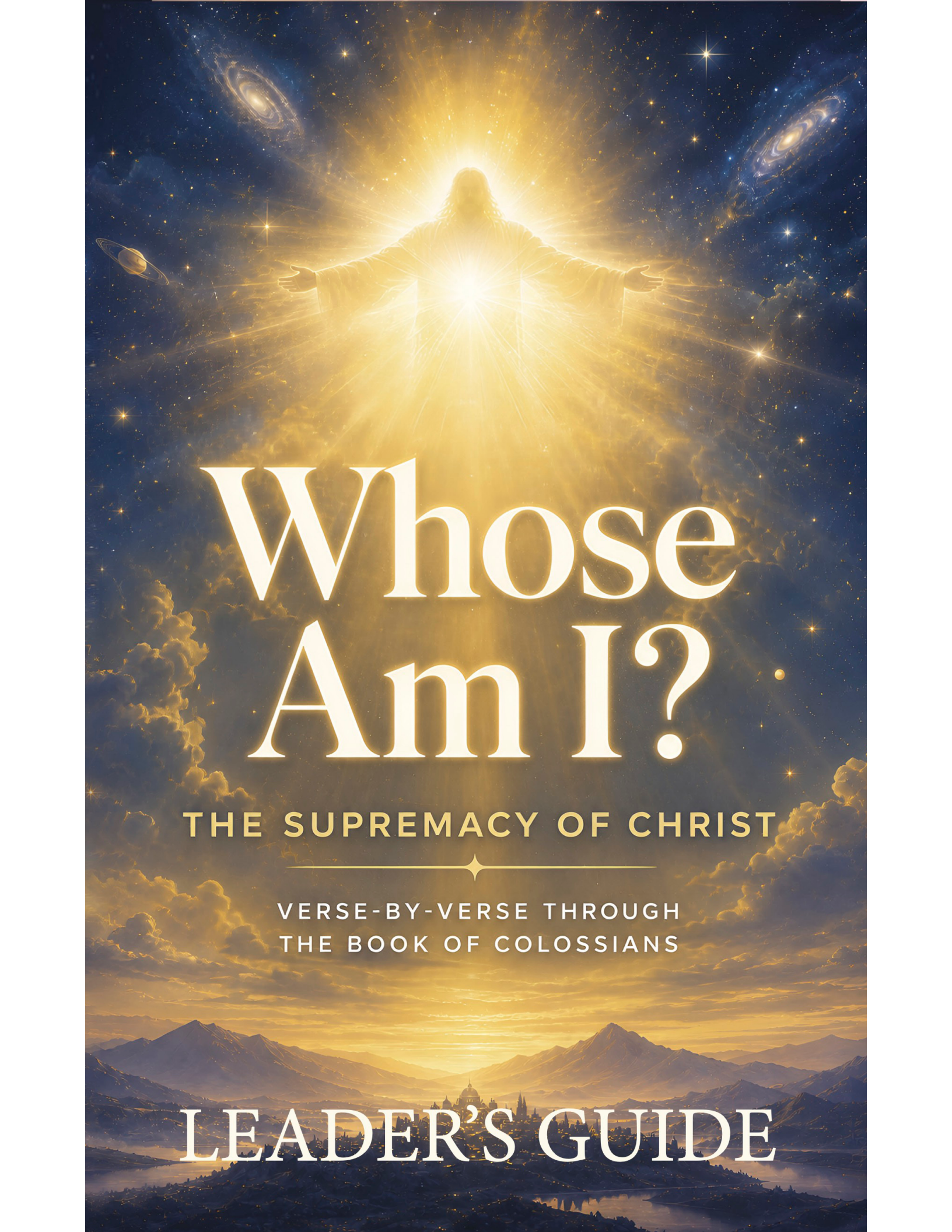




Whose Am I?

THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

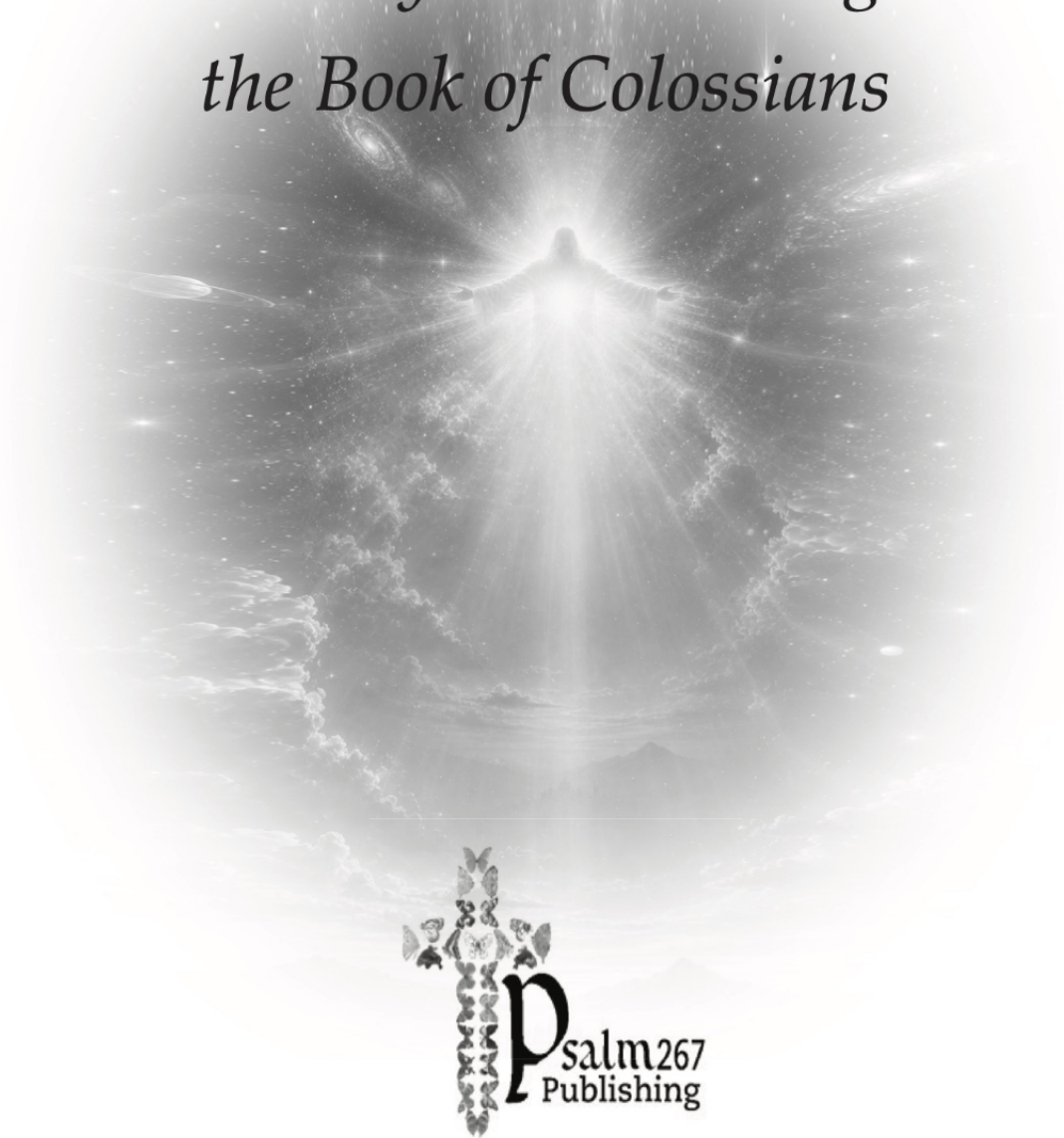
VERSE-BY-VERSE THROUGH
THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

LEADER'S GUIDE

WHOSE AM I?

THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

*Verse-by-Verse Through
the Book of Colossians*



LEADER'S GUIDE

For Teaching the Book of Colossians based on the book

*Whose Am I? The Supremacy of Christ:
Verse-by-Verse Through the Book of Colossians*

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How to Use This Guide

This leader's guide is designed for a five-session study of Colossians — one session for the introduction, and one for each of the four chapters. It is meant to be used alongside the book *Whose Am I? The Supremacy of Christ* by Shari S. Abbott.

