

# COLOSSIANS

FOR BEGINNERS

MIKE MAZZALONGO

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

bibleTalk<sup>TV</sup>



DOWNLOAD  
OUR APP



Copyright 2021 BibleTalk.tv

All our material is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike License.

This means you can use it almost however you need.

The only thing you can't do is re-sell it.

# Colossians for Beginners

---

**Mike Mazzalongo**

This 12-part series is an easy-to-understand explanation of Paul's epistle to the Colossian church. In it, the Apostle describes the many facets of Christ's pre-eminence (superiority) in both the physical and spiritual worlds thus establishing the reasons for His Lordship over all.



**[bibletalk.tv/colossians](https://bibletalk.tv/colossians)**

**Teacher Guide created by  
David Laton, D.Min.  
2020**

## Table of Contents

<b>Lesson #1 – Introduction to Colossians .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Lesson #2 – Colossians 1:1-2 .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Lesson #3 – Colossians 1:3-12.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Lesson #4 – Colossians 1:13-18a.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Lesson #5 – Colossians 1:18b-29 .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Lesson #6 – Colossians 2:1-14.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Lesson #7 – Colossians 2:15-23.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Lesson #8 – Colossians 3:1-11 .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Lesson #9 – Colossians 3:12-17.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Lesson #10 – Colossians 3:18-21.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Lesson #11 – Colossians 3:22-4:18 .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Lesson #12 – Colossians Conclusion.....</b>	<b>52</b>

## Overall Teaching Strategy

It is recommended that teachers use a combination of informal lecture and guided discussion to present these lessons. There are discussion questions associated with each lesson that teachers may use and/or supplement their own questions. A student note guide is also provided for each lesson.

It is recommended that teachers have students view the associated video or read the text for the lesson. This helps students come to the class ready to discuss the lesson and to formulate questions of their own. Teachers should begin the class with a review of key points from the video/text before starting the discussion.

Begin each lesson with appropriate introductory statements that help students focus on the lesson. Teachers should also provide a brief summary of the previous lesson and an overview of key points of the new lesson. This helps students see the ongoing narrative of scripture.

Conclude the lesson by summarizing, or having students summarize, the information from their notes. It is also helpful to ask questions from the lesson to determine that students grasp the concepts. Asking questions in this manner serves as an assessment to ensure objectives are met.

Challenge students with a call to action to apply this information to their lives to help them grow spiritually and help others to do so as well. This can be accomplished by asking questions of students as to how this information relates to their spiritual development at this time and moving forward.

For more information on teaching adults, please visit:  
**<https://bibletalk.tv/101/teaching>**

# Lesson #1 – Introduction to Colossians

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on foundational information about Paul’s letter to the Colossians. Of special note in this lesson is the circumstances of why he wrote this letter.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand background information for Colossians.
- **Feel:** Appreciate the applicability of Paul’s teachings to our life today.
- **Do:** Use information from the Letter to the Colossians to live faithfully and grow spiritually.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 1 – Introduction to Colossians
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 1

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Background
- 1.1 Review of Paul’s life and ministry
- 1.2 Overview of the letter to the Colossians
- 2.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. From the text for this study, why was letter written?**

As a doctrinal statement concerning the deity and all sufficiency of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

**Follow-on Question:** What is meant by “deity of Jesus Christ” and “all sufficiency”?

Jesus is the Son of God. He is a member of the Godhead. All sufficiency indicates that following the teachings of Jesus is what we need for receiving salvation and for living as God wishes.

## **2. What made Paul the perfect apostle to transition the church from a primarily Jewish religion to a world-wide religion that included people from all walks of life?**

Paul began his life as a zealous Jewish Pharisee determined to maintain the purity of Judaism, including persecuting those who departed from his view of Judaism. Because of his significant education and position, he was knowledgeable beyond most of the Law of Moses. This enabled him to speak directly to who Jesus was as the long-awaited Messiah. As he began to reach out to non-Jews, he used his knowledge of God and how God brought about salvation for all to reach those seeking God’s will. He was able to use his Roman citizenship to overcome obstacles in spreading the gospel even to the highest levels of the empire. His passion and commitment kept him faithful during the most trying times in his life.

### **3. Answer the following questions about the Paul's letter to the Colossians.**

- When is it thought to have been written? AD 61 – 63 during his imprisonment in Rome. (See also Acts 28:14-31).
- What indicates Paul is the author of Colossians? Paul begins his letter by naming himself as the author in the first verse. The early church accepted it as a authentic letter from Paul.
- What was a key reason for Paul to write Colossians? He was informed by Epaphroditus that there was dangerous false teachings being taught in Colossae. The heresy (false teachings) involved a mixture of ideas from Greek philosophy, oriental religions, and Jewish traditions. It was presented as higher thought.



#### **4. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Answers will vary but encourage learners to look to not only the content of Colossians, but the intent of the letter to live faithfully. It is all too easy to lead spiritually immature Christians into directions away from God's word. Satan uses individuals, sometimes unknowingly, with persuasive arguments that chip away at the surety of the deity and all sufficiency of Jesus. More mature Christians must be on guard to protect younger Christians from being led away as well as maintaining their own faithfulness. This necessitates constant vigilance in prayer, study, meditation, and fellowship with other Christians.

