

FINDING LIFE THROUGH COLOSSIANS



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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your willingness to go through this study of Colossians. We will be looking at not only what the text says but looking at it through an “in Christ” versus an “in self” filter as well as personal application. I pray the Lord will open your eyes in new and deeper ways as you go through Colossians.

Meditation of Scripture

If the idea of meditation is new to you, it means to engage the Spirit of God to give you personal revelation of a scripture(s). It involves being quiet before the Lord and allowing Him to insert whatever thoughts He wants to share. Meditation is a crucial part of the revelation and transformation process.

Revelation

Since we will be using the word “revelation” throughout the study it is important to define the meaning of the word. “Revelation” simply means the Holy Spirit supernaturally takes His truth and makes it personal to you and to your life situations. Revelation takes you from intellectual understanding to spiritual understanding of God’s truth.

Information - Revelation - Application - Transformation

Think about these four words as you go through Philippians.

- **Information** – for you to know intellectually what God’s word says.
- **Revelation** – for the Holy Spirit to give you a personal revelation of His word.
- **Application** – depending on God to give you the willingness to apply His truth in every area of your life.
- **Transformation** – into Christ-likeness will be the result.

As important as it is to know the Biblical information (God's truth), we must seek the Holy Spirit to give us revelation and then depend on God to give us the willingness, understanding and discernment to apply it to our lives. The result will be spiritual transformation.

Focus Of This Study

The purpose of this study is to help you see God's word in light of the meaning of Christ being our Life. Therefore, before we get into Colossians, let's first lay a foundation of what it means to "find Life." We will continue building on that foundation by looking at what it means and how to grow into Christ-likeness and finally look at how we read scripture through an "in Christ" filter versus an "in self" filter. As we go through Colossians, we will be applying these three foundational truths to various passages.

CHAPTER ONE

Finding Life

Introduction

Let's begin laying the foundation by looking at what it means to "find life." We will start with this key truth.

***Either we are finding LIFE
"FROM SELF" or "FROM CHRIST."***

When we talk about living the Christian life, the key word is "source." This word has many meanings: produce, provide, supply and initiate. When it comes to living the Christian life, there are two sources: you or Christ. If you are the source to live the Christian life, this is called living "from self." If Christ is your Source, this is called living "from Christ." Let's start with looking at what it means to live the Christian life from self.

Living The Christian Life "FROM SELF"

Living the Christian life "from self" means:

It is up to YOU as the SOURCE using your intellect, IQ, ability, self-discipline, willpower and Biblical knowledge with GOD'S HELP to PRODUCE the Christian life.

Let's look at some examples to explain the definition.

If you are the source, it is up to you with God's help to:

- Take God's word and consistently do what it says.
- Consistently keep God's commands.
- Produce spiritual victory and freedom.
- Set yourself free from your sinful behaviors.

- Produce victory over your strongholds.
- Transform yourself.

Concerning this list, think about these two questions: If you have been trying to accomplish these things, how well is that working for you? Have you been consistently successful in accomplishing any of these things? The last question: if not, why not? Answer: Because John 8:32 tells us:

*“You will know the truth and the **truth will set you free.**”*

Have you thought about the converse of this verse? If we are not being set free, doesn't that mean we are not living from the truth. Anything that is contrary to God's truth is a false belief. Think about this. If living from self is not working, then we are living from the following false belief.

***You can SUCCESSFULLY live the Christian life by
YOU being the source with God's help.***

How do we know it is a false belief? Because it is not producing freedom, victory and transformation.

The truth is that living from self as the source will only produce:

- More frustration
- More failure
- More defeat
- More bondage
- More disillusionment
- More inner turmoil
- More of the same and worse.

Can you identify? Are any of these things true of you? If so, is it possible that living from self with God's help is not the life that God intends for us to live? Therefore, let's look at living the Christian life "from Christ."