Each session includes a:

- Big Idea to keep the group focused
- Key Verse, simple Teaching Points you can present or paraphrase in your own words
- Discussion Questions with suggested answers to guide (not replace) the conversation
- Closing Thought, provided to help wrap up each session in prayer and application

Feel free to adapt the pace: some groups may want to spend two sessions on a longer chapter (such as chapter 3), while others may combine sessions. The goal throughout is simple — to see more clearly who Christ is, what He has done, and whose we are because of Him.

SESSION 1

Introduction: Whose Am I?

Overview of Colossians

“That in all things He might have the preeminence.” — Colossians 1:18

Big Idea: Colossians is a Christ-exalting letter that answers one central question — Whose am I? — by showing that believers belong entirely to Christ: Lord over creation, Head of the church, and life of His people.

Teaching Points

- Colossians is a Christ-exalting letter proclaiming the absolute supremacy and complete sufficiency of Jesus Christ.
- Paul wrote from prison to a church he had likely never visited personally, planted through Epaphras, to confront false teaching that mixed human philosophy, Jewish ritual, mysticism, and asceticism.
- The letter asks one central question — “Whose am I?” — and answers it: believers belong to Christ, Lord over creation, Head of the church, and life of His people.
- Colossians divides into two halves: chapters 1–2 declare and defend Christ's preeminence and sufficiency (doctrine); chapters 3–4 show what it looks like to live under His lordship (practice).
- Three major themes run through the book: 1. the preeminence of Christ (supreme over creation, redemption, and the church), 2. the sufficiency of Christ (nothing is lacking in Him), and 3. union with Christ (believers have died, been raised, and now live hidden with Him in God).
- Colossians still matters today because every generation faces new versions of the same temptation — to look for wisdom, fullness, or spiritual power somewhere other than Christ alone.

Discussion Questions

Q1. What was happening in the church at Colossae that prompted Paul to write this letter?

Answer: *False teaching was threatening the believers there — a mixture of human philosophy, Jewish ritual, mystical “higher” experiences, and strict ascetic practices. It promised deeper wisdom and fullness, but at the cost of shifting attention away from the simplicity and sufficiency of Christ.*

Q2. What is the central question Colossians presses on every believer, and how does the letter answer it?

Answer: “Whose am I?” The answer: believers belong entirely to Christ — Lord over creation, Head of the church, and life of His people.

Q3. How does the letter divide, and what is the flow of Paul’s argument?

Answer: Chapters 1–2 focus on the person and work of Christ (doctrine); chapters 3–4 focus on the new life believers are called to live because they are united to Him (practice). The pattern is: Christ’s preeminence declared, defended, and demonstrated.

Q4. What false substitutes threatened the Colossians’ faith, and what are some modern equivalents?

Answer: Human philosophy, legalism, mysticism, and asceticism. Today the vocabulary changes — spiritual fads, moral philosophies, religious movements, “spiritual but not religious” trends, self-help systems — but the danger is the same: drifting from Christ’s sufficiency to seek completeness elsewhere.

Q5. Why does Paul answer error with a clearer vision of Christ rather than a new set of rules?

Answer: Because the real danger isn’t a lack of rules — it’s a diminished view of Christ. When believers see that all the fullness of God dwells in Him, and that they are complete in Him, they are protected against every counterfeit that tries to add to, subtract from, or stand alongside the Lord Jesus.

Closing Thought

As we begin this study, ask God to show you anywhere you may be looking for wisdom, security, or fullness apart from Christ alone.

SESSION 2

Colossians Chapter 1

Colossians 1:1–29

“...Delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” — Colossians 1:13–14

Big Idea: Chapter 1 rises from Paul’s greeting and prayer into one of the greatest passages on Christ in all of Scripture: He is supreme over creation, supreme over the church, and the very hope of glory dwelling within every believer.

Teaching Points

- Paul’s greeting reminds believers who they are (“saints and faithful brethren in Christ”) before he tells them what to do — identity comes before instruction.
- Paul’s prayer (1:9–12) models mature intercession: he prays for knowledge of God’s will, a worthy walk, spiritual fruit, and Spirit-given strength for patient, joyful endurance — not just for changed circumstances.
- Salvation is both a rescue and a transfer: believers have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of Christ, with redemption and forgiveness through His blood (1:13–14).
- Christ is supreme over creation — the image of the invisible God, the Creator and sustainer of all things, existing before all things (1:15–17).
- Christ is supreme over the church as its Head, the firstborn from the dead, in whom all the fullness of God dwells, and through whose cross peace and reconciliation are made (1:18–20).
- The “mystery” now revealed to God’s people is “Christ in you, the hope of glory” — believers’ present life and future hope rest on Christ’s indwelling presence (1:26–27).
- Paul’s goal in ministry was to present every believer mature and complete in Christ, laboring by Christ’s power at work in him, not his own strength (1:28–29).

