



# EMPOWERED COLOSSIANS

*Bible Studies*

JULY 2024



# EMPOWERED COLOSSIANS

## TERM 3 MORNING TEACHING SERIES



### PRIMARY AIM

To begin to explore the theme of being disciples of Jesus Christ, with a focus on the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering us for this task.

### SUBSIDIARY AIMS

- To grow in our understanding of nature and work of Christ.
- To grow in our understanding of the Spirit's role in transforming the life of the believer.
- To gain a deeper understanding of the letter to the Colossians and its themes.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

Over the course of the second half of 2024, St Hilary's will be launching a new Discipleship Strategy. As we head towards this launch, our morning congregations will take some time to remind ourselves of the biblical principles for discipleship.

Paul's letter to the Colossians, likely written from a dark prison cell, was written to correct false teaching and to encourage spiritual transformation within the believer that is grounded in who Christ is, what he has done and will continue to do through his Spirit.

The letter intertwines the importance of Jesus' death and resurrection with the empowerment of the Spirit to guide us to be more like him. Many church cultures tend towards an over-emphasis on Scripture or the Spirit. However, our desire at St Hilary's is to find a healthy middle ground, which seeks to teach a solid understanding of the role of both Spirit and Scripture in our discipleship.

## STRUCTURE AND TOPICS

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	READING
1	Jul-21	Grounded in Christ	Colossians 1:1-29
2	Jul-28	Freedom & Fullness in Christ	Colossians 2:1-23
3	Aug-4	Transformed Living in Christ	Colossians 3:1-17
4	Aug-11	Transformed Relationships in Christ	Colossians 3:18-4:1
5	Aug-18	To the Ends of the Earth (Prayer, Witness & Impact)	Colossians 4:2-18

# 1

## **Colossians 1:1-29**

# ***GROUNDED IN CHRIST***

1. Pray and read Colossians 1:1-29.
2. In verses 1-2, what do you notice about how Paul, Timothy and the Colossian's are introduced / addressed?
3. How is Paul's thankfulness expressed (v.3)?
4. What is the nature of the Colossian's growth (v.4)?
5. What is the basis of their growth (v.5-8)?

6. What is Paul asking to God to do (v.9-14)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. If you were to pray this prayer for yourself and each other, what might it look like if God were to answer this prayer?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Verses 15-20 give glory to Jesus, the Lord of Creation and Lord of the New Creation. What stands out to you about this portrait of Jesus?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What is God's desire for the Colossian's based on verses 21-23?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What does Paul mean in verse 24? Is this an attitude we also must have to follow Jesus?

11. According to verses 28-29, what is Paul's message, his method and his purpose?
  
12. What does it mean to you to be 'fully mature in Christ'?  
What is a next step you can take to further pursue this goal in your life?
  
13. What do we learn from Paul in how he prays for others?  
How might this change our own prayers?
  
14. Paul praises Jesus as Lord of all. Spend some time praising Jesus in prayer. Draw on verses 15-20 as inspiration.
  
15. Pray for each other.



# 2 **Colossians 2:1-23**

## ***FREEDOM & FULLNESS IN CHRIST***

1. Pray and read Colossians 2:1-23.
2. Choose a verse from the passage and share with the group why it stands out to you.
3. In verses 1-5, what does Paul want for the Christians in Colossae and Laodicea?
4. What things does Paul encourage the Christians to do in verses 6-7? What in real terms do you think he means by each of these things?



5. Paul issues a warning in verse 8 about false teaching. This teaching was leading the Christians to depend 'on human tradition and the elemental forces of this world rather than on Christ' and relates to the Christians' proper understanding of Jesus and salvation.

What does verse 9-10 teach us about Jesus and why might this be important?

6. What understanding of baptism does Paul teach in verses 11-12?

7. In verses 13-15, how did God deal with sin? What was Christ's victory?

8. What 'is found in Christ'? (v.17)

9. What are the Christians to guard against (v.18-23)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What types of rules and regulations might Christians overemphasize today?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. Are there any areas in your own life where your knowledge and pride might lead you away from God's power and grace to save? How can we guard against this from happening?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. Look back over the chapter and list out the things that you can find to be thankful to God for.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. Pray for each other.



