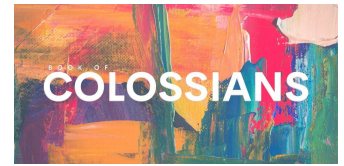


Bible Reading Plan

June 2023



June 5 - 10

June 5 Colossians 1:1-4

Paul introduces himself as an apostle in verse 1, and identifies himself with Timothy. The word apostle is most commonly understood in most of our traditions as referring to the twelve disciples and Paul alone. The meaning of the word apostle and its intent of meaning by the authors and original hearers refers to its definition as “sent messengers” or “one who is sent” (Jn 13:16). While the original apostles were sent by Jesus first hand, which makes them the first of those sent as messengers by Christ, they also passed that commission through the likes of people such as Timothy and others (2 Cor 8:23, Phil 2:25).

- Who is Jesus sending you to today?
- Do you have someone on your heart that you need to reach out to?

June 6 Colossians 1:5- 8

In vs 7 Paul mentions Epaphras as another team member and “sent messenger” to which the people of Colosi first learned of the gospel. In Vs 6 Paul alludes to a network of people spreading this same good news throughout the world and identifies the transformational fruit that it is bearing.

- Have you ever been encouraged by someone else’s faith from another church?
- How can you also build up other believers with your faith?
- What fruit can you identify in our own community and elsewhere?

June 7 Colossians 1:9-12

In vs 9 Paul sees their love for Christ in the Spirit as reason to pray without ceasing for them. In Vs 9 and 10 Paul prays that they have knowledge of God's will and the character of God.

- Why did Paul emphasize knowledge in this petition? How does knowledge of God and His will build a foundation for the other things Paul prays for?
- Who can you pray for in this way today?

June 8 Colossians 1:13- 20

In this section we see a densely packed theological summary of the power and authority of Christ. The imagery of darkness traces through Gen 1:4 creation

narrative, and follows through Exodus 10:21 as Egypt was a kingdom shrouded in darkness during the plague of the firstborn. God's salvation through the blood of the lamb in Egypt and the cross display God's authority and power over evil (Acts 26:18). Vs 15 declares Christ as the Firstborn of creation. The tradition of the Firstborn is lost in our western culture, but in ancient Israelite and some current traditions it would notate Christ equality with the Father and authority over all things. Vs 15 and Vs 17 correlate Christ power in and through creation, with Christ headship over the church and its new creation. The power of Christ's resurrection from death is the same power that spoke light into darkness.

- In light of this good news, how can we worship our creator as new creations today?

June 9 Colossians 1:21- 24

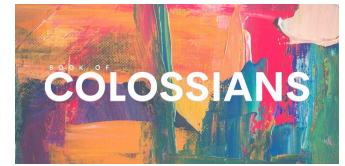
Paul paints Christ “fleshly body through death” as a bloody reconciliation in which Christ suffered for our sins. He then correlates his own suffering as Christ's body, for the sake of the church (Rom 12:1). Paul's statement that his suffering of his own making up “what is lacking in Christ's afflictions” does not point to the finished work of Christ on the cross, rather the active mission and our part as Christ's body to proclaim His Lordship throughout the earth (Matt 28:18-19).

- What would it look like for the church to reflect the suffering servant in Isaiah 53 in our community?
- Who can you serve today?

June 10 Colossians 1:25- 29

Paul declares a mystery that has been proclaimed in Vs 26. Today we take this mystery for granted and assume to know and understand in light of Christ's death and resurrection in history and our traditions of Him. However, the mystery for us plays in reverse as we start with the answer (John 14:6) and look into the scriptures to meditate on the questions and story of past ages (Matt 13:11).

- Do you take your knowledge of Christ and understanding of the scriptures for granted?
- When was the last time the Holy Spirit showed you something new through reading or talking about the bible?
- How can we meditate on His word today?



June 12 - 17

June 12 Colossians 2:1-4

In v. 1 Paul tells the Colossians that he is very concerned for those who have not seen him personally. He is concerned for them because, not having seen them himself, he is unsure about how they are doing in the daily walk with Jesus. In v. 2 he says he wants them to be encouraged because their hearts are “knit together in love.”

- What is Paul making reference to when he says this?

