

# Lesson 6

**Rooted in Christ;  
He is our Liberator...  
so live in him, setting your  
mind on him**

## GETTING STARTED

### 1. Our Study: Colossians 2:16-3:4

#### Overview

As you have read and reread Paul's Letter to the Colossians, have you become more and more conscious of Paul's continual emphasis on the all-sufficiency of Christ to meet humankind's every need and on the importance of humankind's response in faith and obedience to God's will?

As you reread the letter, note that in the first two chapters Paul's emphasis is on Christ. First, he seeks to establish the Colossians in their faith in Jesus Christ. Then, in the last two chapters the emphasis is on the Colossians' response, in terms of sanctification and growth in service. First a person must be rooted and grounded in Christ before that person can grow.

Pray for a willingness to follow God's guidance as he speaks to you through the Word.

#### Concerns About the Life in Christ

As you have read and reread this Letter to the Colossians and noted the things which Paul has been emphasizing, have you said to yourself, "I believe what Paul is saying is true. I believe that Jesus Christ is our Redeemer, Creator, Sustainer, Reconciler, our Source of wisdom and knowledge. I believe that through Baptism we died with Him to the power of sin and were raised with Him to live a new life. I believe all of this with my intellect, but how is what I know in my head/heart going to come out in my hands, feet, and mouth? How do I live a life 'worthy of the Lord'? How do I live the new life over sin and my selfish self? How do I discern what is right and wrong?"

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#### Problems Facing the Colossians

No doubt the Colossians were asking some of the same questions which you may have been asking yourself: How do you live a life that is pleasing to God? It seems that the Colossians were being taught...

- that it was important to follow the old Jewish food laws relating to clean and unclean food.
- that they should observe the ceremonies and rituals of feast days and festivals.
- that men were unworthy to approach God directly but should approach Him through the angel mediators. God is spirit and is good. Human-beings are matter, which is evil. Through self-torture and self-denial human-beings can fight the evil flesh and control the cravings of the flesh. By worshiping the angels, humans can gradually learn how to live in harmony with the laws of nature and become better people.

## DIGGING IN... for the facts

### 2. Beware of Enslavement (Colossians 2:16-19)

A. Paul was very concerned lest the Colossians allow themselves to become enslaved to rituals, practices, and regulations and lose their freedom in Christ. Review Colossians 2:8-15 and decide why Paul began this next portion with “therefore.” \_\_\_\_\_

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B. Make a list of the warnings.

Col. 2:16 \_\_\_\_\_

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Col. 2:18 \_\_\_\_\_

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C. Paul's reason for warning them was because many of these regulations and practices had lost their purpose. In the Old Testament days, the regulations were a reminder of what God had done for them in their exodus from Egypt and were a foreshadow of the coming of Christ. Why had these lost their value? (2:17) \_\_\_\_\_

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D. It seems that Paul may have been referring to one particular false teacher who was insisting on worship of angels, self-abasement, and was pretending to have visions. How does Paul describe him? (2:18b) \_\_\_\_\_

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E. Why is it important that the members of the church “hold fast to Christ”? (2:19) \_\_\_\_\_

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### 3. Live the Life of Freedom (Colossians 2:20-3:4)

As you read Colossians 2:20–3:4. Note the contrasts.

A. SINCE/IF with Christ you died, what should be some of the evidences? (2:20-23) \_\_\_\_\_

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What is the reason? (2:23) \_\_\_\_\_

B. SINCE/IF with Christ you have been raised, what should be the evidence? (3:1-4) \_\_\_\_\_

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What is the reason? (3:3) \_\_\_\_\_

What is the incentive? (3:4) \_\_\_\_\_

# DIGGING DEEPER... for understanding

## 4. What Does Paul Mean?

As you have been studying this section, no doubt there are many statements which puzzle you. To understand this section and all its implications a person really needs a great deal of historical background; even so, defining words, comparing translations, and looking up cross references will give you greater insight into the passage.

### Seek to Know Meaning of Words and Phrases

- A. What is the meaning and significance of these phrases which Paul uses to describe false teachings and teachers: *a shadow, puffed up with idle notions, unspiritual mind, appearance of wisdom*? To what kind of person might you apply these phrases today? \_\_\_\_\_

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- B. What is the meaning of *sensual indulgence*? Why is it that laws and regulations do not make a person holy? Note 1 John 2:15-17; Romans 13:14; Mark 7:21-23. \_\_\_\_\_

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### Look for the Author's Purpose

- C. What is the importance of the IF/SINCE statements - *Since you died with Christ - Since, then, you have been raised with Christ*? What is their relation to seeking and setting (Colossians 3:1, 2)? What if Paul began chapter three with "If you feel like it ..."? \_\_\_\_\_

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- D. What does it mean to get your mind on something? What is involved in the process? What are the things that are above? Do Philippians 4:8 and Romans 8:5-8 give a clue? What are the things on the earth? Do previous passages in Colossians give clues? \_\_\_\_\_

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## GROWING... in Christ

### 5. What is Paul Saying to Us?

According to his emphasis, Paul wants the Christian to be conscious of two significant factors: that the Christian has died to one kind of life and is raised (made alive) to a new kind of life. Note 2 Corinthians 5:17. When Christians realize what God has made them in Christ, they can experience the freedom from the bondage of self and sin. Many live defeated lives because they do not realize the freedom which is theirs in Christ. They have come to *know* Christ's saving power but rarely *live* his liberating power. The power that raised Christ from the dead is available to us for daily living and service. Note Philippians 3:10.

- A. The key words in this lesson are SEEK and SET. The things on which we set our minds will very much determine the extent of our growth in Christ. According to some of the advertising today and according to some of the novels, movies, and streaming shows, what are some of the things which the world wants us to SEEK and SET OUR MINDS on? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- B. If you were facing the following situations, how would you set your mind on the things that are above? What is the place of prayer in the process?
- if someone has disappointed you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - if you feel that you have failed miserably in a task? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - if someone has been unkind to you but you want to be forgiving? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - if you are very worried? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - if you have trouble controlling a bad temper or a sharp tongue? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- C. While Paul is strong in his emphasis on the freedom one has in Christ, does he give us any guide as to how to determine actions? Note 1 Corinthians 6:12, 10:23, 24, 31-11:1; Romans 14:1-6. \_\_\_\_\_  
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- D. What dangers face the church of today in terms of ceremonies and forms? How might ceremonies be substituted for a personal relationship with Christ? How might ceremonies deepen this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_
- E. Someone has said, "Too often Bible study just leads to more Bible study without changing people's attitudes and actions." If this happens, what is wrong? Note James 1:22-25. How might Bible study make a person more critical of others rather than more understanding? Why does this happen? \_\_\_\_\_  
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Memorize ... Colossians 3:1-4. Let these verses be your reminder for daily living in Christ.