# Lesson #2 – Colossians 1:1-2

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is the value of the teachings of Jesus over false wisdom. Of special note in this lesson is Paul's objective to show that the true teachings of Jesus is the sole response to false teachings.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the all sufficiency of Christ and His teachings.
- **Feel:** Defend the all sufficiency of Christ for our salvation.
- **Do:** Use information from the Letter to the Colossians to live faithfully and grow spiritually.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 2 – Colossians 1:1-2
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 2

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.1 Salutation
- 2.0 Arguments made by Paul
- 3.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What is the value to Paul's salutation to the Colossians as he deals with the false teachings they are being subject to?**

As he begins, Paul establishes his authority as an apostle in presenting this teaching. However, he does so in a way that softens the teaching by also recognizing them as fellow Christians. In a very cordial way, he wishes for them peace and God's grace.

This was Paul's customary way of addressing those directly targeted with his letters. Even those he offered criticism to (Corinthians), he recognized them as fellow Christians. In Acts 17 we see Paul recognizing the value of the Athenians as he presents the truth of the one true God in the face of their polytheistic view. This overcomes hostility and encourages others to listen.

We can take a lesson from this as we seek to teach the gospel of Christ to others. We should start with commonalities and recognizing others as sincere in their position. We also should not be so prideful as to think that we also can learn.

## **2. Define Paul's use of the terms Saints and Faithful Brethren.**

**Saints** – It is not a special category of “super saints”, rather those made holy by the blood of Christ.

**Faithful Brethren** – Faithful brethren are those that share in the relationship with Christ. Rejecting Christ and following false teachings indicates unfaithfulness. Our role is to teach the erring one so as to bring them back into faithfulness. Interestingly, Paul uses this term for the Colossians even as he teaches them about the danger of following false teachings. Even those slipping into heresy are brethren until such time that they completely reject the teachings of Jesus. It is not our place to determine who is or who is not a brother in the Lord but rather the teachings of our Master. That is not to say we overlook error or false teaching, but we judge according to God's standard and not ours.

### **3. What does Paul wish for the Colossians by offering them God's grace and peace?**

**Grace** is God's favor and gift of forgiveness, and as a result, salvation from the result of sin. He offers this regardless of our imperfection.

**Peace** is a result of God's grace. This is peace of mind and soul, and with self, and others.

Taken together these two are the most precious gifts God grants to us as His faithful children.

### **4. How does God's grace and peace contrast with the result of the teachings the Colossians were being subjected to?**

The conflicting false and erroneous teachings created turmoil and stress. The core teachings of Jesus as presented by Paul and the other apostles were being undermined. As a result, the peace offered by God was not being felt.

**5. State in your own words the statements from the text about the three simple truths the Gospel of Christ declares and defend your response.**

- All are sinners and condemned before God (Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23)
- No one can save themselves by trying to keep the law in any of its religious or social forms (Galatians 2:16)
- The only way to be saved from the condemnation that awaits us because of our sins is through faith in Jesus Christ and not other (Acts 4:12; Galatians 2:16).

**6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

God's grace through faith saves us (Ephesians 2:8). That is the simple message of the Gospel. Our response of repentance, baptism, and faithful to the teachings of Jesus are how we respond to God's grace – An active and obedient faith. We are saved when we express our faith in Jesus by repentance and baptism. That's the true meaning of saved by faith.

# Lesson #3 – Colossians 1:3-12

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on Paul’s prayer that serves as a bridge to the idea of Christ pre-eminent in their relationship with God. Of special note in this lesson is understanding the expressions Paul uses and how they should influence our understanding of the pre-eminence of Christ.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the pre-eminent Christ
- **Feel:** Defend Jesus as pre-eminent
- **Do:** Use information from the Letter to the Colossians to live faithfully and grow spiritually.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 3 – Colossians 1:3-12
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 3

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Christ Pre-eminent in relationship
- 2.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. How does Paul's prayer equate Jesus to God the Father and how does this express the pre-eminence of Jesus?**

He states both God and Jesus in the opening of His prayer. He offers one prayer but prays to them as one. Paul's prayer is for the Colossians to continue seeking a relationship with Jesus overall all others.

## **2. What concepts make up Paul's prayer of thanksgiving and what do they mean?**

**Faith** – The Colossians faith in Jesus. They believe in the Lord and have not moved from this. Paul is thankful for that.

**Love** – Paul is thankful because the Colossians are expressing their faith in a loving way. They are expressing it as what is best for all through Christ. Just as Christ put others before self.

One cannot be for God and against the Church – Paul is thankful because the Colossians continue to believe in Jesus, their love for others. Together they make us the body of Christ (church).

### **3. What is Paul expressing in Colossians 1:5b-8?**

Paul expands his comment about the hope and reward that the Colossians anticipate. Their reward comes from the message of the gospel – Jesus died to pay for our sins and offers eternal life through Him. (vs. 5b)

The Gospel initiates faith, love, and hope every time God's grace is understood and acted upon. (vs. 6)

Paul reminds them of Epaphras who presented them the Gospel message tells him of their condition and attitude but not in a way that denigrates the Colossians. (vs. 7-8).