Living The Christian Life “FROM CHRIST”

Living the Christian life “from Christ” is defined this way:

***Depending on Christ as your SOURCE to
PRODUCE “THE” Christian life in you.***

To help you better understand living “from Christ,” we will look at the answers to these questions.

- **What is THE Christian life?**
- **What does it mean for Christ to be THE Christian life?**

1. What Is THE Christian Life?

If someone were to come to you and ask, “What is the Christian life?” what would you tell them? Many Christians believe THE Christian life is about keeping a set of rules or commands or having a spiritual checklist: reading the Bible, praying, going to church, serving in the church, being involved in a small group study and doing the best they can for God. Even though all of these things are biblical, is it possible that THE Christian life is something more?

a. Look at what Jesus says about THE Christian life.

Jesus says in the following verses:

“... I AM the way, the truth, and THE LIFE...” John 14:6

“... I AM the resurrection and THE LIFE.” John 11:25

Think about these verses for a minute. What is Jesus saying? It is clear Jesus is saying that He Himself is **THE** Life. What does He mean when He says that He is **THE** Life?

He Himself is “THE” Christian life.

If this is true, THE Christian life is not a checklist of what we are to accomplish “for” God. Rather, THE Christian life is a Person, Jesus Christ, whom we are to live “from.” If you have believed that the Christian life is what we do for God, doesn’t it change how you think about the Christian life knowing it is a Person rather than a checklist you are trying to do through self-effort? To further confirm this truth let’s look at the words of Paul.

b. What Paul says about living “THE” Christian Life

Paul confirms what Jesus said about being THE Life in Philippians 1:21 when he says:

*“For me, to live **IS CHRIST....**”*

Paul confirms that living “THE” Christian life is living from Christ, which means it is not about completing a checklist, trying to keep a set of rules, trying to keep from sinning, or trying to do the best you can to live for God. For Paul, living THE Christian life is Christ Himself. He makes it even more personal in Colossians 3:4:

*“...Christ who is **YOUR life ...**”*

At this point you might be scratching your head and asking this question: “What does it mean for Christ to be THE Life and ‘your’ life?”

2. What Does It Mean For Christ To Be THE LIFE?

***Christ as THE Life and YOUR Life means that
He is the SOURCE for living life.***

We see this in 1 Corinthians 1:30:

“He is the SOURCE of your life in Christ Jesus, ...”
(Revised Standard Version)

Paul is telling us that Christ is our Source for life. When we look at this truth in light of the definition of the word “source,” at the beginning of this chapter, Jesus as our Source is our:

- Initiator (of THE Life)
- Supplier (of THE Life)
- Provider (of THE Life)
- Producer (of THE Life)

Look at these four words in light of Philippians 1:6:

“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began (initiates) a good work in you will carry it to completion (provide, produce and supply) until the day of Christ Jesus.”

God **initiates** His work in us at salvation and, as our Source, will bring it to completion because He is the **provider, supplier and producer** of THE Life.

Let’s look at two other verses that reveal that Christ is your Source for living the Christian life:

“In Him we live and move and have our being.” Acts 17:28

“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things....”
Romans 11:36

These are just two of many verses in the Bible that reveal to us that Christ is to be our Source for living THE Christian life.

Before we go on, let’s address the issue of God’s helping us live THE Christian life. The question was, “Will God help us live THE Christian life?” Let’s answer this question with a question.

***If Christ is your SOURCE for living THE Christian life,
WHY would He HELP you be the source?***

To clarify, if you asked God to help you, weren't you really asking Him to help you be the source? However, since He is the Source, doesn't it make sense that He will not help you be the source?

Let's look at surgery to better understand this truth. Imagine if you were having brain surgery performed on you and you came out of the anesthesia, took the scalpel from the surgeon and asked him/her to help you perform the surgery. I think we would agree that would not end well. In like manner, God is not going to help you be the source because He and He alone is the Source to produce THE Christian life in you.

