

## **Table of Contents (tap to go to study)**

<b>Thanksgiving and Prayer - Colossians 1:1-14 .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The Supremacy of Christ - Colossians 1:15-23 .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Paul's Labor for the Church - Colossians 1:24-2:5 .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Freedom From Human Regulations Through Life With Christ - Colossians 2:6-23 .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Rules for Holy Living - Colossians 3:1-17 .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Rules for Christian Households - Colossians 3:18-4:1 .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Further Instructions - Colossians 4:2-18 .....</b>	<b>8</b>

## Thanksgiving and Prayer - Colossians 1:1-14

**Topics:** Church, Faith, Forgiveness, Fruit, God, Gospel, Grace, Heaven, Holy Spirit, Hope, Jesus Christ, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Knowledge, Love, Partnerships, Peace, Praise, Prayer, Sin, Strength, Thankfulness

### Open It

1. How many cards and letters do you usually receive at Christmas?
2. When was the last time you received a letter from a stranger?
- \* 3. When was the last time you received a letter that really cheered you up?

### Explore It

4. Who wrote the letter to the Colossians? (1:1)
5. Who was with Paul when he wrote this letter? (1:1)
6. How did Paul address the Colossian Christians? (1:2)
7. How did Paul greet his audience? (1:2)
- \* 8. Why did Paul offer prayers of thanksgiving for the Colossians? (1:3-4)
9. From what source did the believers' faith and love spring? (1:5)
10. What did Paul stress about the gospel? (1:5-6)
11. Who taught the gospel to the Colossians? (1:7)
12. How did Paul describe Epaphras? (1:7)
13. What did Epaphras tell Paul and Timothy about the Colossians? (1:7-8)
- \* 14. What was Paul's primary prayer for these Christians? (1:9)
- \* 15. What results did Paul want for the Colossians? (1:10)
16. How could the church at Colosse have spiritual strength? (1:11-12)
17. How does God enable believers to share in His inheritance? (1:12-14)

### Get It

18. What do you find appealing about the way Paul started his letter to the Colossians?
- \* 19. Why did Paul praise a group of Christians he had never met?
20. How are the results of faith, love, and hope evident in your life?
21. How is the gospel bearing fruit in your church?
- \* 22. What can we learn about praying for others from Paul's prayers for the Colossians?
23. If Paul were to write you a personal letter, what might he say to you?

### Apply It

24. What is one way you can improve your prayer this week?
25. What missionaries can you pray for on a regular basis over the next month?
- \* 26. To whom can you write an encouraging letter sometime during the next week?

## The Supremacy of Christ - Colossians 1:15-23

*Topics:* Believers, Church, Creation, Death, Doctrine, Enemies, Image, Reconciliation

### Open It

- \* 1. What person comes to mind when you think of greatness?
- 2. Whom do you look up to? Why?
- 3. What qualities stand out in a person you admire?

### Explore It

- 4. What is Christ's relationship to God? (1:15)
- \* 5. What is Christ's relationship to Creation? (1:15-17)
- 6. How do "all things . . . hold together" under Christ? (1:16-17)
- 7. What is Christ's relationship to the church? (1:18)
- \* 8. Why was the resurrection of Jesus significant? (1:18)
- 9. How did Paul explain the deity of Christ? (1:19)
- \* 10. What did God achieve through the work of His Son? (1:20)
- 11. How did Christ bring us to God? (1:21-22)
- 12. Why was reconciliation necessary? (1:21-22)
- 13. What is a Christian's position before God? (1:22)
- 14. What is the role of faith in reconciliation with God? (1:23)
- 15. What kind of faith did the Colossians have? (1:23)
- 16. What was Paul's confident expectation? (1:23)

### Get It

- \* 17. Why did Paul take the time to describe the qualities of Christ?
- \* 18. What difference does our understanding about Christ make?
- 19. How would you explain reconciliation (with God) to a non-Christian friend?
- 20. What does the work of Christ on your behalf mean to you?
- 21. In what way are we all under Christ's authority?
- 22. In what way are you under Christ's authority?
- 23. How firm is your faith?
- 24. What can a person do if his or her faith is weak?

### Apply It

- \* 25. When can you take time this week to meditate on this powerful, compelling description of Christ?
- 26. What truths about Christ do you want to remember when you present the gospel to unbelieving friends?
- 27. How can you strengthen your faith in Christ this week?