### **4. How does Paul express his blessings for the future of the Colossian church?**

- By knowledge of God's will (vs. 9)
- Their continued ability to please the Lord (vs. 10)
- Increasing in power (God's power) (vs. 11a)
- A joyful attitude (vs. 11b – 12)



## **5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

We continue to express:

- Jesus died for all. This truth is a core teaching of the Bible.
- We have hope because of the resurrection of Jesus.
- We should ask for spiritual blessings, not just for material blessings. In all our prayers, we should do so from the perspective of glorifying God.

# Lesson #4 – Colossians 1:13-18a

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is a continuation of Paul’s statements about the pre-eminence of Christ. Of special note in this lesson is how Paul expresses why Christ is foremost in relationship to God. Additional consideration should be given to how this increases our understanding of the pre-eminence of Christ.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the pre-eminent Christ
- **Feel:** Defend Jesus as pre-eminent
- **Do:** Use information from the Letter to the Colossians to live faithfully and grow spiritually.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 4 – Colossians 1:13-18a
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 4

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Christ pre-eminent in personal relationships continued
- 2.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What statements does Paul make that express the pre-eminence of Christ?**

- Vs 13-14 – We are saved by and through His active role in our redemption.
- Vs 15-16 – He is the image of God, there before creation.
- Vs 17 – All things created through and for him (see also John 1:1-5).
- Vs 18 – He is the head of the church and first to rise from the dead (permanent resurrection).

## **2. What are the concepts contained in Colossians 1:12-14 and what do they mean in context of the pre-eminence of Christ?**

- Rescue – We could not save ourselves.
- Domain – A place or authority or where on resides.
- Transfer – To move or shift from darkness to light. We could not move ourselves, God in Christ moves us.
- Kingdom – Similar to domain. The environment ruled by Jesus with all power and authority. God's Kingdom on earth is the Church which belongs to Christ
- Forgiveness/Redemption – a debt removed. Our debt was removed because of the price paid by Jesus. Not only was the debt removed, but a reward placed in its stead.

### **3. Moses and Joshua play a pre-eminent role in the freedom and hope of the Hebrew nation. What was their specific role and how does that relate to the ultimate pre-eminence of Jesus?**

Answers will vary but look for what Moses and Joshua did for the Hebrew people and relate how that is done by Jesus. Moses led the Hebrew nation from physical slavery and delivered the Law. Joshua led the Hebrew nation into the promised land. Jesus does all of this. He frees us from spiritual slavery of sin and delivers the law of grace. He leads us into the eternal promised land of God's Kingdom, the Church.

### **4. How does Paul portray Jesus in Colossians 1:15-18a? NOTE: All of these descriptions relate to eternity, both before, during and after creation and after the Lord return.**

- Image of the invisible God – vs 15 - (Not just the characteristics or attributes, but God himself in a form we can see (Exodus 33:17-33)).
- First born of all creation – vs 15 - Not the first thing created but a position of rank over all creation. In many societies, the first born holds pre-eminence over all other children and is granted special status and favor, including the larger portion of the inheritance. This is given so as to be the provider for the family when the inheritance is ultimately granted.
- Power of creation – Vs. 16a - Jesus is the power behind creation itself, both the physical and spiritual creation and all who reside therein.
- Purpose of creation – vs. 16b - Not only the power behind creation, but the created for his purpose.
- Before creation – vs. 17a - This shows the divinity of Jesus equal to that of God the Father since God only was before creation.
- Sustains creation – vs. 17b - All things continue to exist in Christ until His return.
- Head of the Church – vs. 18a – Paul also uses the term, “body” to describe the church. This fits with the imagery of Jesus as the “head.” The head gives direction and control to the body.

**5. Why do we feel we have to have more than God's grace given through Jesus to qualify for salvation and what is the reality of God's granting of grace?**

Answers will vary but common responses include that we feel an overwhelming sense of guilt and need to suffer in some way to earn God's grace and forgiveness. In reality, we do need to "do" something. We must act upon our faith in Jesus by obeying. Not to earn salvation, but to demonstrate our faith and join with Him.

**6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

First, we must have a relationship with Christ. Not just any relationship, for even an alien sinner has a relationship, all be it a bad relationship. We must have a personal relationship in which Jesus is the head and we submit to His will in all things. Without that relationship, we have nothing and no way in hope before God. Lastly, when we pray (communicate with God) we do so in the name of Jesus meaning by His authority and through His acceptance. (See also John 14:14).

# Lesson #5 – Colossians 1:18b-29

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is a continuation of Paul’s teachings on the pre-eminence of Christ. Of special note in this lesson is why Jesus is pre-eminent and what our response should be.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand the pre-eminent Christ
- **Feel:** Defend Jesus as pre-eminent
- **Do:** Use information from the Letter to the Colossians to live faithfully and grow spiritually.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 5 – Colossians 1:18b-29
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 5

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Why Jesus is pre-eminent
- 2.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What made Jesus the head of the Church and how was it confirmed?**

It was through the resurrection of Christ. His resurrection confirmed all He had taught and claimed and was not seen before. In short, it fulfilled prophecy in a way not understood. It further confirmed our Lord's relationship within time and for eternity.

