



# A Study in Colossians

1. Rooted in Christ; He is our Life (1:1-2)..... so live in him, rooted and built up in him
2. Rooted in Christ; He is our Redeemer (1:3-14)..... so live in him, increasing in the knowledge of his will
3. Rooted in Christ; He is our Reconciler (1:15-23)..... so live in him, making Christ preeminent in our lives
4. Rooted in Christ; He is our Treasure (1:24-2:7)..... so live in him, growing in wisdom & knowledge in him
5. Rooted in Christ; He is our Victor (2:8-15)..... so live in him, enjoying the fullness of life in him
6. Rooted in Christ; He is our Liberator (2:16-3:4)..... so live in him, setting your mind on him
7. Rooted in Christ; He is our Garment (3:5-17)..... so live in him, putting on the new nature
8. Rooted in Christ; He is our Lord (3:18-4:6)..... so live in him, working heartily as serving him
9. Rooted in Christ; He is our Encourager (4:7-18)..... so live in him, fulling your own service
10. Rooted in Christ; He is our Sustainer (Review)..... so live in him, abounding in thanksgiving

## This Bible Study

... is a call to us to deepen our faith and enrich our lives.

## Rooted in Christ, so live in him

... is the theme for this Bible Study in Colossians. It is taken from the key verses, Colossians 2:6,7

*<sup>6</sup> So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, <sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.*

## The Hope for this Course

... is that those who study it will become more deeply rooted and more securely established in their faith in Christ Jesus, and may learn so to live rooted in him that Jesus Christ will be reflected in all their actions and relationships and may be able to withstand the temptations to false teaching and false living that surround them in the world.

## These are the Lesson Topics

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## Rooted in Christ

... means just as we receive Christ in simple faith, so we are to go on living in him. As a branch abides in the vine, so we are to abide in Christ. As roots receive nourishment from the soil and water, so we are to receive our nourishment from Christ through his Word and Sacraments.

**ROOTED** signified inner growth. Knowledge and understanding of Christ are needed for roots to grow and deepen.

**BUILT UP** denotes outward expression of the inner life. We become built up in our faith as we deepen our understanding and knowledge of Christ, as we respond in obedience and faith, and as we reflect Christ's love in all our relationships.

**STRENGTHENED** conveys the thought of developing deeper convictions, of becoming more and more certain of our relationship with Christ so that we can withstand the storms of life.

**OVERFLOWING** implies growth in gratitude and thankfulness for all that we receive in Christ, his love, joy and peace, his assurance of forgiveness of sin, his strength and grace.

## We Can Help Each Other

... **SO LIVE IN HIM** and grow in our Christians faith through our Bible study. The church is a fellowship of believers. The term fellowship implies a close relationship with others, a sense of belonging, a real caring for one another, a sharing of what we have in Christ, a bearing of each other's burdens. Attendance in worship and Bible study can be places where we can experience these things, but if this is to happen, we need to help each other...

- by preparing our lessons before attending the study, in this way having more to contribute to the discussion
- by attending regularly and inviting others to join with us
- by sharing insights, hopes, concerns, and experiences
- by assuring others of our support and prayers

# Lesson 1

**Rooted in Christ;  
He is our Life...  
so live in him,  
rooted and built up in him**

## GETTING STARTED

### 1. Our Study: Paul's Letter to the Colossians

#### Overview

This is the first of 10 lessons in the study of the Letter to the Colossians. The aim of this lessons is to help you gain an overview of the letter and develop a deeper insight into what it means to live in Christ.

Maybe you are saying, "Why study the Letter to the Colossians? Does it have a message for us today?" Paul wrote this letter because he heard about a dangerous situation developing in the Colossae church. The Christians were being taught doctrines which, if followed, would eventually undermine their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today we, too, are confronted with many things which can undermine our faith in Christ and can hinder our Christian growth. Do any of the following areas concern you? If so, this letter has a message for you.

- *How can I become stronger... more secure... in my faith?* – So often I feel uncertain.
- *How do I face those who challenge my faith?* – I have doubts and fears.
- *Whom shall I believe?* – So many claim to know the answers.
- *How can I grow in my Christian faith?* – So often I feel defeated.

#### How We Should Read This Letter

Think about the way we read letters, texts, or emails. Do we not quickly open the envelope or click on the email and scan the contents to see who has written to us? If it is from a good friend, we read it slowly, enjoying every word. If it is from a stranger, we read it with curiosity, wondering who the person is, why that person has written to us, and what that person wants.

This is a letter which Paul wrote to the Colossians and should be read as a letter. First **you should read the entire letter in one sitting** to get the general impression. As you read, try to picture the person who wrote the letter and the circumstance under which it was written. What was the author seeing, hearing, thinking, and feeling that caused him to write as he did? Also try to imagine what that people were like who read this letter. What kind of persons were they? What were the challenges that they were facing?

#### DO THIS NOW

First, read the entire letter for general impressions as to the author, the readers, and the purpose of the letter.

