

# Let's Worship God

18th-23rd February 2019  
Colossians



# Colossians

## **Monday - Colossians 1:1-12 - The Saints**

*These notes are written by Dr. Tim Donachie.* The city of Colossae had been a very thriving city, described by Xenophon in 401 B.C. as 'a city inhabited and prosperous and great'. However, by the time of the apostle Paul it had declined in importance and was surpassed by neighbouring cities like Hierapolis and Laodicea. Its population was a mixture of idol worshipping pagans and a considerable number of Jews.

Paul wrote to the Christians from his Roman imprisonment to warn them against heresy, to direct them to the Lord Jesus Christ and to emphasise the virtue of forgiveness.

Paul begins his letter by introducing himself: He is an apostle of Jesus Christ; this is all the authorisation he needed for the message he was sending to the church. As the sent one of God, commissioned to be 'the apostle to the gentiles' Acts 9:5,15-16, he was to bring God's message to God's people. The people were to receive his words as the very words of the living God - and so must we!

Although this letter was addressed to the church in Colossae, it was also intended for the church in Laodicea and probably other congregations as well 4:16. The people who received the letter are described as: Saints - not especially 'holy' people but people who were consecrated to God. All believers are saints. Faithful Brethren - What a wonderful way to be described! The one thing that God requires of his people is faithfulness, and here in this city where believers were being troubled by heretical teaching, there were many who remained faithful. In Christ - Sainthood and faithfulness depend on a living relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough to have all the outward appearance of a Christian, to attend worship, to read the Bible and to pray, the one essential thing is to be united to Christ by faith.

### **Questions**

1. What are the implications for Scripture being 'the very words of God'?
2. What do you need to do to be called a 'faithful brother/sister'?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Pray that you would grow in faithfulness.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. Colossians 1:13

**Praise: Psalm 39 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# Colossians

## Tuesday - Colossians 1:1-12 - Grace and Peace

Greetings in the time of the apostles were so much more than a mere 'Hello' or the standard 'How are you?' to which we never really expect a reply! There were fairly standard greetings in New Testament times, both spoken and written, but here the apostle Paul combines the Greek and the Hebrew greetings and, at the same time fills them with a meaning that was specifically Christian. This is the second shortest greeting found in Paul's epistles, only 1 Thessalonians 1:1 has fewer words, and yet it contains such rich teaching. This twofold greeting or blessing contains everything that is necessary for fruitful and contented life in the presence of God.

Grace is that beautiful New Testament word that speaks of unmerited favour and goodness, and in particular, that undeserved favour of the Almighty God for hell deserving sinners. It is the goodness and love displayed by God in sending His only Son into the world to bear the punishment that we deserved. It is the mercy of God in giving to those who least deserve it, the free gift of salvation, Eph. 2:8. Nor does it end there! God's favour, undeserved by us, strengthens us in weakness, helps us to resist temptation, illuminates our minds, and 'daily loads us with benefits'.

One of the great blessings that come through God's grace to us is peace. Not just the absence of conflict, the Hebrew concept of peace (shalom) is completeness, soundness or wholeness. The peace that Paul desired for the Colossians was peace with God because of the forgiveness of sin through the Lord Jesus Christ, and the peace from God that would enable the believer to be content no matter what the circumstances of his life. The apostle Paul had experienced that peace himself and so he was able to say 'I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am'. Phil. 4:11.

### Questions

1. Can you think of a way to make your greetings more meaningful?
2. How you can you display the peace of God in your daily life?

### Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for God's grace and peace.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### Memory Verse

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. Colossians 1:13

**Praise: Psalm 40 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# Colossians

## **Wednesday -Colossians 1:3-8; Psalm 118:1-18 - Thanksgiving**

These verses are all about thanksgiving. Paul follows the usual form of letter writing in the Middle East where the greeting was normally followed by a word of thanksgiving to some heathen deity or other. Whilst Paul follows the usual form of letter writing, he demonstrates that what he is saying is more than mere form.

In his continual prayers for the Church Paul made the element of thanksgiving very prominent. He is very specific about the reasons for his rejoicing and thanksgiving to God for the lives of the Colossian Christians. It is significant that Paul does not focus upon their health or wealth but only on the evidences of godly character that could be seen in them. There are three things for which Paul and Timothy give thanks as they pray for the Christians in Colossae.

1. The faith they professed was known far and wide. Paul had probably never met most of the believers but he had heard of their faith.

2. Their faith was a well grounded faith. Paul speaks of the three indispensable characteristics of true Christian character, faith, hope and love. For the Christian, a true appreciation of the hope that he has in Christ will strengthen his faith and will increase his love for those who share 'like precious faith'.

3. Their faith was a gospel faith. The reason that they were as they were was because of the preaching of the gospel. It was through the gospel alone that they had come to faith. It was because of the gospel alone that they were able to show the character for which Paul gives thanks. He wants to help faithful believers to counter the arguments of those who were seeking to supplement the gospel message with new heretical teaching that would make them 'wiser'. Paul tells them that the fruit produced in their lives was by the gospel and the gospel alone.