## **2. Discuss the following questions from Colossians 19-20.**

**What three elements made Jesus the head of the church and what do they individually and collectively represent?**

- Redemption – Jesus paid the price to (purchase) free us from our sin.
- Resurrection – Jesus proved His deity (Godliness) by His resurrection from the dead.
- Reconciliation – Jesus re-established the balanced relationship between man and God as a product of our redemption.

Taken together we see the entirety of the role Jesus fulfilled as our Messiah (deliverer) in like fashion to Moses as the deliverer of the Hebrew nation. Moses freed from physical slavery and Jesus frees us from spiritual captivity. Whereas the physical is temporary, the spiritual is eternal.

**Why are false gods or doctrines unable to stand before the pre-eminence of Jesus?**

None can provide the elements of redemption, resurrection, and reconciliation.

**What occurred as a result of the death and resurrection of Christ?**

Jesus brought man and god together completing the authority of Christ.

### **3. Discuss the following questions from Colossians 1:21-23.**

#### **Why did God reconcile us? (vs. 21-22)**

To present us blameless before God. The blood of Christ cleanses us of our sin (1 John 1:7; Hebrews 9:13-14).

#### **What is the condition for our continued holy and blameless presence before God (vs. 23)?**

Our continued faithfulness

#### **How does accepting false doctrine destroy our presence before God?**

If we accept any teachings other than the pre-eminence of Christ then we reject Jesus as our Lord and the product of our redemption, salvation. NOTE: The action is on us. We reject Christ and His gift.

### **4. How does Paul qualify as a worthy teacher and minister of Christ and why does he state it? (Colossians 1:24-29)**

Paul also suffered in Christ for their sakes. In doing so he is teaching by example that all will have to endure hardship for the sake of Christ. NOTE: This was part of the statement made by Jesus to Ananias in Acts 8:16 regarding Paul's calling and what he would endure.



**5. Discuss the following questions from Colossians 1:25-27.**

**What was mystery hidden from past ages and generations and what was Paul's role in revealing it?**

Mystery refers to something unknown or not understood. The mystery was the process of redemption of man through the suffering of Christ and Paul's sharing in it as he carried the gospel to the gentiles.

**What of the mystery continues?**

None. God's salvation is now known for all to receive.

## **6. Describe the following application from Paul's statements in this section.**

False teachers have always used the same methods, therefore we must be on guard against them. They seek to displace Jesus as Lord and pervert (change/alter) the teachings of who Christ was and His message.

The gospel produces everything God intends for us. The gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and our redemption before God (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). This meets God's requirements for the purchase of our souls.

Suffering is a normal part of Christianity. Christ suffered physically and through the separation from the Father, and so will His followers (Matthew 5:11-12). For some the suffering is harsh treatments as they stand uncompromising before the world. Every faithful Christian suffers if nothing more than when we refuse to give in to the desires of the flesh. The closer we grow to Christ, the more our discomfort and suffering. We are to be aware and prepared so we will remain faithful (Forewarned is forearmed). NOTE: Consider bringing in Jesus' statement from Matthew 7:13-14 regarding what is endured, and the reward received.

## **7. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Christ suffered for our sins. To receive His blessing of salvation we must forsake all and turn to Him in obedience and submission. This involves our understanding of who He is as **the** Son of God, the author and finisher of our salvation (Hebrews 12:1-2). Following our understanding we demonstrate our commitment to Him by our baptism and faithful living. We do not compromise in His message and how we live our lives as faithful followers.

# Lesson #6 – Colossians 2:1-14

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on Paul’s instruction on the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus. Of special note in this lesson is why the teachings of Jesus are pre-eminent.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand Paul’s teachings of the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Recognize the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus over all other religious doctrines.
- **Do:** Follow the teachings of Jesus for our salvation and faithfulness.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 6 – Colossians 2:1-14
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 6

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Christ: Pre-eminent in doctrine
- 2.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

**1. What assurances does Paul give in Colossians 2:1-3 regarding his role in his relationship to the Colossians and Laodiceans, and how does this relate to Jesus' role?**

Paul – Although he did not personally start these congregations, he taught and influenced the founders, Epaphroditus and Timothy. Paul also expresses his prayer of love and unity, so they'll see Jesus as He is, God's Son and our Savior. Paul also points to Jesus as the source of true wisdom.

Jesus – Jesus taught and influenced many who carried His message to others, even though they had not personally met Him. His life and message show the true nature of God. His life was given for us as the ultimate expression of love. Jesus also prayed for unity (See John 17).

**2. What is Paul's purpose in expressing these thoughts to the Colossians (vs. 4-5)? What would be the resulting danger?**

Paul is writing so they won't be misled. Being misled would result in believing false doctrine thus endangering their salvation.