Discussion Questions

Q1. In Colossians 1:15–17, what does Paul teach about Christ’s relationship to creation?

Answer: *Christ is the image of the invisible God and preeminent (“firstborn”) over all creation. He is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, existing before all things, and the One who holds all things together.*

Q2. What does it mean that “all fullness” dwells in Christ, and that peace was made “through the blood of His cross” (1:19–20)?

Answer: *The complete fullness of deity resides permanently in Christ — nothing of God is lacking in Him. Through His sacrificial death He made peace, reconciling to Himself all who trust Him and setting in motion the ultimate restoration of all things under His rule.*

Q3. How does Paul describe believers’ former condition and their new position in Christ (1:21–22)?

Answer: *Formerly alienated from God and enemies in mind through wicked works; now reconciled through Christ’s death in His body, so they may be presented before God holy, unblameable, and unproveable.*

Q4. What is “the mystery” Paul describes in 1:26–27, and why does it matter?

Answer: “Christ in you, the hope of glory” — a truth once hidden and now revealed: Christ Himself indwells believers, including Gentiles. It matters because it grounds both the believer’s present life and future glory in union with Christ, not in outward performance.

Q5. What was Paul’s goal in ministry (1:28–29), and what enabled him to pursue it?

Answer: To present every person mature and complete in Christ. He pursued this by laboring and striving — but according to Christ’s power working mightily in him, not by his own natural energy.

Q6. Application: How should Christ’s supremacy over creation and the church change the way we face trials, culture, or competing worldviews this week?

Answer: Answers will vary. Guide the group to see that if Christ holds all things together and reconciled all things through the cross, no circumstance, ideology, or power is outside His authority — which should produce confidence, worship, and freedom from fear.

Closing Thought

Close by thanking God together that believers have already been rescued from darkness and brought into Christ’s kingdom — not by their own effort, but by His grace.

SESSION 3

Colossians Chapter 2

Colossians 2:1–23

“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.” — Colossians 2:9–10

Big Idea: Chapter 2 defends the preeminence and sufficiency of Christ against every counterfeit — philosophy, legalism, mysticism, and asceticism — by showing that believers already possess everything they need in Him.

Teaching Points

- Paul’s deep spiritual “conflict” (agonizing prayer and concern) for believers he had never met shows that real ministry includes unseen intercession, not just visible activity (2:1–3).
- The Colossians are warned not to be beguiled by persuasive-sounding error — false teaching rarely looks ugly; it usually sounds deep, sophisticated, or spiritual (2:4).
- The Christian life is to be lived the same way it began — by faith: “as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him” — rooted, built up, established, and overflowing with thanksgiving (2:6–7).
- Believers are warned against philosophy and empty deceit built on human tradition rather than on Christ (2:8) — and given the answer: in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and believers are complete in Him (2:9–10).
- At the cross, Christ forgave all trespasses, canceled the record of debt that stood against us, and triumphed publicly over hostile spiritual powers (2:13–15).
- Paul exposes three counterfeit paths to spirituality that all disconnect people from Christ the Head: legalism — rules about food and holy days (2:16–17); mysticism — angel worship and visionary experiences (2:18–19); and asceticism — harsh, self-made rules (2:20–23). None has real power to change the heart.

Discussion Questions

Q1. What did Paul pray for the believers at Colossae and Laodicea, even though he had never met many of them (2:1–3)?

Answer: That their hearts would be comforted, that they would be knit together in love, and that they would have the full riches of assured understanding, so they would truly know Christ, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.

Q2. According to 2:6–7, how are believers to “walk” in the Christian life?

Answer: The same way they received Christ — by faith, not self-effort. Rooted, built up, and established in the faith, and abounding with thanksgiving.

