

Small Group Study Guide: Colossians 1:1-12

Christ Supreme, Christ Sufficient

Sermon August 23rd

Introduction

Colossians opens not with a list of rules or an immediate rebuke, but with profound thanksgiving and a deep vision of spiritual identity. Writing while imprisoned in Rome, the Apostle Paul—with protégé Timothy—writes to a young church in Colossae, a city in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) experiencing a dangerous mix of cultural pressures. False teachings were beginning to threaten the church, blending elements of Jewish legalism, mysticism and pagan philosophy that falsely promised a “secret higher knowledge” beyond even Jesus Christ Himself. This was fertile ground for syncretism—blending beliefs in ways that diluted the Gospel. Paul knew this syncretism issue well, as it had plagued the ancient Israelites settling in the Promised Land, many (including King Solomon) allowing religious practices of surrounding Gentile nations to infiltrate and corrupt their worship, beliefs and lives.

Paul writes around AD 60–62 to firmly ground these believers in reality: Jesus Christ is completely supreme and entirely sufficient. Before Paul addresses any theological danger or practical duty, he anchors the believers in who they are—holy, faithful and deeply loved by God. Colossians opens by reminding us that Christian living flows from Christian belonging. We do not strive to earn God’s favor; we live out of the grace and peace He has already lavished upon us.

Opening Question:

When has remembering your foundational identity in Christ helped you stay grounded when surrounding cultural or personal pressures felt overwhelming?

I. Rooted in Truth, Anchored in Hope (Colossians 1-4)

Paul grounds his letter in a real time, place, and pastoral setting

Colossae was once a flourishing trade city along the Lycus River valley, but by the first century AD it had been eclipsed by neighboring Hierapolis and Laodicea. Though smaller, Colossae was a melting pot of Jewish traditions, Greek philosophy and regional pagan mysticism. The church was likely founded not by Paul directly, but by Epaphras, a native Colossian who was converted under Paul's ministry in Ephesus (Colossians 1:7; 4:12).

Read **Acts 19:8–10**, indicating how the Gospel spread throughout Asia via Paul's ministry: *Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.*

Read **Revelation 3:14–17**, regarding a nearby church and the perils of spiritual compromise: *“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Ruler of God's creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of My mouth. You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.”*

1. How does knowing that Colossae was a culturally mixed, pluralistic (mixed faiths and cultures) environment mirror the challenges we face today in our own culture?
2. Paul writes to believers he has never met personally. What does this demonstrate about the global unity and shared family bond within the Body of Christ?

II. Gratefully United in Christ, Honored to Serve Him (Colossians 1)

Paul's masterwork of Christ-centered theology

In Colossians 1, Paul's overriding theme is the absolute supremacy and complete sufficiency of Jesus Christ over creation and redemption. Rather than launching directly into theological and doctrinal threats to the Colossian church, Paul paints a breathtaking picture of the truth: the One who holds the stars together (1:17) is the exact same One who bled on a cross to present *you* holy and blameless (1:22).

Read **Colossians 1** along with the following:

- **Hebrews 1:3:** *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After He had provided purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*
- **2 Corinthians 5:17-18:** *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.*

3. Why is it more effective to combat false worldviews by magnifying the beauty of Christ rather than simply arguing against error?

4. How does Paul's structural transition from the cosmic scale of the universe (vv. 15–20) down to your personal heart (vv. 21–23) deepen your gratitude for the Gospel?

III. Divine Authority and Brotherly Partnership (Colossians 1:1)

Paul establishes his apostleship by God's will while lifting up a co-laborer in the Gospel

Reread **Colossians 1:1** along with the following passages:

- **1 Corinthians 1:1–3**, wherein Paul anchors his calling in God's will vs. human ambition: *Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be His holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

- **2 Timothy 1:8–11**, how Paul’s apostolic authority prevails despite his chains: *So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me His prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the Gospel, by the power of God. He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. And of this Gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.*
5. Paul identifies himself as an apostle “*by the will of God*,” not by personal choice or human election. How does understanding your life's calling as initiated by God change your perspective on your current station or responsibilities?
 6. Paul includes Timothy as “*our brother*.” Why is it vital for Christian leadership and discipleship to operate in partnership rather than isolation?

IV. Holy, Faithful, and Favored in Christ (Colossians 1:2)

Paul addresses believers' dual citizenship—living in an earthly city and in a heavenly Savior

Read **Colossians 1:2** and the following:

- **1 Peter 1:1–2**, reinforcing believers being “in the world, while not of the world”: *To God’s elect, exiles scattered throughout ... Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with His blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.*
- **Romans 5:1–2a**, indicating true peace as fruit of reconciliation with God: *Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.*

7. Paul addresses the believers as holy (“*saints*” set apart for God’s purposes), “*faithful*,” and recipients of “*grace ... and peace*”. How does knowing that grace (*unmerited favor*) always precedes peace (*wholeness*) protect you from trying to earn God's approval?
8. The Colossians lived “in Colossae” but were spiritually “*in Christ*.” What does it look like in your daily life to live faithfully in your local community) while rooted “*in Christ*”?