**3. How does the use of “firmly rooted” in verse 6-7 relate to the pre-eminence of Jesus as the “corner stone, founder, and perfecter of our faith? (See also Hebrews 12:1-2; Matthew 21:42; I Peter 2:6-7; Ephesians 2:19-20)**

Jesus must be first in our life. When we understand and commit to this, it helps us focus all other parts of our life; physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.

In Matthew 7:24-27 Jesus tells the parable of building a house on the solid foundation of His teachings. In verses 28-29 of this passage, even those listening to Him recognized the authority by which He taught these things.

**4. Use Colossians 2:8 to answer the following questions:**

**How is the doctrine of Christ the standard?**

It isn't just what Jesus taught, but also how He lived, showing His devotion and faithfulness to God the Father.

**What does following the doctrine of Jesus do for us?**

Unlike the doctrines of the false teachers, the truth of Jesus and His message sets us free from the slavery of sin. He also sets us free from the despair of hopelessness and into the hopefulness of eternal life with God.

## **5. What are the four reasons Paul gives for us to give pre-eminence to the doctrine of Christ?**

- Vs. 9 – Jesus is divine – THE Son of God and His doctrine is God’s doctrine. This is part of the statement made by Jesus in John 17:6-8.
- Vs. 10a – We are complete in Christ. In Christ we have all we need for salvation and faithfulness.
- Vs. 10b – Jesus is ruler of all. It is His church, and we are His subjects. He is the Master, and we are the servants.
- Vs. 11-15 – Jesus is the Savior. This pulls it all together. We are saved through Christ and identified as His people through our obedient, faithful response. We now have eternal life through sharing in His death and resurrection (baptism).

## **6. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

The doctrine of Christ is pre-eminent because there is no other salvation except through Jesus. He purchased our souls by His death therefore, we are now His. And being His, we reject all other doctrines. That is the basis of our faithfulness.

# Lesson #7 – Colossians 2:15-23

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on the gospel message accomplished by the cross of Christ. Of special note in this lesson Paul's continued admonition to not be pulled away from the core teaching of the cross.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand Paul's teachings of the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Recognize the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus over all other religious doctrines.
- **Do:** Follow the teachings of Jesus for our salvation and faithfulness.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 7 – Colossians 2:15-23
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 7

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Review of Paul's statements of the pre-eminence of Christ
- 2.0 Victories of the cross
- 3.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a "right or wrong" response.



**1. Summarize the three explanations from the introduction to this lesson about why the false doctrines were insufficient for our salvation.**

- Jesus is pre-eminent in our relationship with God – Jesus only is our link to God, not angels or any other being or philosophy.
- The doctrine of Christ – Belief in Christ unlocks the mystery of heavenly wisdom and knowledge, especially knowledge of God’s plan for our salvation.
- Other religions, especially Judaism – Our baptism in Christ destroys the old man and identifies us as God’s people. Religious rights, traditions, and ceremonies, specifically circumcision cannot save us. Of special interest is that this issue of circumcision was address in Acts 15 with the Jerusalem Council, but it continued to be an issue. In a similar way, as we bring others to Christ, they bring with them the teachings they have from their past. Be aware that it might take a while to replace these with the complete truth of God’s word.

**2. Summarize in one or two sentences the theme of Colossians 2:8-15.**

Answers will vary but look for statements conveying the truth that the victory of Jesus through the cross destroyed sin, gives us eternal life, and that no man-made religions or traditions could accomplish.

### **3. Discuss the following traps of false teaching.**

- The trap of authority (vs. 16-17) – The Judaizers continued to insist on keeping the traditions and practices of the Old Law and Judaism. They claimed a false authority over the simple and all-encompassing message of salvation by grace through faith. The imagery used by Paul is a judge – a ruler similar to the leaders from the book of Judges (not a “judge” as we interpret the role today.).
- The trap of false spirituality (vs. 18-19) – The true prize of freedom from condemnation granting us an eternal relationship with God. God grants us a superior level of spirituality through Christ. Man’s philosophies and desires cannot give us a relationship with God. In truth, they interfere with our relationship with God.
- The only true source of authority and spiritual growth is God Himself through Christ.

#### **4. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

We must be careful of false teachers who continue to use the same practices as those trying to weaken our faith as was happening with the Colossians and others in the first century church. Paul and Peter both gave strong warnings in other letters (Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 2 Peter 2).

Because of the pre-eminence of Jesus and the doctrine of the cross, we can be confident in our salvation. We must be on guard to let no one rob us of the joy of our salvation.

# Lesson #8 – Colossians 3:1-11

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on Jesus as the determiner of right or wrong. Of special note in this lesson is how to apply Christian ethics in our lives.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand Paul’s teachings on the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Recognize the pre-eminence of Jesus in how we determine right or wrong.
- **Do:** Follow the teachings of Jesus for our salvation and faithfulness.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 8 – Colossians 3:1-11
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 8

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Christ: Pre-eminent in ethics 3:1-4:6
- 2.0 Elements of the Christian standard – 3:4 – 4:6
- 3.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What is meant by ethics, Christian ethics, and how do they differ from ethics in everyday life?**

Ethics is simply the standards of right and wrong in our lives. Christian ethics are the standards of right and wrong in our lives as disciples of Jesus. NOTE: This could be considered a “trick question”. There should be no difference between our Christian ethics and ethics of everyday life. See also Romans 12:1-2; 6:1-10.