# 3

## **Colossians 3:1-17**

# **TRANSFORMED LIVING IN CHRIST**

1. Warm up: As we go through life, there are many times when we grow and undergo various transformations. Share a period in your life when you experienced transformation in your own life.
2. Pray and read Colossians 3:1-17.
3. In verses 1-4, what kind of relationship is Paul encouraging the Colossians to have with Christ?
4. What does it mean to have your life 'hidden with Christ' (v.3)?

5. Paul in 2:16-23 seems to be responding to some who are dealing with sin by creating radical rules and regulations. What radical action instead is Paul calling the Colossians to in 3:5-10 to deal with sin? How might this kind of action look like in someone's life?
  
6. Does putting on 'the new self' mean that all other identities are removed (10-11)? Why/why not?
  
7. Paul lists out virtues in verse 12. We see these virtues displayed in the person of Christ. Which of these virtues do you find comes more naturally to you and which virtue do you struggle with more?
  
8. What role does mutual forgiveness play in the body of Christ and our journey of putting on these virtues?

9. Some in our current age might think about love as a feeling. Discuss this understanding of love in relation to verse 14?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. What kind of peace is Paul calling people to (15)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
11. The word of Christ is to be communicated in the body of believers through instruction and worship. What stands out to you in verses 16-17?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
12. Looking back over verses 1-17, what kind of transformation is Christ calling us to?

13. What is one thing that you look to your brothers and sisters in Christ for, to help you as seek to put off the 'old self' and put on the 'new self'?

14. Pray for each other.

# 4

## **Colossians 3:18 - 4:1**

### ***TRANSFORMED RELATIONSHIPS IN CHRIST***

1. Pray and read Colossians 3:18-4:1.
2. How might verses 1-17 provide the context and principles for Paul's instructions for household relationships in the following verses?
3. Paul addresses wives in verse 18 and husbands in verse 19. What attitude does Paul want wives and husbands to have towards each other? Also, what attitudes or behaviours need to be guarded against?
4. Some Christians misuse verse 18 as part of a theology which justifies forms of domestic violence against wives. How would you respond to someone who holds this view?



5. Children are 'to obey their parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord'. How might including the motivation of pleasing God positively influence both the parent and the child?
  
6. What types of things lead children to become embittered? What steps can fathers (or mothers or grandparents) take to avoid embittering their children and to instead encourage them?
  
7. Why might Paul give instructions to masters and slaves instead of seeking to end slavery?
  
8. How does Paul's instructions in verse 22-25 benefit the Christian slave and others in the household? What other attitudes might he be guarding the slave against having?

9. In 4:1, what is the warning for Christian masters? What is at stake if they do not heed this warning?
10. What can we learn from Paul's instructions to masters and slaves, that might also apply to our own workplaces?
11. *... it must be recognized that Christian authors [Paul and Peter] appropriated these well-known household codes probably for apologetic reasons and as a means of ensuring the commendable conduct of Christian homes before outsiders (see Col 4:5; 1 Thess 4:12). The Christian household codes concern how the lordship of Jesus Christ over a community is to be lived out before the pagan world around them. While these codes are undoubtedly patriarchal, they express that patriarchy in light of mutual obligations of honor and love and clearly censure abuses of authority.*

Discuss this quote from NT scholar Dr Michael Bird.

12. What other domestic relationships or roles are not addressed by Paul? Name them and explore what principles from chapter 3 might be helpfully applied to those relationships.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
13. Share one principle or insight that you will take away, or action that you will pursue during the week.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
14. Pray for each other.

# 5

## **Colossians 4:2-18**

### ***TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH (PRAYER, WITNESS & IMPACT)***

1. If you had to describe your prayer life, what would you say it is characterized by?
2. Pray and read Colossians 4:2-18.
3. What is the Colossian believers' prayer to be characterised by (v.2)?
4. What are some ways we can increase our thankfulness and watchfulness in our prayer life?

5. In verses 3-4, what does Paul ask pray for and what is at the heart of his request?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What does it look like to wisely witness to your friends, neighbours and work colleagues (v.5)? Conversely, what does unwise witness look like?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What obstacles in society stand in the way of our positive witness to others?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. 'Let your conversation be always full of grace' (v.6). What does this look like in practice?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What do you learn about the people Paul mentions in verses 7-15? What do you learn about Paul?

10. As you look back over Colossians, what themes or verses stand out to you? Why?

11. Pray for each other.



*FEEDBACK?*

*To share your ideas and feedback  
on how to improve our bible study series,  
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