V. Fruits of Faith and Prayer for Spiritual Growth (Colossians 1:3–12)

Paul offers heartfelt thanksgiving for the church's faith, love and hope, praying for their continual growth in God's wisdom

Also read the following passages:

- **Ephesians 1:15-19a:** *For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God’s people, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in His holy people, and His incomparably great power for us who believe.*
 - **John 15:4-8:** *“Remain in Me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in Me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to My Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples.”*
9. Paul highlights a trio of Christian virtues in vv. 4–5: faith in Christ, love for all saints and hope stored-up in heaven. How does eternal hope activate your love for others today?

10. In vv. 9–10, Paul prays that they may be “*filled with the knowledge of His will*” so that they can “*walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.*” What is the difference between knowing God’s will motivated by intellectual pride vs. knowing it to bear fruit in every good work?

Application: Rooted in Grace, Living as His Own

Transformation begins with revelation—seeing who God is and who we are in Him

As you consider your week ahead, reflect on these truths:

- **You are called by the will of God**—placed where you are for His divine purposes.
- **You are holy**—set apart and valued by God, regardless of your performance.
- **You are secure**—living (abiding) “*in Christ*” insures your eternal salvation.
- **You are gifted with grace and peace**—unearned favor and steady assurance daily.

This Week’s Challenge

Choose one word or phrase from Colossians 1:1–2 (e.g., “*by the will of God*,” “*faithful*,” “*in Christ*,” “*grace ... and peace*”) that speaks to a current struggle.

1. Commit: Repeat it daily in prayer.
2. Display: Put it somewhere visible (sticky note, phone screen).
3. Act: Make one decision this week based on who God says you are, not how you feel.

Closing Reflection: How does starting our study of Colossians focused on God’s grace and peace reshape the way you think about talking to Him throughout your day?

Small Group Study Guide: Colossians 1:13-29

Rescued, Redeemed and Reconciled

Sermon August 30th

Introduction

Colossians 1:13–29 contains one of the most sublime and magnificent declarations of who Jesus Christ is in all of Holy Scripture. Writing to combat false teachings that sought to diminish Jesus as merely one of many spiritual beings, Paul lifts our eyes to behold the absolute supremacy and complete sufficiency of the Son.

Paul moves from the cosmic throne room to the human heart. Jesus is the Creator of the universe, the Head of the church and the supreme Ruler over all—yet He is also the One who bled on a cross to reconcile *you* to God. We were once alienated and hostile toward God, but through Christ's physical death, we are presented holy and blameless in His sight. Salvation is not self-improvement; it is a transfer from darkness to light, from death to life.

Opening Question:

When you think about Jesus, do you tend to view Him primarily as a helpful Guide for daily life or as the eternal, supreme Creator and King over all? How do both perspectives matter?

I. Rescued from Darkness (Colossians 1:13–14)

Paul describes salvation as a dramatic rescue operation, moving believers from one kingdom to another as God's own

Reflect upon **Psalm 103:10–12**, sharing the wonder of saving faith in Christ: *He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.*

Read also **1 Peter 2:9–10**: *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you*

out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

1. God has "*rescued us from ... darkness*" and "*transferred us into [His] kingdom.*" How does viewing salvation as a rescue vs. a self-help effort change your posture toward God?
2. In what ways does knowing that your redemption includes complete "*forgiveness of sins*" free you from hidden shame or legalistic self-reliance?

II. The Supreme Lord of Creation (Colossians 1:15–17)

Paul declares Christ's absolute authority over the visible and invisible cosmos

Read also the following passages, reinforcing Jesus Christ's divine nature as God the Son:

- **John 1:1–3:** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.*
 - **Hebrews 1:1–3:** *In the past God spoke ... through the prophets ..., but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed Heir of all things, and through whom also He made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word. After He had provided purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*
3. Paul calls Jesus "*the image of the invisible God*" (1:15). What does Jesus reveal about the character and heart of God the Father that you find most comforting?

4. “*In Him all things hold together*” (1:17)—when your personal life, family and/or circumstances feel like they’re falling apart, how does this truth bring stability and comfort?