## Paul's Labor for the Church - Colossians 1:24-2:5

*Topics:* Body, Church, Encouragement, Glory, God, Hope, Jesus Christ, Joy, Serving, Suffering, Teaching, Unity, Wisdom

### Open It

1. When was the last time you had a good physical workout?
- \* 2. How do you feel after strenuous physical exercise?

### Explore It

3. Why did Paul rejoice? (1:24)
- \* 4. What did Paul do for the sake of the church? (1:24)
5. What commission did God give Paul? (1:25)
6. To what mystery did Paul refer? (1:26)
7. To whom had God chosen to make known a mystery? (1:27)
8. How did Paul help believers become spiritually mature? (1:28-29)
- \* 9. What kind of effort did Paul expend in preaching and teaching? (1:29)
10. What did Paul want his audience to know? (2:1)
11. What was Paul's stated purpose? (2:2-3)
12. What is hidden in Christ? (2:3)
- \* 13. How would a commitment to the full knowledge of Christ protect the Colossians? (2:4)
14. How was Paul unified with the church at Colosse? (2:4)
15. What delighted Paul? (2:5)

### Get It

16. Paul had never met the Colossian Christians; how could he have suffered for them?
17. How is suffering an essential part of the Christian life?
- \* 18. Why did Paul work so hard for the Colossians?
19. What results did Paul expect from his work for the sake of the gospel?
20. What can you do for the church of Christ?
- \* 21. When have you become tired because of your work for the kingdom of God?
22. What makes a church encouraged and united?
23. What "fine-sounding arguments" draw some Christians away from the faith?
24. What can we do to grow in our understanding of Christ?
25. What can you do to grow in your understanding of Christ?

### Apply It

- \* 26. What kind of "spiritual workout" would increase your stamina for the Christian journey ahead this week?
27. How can you learn more about Christ this week?

# Freedom From Human Regulations Through Life With Christ - Colossians 2:6-23

*Topics:* Angels, Authority, Body, Church, Death, Doctrine, Faith, Freedom, God, Jesus Christ, Judging Others, Legalism, Rules, Worship

## Open It

1. What good advice have you never forgotten?
- \* 2. In what ways would you characterize yourself as permissive, and in what ways would you characterize yourself as strict?

## Explore It

3. How did Paul tell the Colossians to continue in Christ? (2:6-7)
4. What false teaching was Paul concerned about? (2:8)
5. What did Paul affirm about Christ? How? (2:9-10)
- \* 6. What did God give the Colossian believers? (2:10)
7. Why do Gentile Christians have no need to conform to Jewish rules and regulations? (2:11-12)
8. How did the Cross cancel the written code? (2:13-14)
9. From what did Christ deliver us? How? (2:15-17)
- \* 10. How did Paul encourage the Colossians to practice their freedom in Christ? (2:16)
11. How did Christ fulfill what the Old Testament foreshadowed? (2:17)
12. Whom did Paul accuse of trying to rob believers of their spiritual rewards? (2:18)
- \* 13. What were the characteristics of the false teachers? (2:18-19)
14. How did Paul challenge the legalism that had infected the church? (2:20-21)
15. What are the failings of human commands and teachings? (2:20-23)

## Get It

- \* 16. What “additions” to faith in Christ have you encountered from teachers in your Christian community?
17. How are you affected by popular religious rules floating around today?
18. What does “fullness in Christ” mean to you?
- \* 19. Paul’s advice kept the Colossians growing in their faith; what Christian leaders have helped you stay on track spiritually?
20. How deep are the roots of your faith?

## Apply It

- \* 21. This week, how can you best exercise the freedom you have in Christ?
22. How can you help a Christian friend get rid of his or her false ideas about Christ?

## Rules for Holy Living - Colossians 3:1-17

*Topics:* Actions, Believers, Death, Equality, Glory, God, Heart, Heaven, Holiness, Image, Jesus Christ, Knowledge, Love, Peace, Renewal, Security, Sin, Thankfulness

### Open It

1. What's the nicest suit or outfit you have ever worn?
- \* 2. When you're finished with your old clothes, what do you often do with them?

### Explore It

3. Where did Paul tell the Colossians to turn their attention? (3:1)
4. Where did Paul tell the believers to focus their concern? (3:2)
5. What was the Colossians' security? (3:3)
- \* 6. Why should believers look forward to Christ's return? (3:4)
7. What must die? (3:5)
8. What evil activities does God seek to eliminate from our lives? (3:5)
9. Why is God's wrath coming? (3:5-6)
- \* 10. What had the Colossians taken off? (3:7-9)
11. What had the Colossians put on? (3:10)
12. What distinctions are removed in Christ? (3:11)
13. What virtues does God seek to plant in us? (3:12, 14)
- \* 14. How were the Colossian believers called to clothe themselves? (3:12-17)
15. Why did Paul call on the believers to be peaceful and thankful? (3:15-16)
16. What should we do? How? (3:17)
17. What is one principle that ought to guide everything we do? (3:17)

