

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the ideas and thoughts of the heart.”

Course Text: Colossians

Colossians is a letter from Paul to the Christians in the city of Colossi. Paul wrote the letter from prison, probably in Rome. He apparently wrote the book of Ephesians at around the same time, for the books are very similar.

Expect to learn these lessons from Colossians:

Jesus Christ is the Creator of everything and has authority over it, so we should obey Him.

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, so we should obey Him.

Jesus Christ is the Firstborn from the dead, so we should obey Him.

Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior, so we should obey Him.

Jesus Christ within us gives us the strength for Godly living, so we should obey Him.

Jesus Christ gives us the example of the Godly life, so we should obey Him.

Jesus Christ is the treasury of all wisdom and knowledge, so we should obey Him.

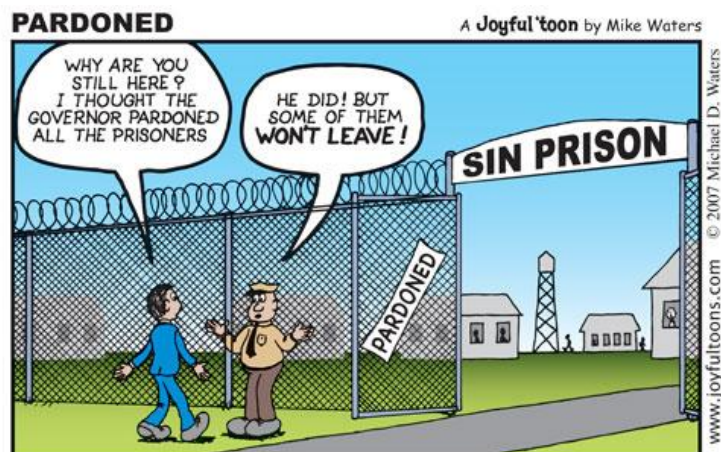
Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the prophecies of God.

In Jesus Christ there are no ethnic, economic, or national differences.

Suggested methodology:

1. Let the students have a copy of the lesson well before the class meets. (Perhaps the previous meeting)
2. The students read the Bible book and answer the questions in this lesson before the group meets.
3. At the class meeting allow time for greetings and fellowship. (Save most of this for the end)
4. Take prayer requests (Try to keep it from becoming a competition to see who has the most or the worst.)
5. Pray (The idea here is to leave our troubles with God so we can give His word our attention with a clear mind.)
6. Discuss the questions on page 7. Let those who prefer to listen, listen. My answers, when provided, are just one opinion; you may have a better answer. It might be good to establish the norm that only those who have actually read the book should discuss it aloud.
7. Discuss whatever other questions people have on their mind about the Colossians.
8. Close in prayer (It is best to call on others to pray, but try to get their permission ahead of time.)
9. Fellowship (Leave this as open ended as possible for the time and place you meet.)

Depending on the number of people, this class is expected to take about an hour.



He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. Col. 2:13,14

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Colossians Chapters 1 and 2

CHAPTER 1 - Paul greets the Colossians and compliments them for their faith and love. He gives the credit for them doing well to the hearing of the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. He prays that they will be filled with God's wisdom and because of that behave well, rejoice in the Lord, and give thanks to Him. We owe Him our gratitude for His great salvation of us from our former evil ways. Jesus Christ is lifted up as the Creator of the universe, the firstborn from the dead, and the head of the church.

Read Colossians chapter 1 and answer the following questions:

- [1A] Who was the co-author of this book with Paul? _____
- [1B] How often did Paul and Timothy pray for the Colossians? _____
- [1C] Who has given Paul a report about the Colossians? _____
- [1D] The Son is the image of what? _____
- [1E] The Son is the firstborn of what? _____
- [1F] Who does Paul proclaim? _____
- [1G] Whose power works within Paul? _____

CHAPTER 2 - Paul affirms his concern for his readers. He points to Jesus Christ as the source of everything worth knowing. He warns them not to allow themselves to be tricked by false and deceptive teaching. He suggests the best way to avoid being fooled is to understand the supremacy of Jesus Christ in all things. He tells us not to put ourselves once again under the rule of men and their traditions. We are to die to the things of this world with Jesus Christ.