III. The Head of the Church and Firstborn from the Dead (Colossians 1:18–20)

Paul shifts from Christ’s supremacy in creation to His supremacy in redemption

Read also the following regarding our unity, reconciliation and mission “*in Christ*”:

- **Ephesians 1:22-23:** *God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be Head over everything for the Church, which is His Body*
 - **2 Corinthians 5:18-19:** *All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation.*
5. What does it mean practically for Jesus to be the “*Head*” of Glenkirk Church, rather than human leaders, programs or cultural preferences?
 6. Paul says God made peace “*by the blood of His cross.*” (v. 20) Why is the cross essential for true reconciliation between God and humankind?

IV. Reconciled and Presented Holy (Colossians 1:21–23)

Paul reminds believers of where we came from and where we now stand in Christ

Also read the following, reinforcing glorious justification and victory in Christ:

- **Ephesians 2:1-3:** *You were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and ... the spirit [working] ... in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. ... We were by nature deserving of wrath. ... At that time you were separate from Christ, ... foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*
- **Romans 8:31b-34:** *If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

7. Paul reminds us that we were once "*alienated and hostile [toward God]*" (1:21). Why is remembering our former state spiritually healthy for cultivating humility and gratitude?

8. Christ promises to present you "*holy and blameless and above reproach before Him*" (1:22). How does this promise guard your heart against Satan's lies?

V. Paul's Ministry for the Church (Colossians 1:24–29)

Paul shares his joy in laboring for the Church so that all believers become mature in Christ

Read the following, calling us to contentment and faith borne out of gratitude for God's mercy, grace and love:

- **1 Peter 2:4–5:** *For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.*

- **Philippians 4:12–13:** *I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.*

9. Paul speaks of the glorious mystery: "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" (1:27) How does knowing that the living Christ indwells you change your approach to daily struggles?

10. Paul labors "with all His energy that He powerfully works in me." (1:29) Where do you need to stop striving in your own strength and rely on Christ's power working through you?

Application: Living in the Supremacy of Christ

Colossians 1 teaches that Jesus is not merely a component of our lives; He *is* our life

Reflect on these truths this week:

- **You are rescued**—transferred out of darkness into Christ's light and kingdom.
- **You are sustained**—the Creator of the universe holds your life together.
- **You are reconciled**—made holy, blameless, and free from accusation.
- **You are indwelt**—Christ Himself lives in you as your hope of glory.

This Week's Challenge

Choose one phrase from Ephesians 2 (e.g., "*made alive*," "*by grace*," "*brought near*," "*He Himself is our peace*," "*one new humanity*") which resonates particularly with you.

1. Commit: Repeat it daily in prayer.
2. Display: Put it somewhere visible.
3. Act: Take one practical step this week that reflects trust in Christ's supreme power rather than anxiety over your circumstances.

Closing Reflection: How does Paul's movement from death to life and from division to unity reshape the way you see the people you encounter throughout your day?

Small Group Study Guide: Colossians 2:1-15

Encouraged, United and Built Up in Him

Sermon September 6th

Introduction

In Colossians 2, Paul reveals his intense pastoral fight for the church. Writing from prison, he labors in prayer so that believers will not be duped by plausible-sounding arguments, hollow philosophies, or human traditions that attempt to supplant Jesus Christ.

The world often offers "add-ons" to faith—promising that true fulfillment comes through Christ *plus* legalistic rules, *plus* mystical experiences and/or *plus* human wisdom. But Paul issues a ringing declaration: in Christ, all the fullness of God lives in bodily form, and in Him you have been brought to fullness! You do not need secret knowledge or extra ritualistic burdens. On the cross, Jesus disarmed every spiritual power and authority, canceling our record of debt. Spiritual growth is not about climbing a ladder of legalism; it is about walking rooted, built up, and established in the sufficiency of Jesus..

Opening Question:

When have you been tempted to feel that basic faith in Jesus wasn't "enough"—that you needed extra rules, special experiences, or secular approval to be a truly complete Christian?

I. Colossians 2: Freedom through Sufficiency in Christ

Paul takes on the "Colossian heresy" threatening this young church—a blend of Jewish legalism, pagan philosophy and seeds of corrupting gnostic ("secret know-how") mysticism.

Because believers possess total fullness and wholeness in Jesus, turning to human regulations or esoteric visions is spiritual regression. In 2:8 Paul uses the Greek term

sylagogeō (“taken captive”), painting a vivid picture of believers being dragged away as plunder or kidnapped slaves by hollow human philosophies.

In 2:18, Paul utilizes the imagery of a Roman military triumph: when a Roman general defeated an enemy, he led a public parade displaying the disarmed, captured enemy rulers. Paul pictures Jesus doing this exact thing to Satan and demonic powers at Calvary’s cross!

1. Why is the imagery of Christ nailing our canceled debt to the cross such a potent defense against legalism and spiritual condemnation?
2. How does Paul’s warning against being “kidnapped” by hollow philosophy challenge the way we interact with modern secular worldviews?