Q3. What warning does Paul give in 2:8, and what makes a philosophy “vain deceit”?

Answer: Beware of being taken captive through philosophy and empty deceit based on human tradition and the world’s elementary principles rather than on Christ. Human reasoning becomes spiritually dangerous when it is disconnected from God’s revelation and centered on man instead of Christ.

Q4. What does it mean that believers are “complete in Him” (2:9–10)?

Answer: Because all the fullness of deity dwells in Christ bodily, and believers are united to Him, they lack nothing spiritually. Fullness is found not by adding to Christ, but by belonging to Him.

Q5. What happened at the cross according to 2:13–15?

Answer: God forgave all of believers' trespasses, blotted out the record of debt (the law's charges) against them, and triumphed over hostile spiritual powers, making a public spectacle of their defeat.

Q6. What three counterfeit paths to spirituality does Paul warn against in 2:16–23, and what is wrong with each?

Answer: Legalism — judging others by food, drink, or holy days, which were only shadows now fulfilled in Christ; mysticism — worship of angels and visionary experiences that don't hold fast to Christ the Head; and asceticism — self-made severity that looks wise but has no power to conquer the flesh.

Q7. Application: Which of these three counterfeits — legalism, mysticism, or asceticism — do you find most tempting today, and why?

Answer: Answers will vary. Encourage honest reflection; the common thread in all three is looking somewhere other than Christ Himself for fullness, wisdom, or spiritual power.

Closing Thought

Close by inviting the group to name one place they've been tempted to add to or substitute for simple faith in Christ, and pray for one another to "hold fast to the Head."

SESSION 4

Colossians Chapter 3

Colossians 3:1–25

“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” — Colossians 3:1–2

Big Idea: Chapter 3 shows what it looks like to live out the new life believers already possess in Christ — putting off the old self, putting on Christlike character, and letting His peace and word rule every relationship.

Teaching Points

- Because believers have been raised with Christ, they are called to set their minds on things above — obedience flows from identity, not the other way around (3:1–4).
- Believers are to “put to death” (mortify) sins of the flesh — sexual sin, impurity, evil desire, and covetousness, which Paul calls idolatry because it worships something other than God (3:5–7).
- Believers are also to put off sins of speech and relationship — anger, wrath, malice, slander, lying — because the “old man” has been put off and the “new man” put on, renewed after the image of Christ (3:8–11).
- In Christ, old dividing lines of ethnicity, culture, and status lose their power to define identity — “Christ is all, and in all” (3:11).
- Believers are to “put on” Christlike character — compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forbearance, and forgiveness — with love as the bond that holds every virtue together (3:12–14).
- The peace of Christ is to rule the heart, and the word of Christ is to dwell richly, shaping teaching, worship, and everyday speech and action — all done “in the name of the Lord Jesus” with thanksgiving (3:15–17).
- Christ’s lordship reaches into ordinary relationships — marriage, parenting, and work — calling each person to serve “heartily, as to the Lord” (3:18–25).

Discussion Questions

Q1. Why does Paul begin chapter 3 by telling believers who they are (“if/since you are risen with Christ”) before telling them what to do?

Answer: *Because Christian obedience flows from identity, not the other way around. Paul consistently grounds practical commands in what Christ has already accomplished for believers, rather than asking them to earn a standing they don’t yet have.*

Q2. What does it mean to “seek things above” and “set your affection on things above” (3:1–2)?

Answer: *Orienting the mind, heart, and ambitions around the risen Christ — living from heaven’s perspective while still walking on earth. Where the mind goes, the life follows.*

Q3. What sins does Paul call believers to “mortify” in 3:5–9, and why does he call covetousness “idolatry”?

Answer: *Sins of the flesh (sexual sin, impurity, evil desire, covetousness) and sins of speech and relationship (anger, wrath, malice, slander, lying). Covetousness is idolatry because it elevates something or someone above God — worshiping desire rather than the Lord.*

Q4. According to 3:10–11, what happens to old distinctions of ethnicity, culture, and social class in Christ?

Answer: They no longer define a believer's deepest identity. Christ is all and in all — the center, sufficiency, and unifying reality of His people — though this doesn't erase every earthly distinction.

Q5. What virtues does Paul call believers to “put on” in 3:12–14, and what is the “bond of perfectness”?

