

Complete In Christ

A study in the book of Colossians

Lesson One

“Since We Heard Of Your Faith”

Each one of us, as believers has a special calling on our lives. Since we first came to believe in Christ and trust in Him as our Savior, we gave Him lordship over our lives and God began in us a work of sanctification. He called us out from the general population and set us apart for **His purposes**.

Hopefully, we can all look back and see how different our lives are since that day when we first came into God’s saving grace. It’s easy to focus on all of our failures and how far it is we still have to go but take a moment to examine some of the fruit God has produced in your life.

- 1) What are some of the changes you see?

Read Colossians 1:1–14

Paul begins his letter by addressing himself as “...an apostle of Jesus Christ; by the will of God...” (verse 1). Paul recognized that although we have a responsibility to respond to God’s call; the call itself originates with **God’s will**, not ours. Look up **Acts 9:1-19** for the account of Paul’s conversion to Christ.

- 2) Explain briefly the contrast between the plans and purposes Paul had laid out for himself as he traveled to Damascus, with the intervention of God’s plans and purposes for his life.
- 3) You may not have had a Damascus experience; but describe how God intervened in your life to get your attention and reveal **His plan** for you.

- a. Do you find examples of God continuing to intervene in your well thought-out plans so that He can redirect you down the path He has laid out for you? Do you have an example of this you can share with the group?

In verse 3, Paul tells the Colossian church that “We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; praying always for you....”

- 4) Read on to verses 4 through 8. What are the three things Paul gives thanks to God for that he has heard about the church in Colossae?

- a. How would you describe the following? Can you give a brief explanation of what Paul refers to as:

Our faith:

Our hope:

The characteristics of our love:

- 5) In another letter Paul centers in on these three things as the only three that will remain. Which does he say is the greatest of these three? (See 1Cor. 13:13 & Jn. 13:34 & 35)

- a. Why?

Paul tells the church in verse 9, “For this cause also, since the day we heard it; we do not cease to pray for you; and to desire.....” (KJV)

- 6) What are some of the things that *you* most often pray for and desire for others?

- a. How about for yourself?

- 7) Read on through Colossians 1:9-11 and list the **specific things** Paul prays for the Colossian church.

This is an excellent example of how we ought to be praying for others and what we should also be desiring for ourselves. The next time you aren't sure how to pray for someone, look back and review Paul's prayer for the Colossians.

The first thing on Paul's prayer list for this church is "...that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." (verse 9)

- 8) What is God's will for us? (See 1Thess. 4:3a)
- 9) What other Scriptures can you find that state what God's will is for us? Record your findings and the Scriptural references.

Read Colossians 1:10

- 10) We are all well aware of the weakness of our flesh. Romans 7:18 states that in our flesh dwells **no good thing**. In fact, all throughout Romans, Chapter 7, we read of Paul's continual struggle with the sinful nature of his flesh. We are all sinners saved by grace...the **unmerited** favor of God. How, then, do we walk **worthy**? Read Romans, chapter 12 and record the ways Paul tells us to "walk."

- 11) In what ways does Paul tell us in verse 10 of Colossians that we are to be fruitful? (See also Romans 12:6-8.)

- 12) What fruits are we to exhibit? (See Galatians 5:22 & 23)

- a. What are some of the **practical** ways we can demonstrate this fruit? (See Romans 12:9-18.)

13) Paul continues his prayer for the Colossians in verse 10b by praying they would continue **increasing** in knowledge. Do you feel you are **increasing** in your knowledge of God? What do you feel is the best way we can increase in our knowledge of God? (See Acts 17:11; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 3:16)

14) There is a difference between the casual knowledge we may have of someone and the deeper knowledge we may have of a close friend. More different still is the intimate knowledge we have with a spouse. Which category is your knowledge of Jesus in? This isn't a question you need to share with the group, but as the **Bride of Christ**, it's something for all of us to think about. If you have comments or insights you'd like to share with the group, list them below.

15) In verse 11 Paul prays for the church to be **strengthened**, ".....for all **patience** and **longsuffering** with **joy**." The Phillips Translation reads, "We pray that you will be strengthened from God's glorious power so that you may be able to pass through any experience with joy." Look up the definition of the following words.

Patience –

Longsuffering –

Joy –

16) How are these produced? What is their **source** according to verse 11?

Paul begins Colossians 1:12 with the words "...**giving thanks**..." (Verse 12a)

17) Warren Wiersbe states that, "Thankfulness is the opposite of selfishness." Is thanksgiving a part of your daily prayer life?

a. When do you most often find yourself lifting thanks to God?

b. What kind of things prompt your heart to thankfulness?

c. Read Ephesians 5:20 and record what Paul tells us we should be thankful for and when we should lift up that thanks to God.

18) Verse 12 of Colossians continues on with Paul's prayer that the church would be "giving thanks to the Father, Who has qualified us to be partakers of the **inheritance of the saints** in light." What is the **inheritance** of the saints? (Read Eph. 1:3-23)

a. Read Colossians 1:13 & 14. List the four things Paul states here that Christ has done for us in order to qualify us to be **partakers** of the inheritance.

19) As we look back over this first lesson in Colossians it is important for us to remember Who the **Originator** of our faith is. He is also the originator of this work of sanctification that He has begun in us. We are **His** workmanship (Eph. 2:10). **He called us; He qualifies us; He prepares good works for us and He prepares us** for those works. Our responsibility is one of **response.....all the rest is His** working.

Share what was most meaningful to you in this lesson.

“I have chosen you.’ That is the way the grace of God begins. It is a constraint we cannot get away from; we can disobey it, but we cannot generate it. The drawing is done by the supernatural grace of God and we can never trace where His work begins. Our Lord’s making of a disciple is supernatural. He does not build on any natural capacity at all. God does not ask us to do the things that are easy to us naturally. He only asks us to do the things we are perfectly fitted to do by His grace.”

Oswald Chambers