II. Paul’s Struggle for Their Encouragement and Unity (Colossians 2:1–5)

Paul agonizes in prayer so that believers will have complete understanding and unshakeable conviction

Read also the following passages:

- **Proverbs 2:1b–5**, which reflects on seeking true wisdom as hidden treasure: *If you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.*
- **Ephesians 3:16–19**, Paul’s prayer for believers to be strengthened internally and rooted in love: *I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

3. Paul desires for hearts to be “*encouraged, ... knit together in love*” (2:2). Why is authentic Christian community essential for protecting us against false teaching, deceptive arguments and the enemy’s assaults?
4. Paul warns against being deceived by “*plausible arguments*” (2:4). What modern cultural ideologies sound persuasive on the surface, but subtly pull people away from Christ?

III. Rooted and Built Up in Christ (Colossians 2:6–10)

Paul contrasts hollow human philosophy with the complete sufficiency of walking in Christ

Read also the following passages:

- **Psalm 1:1–3:** *Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on His law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.*
 - **1 Corinthians 1:20–25:** *Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know Him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.*
5. Paul says, “As you received Christ Jesus as Lord, so walk in Him” (2:6). What practices help you stay “*rooted and built up*” (2:7) in Christ?

6. 2:10 makes the astonishing claim: “*you have been filled in Him.*” How does grasping your fullness in Christ counter materialism, approval-seeking and/or performance anxiety?

IV. True Circumcision and Spiritual Resurrection (Colossians 2:11–13)

Paul uses spiritual baptism and circumcision to describe our radical inward transformation

Read also the following, emphasizing the wonder of being raised to new life in Christ:

- **Romans 6:3–5:** *Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we will certainly also be united with Him in a resurrection like His.*
- **John 15:4–5:** *But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.*

7. Though “*dead in your trespasses*” (2:13) God made you alive with Christ. Why is seeing salvation as resurrection different than considering it merely “self-improvement”?

8. How does remembering that your old, sinful nature was “*buried*” in Christ help you say “no” to lingering sinful habits?

V. Canceling the Debt and Disarming the Enemy (Colossians 2:14–15)

Paul presents a glorious image of the cross as the total cancellation of our guilt and the public defeat of evil

Read the following passages, reinforcing the glory of justification in Christ:

- **Psalm 103:10–12:** *He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.*
- **Romans 8:33–34:** *Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

9. God canceled “*the record of debt that stood against us, nailing it to the cross*” (2:14). In ancient times, a canceled debt note was stamped “Paid in Full” (“*It is finished!*” or “*Tetelestai!*”, per John 19:30). How does grasping this overturn guilt and shame?

10. How does knowing Satan is a defeated foe encourage you amidst spiritual battles?

Application: Walking in His Sufficiency

Colossians 2 teaches us that spiritual growth is not adding something new to Christ, but sinking our roots deeper into Him

Reflect on these truths for the week ahead:

- **You are complete**—in Christ, you lack no spiritual resource.
- **You are rooted**—grounded in truth, built up in grace, overflowing with thankfulness.
- **You are forgiven**—your entire record of debt was nailed to the cross and canceled.
- **You are victorious**—Christ has disarmed every power that stands against you.

This Week's Challenge

Choose one phrase from Colossians 2:1–15 (e.g., “*rooted and built up*,” *brought to fullness*,” “*made us alive*,” “*nailed it to the cross*”).

1. Commit: Pray it daily, thanking God for His total sufficiency.
2. Display: Write it down and keep it in view.
3. Act: Reject one thought of spiritual inadequacy or shame this week by declaring what Christ accomplished on your behalf.

Closing Reflections: How does knowing your legal debt is completely canceled in Christ change the way you approach God in prayer today? The way you approach others throughout your day?

Small Group Study Guide: Colossians 2:16-23

Freedom from Shadows, Life in the Substance

Sermon September 13th

Introduction

In Colossians 2:16–23, Paul deals a decisive blow to religious legalism, false mysticism and harsh asceticism. The young church in Colossae was facing pressure from religious teachers who insisted that true holiness required observing strict dietary laws, celebrating specific religious festivals, seeking visions of angels and abusing the physical body.

Paul exposes these practices for what they truly are: shadows at best. The religious rituals of the Old Covenant were meant to point forward, but the reality—the substance—belongs to Jesus Christ. To demand that Christians go back to images when they have the Savior is like preferring a picture on the wall over the actual person standing right in front of you. Furthermore, Paul exposes the ultimate weakness of legalism: human rules and self-imposed worship may *look* spiritual, but they have zero power to restrain the desires of the sinful flesh. True transformation never comes from external rules; it flows from a living connection to Christ, the Head of the Body.

