesus? God? Both? Before drawing any conclusions, think about the larger context of Col 1, and what it says about Christ’s relationship to God.

What areas of your life currently belong to the domain of darkness? Are you willing to let Christ’s “light” shine in them? Who do you know that can help you overcome them? Reach out to God, and reach out to them.

Spend the rest of the time you would usually spend studying Colossians to pray about ways God can help you overcome darkness in your life.

*God has shined His “light” in the “domain of darkness.” His light is Christ. He has moved us from where darkness reigns to where He reigns. The shadows will tremble.
Darkness will try to hide.*

*“The image of the invisible God” came to earth so that we can visibly be like Jesus. No matter what pain, turmoil, or darkness you are flailing against, Christ can intervene. Christ can be victor in your life because He is already victorious over the earth, and all powers. May His power reign in your life.
May the Holy Spirit work in you so that you can be like Jesus.*