Read Colossians chapter 2 and answer the following questions:

- [2A] Where are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden? _____
- [2B] On whom does the fullness of Deity dwell? _____
- [2C] With whom are we buried in baptism? _____
- [2D] With whom are we made alive again? _____
- [2E] What are we to not allow others be judges of us about? _____
- [2F] We avoid being deceived by holding onto what? _____



For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,
- COLOSSIANS 1:13 NIV

----- ANSWERS -----

- [1A] Who was the co-author of this book with Paul? Timothy Col 1:1
- [1B] How often did Paul and Timothy pray for the Colossians? Always Col 1:3
- [1C] Who has given Paul a report about the Colossians? Epaphras Col 1:7
- [1D] The Son is the image of what? The invisible God Col 1:15
- [1E] The Son is the firstborn of what? All creation Col 1:15
- [1F] Who does Paul proclaim? Christ Col 1:28
- [1G] Whose power works within Paul? Christ's Col 1:29

- [2A] Where are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden? In Christ Cor 2:2-3
- [2B] On whom does the fullness of Diety dwell? Christ Cor 2:8-9
- [2C] With whom are we buried in baptism? Christ Cor 2:11-12
- [2D] With whom are we made alive again? Christ Cor 2:13
- [2E] What are we to not allow others be judges of us about? Food, drink, and holidays Cor 2:16
- [2F] We avoid being deceived by holding onto what? The head, Jesus Christ Cor 2:18-19

Ephesians and Colossians have a lot of similarities.
 These are some of the similar verses between Colossians and Ephesians:

Col 1:10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;	Eph 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,
Col 1:21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds,	Eph 2:3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.
Col 1:25 Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God,	Eph 3:2 if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you;
Col 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.	Eph 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Colossians Chapters 3 and 4

CHAPTER 3

Our lives are hidden with Christ in God. We are to be dead to earthly things. They are the things that lead to the downfall and destruction of the lost. In Christ there are no ethnic, economic, or national differences. We are to let the peace and word of Christ dwell in our hearts in such a way that we bring forth the fruit of a Godly life. We are serving God when we do whatever we do, well. He lists some specific thing to do and not do.

Read Colossians chapter 3 and answer the following questions:

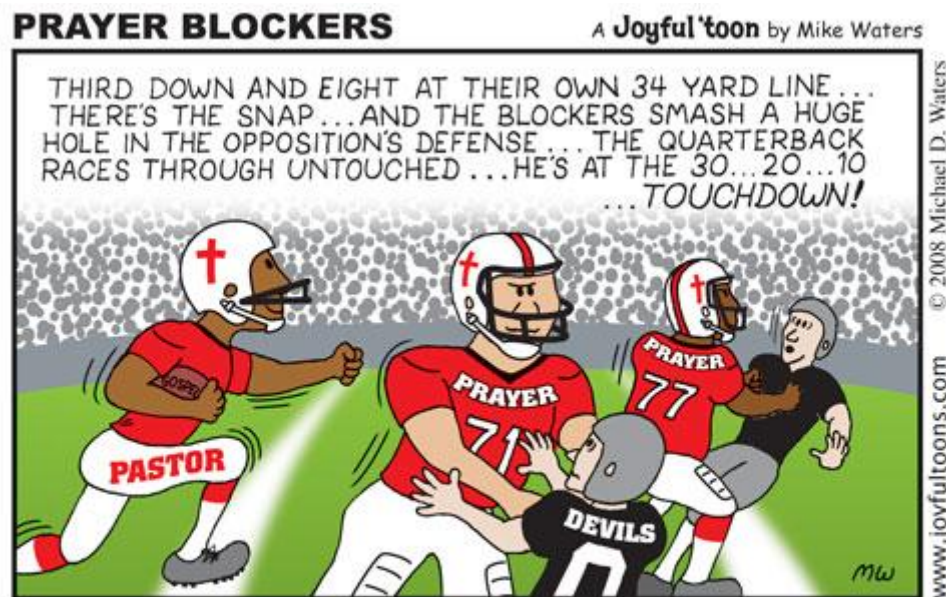
- [3A] Where is Jesus Christ now? _____
- [3B] Where is our life hidden? _____
- [3C] What are we to consider our earthly bodies? _____
- [3D] What are we not to do to one another? _____
- [3E] What are we to do for one another? _____
- [3F] What can children do to please the Lord? _____

CHAPTER 4

Paul finishes his lists of do's and do not's started in the previous chapter. He concludes the letter with some personal notes.