Opening Question:

Why do you think human beings are so easily drawn to legalism (rules, checklists, external appearances) rather than cultivating a deep, daily relationship with Jesus?

I. Don't Let Anyone Judge You (Colossians 2:16–17)

Paul warns against judging based on rituals

Reflect also upon **Romans 14:1–4, 10**: *Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but*

another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ... You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat.

Read also **Hebrews 10:1–4**: The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

1. How does Jesus Christ fulfill the Old Testament shadows?

2. Are there areas where you tend to judge other believers—or feel judged by them—over secondary preferences or non-essentials? In what area(s) does this tend to happen?

II. Don't Let Anyone Disqualify You (Colossians 2:18)

Paul warns against false mysticism and prideful (fleshly) spiritual elitism

Read also the following passages:

- **2 Corinthians 11:13–15a**, warning that spiritual deception often disguises itself as righteousness: *For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness.*
- **1 John 4:1**: Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

3. How does false humility subtly promote spiritual pride, often leading to division?

4. Paul warns against people delight in “*worship of angels*” or boast about private visions. Why is spiritual experience dangerous when untested or not grounded in Scripture?

III. Disconnected from the Head (Colossians 2:19)

Paul exposes the root danger of false spirituality: losing true connection with Christ

Read the following, emphasizing dependence upon Christ and interdependence in Him:

- **Ephesians 4:15–16:** *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*
- **John 15:4–5:** *Remain in Me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the Vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.*

5. What daily habits or attitudes cause us to lose our practical connection with Jesus during a busy week?

6. What are the problems with professing believers who don’t attend church, defaulting to their “own, special relationship with God”?

IV. Dead to the World's Basic Principles (Colossians 2:20–22)

Paul challenges why believers who died with Christ would submit to manmade regulations

Read the following passages, reinforcing how God looks on the heart:

- **Isaiah 29:13:** *The Lord says: “These people come near to Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship of Me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.”*
- **Matthew 11:28–30:** *“Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*

7. Why do harsh rules fail to produce holiness?

8. Why is a faith based primarily on "what we avoid" or oppose unappealing to a watching world, compared to a faith based on the One we love and follow?

V. The Futility of Self-Made Religion (Colossians 2:23)

Paul exposes the ultimate failure of asceticism and legalistic self-denial

Read also the following, emphasizing Jesus saves us when we cannot save ourselves:

- **Romans 7:18-19,** : *For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ... For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*
- **Titus 3:5:** *He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

9. Why are external religious disciplines so deceptive and appealing to many?

10. Paul states bluntly that manmade rules "*are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.*" What notable/famous examples have you seen of this truth? How can you avoid such pitfalls?

Application: Resting in Christ, Walking in Liberty

Colossians 2 calls us to abandon the bankruptcy of legalism and embrace the life-giving reality of union with Jesus

Reflect on these truths this week:

- **You have the reality**—Jesus is the substance; don't settle for living in shadows.
- **You are connected**—your spiritual life and growth flow directly from Christ, your Head.
- **You are free**—you died with Christ to the world's legalism and approval traps.
- **You are transformed from within**—the Spirit changes your heart; human rules cannot.

This Week's Challenge

Choose one phrase from Colossians 2:16–23 that resonates particularly

1. Commit: Pray it daily, thanking God for freedom in Christ.
2. Display: Keep it somewhere visible.
3. Act: Identify one legalistic standard or self-imposed rule you've used to measure your worth and surrender it to Jesus this week.

Closing Reflections: How does resting in Christ's finished work give you true joy and freedom in your daily walk with Him? Where do you sense Jesus inviting you to rest more deeply in Him?

Small Group Study Guide: Colossians 3:1-11

Set Your Mind Above, Put On the New Self

Sermon September 20th

Introduction

Colossians 3 marks a profound shift in Paul's letter, moving from foundational theology to practical Christian living. But Paul does not shift from "faith" to "works"; he shifts from identity to expression. Because you have been raised with Christ, your true life is now hidden with Christ in God! Therefore, Christian holiness is not a desperate attempt to become someone new—it is the daily practice of living out who you already are in Him.

Paul uses the powerful metaphor of changing clothes: putting off the old, decaying garments of the flesh and putting on the new wardrobe of the Spirit. We are commanded to put to death daily the destructive sins of the heart and tongue—sexual immorality, greed, anger, malice and lying. In Christ all worldly barriers that divide humanity (racial, cultural, religious and economic) are demolished. Here, Christ is all, and is in all.

Questions:

When you take off dirty, sweaty clothes after a long day of hard work, how does it feel to put on clean garments? How does that physical reality illustrate spiritual renewal?