Answer: Tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forbearance, and forgiveness modeled on Christ's forgiveness of us. Love is the bond of perfectness — it binds all the other virtues together in unity and maturity.

Q6. How does letting “the word of Christ dwell in you richly” (3:16) show up practically?

Answer: In teaching and admonishing one another, in worship through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and in a life saturated with Scripture that shapes understanding, speech, and relationships.

Q7. How does the instruction to “do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (3:17) reframe even ordinary areas of life like marriage, parenting, and work (3:18–25)?

Answer: Every relationship and responsibility becomes an act of service to Christ Himself. Wives, husbands, children, fathers, and servants are each called to live under His lordship, doing their part heartily “as unto the Lord” rather than merely to please people.

Closing Thought

Close by asking each person to name one “old self” habit to put off and one Christlike virtue to put on this week, then pray for one another by name.

SESSION 5

Colossians Chapter 4

Colossians 4:1–18

“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving... Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.” — Colossians 4:2, 5

Big Idea: Chapter 4 closes the letter by showing Christ’s preeminence demonstrated in prayer, witness, speech, and faithful relationships — truth worked out in ordinary life, not just abstract theology.

Teaching Points

- Masters are reminded that they too have a Master in heaven — authority in any relationship is stewardship under Christ, not a license for self-interest (4:1).
- Paul calls believers to a prayer life marked by perseverance, alertness, and gratitude, and asks them to pray specifically for gospel opportunity and boldness — even from prison (4:2–4).
- Believers are to “walk in wisdom” toward outsiders and “redeem the time,” living with intentional, gracious conduct that makes the most of every opportunity to represent Christ (4:5).
- Christian speech is to be “seasoned with salt” — gracious, wholesome, and fitting to each person and situation (4:6).
- Paul’s long list of personal greetings — Tychicus, Onesimus, Mark, Epaphras, Luke, and others — shows that ministry is deeply relational and carried forward by faithful co-laborers, including some restored from past failure (4:7–15).
- The letter closes with a charge to Archippus — “take heed... that you fulfill” the ministry received from the Lord — a reminder that every believer’s calling must be pursued with watchfulness to completion. The letter ends, fittingly, on grace (4:16–18).

Discussion Questions

Q1. How does Paul’s instruction to masters in 4:1 reflect the theme of the whole letter — that Christ has the preeminence in every relationship?

Answer: Even those who hold authority (masters) are reminded that they themselves answer to a Master in heaven. Leadership is stewardship under Christ, never a license for self-interest.

Q2. What three qualities does Paul call for in prayer in 4:2?

Answer: Perseverance (“continue”), watchfulness/alertness (“watch in it”), and thanksgiving.

Q3. What does Paul ask the Colossians to pray for regarding his own ministry (4:3–4), and what does this reveal about his priorities even in prison?

Answer: An open door to speak the mystery of Christ, and boldness and clarity to make it known as he ought to speak. It shows his concern was for gospel opportunity, not personal comfort or release from prison.

Q4. What does it mean to “walk in wisdom toward those who are outside” and “redeem the time” (4:5)?

Answer: Living with truthful, gracious, discerning conduct before a watching world, and intentionally seizing opportunities to represent and share Christ rather than letting them pass by.

Q5. What does the long list of names and personal greetings in 4:7–17 teach us about ministry and the church?

***Answer:** Ministry is deeply relational and shared. The kingdom advances through faithful co-laborers — some restored, like Mark; some transformed, like Onesimus — whose faithfulness and encouragement matter as much as visible leadership.*

Q6. What charge does Paul give to Archippus in 4:17, and how does it apply to believers today?

***Answer:** “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it.” Every believer’s ministry is received from the Lord and must be pursued with watchfulness and carried through to completion, not just begun.*

Q7. Looking back at the whole book of Colossians, what is one truth about Christ’s supremacy or sufficiency that most challenges or encourages you, and how will it shape your life this week?

***Answer:** Answers will vary. Use this as a closing wrap-up question for the whole series, inviting each person to share one specific, personal application from the study.*

Closing Thought

Close the series by reading Colossians 1:18 together — “that in all things He might have the preeminence” — and praying that Christ would have first place in every area of each person’s life.