## **2. Colossians 3:1-4 – Why is the spiritual standard set by Christ superior to our earthly wealth and values?**

Christ is eternal and so too are those who are His. We submit to him in faith and therefore use His life and teachings as our standard of living. It is a matter of focus. As Paul states here, we set our hearts on things above, not on earthly things.

Those things we considered important in our lives now change in their priority and purpose. They are either no longer important or take a lower priority to those things that strengthen our relationship with God through Christ. All of this is because we are now in Christ through our continued faithful obedience.

### **3. Summarize from Colossians 3:4 through 4:6 what Paul establishes as elements of Christian living and how we can exhibit these in our lives.**

Vs. 5-11 – Personal holiness – Our new life in Christ begins to be seen in our personal conduct. We change all elements of our lives as our focus shifts to the true standards of behavior taught by Christ (See Matthew 5, 6, 7 – Sermon on the Mount). Our earthly bodies (our sensual nature – see also Galatians 5:19-24) are controlled rather than controlling us. In doing so, we remove ourselves from the wrath of God.

Vs. 8-10 – Beyond our sensual nature, we also remove those elements that cause difficulties in interpersonal relationships and prevent us from developing and showing the characteristics of Jesus towards others. These elements cause strife and disunity (See also Proverbs 6:16-19). We are to resist these.

Vs. 11 – No matter who we are (ethnicity, nationality, economically, religiously, or politically) we are now in Christ as new creatures focused on holy living according to the standards of Christ.

#### **4. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Self is the greatest barrier to growing spiritually (defined as becoming Christ like). We must compare our physical, intellectual, and emotional growth to the standards of Christ. We struggle as we resist change, but we must hold true to our commitment as disciples of Jesus. Normal life necessitates change, so too does spiritual growth.

There is a positive cycle of growth when we experience spiritual growth. The more we grow, the more we develop the ability and desire to grow. This spurs on more growth and desire. All of this leads to a deeper relationship with God thus enabling us to grow into greater servants for the Master.

# Lesson #9 – Colossians 3:12-17

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is a continuation of Paul’s discussion on Christian ethics. Of special note in this lesson is how various elements come together to establish a Christian standard for life and morality.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand Paul’s teachings of the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Recognize the pre-eminence of Jesus in how we determine right or wrong.
- **Do:** Follow the teachings of Jesus for our salvation and faithfulness.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 9 – Colossians 3:12-17
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 9

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Elements of Christian standard – continued
- 1.1 A loving attitude (vs. 12b-14)
- 1.2 A thankful heart (vs. 15-17)
- 2.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.



## **1. Answer the following questions from Colossians 3:12-17.**

**Vs. 12 – What expression does Paul use to describe how we are to have these characteristics in our lives and what does this bring to mind?**

Paul states we are to “put on” these characteristics as a garment that covers us and becomes how we are seen. We take on the identity based on the qualities he outlines in this verse.

**Why does Paul say we are to put on these elements?**

We are now children of God, citizens of His Kingdom. As such we represent Him. As an example, members of a nation’s military wear uniforms identifying who they belong to. In a real way, we are in a spiritual war as soldiers for Christ (Ephesians 6:10-18a; 1 Peter 1:13; 2:9-12).

**What is the nature of our position as those chosen by God compared to the nation of Israel?**

We are God’s spiritually chosen people and thus eternal. The Israelites were God’s chosen people through whom Jesus would come. Their role and time came to an end when Jesus completed His earthly mission and established the church, to which we are added through our faithful obedience.

**What does the term, “Holy” mean and how does it apply to us?**

The term means to be separate or made separate. As God’s people, we are separate from the physical nations of this world as part of a spiritual Kingdom.

**How does the term, “beloved” apply to us in comparison to mankind in general?**

We are God’s people, part of His family adopted at a great price. This places us in a special category as members of His household and we are afforded spiritual rights and privileges. (A follow up question would be to have the class identify from their own view what those rights and privileges are. Look for indicators of a special relationship through such things as answered prayers and shortcomings forgiven.)

## **2. Vs. 12b-14 – What should be our attitude as God’s chosen people and why?**

We should be loving, compassionate, kind, humble, gentle, patient, bear with one another, forgiving, just as Jesus was. As those that identify with Christ, we must put on Christ in all elements of our lives, especially in attitude and behavior. As a practical example, Jesus preached the value of forgiveness, and then when He hung on the cross, He demonstrated it by asking God the Father to forgive those tormenting Him.

## **3. Vs. 14 – What is the result of putting on love and what does this mean to us?**

Love forms a bond of unity binding believers together with God and each other (see also 1 Corinthians 13 as the greatest of spiritual gifts). Love is the greatest of these because it is the nature of God and eternal, whereas hope and faith will be fulfilled when Christ returns.