I. Transformation into Faithful, Grateful, Loving Servants (Colossians 3)

Colossians 3 establishes the ultimate framework for biblical sanctification. The central theme of this chapter is ethical transformation flowing from resurrection identity. Paul does not give moral imperatives until he has thoroughly anchored us in spiritual indicatives: "*you have died*," "*you have been raised*," "*your life is now hidden with Christ in God*"! Paul radically defines greed/covetousness as idolatry (3:5): craving material things or status is not merely a social flaw; it is bowing down to a false god, choosing creature comforts over the Creator. Christ's Gospel unites even the most extreme human divides into one new humanity. (3:11)

1. Why must ethical change always begin with our mind and identity ("*set your minds above*", 3:2) rather than sheer willpower?
2. How does Paul's inclusion of the "*Scythian*" (3:11; regarded as the most uncivilized, terrifying barbarians on earth) challenge our own subconscious prejudices or hesitations toward welcoming certain people into our lives and church family?

II. Raised with Christ, Seeking Things Above (Colossians 3:1–4)

Paul grounds our daily orientation in our spiritual resurrection with Jesus

Read also the following passages:

- **Romans 6:4–6:** *We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we will certainly also be united with Him in a resurrection like His. For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.*
 - **Philippians 3:20–21:** *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.*
3. What is the difference between being "heavenly-minded" and being so detached that you are of no earthly good?

4. “For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” (3:3) How does knowing your life and security are safely hidden in God bring peace during turbulent times?

III. Putting to Death the Old Nature (Colossians 3:5–7)

Paul gives an uncompromising command to destroy the sinful habits of the old life

Read also the following passages, admonishing that we turn from worldly ways:

- **Romans 8:12-13:** *Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.*
 - **Galatians 5:19–21:** *The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*
5. "Put to death"(3:5)—why is gentle compromise with habitual sin impossible for a healthy Christian walk?

6. “The wrath of God is coming” (3:6)—is this the rant of an unstable man in a park waving a sign? How has the enemy dulled the natural person’s appreciation of God’s holiness?

IV. Putting Off Sins of the Tongue and Temper (Colossians 3:8–9)

Paul turns his attention from personal morality to relational speech and anger

Reflect also upon the following, indicating where righteousness must supplant strife:

- **Ephesians 4:29, 31:** *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ... Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.*
- **James 3:9–10:** *With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.*

7. Which of these—anger, rage, malice, slander, filthy language, lying—challenges you most? Which of these is most tolerated or excused in society, even in Christian circles?

8. How does lying destroy the foundational trust needed for a group or church to flourish?

V. Redeemed into One New Humanity (Colossians 3:10–11)

The new self is continually being renewed in the image of our Creator, Jesus, the Perfect Man

Read also the following:

- **Genesis 1:27**, reminding us that you will never gaze upon another human not made in God's image: *So God created humankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them.*
- **Romans 8:29**, a calling to be God's faithful image-bearers and Christ's Bride: *For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.*

9. What cultural, political or social divisions exist today that Christ's Gospel breaks down?

10. "*Christ is all, and is in all*" (3:11)—how does keeping Christ at the center of our natural and church families enable unity amidst personal differences?

Application: Dressed for the New Life

Spiritual maturity requires both taking off the old life and actively putting on the new.

Reflect on these truths this week:

- **You are raised**—your true life is securely hidden with Christ in God.
- **You are dead to sin**—you have been given the Holy Spirit's power to put fleshly habits to death.
- **You are renewed**—God is restoring His image in you day by day.
- **You belong to one family**—in Christ, all human barriers are superseded by His unity.

This Week's Challenge

Choose one phrase from Colossians 3:1–11 that resonates ("*raised with Christ*," etc.)

1. Commit: Pray it daily, asking the Spirit to align your desires with God's will.
2. Display: Put it in a prominent location.
3. Act: Identify one habit, attitude, or pattern of speech from your "old self" and take a concrete step to put it off this week.

How does remembering that your life is "hidden with Christ in God" give you confidence when facing daily insecurities?

Small Group Study Guide: Colossians 3:12-25

Clothed in Compassion, Bound in Love

Sermon September 27th

Introduction

Having called believers to put off the ragged garments of the old self, Paul now describes the beautiful wardrobe of the new creation. As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, we are called to clothe ourselves daily with the very character of Jesus: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience and forgiveness. Over all these virtues, we put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Paul then paints a radiant picture of the Christian community in action: governed by the peace of Christ, saturated with the Word of Christ, overflowing with gratitude, and doing every single action and word in the name of the Lord Jesus. Finally, Paul brings this high theology right into the home, addressing husbands, wives, children, parents, workers, and leaders. Discipleship is not tested in a vacuum; it is proven in the ordinary, everyday rhythms of family, work, and personal relationships.

Opening Question:

When have you seen Christlike love transform a relationship or environment?