Second, reread Colossians 2:6,7. These are the theme verses for our study. Underline them in your print Bible or highlight them in your digital version and memorize them.

Third, look at the map at the end of this lesson (or find one online or in your study Bible) and locate the cities of Colossae, Laodicea, and Hieropolis (not on the map provided in this handout). They were thriving cities in Paul's day!

## DIGGING IN... for the facts

### 2. The Author and the Readers

One of the purposes of this Bible Study is to help you become a “discoverer.” The first step in the process is to learn how to observe exactly what the author is saying. We will call this DIGGING IN... for the facts. People can fall into the trap of reading Scripture without really SEEING very much or even THINKING very much when they read. Digging implies activity... Observing! Thinking! Writing?

Maybe you are saying, “I don’t mind reading and observing, but I don’t like writing! It seems like such a bother, and I am not always certain about my answers.” Don’t worry too much about right or wrong answers. Just remember that you are learning how to become a “discoverer,” how to observe, how to think, how to interpret the Word of God. Writing will help you be more specific in your study.

One way to increase your powers of observation is to make use of these six questions; Who? Where? When? What? Why? How? Let’s use these questions in terms of the author and the readers.

A. Who is the author? How does he describe himself? (Col. 1:1, 23, 25) \_\_\_\_\_

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B. Who is the co-sender of the letter? (Col. 1:1) \_\_\_\_\_

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C. Where is the author as he is writing this letter? (Col. 4:3) \_\_\_\_\_

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D. How are the readers described? (Col. 1:2, 4; 2:5) \_\_\_\_\_

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E. What seems to be the reason for Paul writing this letter? \_\_\_\_\_

1. What was he hearing about the Colossians? (Col. 2:4,8,16,18) \_\_\_\_\_

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2. How did he feel about the Colossians? (Col. 2:1) \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What was his hope? (Col. 2:6,7) \_\_\_\_\_

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## DIGGING DEEPER... for understanding

### 3. What Does Paul Mean?

So far in our study we have been observing what Paul said about himself and the Colossians. Now we need to ask ourselves, “What did Paul mean by the words which he used?” We call this DIGGING DEEPER – for understanding. Study the following questions. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

- A. What is the meaning of Paul’s description of himself? (Col. 1:1) “*an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God*”. Acts 26:16-19 helps interpret. \_\_\_\_\_

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- B. What is the meaning of Paul’s challenge: “*continue to live your lives in him*”? (Col. 2:6) Consider each word separately as to meaning. Look in a dictionary for definitions. Note John 15:5-11 for additional insights. \_\_\_\_\_

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- C. What did Paul mean by the phrases, *rooted – built up – strengthened – overflowing*? (Col. 2:6,7) First think about the process of growth in a plant, relating these phrases to this process. \_\_\_\_\_

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Then relate them to the process of growth in the Christian life. What is the importance of each phase of growth? Note Psalm 1:2,3; Jeremiah 17:7,8; and Ephesians 3:16-18 for additional insights.

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In order to gain deeper understanding of what you read in Scripture, it is helpful to compare other translations of the Bible, look up words in the dictionary, and study cross-references. This can be a very simple process with the availability of so many of these resources online. Use

- [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com),
- [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org),
- [www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com),
- [www.bible.com](http://www.bible.com),

or some other online tool that you have used to dig deeper into the text!

# GROWING... in Christ

## 4. What is Paul Saying to Me?

The Christian life is never static. We are either *growing in Christ* or we are *growing away from Christ*. The purpose of this lesson is to help you know Christ is the source of both your life and your growth. After observing the statements in a passage and trying to interpret their meanings, you need to say to yourself, "What does this study mean to me? Where am I, growing in Christ or growing away from him?"

A. **Take an Inventory...** Use the theme verses (Col. 2:6,7) as your guide.

1. Think of how it is that you came to faith in Christ – through baptism? through the preaching of the Word? Consider what Christ means to you presently in terms of accepting all that he desires to give you? Does your "living by faith" mean that you do or do not think about Christ consciously throughout the day? What does it mean to "receive Jesus Christ as Lord"? Any clues in these references... John 1:12; Acts 2:41; 1 Ths. 2:13

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2. Think about all that you have been taught about Christ. Think about those who taught you. In what way have these persons and teachings been an influence in your life? Describe ONE PERSON of influence in your life of faith.

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3. Consider how these lessons in Colossians might help you become...