## **Questions**

1. Why do you think people had heard about the Colossian faith?
2. What can you learn about prayer from this passage?

## **Prayer Points**

1. Give thanks for all God has done for you.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## **Memory Verse**

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. Colossians 1:13

**Praise: Psalm 41 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

# Colossians

## Thursday - Colossians 1:9-12 - Wisdom

One very characteristic thing about the life of the apostle Paul was the emphasis that he had on prayer both personal and corporate. It would seem that the news that Paul had received from Colossae had caused a great upsurge in prayer. The church in Colossae was facing a problem with false teachers called Gnostics (from the Greek word for knowledge), who were teaching that Christ was not sufficient to meet all their needs, and that they required more detailed mystical and philosophical knowledge. So Paul prays that the believers might have true wisdom and understanding. Paul knew that it is impossible to serve God properly without a clear understanding of what he requires of his people Acts 22:10,14; Rom. 12:2. The knowledge that Paul prayed for was not a theoretical 'head' knowledge that can so easily lead to pride, but a profound experimental knowledge of the revealed will of God that will lead to a humbling of soul before the Lord. The kind of knowledge and understanding that leads to practical application and obedience in the daily life of the believer.

This knowledge is to be 'in all spiritual wisdom and understanding'. The goal that Paul sets before them is the one that is set before all believers, that of living to the honour and praise of God. Wisdom from the Holy Spirit is essential if the believer is to use the best methods to achieve this goal. True spiritual understanding does not come from the knowledge of occult secrets or the use of magical passwords as the Gnostics taught, but by a Spirit led understanding of the Word of God and a Spirit enabled application of the Word to the heart and life of the believer. It is the kind of wisdom spoken of by James when he wrote, 'the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy'. James 3:17.

### Questions

1. How are we to be 'filled with the knowledge of his will'?
2. How can we encourage one another to pray for each other?

### Prayer Points

1. Pray that you would have knowledge and wisdom.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### Memory Verse

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. Colossians 1:13

**Praise:** Psalm 42 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.

# Colossians

## Friday - Colossians 1:10-12; Ephesians 5:1-10 - A Life Pleasing to the Lord

When Paul prayed that the believers might increase in the knowledge of the will of God v.9, it was not so that they would be able to parade their knowledge or be proud of their achievement. As far as Paul was concerned, the purpose of his prayer is very clear and specific; it was that the believers would live lives that were pleasing to the Lord. This life of God-pleasing is described by four phrases.

It is a life of fruit bearing. Jesus speaks in John 15 of the inevitability of fruit bearing in the life of anybody who 'is joined to the vine v.5. Paul too, speaks of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. This fruit should be seen in the life of every believer to one degree or another.

It is a life of increasing knowledge. The more knowledge a person has of Christ, the more he will want to know; so Paul cries out in Philippians 3:10 'Oh that I might know him...!'

It is a life of continual strengthening. The inherent weakness of even the best of the saints of God is overcome by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, and the more we know of him and of the resources of power at our disposal through Christ, the more we are able to say with Paul; 'I can do all things through him who strengthens me'. This strength enables the believer to cope with difficult circumstances (steadfastness), and to face opposition and persecution (patience).

It is a life of joyful thanksgiving. One of the characteristic marks of the apostles and the first century Christians was that they were able to rejoice in the most adverse of circumstances. Even suffering the most awful persecutions they were enabled to rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ.

## Questions

1. How do you think a believer can know if he is bearing fruit in his life?
2. How can a Christian develop a life of thankfulness?

## Prayer Points

1. Pray that you would bear much fruit.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

## Memory Verse

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. Colossians 1:13

**Praise: Psalm 43 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**



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## **Saturday - Colossians 1:13-20 - Continual Thanksgiving**

The prayer begun in verse 9 continues with reasons why the Colossian Christians should be thankful to God. Paul tells them that they had received an inheritance that was much more precious than anything else they could possibly imagine. The ancient tribes of Israel all had a share in the inheritance God promised to His covenant people in the Old Testament, and Paul now relates this in a spiritual sense to the believers:

It is an inheritance sovereignly bestowed. It is not obtained by merit or by right but received only through the gracious activity of God. This inheritance is not one restricted by birth or nationality but is the common possession of every one who is born again.

It is described as an 'inheritance in Light'. The word 'light' in Scripture is often used to symbolise the knowledge of God, the love of God, the peace of God, and joy in God. It is connected with holiness Acts 20:32, revelation 2 Cor. 4:4, love 1 Jn. 2:9,10, glory Is. 60:1-3, and peace and joy Is. 9:1-7. The inheritance, therefore, is nothing less than a full and free salvation.

This glorious inheritance has been obtained for the believer in a wonderful act of rescue. Those who trust in Christ have been rescued from the 'domain of darkness'. Darkness in Scripture speaks of sin, disobedience, rebellion, and death and is a condition into which all are born and from which no-one can free themselves.

The rescue was effected by God the Father sending the Son of His love into this sinful world to bear the punishment due to sin and thus tear His elect from the dominion of Satan. This great rescue has made a change as dramatic as it is possible to make; a new master, a new citizenship, a new standing, and a new destination. What better reason for continual thanksgiving could there be?

### **Questions**

1. What does it mean for a person to receive the 'inheritance of the saints in Light'?
2. What difference should the four 'new things' make to the way we live?

### **Prayer Points**

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

### **Memory Verse**

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son. Colossians 1:13

**Praise: Psalm 44 - See [www.rpglobalalliance.org](http://www.rpglobalalliance.org) for Psalm tune helps.**

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that  
Ezra read from  
the book of the Law  
day after day  
and that  
the people of God  
were filled with joy!**

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