I. The Wardrobe of Saints (Colossians 3:12–14)

Paul lists the beautiful virtues that mark God's chosen, holy and beloved children

Read **Michah 6:8**: *He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

Read also Galatians 5:22–23: *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

1. Paul addresses believers as "*God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved.*" How does starting from a place of being "*dearly loved*" empower you to show patience and gentleness to difficult people?
2. "*Forgive as the Lord forgave you*"—how does reflecting on the immensity of Christ's forgiveness toward you soften your heart to forgive someone who has hurt you?

II. Governed by Peace and Gratitude (Colossians 3:15)

Paul calls believers to let Christ's peace rule

Read and reflect also upon the following:

- **Philippians 4:6–7:** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
- **Psalms 100:4–5:** *Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the LORD is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.*

3. Paul says, "*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.*" How can Christ's peace help your small group or family make wise decisions and settle disagreements biblically?

4. "And be thankful." Why is an ungrateful heart the root of much strife, anxiety and discontentment? How can you adopt an "attitude of gratitude" re God's provision?

III. Saturated with the Word and Worship (Colossians 3:16–17)

Paul paints a dynamic picture of a Gospel-drenched church family

Read also the following passages, touting Scripture-inspired, grateful praise:

- **Psalm 119:105–108:** *Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow Your righteous laws. I have suffered much; preserve my life, LORD, according to Your word. Accept, LORD, the willing praise of my mouth, and teach me Your laws.*
 - **Ephesians 5:19–20:** *... speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
5. "Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly"—what practical habits help God's Word dwell deeply in your life rather than superficially?

6. "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus"—what does it mean to live your whole day "in the name of Jesus"?

IV. Christlike Relationships in the Home (Colossians 3:18–21)

Paul applies the lordship of Christ to the core relationships of families

Reflect also upon:

- **Ephesians 5:21–25, 33:** *Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her.*
- **Ephesians 6:1–4:** *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise—“so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

7. How does applying Christ's sacrificial example transform marriage into a living witness?

8. What does encouraging, Christ-centered parenting look like in daily practice?

V. Working as unto the Lord (Colossians 3:22–25)

Paul addresses bondservants (employees) and masters: secular work as an act of worship

Read also the following:

- **Ephesians 6:5-8a:** *Slaves (employees or debtors), obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do.*
- **1 Corinthians 10:31;** *God permits our circumstances—we should be grateful and faithful in all we do: So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*

9. Remember that “slavery” or being a bondservant in biblical context relates to paying off a debt or complying with a peace treaty, not how we tend to view slavery (see Exodus 21:16: “*Anyone who kidnaps someone is to be put to death, whether the victim has been sold or is still in the kidnapper’s possession.*”). How does this reminder affect your perspective on today’s featured verses?
10. Paul reminds workers that they will “*receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.*” How does an eternal reward perspective free us from workplace envy and bitterness?

Application: Clothed in Grace, Living for His Glory

Colossians 3 reinforces that when Christ is our life, every relationship and daily responsibility should be transformed for the better

Reflect on these truths this week:

- **You are chosen, holy and dearly loved**—live out of that deep identity.
- **You are called to forgive**—releasing others because Christ has released you.
- **You are ruled by peace**—letting Christ’s peace settle disputes and quiet anxiety.
- **You are connected**—you stand not alone but with the body of Christ.
- **You work for King Jesus**—every task done with excellence becomes an act of worship.

This Week's Challenge

Choose one virtue or phrase from Colossians 3:12–25 (e.g., “*clothe yourselves with compassion*,” “*forgive as the Lord forgave*,” “*let the peace of Christ rule*,” “*do ... all in the name of the Lord Jesus*,” “*as working for the Lord*”, etc.).

1. Commit: Pray it daily over your home and workplace or neighborhood.
2. Display: Post it somewhere visible.
3. Act: Practice one intentional act of unexpected kindness, forgiveness or humble service in your home, neighborhood or workplace this week.

How does viewing your daily work and chores as service directly to Jesus—opportunities to honor and worship Him—change your heart posture this coming week?

Small Group Study Guide: Colossians 4:1-18

Sent, Steadfast and Strengthened in Community

Sermon October 4th

Introduction

Colossians concludes with Paul lifting our eyes to the horizon of global mission and authentic community. Having taught that Christ is supreme over all creation, that our legal debt is canceled and that our daily lives are to be clothed in His virtues, Paul now gives two final, essential commands for living in the world: devote yourselves to prayer and walk in wisdom toward those outside the church.

Paul asks for prayer not for his release from prison, but for an open door for the Gospel. Even in chains, Paul's heart is focused on proclaiming the mystery of Christ clearly. He calls us to let our speech always be full of grace, seasoned with salt. Finally, Paul closes his letter by naming a diverse team of co-laborers—men and women, Jews and Gentiles, former runaways and seasoned leaders. Colossians 4:1–18 reminds us that the supremacy of Christ produces a network of faithfulness—people who pray, encourage, serve, suffer, teach and stand firm together.