#### **4. Answer the following questions from Colossians 3:15-17.**

##### **What should rule in our hearts and what does this mean to you?**

The peace of Christ should rule in our hearts. It means that Christ is our standard and we have peace as we know we are following God's will and belong to Him.

##### **Vs. 16 – What is the sign that God's word dwells richly within believers?**

We worship God with thanksgiving and encourage one another to do so as well. (See also Hebrews 10:22-25).

##### **Vs. 17 – What is the outcome on our everyday life as a result of our thanksgiving?**

Our lives should be motivated to continue to live for Christ. This completes the positive cycle of thanksgiving: We experience the peace of Christ in our hearts; we are moved to give thanks to God for this (worship); we are motivated by gratitude to live and serve in His name (by His authority and as He wills); This reinforces and deepens the peace we feel and keeps the cycle turning.

#### **5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

We learn the teachings of Jesus and put them into practice in our lives. This draws us closer to Him and encourages us to continue to grow like Him in personal holiness, a loving attitude and a thankful heart.

# Lesson #10 – Colossians 3:18-21

---

## Teaching Strategy

This lesson is a continuation of Paul’s teachings on elements of Christian ethics established by Jesus. Of special note in this lesson is the elements of Christian standard as applied to the family.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand Paul’s teachings of the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Recognize the pre-eminence of Jesus in our family.
- **Do:** Follow the teachings of Jesus for our salvation and faithfulness.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 10 – Colossians 3:18-21
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 10

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Elements of the Christian standard
- 2.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What is the relationship of Christian ethics and our commitment to Jesus?**

The word Christian is made of two words, “Christ” and the suffix, “ian”. “ian” means of, therefore, the word Christian means, “of Christ”. When we commit to Jesus and His teachings, we commit to developing His characteristics and following His teachings. We learn about who Jesus is and His teachings then apply these to our lives. Christian ethics is about how we live according to the standards of Jesus. It is less about keeping rules and more about being seen as one who is like Christ.

## **2. Why does Paul seem to change focus by bringing in instruction for the family?**

Paul is adding another critical element of the pre-eminence of Jesus in our lives – Jesus is pre-eminent in our family.

## **3. From Colossians 3:18-21, why are the teachings of Jesus important to how we live as a family?**

The family has always been the important foundation upon which every society is built. We are even described as the family of God (1 John 3:1-2; Ephesians 2:19-22). As in all things, Jesus conveys to us the will of God the Father related to living as a family.

#### **4. What are the similarities of Colossians 18:21 and Ephesians 5:21?**

There are several possible responses but look for information related to how Paul reestablishes or emphasizes the structure of the family as God designed it. A key phrase in Colossians 3:18-21 is the phrase, “is fitting in the Lord.” In the period when Paul was writing these letters there were those who were either forbidding marriage or had an incorrect (by God’s standards) view of the proper relationship of members within a family (i.e., wives and children as property; the ease in divorcing a wife, etc.)

#### **5. Although Paul expresses the “ideal” family arrangement, how does this apply to those whose family situation cannot fit this pattern?**

We should first be faithful to Jesus. That is the foundation for all elements and situations in our lives. Submission is a choice we make, just as Jesus submitted to the will of God in all things. Through Jesus as our standard, we learn about true love, submission and faithfulness. Sometimes this means submitting in situations where there is stress upon our faithfulness. We continue to live faithful lives to the best of our ability. It is also important that those who are not faced with challenges to their family situation strive to be loving and supportive of those who do face challenges. An excellent principle, if not command, is found in James 1:27 in reference to how we care for those in challenging family situations.

#### **6. From Colossians 3:19 what is the responsibility of husbands to their wives and how does this relate to Paul’s instruction in Ephesians 5:25-33?**

Husbands are to love their wives, even before themselves. This is God’s model. In Ephesians 5, Paul expands on this idea in that husbands are to love their wives spiritually (Eph 5:25-27); physically (Eph 5:28-31); and emotionally (Eph 5:33). A point of emphasis here: In Eph 5:33, Paul ends with the statement, “and let the wife see that she respects her husband.” A man seeking his wife’s respect must be worthy

of it as the spiritual leader of his family, a role specified by God and one that cannot be abdicated to another. There are situations where the husband is incapable of being a spiritual leader. It then falls upon the wife/mother to fulfill this role. She should do this, but this is not God's primary design. The husband and wife work together to support one another's faithfulness as well as their role in the marriage and work to instill these qualities in their children.

**7. What instruction does Paul give to children and what is the relationship of the father in this?**

Children are to respect and obey parents. Again, the father as the leader of the family, is to foster this by his love of God, commitment to Christ and love for his wife. This has always been God's plan for his people.

**8. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

An orderly family is God's plan and is another element that reflects the presence of God in our lives when we follow it. This plan has three elements:

Commitment to Jesus by the father recognizing and fulfilling his role as the spiritual leader.

A submissive wife bringing balance to the home by her role as loving wife supporting her husband. She submits regardless of her husband's or her flaws.

Children who respect and obey their parents and receive instruction in the Lord.

A critical element in all of this goes back to the phrase in Colossians 3:18, "as is fitting in the Lord." Jesus is our standard in all things and the One we strive to be like.