### Get It

18. If you consistently set your sights on Christ and heaven, how would your life be different?
- \* 19. What old, "earthly" clothing do you need to get rid of?
- \* 20. How does wearing "Christ's clothing" affect the way you live your daily life?
21. What Christian virtues are you lacking?
22. What spiritual process is involved in "putting off" and "putting on"?
23. What is involved in replacing old habits with new ones?
24. How should life in Christ affect the way you treat others?
25. How are all your relationships to be built around Christ?
26. Why do we need to be loving toward others?
27. Why is a thankful spirit an important part of holy living?

### Apply It

- \* 28. Which of God's goals for holy living do you need to apply to your life this week?
29. How can you be more thankful and loving to those who are close to you?

## Rules for Christian Households - Colossians 3:18-4:1

*Topics:* Believers, Children, Discouragement, Fairness, Family, Favoritism, Heaven, Husbands, Jesus Christ, Justice, Love, Obedience, Pleasure, Rewards, Right, Sincerity, Slavery, Submission, Wives, Work

### Open It

- \* 1. If you were to make up a slogan that describes your family, what would it be?
- 2. Generally speaking, how do you get along with others?

### Explore It

- 3. What should wives do? (3:18)
- 4. What should husbands do? (3:19)
- \* 5. How should children respond to parents? (3:20)
- \* 6. Why does obedience to parents please the Lord? (3:20)
- \* 7. Of what do fathers need to be careful? (3:21)
- 8. How can children become discouraged? (3:21)
- 9. What directives did Paul give slaves? (3:22-25)
- 10. How were slaves called on to serve Christ? (3:23-24)
- 11. How would God mete out full justice in the master-slave relationship? (3:25)
- 12. What instructions did Paul give masters? (4:1)
- 13. What insight did Paul give masters? (4:1)

### Get It

- \* 14. How do God's instructions to families help family members become mature Christians?
- 15. Why should wives submit to their husbands?
- 16. Why does God tell husbands not to be harsh with their wives?
- \* 17. Why should Christian parents rear their children in an atmosphere of encouragement?
- 18. How can Christian parents rear their children in an atmosphere of encouragement?
- 19. How can God's instructions to slaves apply today to Christian employees?
- 20. Which of God's principles for Christian households challenge you to change?

### Apply It

- \* 21. What is one way you can improve the way you treat each member of your family?
- 22. How can you have an attitude of service toward others in your work?

## Further Instructions - Colossians 4:2-18

**Topics:** Believers, Church, Circumstances, Conversation, Encouragement, Grace, Jesus Christ, Kingdom of God/Heaven, Maturity, Partnerships, Prayer, Serving, Thankfulness, Wisdom

### Open It

- \* 1. What's your favorite salty snack?
- 2. If you had to eat all food without salt for a day or two, how would this affect your eating habits?

### Explore It

- \* 3. What did Paul prescribe for all believers? (4:2)
- 4. What request did Paul make of his readers? (4:3-4)
- 5. What did Paul say about the Christian's public life? (4:5-6)
- \* 6. How should believers speak to others? (4:6)
- 7. Who was Tychicus? (4:7)
- 8. Why did Paul send Tychicus to Colosse? (4:7-8)
- 9. Who was Onesimus? (4:9)
- 10. Whose greetings to the Colossians did Paul include in his letter? (4:10-14)
- 11. Which of Paul's partners in ministry were Jews? (4:10-11)
- \* 12. What did Epaphras do on behalf of his church at Colosse? (4:12-13)
- 13. What relationship did Luke and Demas have to Paul? (4:14)
- 14. To whom did Paul send greetings? (4:15)
- 15. Where did Paul want his letter read? (4:16)
- 16. What instruction did Paul send Archippus? (4:17)
- 17. How did Paul conclude his letter? (4:18)

### Get It

- 18. Why is prayer important?
- 19. How much time do you devote to prayer each day?
- 20. How did Paul set an example for mature interpersonal relationships?
- \* 21. In what ways is your conversation "seasoned with salt"?
- 22. How well do you relate to unbelievers?
- \* 23. Paul demonstrated the value of teamwork in ministry; how well do you work with other Christians for the kingdom of God?
- 24. Paul spoke highly of his Christian friends; what can you praise about your Christian friends?

### Apply It

- \* 25. How can you season your speech with God's grace among non-Christians?
- 26. How can you remember to speak well of family members and Christian friends this week?
- 27. What personal relationship can you improve during the next few days? How?