Therefore, since Christ is our Source as the initiator, supplier, provider and producer should we not live "from" Him? Now that we know we are to live from Christ, let's look at the objective of living from Christ as our Source.

CHAPTER TWO

Growing Up Into Christ-Likeness

Another way of saying we are to live from Christ is to grow into Christ-likeness. Let's begin by learning what it means to grow up spiritually.

1. What Does It Mean To Grow Up?

Growing up spiritually FROM Christ means growing into CHRIST-LIKENESS.

Let's look at four verses that reveal this. First, in Ephesians 4:15 it says:

*"Instead, we will speak the truth in love, **growing in every way more and more like Christ**, who is the head of his body, the church."*

The word "growing" in this verse means "inward spiritual growth." The second verse is Romans 8:29:

*"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become **conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be the first-born among many brethren."*

The word "conformed" means to "align our beliefs and thoughts with another or having the same form as another."

The third verse is 2 Corinthians 3:18:

*"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being **transformed into His (Christ) likeness** with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who **Is the Spirit.**"*

The Greek word for “transformed” is “metamorphoo” which means “a change of the form or nature of a person into a completely different person by supernatural means.” It is where we get the word “metamorphosis.”

The last verse is Galatians 4:19.

*“My children, with whom I am again in labor until **Christ is formed in you.**”*

The word “formed” in the Greek means “in the same nature as.” Let’s combine these four verses to affirm that we are to grow and who we are growing into.

- “**Growing** in every way more and more **like Christ**” – Ephesians 4:15
- “**Conformed** to the **image of His Son.**” – Romans 8:29
- “**Transformed** into **His [Christ’s] likeness.**” – 2 Corinthians 3:18
- “**Christ** being **formed** in you.” – Galatians 4:15

Therefore, let’s sum up growing up spiritually this way.

Christ being FORMED in you is the result of you being CONFORMED to His image which occurs when you are being TRANSFORMED into Christ-likeness (i.e., growing to become more like Christ).

2. The Definition Of Christ-Likeness

Christ-likeness is LIVING FROM and EXPERIENCING the SUPERNATURAL characteristics of Christ in us.

The fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22, 23a is a great example of Christ-like characteristics:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is [Christ’s] love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control....”

The fruit of the Spirit is not something God gives us or that we try to produce, it is who Christ is in us (i.e., He is our love, joy, peace, etc.). We see a great example of this in Ephesians 2:14:

“For He [Christ] Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall.”

The key truth is this:

***Christ is NOT GIVING us love, joy, peace, etc.
He IS our love, joy, peace, etc.***

Here is a longer list of Christ-like characteristics:

Christ In You Is Your:

Unconditional love	Victory	Grace
Acceptance	Faith	Freedom
Patience	Strength	Peace
Forgiveness	Understanding	Security
Fearlessness	Wisdom	Discernment
Christ-confidence	Adequacy	Humility
Boldness	Righteousness	Selflessness
Rest	Compassion	Courage
Hope	Gentleness	Christ-control
Faithfulness	Power	Joy
Worth/Value	Kindness	Goodness
Affection	Respect	Thanksgiving

3. Christ-like Characteristics Are SUPERNATURAL

When we talk about Christ-like characteristics, we are not talking about human thoughts, feelings or attitudes. We are

talking about supernatural characteristics of Christ. What is meant by “supernatural” when it comes to Christ-likeness?

It means they are GOD-PRODUCED and are UNEXPLAINABLE but they can be EXPERIENTIAL.

Let’s look at this definition in light of Philippians 4:7:

“Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”

The peace Paul is referring to is a God-produced peace that Paul could not explain (*which exceeds anything we can understand*) because it was supernatural. Even though could not put into words a description of God’s peace, he was experiencing it. Even though Christ-like characteristics are supernatural, you can eventually experience them.