# Lesson #11 – Colossians 3:22-4:18

---

## Teaching Strategy

This lesson is a continuation of Paul’s teachings on elements of Christian ethics established by Jesus. Of special note in this lesson is the elements of Christian standard as applied to society.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand Paul’s teachings of the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Recognize the pre-eminence of Jesus in how we interact with society.
- **Do:** Follow the teachings of Jesus for our salvation and faithfulness.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 11 – Colossians 3:22-4:18
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 11

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Features of the Christian standard (3:22-4:1)
- 2.0 Conclusions and greetings
- 3.0 Application

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.



## 1. Summarize the elements that Paul teaches about Jesus as pre-eminent and how you see these as foundational to your Christian life.

Answers will vary but look for responses indicating holy living, a thankful heart, and an orderly family.

**Holy living** – Applying the teachings of Jesus in how we live, especially sexual purity.

**A loving nature** – God is love (see also 1 John 4:7-8). Love of God and others from the heart as a faithful Christian.

**A thankful heart** – As we realize more about our salvation and God’s love for us, we grow in our thankfulness and how we express it through our faithfulness.

**An orderly family** – We follow God’s plan for how our family is structured and functions.

Each of these elements are of a personal nature as we, as saved individuals, work out our salvation.

## 2. Summarize key elements of an orderly society and why Paul would include these in his instruction?

**As Christians**, we live in various societies and bring others to the Lord from different backgrounds. This impacts how we are seen and interact in our societies. We must be seen as different from the world in order to better show Jesus.

**Slaves** (servants/workers) Fulfilling these roles from a position of humility and submissiveness. We do so as if serving God, which we truly do. We will be judged by our faithfulness to God, regardless of our role in society.

**Masters** – Masters (those in positions of influence and power) are to represent the characteristics of Christ to all, regardless of position. God requires us to have mercy if we are to receive mercy. Paul teaches, in other passages, that those in authority and influence will be held to a higher standard.

### **3. Summarize Paul's final greetings in Colossians 4:2-4.**

Paul encourages us to devote ourselves to a variety of elements. A key element is devotion – to make a focused effort to develop, grow in and express these elements. In doing so, we are better able to show our Lord to the world.

### **4. From Colossians 3:7-9, what does Paul encourage the Christians to do in context of his situation and theirs, and how does this serve as a conclusion to his letter to the Colossians?**

They are not to use his or their situation to withdraw from their role in growing in faithfulness and to continue in their efforts to show our Lord in truth. This is a fitting overall summary of the pre-eminence of Christ and how we are to have the focus of faithfulness to Christ in all things regardless of our situation or role.

**5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

As faithful Christians, we must grow to the point where we become Christlike in all facets of life.

# Lesson #12 – Colossians Conclusion

---

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on summarizing Paul’s teachings throughout the letter to the Colossians. Of special note in this lesson is how we can apply this to our lives today as we live faithfully according to the teachings of Jesus.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Understand Paul’s teachings of the pre-eminence of the teachings of Jesus.
- **Feel:** Recognize the pre-eminence of Jesus in all elements of our life.
- **Do:** Follow the teachings of Jesus for our salvation and faithfulness.

## Support

- Series – Colossians for Beginners (Mike Mazzalongo 2014)
- Video – Lesson 12 – Colossians Conclusion
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 12

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Summary of the supremacy/pre-eminence of Jesus
- 2.0 Exhortation
- 3.0 Application of Paul’s letter to the Colossians.

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What was the background of Paul's letter to the Colossians?**

The Colossians were being pressed by false teachers, Greek philosophical ideas, pagan practices and Jewish religious traditions while sincerely trying to determine and follow the teachings of Jesus.

## **2. Summarize the seven positions of supremacy held by Jesus.**

- He is the supreme spirit (vs. 15a)
- He holds the supreme position (vs. 15b)
- He is the supreme authority (vs. 16a)
- He is the supreme reason for existence (vs. 16b)
- He is the supreme power (vs. 17)
- He is the supreme head of organized religion on earth (vs. 18a)
- He is the supreme leader of the eternal Kingdom of heaven (vs. 18b)

### **3. What three things do Christians need to do if we accept what Paul has taught?**

- Remember the way they (we) were saved (vs. 21-22) – We are saved by Jesus. He purchased us with His blood therefore we belong to and serve Him.
- Remember to be faithful (Vs. 23a) – God’s grace is free, but we must commit to His will to receive it.
- Remember the truth (vs. 23b) – We must be on guard and stay focused on Jesus as pre-eminent in all things. We cannot allow other teachings to pull us away from Him. We are to remember that Christ is the only supreme one, His cross is the only way to forgiveness and perfection. His gospel is the only true message of hope.

### **4. What is the most significant lesson you learn from Paul’s letter to the Colossians and how does this support your efforts to live faithfully?**

Answers will vary significantly based on one’s situation in life. Encourage answers that show how faithful living not only aids in spiritual growth but indicates spiritual maturity. Also look for elements that show commitment to the pre-eminence of Jesus in all elements of our lives.

This concludes the lessons from Colossians. We give God the glory!