Colossians closes as it began: wrapped in grace, grounded in peace and demonstrating that the kingdom of God moves forward through faithful, interconnected relationships in the Body of Christ.

Opening Question:

When you pray for your own life or for others, do you tend to spend more time asking for changed circumstances (e.g., comfort, health, relief) or for open doors to share Christ?

I. Prayerful Missional Living and Relational Partnerships (Colossians 4)

Paul refuses to allow faith to remain an abstract, private leaning—faith must spill over into watchful prayer, wisdom toward non-believers and deep, meaningful church partnerships

Read **1 Peter 3:15**, exhibiting wisdom in speech attracting others toward Jesus: *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.*

Read also **Psalms 133:1-2**, regarding God-pleasing unity in Christ: *How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe.*

1. Why is it significant that Colossians' final chapter focuses heavily on global mission and real-world relationships rather than theory?
2. How does Paul's call for speech that is "*gracious, seasoned with salt*" (4:6) challenge the aggressive or abrasive tone often used in modern public discourse?

II. Heavenly Masters, Devoted Prayer, and Open Doors (Colossians 4:1-4)

Paul calls Christian employers to righteousness and all believers to persistent, watchful prayer for Gospel opportunities

Read **Ephesians 6:9**, a call to exhibiting Jesus' heart in all relationships: *Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that He who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with Him.*

Read also **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**, reflecting an attitude of gratitude: *Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

3. How should knowing we answer to God shape how we manage others, lead teams or collaborate in general?
4. Paul doesn't ask for a way out of prison, but for a door to be opened for the Gospel message. How does this challenge the way you pray during your own difficult seasons?

III. Wisdom and Grace Toward Outsiders (Colossians 4:5–6)

Paul instructs believers on how to interact with non-believers in daily life

Read also the following passages, both emphasizing sharing truth in love:

- **Matthew 5:14–16:** *“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”*
 - **Proverbs 15:1–2:** *A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise adorns knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.*
5. How will you *"make the most of every opportunity"* this week in your own neighborhood and/or workplace?
 6. How can our words be both attractive and truthful/*"seasoned with salt"* when discussing faith with others?

IV. The Fellowship Among Co-Laborers (Colossians 4:7–14)

Paul commends a diverse team of saints who risk their lives while serving the church

Reflect also upon the following, both testimonies to restoration in Christ:

- **Philemon 1:10–12:** *I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. Formerly he was useless to you (your runaway slave), but now he has become useful both to you and to me. I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you.*
- **2 Timothy 4:11:** *Only Luke is with me. Get Mark (who previously abandoned our missionary journey) and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.*

7. Paul mentions Tychicus (encourager), Onesimus (restored brother), Aristarchus (fellow prisoner), Mark (restored minister), and Luke (beloved physician). What does this diverse list reveal about the necessity of teamwork in God’s kingdom?

8. How does seeing Paul’s team challenge the idea of a “lone-ranger Christian” life?

V. Finishing Well and Staying Faithful (Colossians 4:15–18)

Paul ends with final greetings, instructions and a personal reminder: “*Remember my chains*”—his closing words call believers to perseverance, community and faithfulness

Read also the following, reinforcing how Christ empowers the Body and its members:

- **Colossians 4:2-4:** *Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*
- **2 Timothy 4:7–8:** *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.*

9. Paul tells the Colossians to inspire Archippus (4:17). What ministry or spiritual nudging has God given you that you need encouragement to complete?

10. Paul ends with "*Grace be with you.*" Why is grace the ultimate note on which every Christian letter, day, and life must end?

Application: Sent Together, Strengthened Together

Colossians ends with a picture of shared mission: the supremacy of Christ produces a community of people who pray, encourage, serve, and persevere together

Reflect on these truths this week:

- **You are called to persistent prayer**—watchful, thankful and focused on God's kingdom.
- **You are an ambassador**—called to walk in wisdom and speak grace to a watching world.
- **You belong to a team**—partnering with other believers to edify (build up) the church.
- **You are sustained by grace**—God's unmerited favor carries you from start to finish.

This Week's Challenge

Choose one phrase from Colossians 4 that particularly resonates

1. Commit: Pray it daily over your personal life and Glenkirk Church.
2. Display: Post it somewhere visible.
3. Pray specifically for one person in your life who does not know Christ, and seek one gracious, salt-seasoned opportunity to encourage them this week.

How does Paul's closing greeting—"*Remember my chains. Grace be with you*"—inspire you to stand firm and live boldly for Christ in your current season?