3. Key Truths About Christ-Likeness

Let’s look at three key truths about Christ-likeness.

a. **We contain ALL of these Christ-like characteristics.**

The first key truth is since Christ is in you, how much of Christ’s love, acceptance, humility, etc. do you contain? The answer is: all of it. How do we know? Look at Colossians 2:9, 10 for the answer.

“For in Him [Christ] ALL the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him [Christ] you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority.”

If we have the fullness of Christ in us and we are complete in Him then how much of His love, peace, joy, etc. do we contain? Answer: All of it.

b. Living from Christ-likeness means Christ will meet ALL of your SPIRITUAL needs.

As we live from Christ-likeness, Christ as our Source will meet all our spiritual needs. We see this in Philippians 4:19

“And my God will meet ALL of your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ.”

When you look at the list of Christ-like characteristics on the previous page, is there anything on that list that you don't need? I hope you would agree we need everything on that list. The good news is we don't have to try to meet our own spiritual needs because Christ Himself is our need-meeter.

c. Negative circumstances or relationships won't ROB you of your Christ-likeness.

Adversity, negative relationships or circumstances can rob us of our human joy, peace, rest, etc. but living from Christ-likeness, (Christ's love, acceptance, security, rest, etc.) means you can live from a place where adversity, negative relationships or circumstance won't rob you of your Christ-likeness. Paul gives us a personal example of this in Colossians 1:24:

***“I am overflowing with JOY
in the midst of all our suffering....”***

In spite of Paul's suffering (beatings, whippings, stoning, etc.), he was experiencing a supernatural, Christ-like joy that no suffering could rob him of. We know this is a supernatural, Christ-like joy because we would not be feeling a human joy in the midst of our suffering. Now that we understand that living from Christ means growing into Christ-likeness, let's look at how we grow up/live from Christ.

4. How Do We Grow UP - Live “From Christ?”

I believe the heart of the answer to this question is found in John 15:5:

“I AM the VINE, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit...” John 15:5a

Jesus is saying that just as the physical branch is designed to be totally dependent upon the physical vine for life, you, as a “spiritual” branch, are designed to live totally dependent upon Him, the spiritual Vine, for life. The word “abide” means **“dependence.”** Other words for “abide” are:

- Remain
- Rely on
- Draw from
- Live from

Doesn’t it make sense that if Christ is our Source, then our part is to depend on Him to be our Source? That is why Jesus uses the perfect example of the branch being totally dependent on the vine for life.

So, God’s design for you that allows Christ to live His life through you is:

***DEPEND ON, RELY ON and DRAW FROM
God as your Source.***

[Note: The word “bears” in John 15:5 does not mean “produce.” The word “bears” means “to carry.” The key point is the branch does not produce the fruit. The vine is the source for producing the fruit while the branch only manifests the fruit that the vine produces.]

Another word for dependence is **faith**. We see this in Galatians 2:20:

*“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, **but Christ lives in me**. The life I now live in the body, **I live by FAITH in the Son of God**, who loved me and gave himself for me.”*

Why do we need to live by faith in Christ?

As we walk by faith in Christ (walking in the Spirit), the Holy Spirit will TRANSFORM us into Christ-likeness.

Another reason we are to depend on Christ is that He, through the Holy Spirit, is the initiator, provider and producer of Christ-likeness. (Philippians 1:6; 4:19). Our part is to depend on Him moment by moment to transform us into Christ-likeness.

5. Practical Steps of Faith

Before we look at the outcome of being transformed into Christ-likeness, let's look at some practical steps of faith to engage God to be transformed into Christ-likeness.

Example #1: Let's assume you struggle with rejection.

Step of faith: “Lord, I am trusting you to **BE my acceptance**. I am seeking you to renew my mind to the truth that I am totally accepted in You with the result, I no longer have to take ownership of someone's rejection.”

Example #2: Let's assume you struggle loving someone.

Step of faith: “Lord, I am trusting you to **BE my unconditional love**. I am seeking you to renew my mind to the truth that not only am I unconditionally loved by You, but through me, You can unconditionally love this unlovable person through me.”