Read Colossians chapter 4 and answer the following questions:

- [4A] What are we to devote ourselves to? _____
- [4B] Who did Paul send with news about himself? _____
- [4C] Who is a prisoner with Paul? _____
- [4D] Which gospel writer is with Paul? _____



And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, ... Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. – COL. 4:3,4 NIV

----- ANSWERS -----

- [3A] Where is Jesus Christ now? At the right hand of God Cor 3:1
 [3B] Where is our life hidden? With Christ in God Cor 3:3
 [3C] What are we to consider our earthly bodies? Dead to sin Cor 3:5
 [3D] What are we not to do to one another? Lie Cor 3:9
 [3E] What are we to do for one another? Bear and forgive Cor 3:13
 [3F] What can children do to please the Lord? Obey their parents. Cor 3:20
- [4A] What are we to devote ourselves to? Prayer Cor 4:2
 [4B] Who did Paul send with news about himself? Tychicus Cor 4:7 (He probably also delivered this letter.)
 [4C] Who is a prisoner with Paul? Aristarchus Cor 4:10
 [4D] Which gospel writer is with Paul? Luke Cor 4:14 (Cor 4:10 is probably not referring to Mark, the author of the Gospel by that name, but it might be him.)

Ephesians and Colossians have a lot of similarities.

These are some more of the similar verses between Colossians and Ephesians:

Col 3:8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.	Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.
Col 3:10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him--	Eph 4:23-24 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.
Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.	Eph 5:19-20 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father
Col 3:18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.	Eph 5:22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.
Col 3:19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.	Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,
Col 3:20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.	Eph 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
Col 3:21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.	Eph 6:4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.
Col 4:1 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.	Eph 6:9 And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.
Col 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.	Eph 4:29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

(1) Colossians 1:21 and Colossians 3:9-12 describes us before and after Christ. Which description fits you better? Why?

Think & Pray _____

(2) How well are you practicing Colossians 4:2-3? Why?

Think & Pray _____

(3) What does Colossians 2:9 mean?

Think & Pray _____

(4) Which verse or passage would you select to memorize from Colossians? Why?

Think & Pray _____

(5) How can the lessons of Colossians be applied to our own life?

Think & Pray _____

(6) If someone asked you what Colossians was about what would you say?

Think & Pray _____

If you have any questions about Colossians, now is the time to discuss them with your classmates.

(1) Before and After: "Being renewed" describes me pretty well. I am better than I used to be, but I still need a lot of renovation. I would prefer being more like the complete second description, but I stumble at times. But like I said, I hope and believe I am making progress. God has redeemed me, through Jesus Christ. Not one Christian lives every day exactly like he should. A bumper sticker I read once said, "Christians are not perfect; just forgiven." God is still in the process of conforming us to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29). The mountain of rock at Mt. Rushmore in South Dakota looks like George Washington, and the other presidents; but it took a lot of work in removing the "debris" that did not look like the presidents. The same is true with us; there is a lot of rubbish to be removed. God is still clearing away my debris.

(2) Devoted to Prayer: My answer to this one has to be pretty similar to the one above. I am doing better at this than I was ten or twenty years ago, but not nearly so well as I would like to be doing. I hope when you think about the part where Paul says, "praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ" you will remember to pray for our ministry that God would enable us to effectively share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. By the way The word "Mystery" means a secret and the word "Mysterious" means something that is very complex and difficult to understand. The things about Christ were mysterious to the Sadducees because they knew not the Scriptures, neither the power of God (Mark 12:24). The solution to the whole problem is study to show ourselves approved unto God (II Tim. 2:15) If we do, Christ will not be a secret to us.

(3) One Lord: Jesus is Lord. This is a very rich verse. Moses said, The Lord (Jehovah) our God is One (Deut. 6:4). The Hebrew word for "one" is "Ech-awd" meaning a compound unity; as a man and wife (Gen. 2:24). The Godhead is a compound unity:

[a]. The Father is God (John 17:1-3).

[b]. The Son is God (Heb. 1:8; Isa. 9:6).

[c]. The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:1-4). And all the fullness of the Godhead dwells (as a permanent resident) in Jesus Christ bodily. So, Jesus is Lord.

(4) A Verse to Remember There are so many good ones to choose from. I like Colossians 1:14 "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

(5) Colossians Life Application One thing I would say for sure is Jesus Christ should be more important to us than anything else in our life. I hope it encouraged you to godliness and gave you more confidence in your redemption. Colossians 3:9-12 speaks of a life of godliness; and many people shy away from the word "godliness"; but godliness is profitable unto all things" (I Tim. 4:8).

A good lesson to learn.

(6) Colossians Core Message I think Colossians is about more than one thing. One thing it was written for was to correct the theory that Jesus Christ is just a better than average creature—: He is the Creator (Col. 1:15-17). The Father says to the Son, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever (Heb. 1:8). Also, we do not need Jewish rituals (Col. 2:16), nor Gentile philosophy (Col. 2:8). We are complete in Christ (Col. 2:10). The subtitle "The person and works of Jesus Christ" would work for this book, I think.