At the end of v. 2 and in v. 3 he goes on to add that they should be encouraged because they know about God’s mystery. This mystery is Christ Himself in whom are hidden all wisdom and knowledge.

- What is the difference between wisdom and knowledge?
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June 13 Colossians 2:5-8

Paul continues his encouragement. In v. 5 he urges them to be firm in their faith. In v. 6, he reminds them, as he does in many of his letters, to walk in Christ.

- What is Paul’s point?
- What does it mean to walk in Christ?

In v. 7, Paul reminds us that we must excel in thanksgiving for all that God has done for us. In v. 8, he warns them to beware of worldly philosophies. The early church would be challenged by many various ideas and false teachings about who Jesus was and how the Father was working in and through Him.

June 14 Colossians 2:9-12

In v. 9 Paul states, as clearly as he does anywhere else in scripture, that Jesus is God. He declares that the entirety of God’s divine nature is present in Jesus. Knowing and living by this fundamental truth is the means by which we can avoid being captured.

- Why is this truth so important?

Notice how Paul continues in v. 10-12 to show what the truth of Jesus’ deity means for our faith. Everything hinges on Jesus. So we must know confidently who He is and what that means for us.

June 15 Colossians 2:13-16

Having discussed the supremacy of Christ, Paul goes on to explain what Jesus has accomplished for us. Paul reminds us that while we were once dead, we are now alive! True life is available only to those who have put their trust and faith in Jesus.

- As you read these verses, what details about Jesus’ accomplishments on our behalf does Paul want to emphasize here?
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June 16 Colossians 2:17-20

Paul warns the Colossians about the consequences of listening to those who want them to concern themselves with the many customs and practices of those who have a form of godliness but lack the power of a vital relationship with our living Lord!

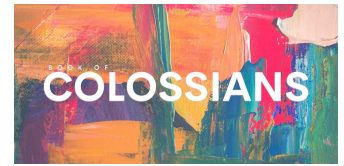
- What are some of these practices that can lead us astray?
 - Besides those Paul lists here, what others can you think of?
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June 17 Colossians 2:21-24

This chapter ends by telling us that while these legalistic behaviors have an appearance of wisdom, in reality they are useless.

- Why is this?
- What do all these practices rely on?

One of our enemy’s schemes is to get us to depend upon ourselves for our own salvation. The truth is that we need to humble ourselves and accept the fact that we can do nothing to save ourselves. Salvation is found in the Lord and in Him alone!



June 19 - 24

June 19 Colossians 3:1-4

- What does it mean to seek the things that are above and to set your mind on things that are above?
 - How does the idea of being hidden with Christ in God relate to the believer's identity and relationship with God?
 - How does this passage encourage Believers to live out their faith in the world?
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June 20 Colossians 3: 5-8

- How does the idea of the believer being dead to these things relate to the Believers New Life in Christ?
 - Who will the wrath of God come upon?
 - What is the reminder to the child of God about the practices in verse 5?
 - How can a Believer actively work towards putting off these vices and grow in Christ's likeness?
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June 21 Colossians 3:9-12

- What does it mean to put off the old self and put on the new self in this context? (Ephesians 4:24)
 - In what ways does the new self reflect the character and nature of Christ?
 - What is the significance of the phrase no Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and Freeman in the context of the new self?
 - How does putting on compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience relate to living out the new self?
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June 22 Colossians 3: 13 - 16

- How does the Forgiveness we receive from God through Christ impact our ability to forgive others?
 - In what ways does love serve as the bond of perfection in unity among believers?
 - How can the Peace of Christ rule in our hearts, and what might hinder that peace from taking root in our lives?
 - How does gratitude play a role in the Christian's life, and how can we cultivate a spirit of thankfulness in all circumstances?
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June 23 Colossians 3:17- 20

- How does the concept of doing everything in Jesus name impact our daily lives and actions?
 - How does the concept of mutual submission apply to different relationships, such as within families and the broader community?
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June 24 Colossians 3:21-25

- In what ways can fathers nurture and encourage your children in the Lord?
- How can believers maintain their faith and integrity while working under earthly employers?
- How does the idea of working for the Lord rather than for employers influence our perspective on work?
- How does the promise of an inheritance from the Lord motivate us to serve him wholeheartedly?
- In what ways can the insurance of God's justice and impartiality impact our relationships with others?