Example #3: Let's assume you struggle forgiving someone.

Step of faith: "Lord, I am trusting you to **BE my forgiveness**. I am seeking you to renew my mind to the truth that I am totally forgiven by You. Transform my heart so that I will be willing to forgive this person with Your forgiveness."

6. Examples of What Our Lives Will Look Like As We Are Being Transformed Into Christ-Likeness

What will be the inward and outward results in our lives as we are being transformed into Christ-likeness? Here are some examples:

- You live from **Christ's unconditional love** rather than trying to find unconditional love from others.
- You live from **Christ's acceptance** which means you no longer have to take ownership of someone else's rejection of you and you can accept others unconditionally.
- You no longer have to live in fear because you are living from **Christ's courage**.
- You no longer have to try to be in control because you are living from **Christ's control**.
- You can live from **Christ's peace** when adverse circumstances occur (like receiving a life-threatening health diagnosis).
- You can live from **Christ-confidence** in spite of all the negativity and evil that is going on in the world.
- You can live from **Christ's forgiveness** when someone has offended you.
- You can live from **Christ's humility** when your pride is hurt or you feel unappreciated.

I hope you see through these examples of living from Christ-likeness how radically our lives can be changed. Would you agree that if you are more and more living from Christ-likeness you would call that “abundant life?” Let me sum up this section this way:

Living “from Christ” means that we **DEPEND** on Christ as our Source in order to be **TRANSFORMED** into **CHRIST-LIKENESS**.

[**NOTE:** Sometimes when people hear the term “Christ-likeness” they believe it means we are becoming deity. That is not true. Rather, as we walk in dependence on God, He transforms us to live from Christ-like characteristics (e.g., a Christ-like love, joy, forgiveness, etc.)]

Before we end this chapter, let’s summarize the difference between living from self, versus living from Christ:

<u>Living From SELF</u>	<u>Living From CHRIST</u>
The Christian life is a set of rules to follow or a spiritual checklist.	THE Christian life is a Person: Jesus Christ
Self is the source with God’s help to live the Christian life.	Christ is the Source to live the Christian life.
Depend on my self-effort, will-power, self-discipline and ability with God’s help to live the Christian life.	Depend on God and His, power moment by moment to live His life in me.
Results in living in bondage and defeat	Results in living in Christ’s victory-freedom.
There is no transformation.	I am being transformed into Christ-likeness.
Self-centered, self-absorbed life.	Christ-centered and other-focused life

CHAPTER THREE

An “In Christ” Versus “In Self” Filter

Introduction

We can look at God’s word through two filters: and “in Christ” or “in self” filter. In this chapter, we will look at the difference between the two.

The Difference Between An “In Self” Versus An “In Christ” Filter

a. Through An “In SELF” Filter

Let’s first define an “in self” filter:

We learn God’s word and try to apply it to our lives using our OWN intellect, ability, self-discipline and willpower with GOD’S HELP to be TRANSFORMED.

b. Through “In CHRIST” Filter

An “in Christ” filter is defined as:

Seeing God’s word through the truth of Christ being our SOURCE from whom we live in a moment by moment DEPENDENCE in order to be transformed and grow up spiritually.

Example #1:

To understand the difference between and “in self” versus “in Christ” filter let’s look at a passage of scripture.

*"I can do all thing through Him (Christ) who
strengthens me." Philippians 4:13*

Looking at this verse through an "in self" filter, we conclude that we, in and of ourselves, using our own strength and ability can do all things with Christ's help.

Looking at Philippians 4:13 through an "in Christ" filter means we understand Christ as our Source will do all things through us with the result we will grow up spiritually (be transformed into Christ-likeness).

Example #2

Look at the commands listed in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19.

"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-19

Through An "In Self" Filter

Reading this scripture through an "in self" filter means that it is up to me using my willpower, strength and self-discipline to try and keep these commands.