*rooted* – gain a deeper understanding of the Christian faith? \_\_\_\_\_

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*built up in him* – gain deeper understanding of how Christ might be expressed in your life? In your relationships with other people? \_\_\_\_\_

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*strengthened in faith* – gain deeper convictions? \_\_\_\_\_

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*overflowing* – grow in gratitude and thanksgiving? \_\_\_\_\_

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**B. Think About Others...**

1. To live in Christ also means to live in his body, the Church. In what way might you help someone else become rooted, built up, strengthened, and overflowing...” in your home? in your neighborhood? in your congregation? Illustrate your answer(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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2. How might Bible Study meet the needs of the person who says, “I feel life is so superficial. All I do is get out of bed, work, worry, wait on the family, stream my show, cook and eat, go to bed again. And anyway, so much of life is unreal “social media” or “fake news”... superficial! Is this all there is to life?” \_\_\_\_\_

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Or, for the one who says, “I feel that I am the only one in my home, in my circle of friends, in my work situation who is concerned about God’s will and the meaning of the Christian life!” \_\_\_\_\_

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**C. Ways to Respond...**

Ask... someone in your F.R.A.N. network to read the Letter to the Colossians with you. Discuss with others what difference Jesus makes in one’s life. \_\_\_\_\_

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Memorize... Colossians 2:6,7. Meditate on each verb. \_\_\_\_\_

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Pray... that the Holy Spirit will reveal to you wherein your roots need deepening and your faith strengthening

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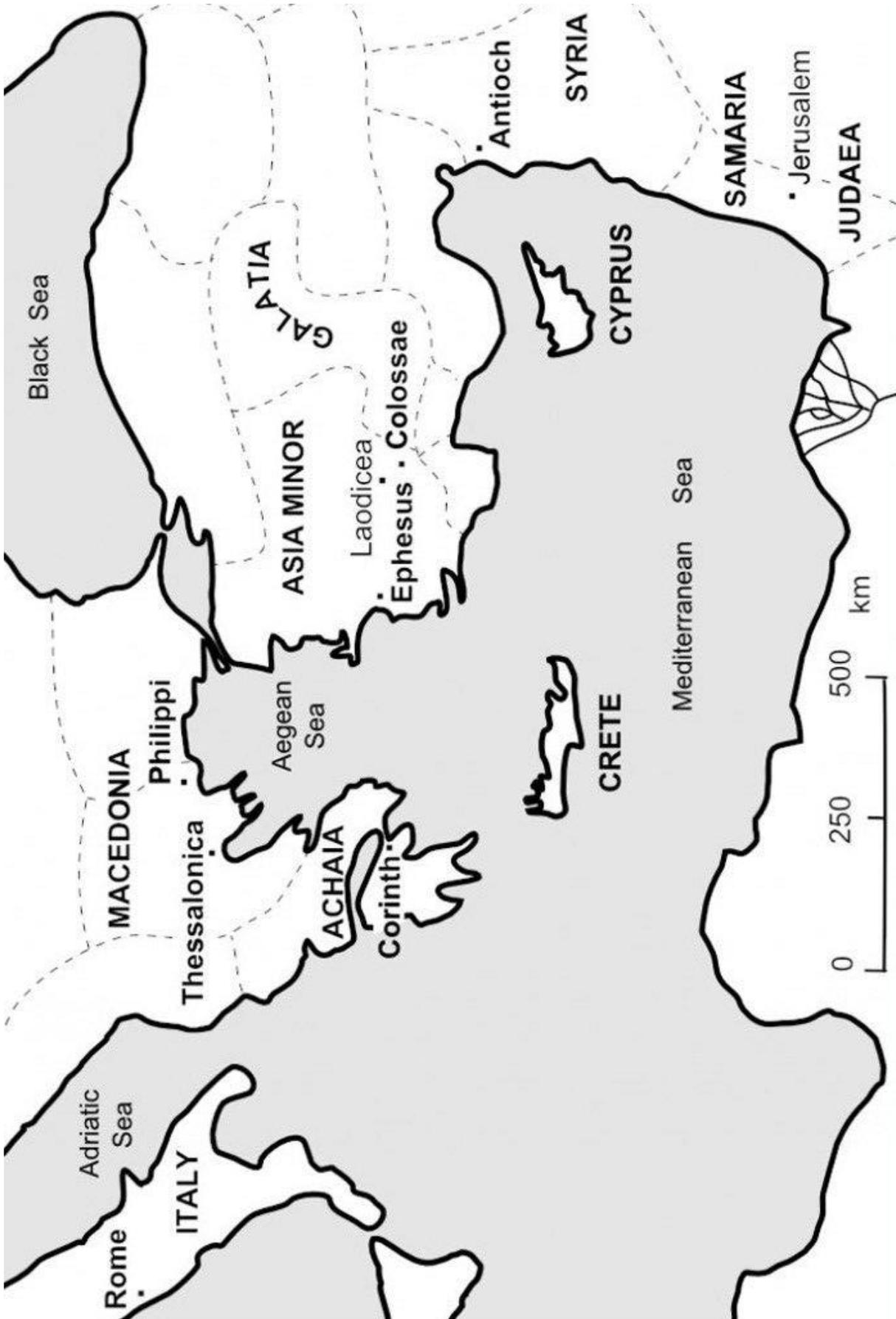
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Use... the hymn, “Jesus, Priceless Treasure” (#823 or [https://hymnary.org/text/jesus\\_priceless\\_treasure](https://hymnary.org/text/jesus_priceless_treasure)) as an expression of gratitude to Christ for who he is and what he has done for you. \_\_\_\_\_

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PAUL'S LETTERS TO THE NEW CHURCHES