What do you believe will be the results?

Through An "In Christ" Filter

Reading this verse through an "in Christ" filter, means I, in and of myself being the source, cannot keep any of these commands. However, as I depend on Christ as my Source, through me He will rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in everything and not quench the Spirit.

One Final Thought Concerning An In Christ Filter

Let's look again at John 15:5:

*"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do **nothing.**"*

The word we want to focus on in this verse is "nothing." When you look this word up in the original Greek it means "nothing." When Jesus says, "*apart from Me you can do nothing*" what does that mean.

"Nothing" means that in and of ourselves,

- We can't do what the Bible asks, tells us or commands us to do.
- We can't take God's promises and make them an experiential reality in our lives. (i.e. set ourselves free, transform ourselves)
- We can't change or transform the lives of others.

Note: In addition to reading Colossians as God's word, please read it as Paul's testimony as well because he is not only teaching but, he is also bearing witness to how the Lord has transformed his life.

All the verses will be from the New American Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

CHAPTER FOUR

Colossians - Chapter One

Chapter 1 - Verses 1-14

- 1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
- 2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.
- 3 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,
- 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints;
- 5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel
- 6 which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth;
- 7 just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,
- 8 and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.
- 9 For this reason, also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
- 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;
- 11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously
- 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.
- 13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,
- 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Your Thoughts

As you meditate on these verses, write down any personal revelation the Holy Spirit may give you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment concerning how these verses might apply to you, your marriage, your parenting, your workplace or you other relationships. Write those applications down as well.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Chapter 1 - Verses 15-29

- 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
- 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.
- 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.
- 18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.
- 19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,
- 20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.
- 21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds,
- 22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—
- 23 if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.
- 24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.
- 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,
- 26 that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints,

- 27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches
of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which
is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
- 28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and
teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may
present every man complete in Christ.
- 29 For this purpose, also I labor, striving according to His
power, which mightily works within me.

Your Thoughts

As you meditate on these verses, write down any personal revelation the Holy Spirit may give you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment concerning how these verses might apply to you, your marriage, your parenting, your workplace or you other relationships. Write those applications down as well.

[illegible]

CHAPTER FIVE

Colossians - Chapter Two

Chapter 2 - Verses 1-12

- 1 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face,
- 2 that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself,
- 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
- 4 I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.
- 5 For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.
- 6 Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,
- 7 having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.
- 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.
- 9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,
- 10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;
- 11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

- 12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

Your Thoughts

As you meditate on these verses, write down any personal revelation the Holy Spirit may give you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment concerning how these verses might apply to you, your marriage, your parenting, your workplace or you other relationships. Write those applications down as well.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Chapter 2 - Verses 13-23

- 13 When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,
- 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.
- 15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.
- 16 Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—
- 17 things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.
- 18 Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,
- 19 and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.
- 20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,
- 21 “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!”
- 22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?
- 23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

Your Thoughts

As you meditate on these verses, write down any personal revelation the Holy Spirit may give you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment concerning how these verses might apply to you, your marriage, your parenting, your workplace or you other relationships. Write those applications down as well.

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CHAPTER SIX

Colossians - Chapter Three

Chapter 3 - Verses 1-13

- 1 Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.
- 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.
- 5 Therefore, consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.
- 6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience,
- 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.
- 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.
- 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices,
- 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—
- 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.
- 12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

- 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

Your Thoughts

As you meditate on these verses, write down any personal revelation the Holy Spirit may give you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment concerning how these verses might apply to you, your marriage, your parenting, your workplace or you other relationships. Write those applications down as well.

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Chapter 3 - Verses 14-25

- 14 Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.
- 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.
- 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.
- 17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.
- 18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
- 19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.
- 20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.
- 21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.
- 22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.
- 23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,
- 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.
- 25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.

Your Thoughts

As you meditate on these verses, write down any personal revelation the Holy Spirit may give you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment concerning how these verses might apply to you, your marriage, your parenting, your workplace or you other relationships. Write those applications down as well.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

Colossians - Chapter Four

Chapter 4 - Verses 1-9

- 1 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.
- 2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving;
- 3 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, for which I have also been imprisoned;
- 4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.
- 5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.
- 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.
- 7 As to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information.
- 8 For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts;
- 9 and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your number. They will inform you about the whole situation here.

Your Thoughts

As you meditate on these verses, write down any personal revelation the Holy Spirit may give you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment concerning how these verses might apply to you, your marriage, your parenting, your workplace or you other relationships. Write those applications down as well.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Chapter 4 - Verses 10-18

- 10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him);
- 11 and also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me.
- 12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.
- 13 For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.
- 14 Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and also Demas.
- 15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house.
- 16 When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea.
- 17 Say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."
- 18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.

Your Thoughts

As you meditate on these verses, write down any personal revelation the Holy Spirit may give you. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment concerning how these verses might apply to you, your marriage, your parenting, your workplace or you other relationships. Write those applications down as well.

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Summary

We hope this study has given you a clearer perspective of how Paul describes and walks in Christ as His Source. As brilliant and capable as he was, Paul realized that his intellect and ability was not enough to live THE Christian life. This is why he said in Galatians 2:20:

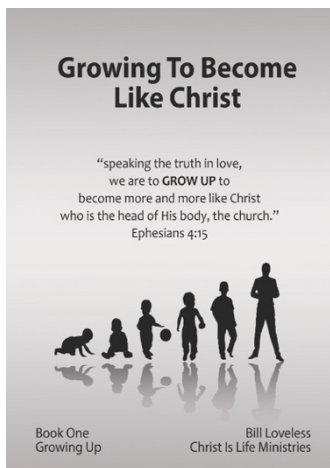
*“....I **no longer live** (I can’t do it) but **Christ** (as my Source) **lives in me.**”*

Paul was our model in understanding how to depend on Christ as our Source. We pray the Holy Spirit has given you deeper revelation of what that looks like and how it applies to your life.

Where Do I Go From Here?

At our website listed below, we encourage you to check out our four-part discipleship series called ***Growing Up – Growing Out – Growing Deep*** designed to teach Christians how to fulfill their purpose and calling. The first book in the series is called ***Growing to Become Like Christ***.

Book One covers the following topics:



- What it means to grow up spiritually to become like Christ.
- The difference between living “A” Christian life versus living “THE” Christian life.
- What it looks like practically to grow to become like Christ.
- What are some of the hindrances to spiritual growth and how we overcome them.
- How becoming like Christ transforms every area of our lives.

CILM DISCIPLESHIP MATERIALS

CILM has this series and many other studies, booklets and videos at our website listed below. To purchase ready-to-use copies from **Amazon or download for free** and do your own printing, copying and binding, please go to the **Discipleship** tab of our website. We hope you will take advantage of these materials.

Christ Is Life Ministries (CILM)

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(2025-08-08)

FINDING LIFE THROUGH COLOSSIANS

The focus of this study is to look at the book of Colossians through the eyes of:

- Understanding and applying the meaning of Christ as our Life and Source.
- Understanding Colossians through an “in Christ” filter versus an “in self” filter.
- Learning the meaning of Christ-likeness and what it looks like to be transformed to live from it.

This booklet can be used for one-on-one study, small group or Sunday school format.



Bill Loveless is the founder of Christ is Life Ministries (CILM), a non-profit, non-denominational discipleship ministry. CILM's focus is teaching Christians that Christ is their only source for living the Christian life, what it looks like to be transformed into Christ-likeness, and how to be drawn into a deep relationship with Him. Bill finished his earthly journey in 2024 and is now with the Lord he loves.

For further information and to see other discipleship materials being offered, please go to our website: www.christislifeministries.com

