

# Lesson 10

**Rooted in Christ;  
He is our Sustainer...  
so live in him, abounding in  
thanksgiving**

## GETTING STARTED

### 1. Our Study: Colossians 4:7-18

#### Overview

You have now made a thorough study of this Letter to the Colossians. Usually in your studies you were first encouraged to reread the whole letter. The purpose of this was to help you think of each section in Colossians in relation to the whole letter. When studying Scripture, we should always study passages in their context, rather than by themselves. Most of the false teachings of today are built on isolated passages misunderstood or manipulated apart from their context.

This time as you make your overview, rather than concentrating on the letter, concentrate on yourself. Take an inventory of what has been happening to you during the study. God promises that the Holy Spirit works through the Gospel, speaking to you concerning the “mystery” of the Gospel, *Christ in you, the hope of glory*. How have you been responding?

- IF you have been keeping Christ’s loving invitation to come to him an arm’s distance away – have you said, “Lord Jesus, I come just as I am, a sinner, confessing my own unworthiness...”? \_\_\_\_\_

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- IF you have been uncertain about your salvation – have you said, “In faith I trust what Christ has done for me”? \_\_\_\_\_

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- IF you have been facing hardships and difficulties – have you said, “Thank you, Lord, for your strength...”? \_\_\_\_\_

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- IF you have been anxious about the powers of darkness – have you said, “Lord Christ, I believe you are still in control...”? \_\_\_\_\_

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- IF you have been tempted to follow other “gospels” – have you said, “Lord, teach me to know what is truth...”? \_\_\_\_\_

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## DIGGING IN... for the facts

### 2. What Has Paul Been Saying?

Paul has been saying many things in this letter. Now let us try to summarize some of the major ideas. Paul has been describing how a person should live in Christ so that Jesus is in control of one's life, rather than in the world and let false doctrines and selfish desires control one's life. We shall list some of the major areas of Paul's concern. Review the entire letter and state one fact which Paul stressed regarding each one of these aspects concerning the life in Christ.

A. So live in Him – as one who is increasing in the knowledge of His will (1:3-14) \_\_\_\_\_

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B. So live in Him – as one who is making Christ preeminent in her life. (1:15-23) \_\_\_\_\_

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C. So live in Him – as one who is growing in wisdom and knowledge in Him. (1:24-2:7) \_\_\_\_\_

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D. So live in Him – as one who is enjoying the fullness of life in Him. (2:8-15) \_\_\_\_\_

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E. So live in Him – as one who is setting her mind on Him. (2:16-3:4) \_\_\_\_\_

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F. So live in Him – as one who is putting on the new nature. (3:5-17) \_\_\_\_\_

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G. So live in Him – as one who is working heartily, serving Him. (3:18 to 4:6) \_\_\_\_\_

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# DIGGING DEEPER... for understanding

## 3. What Has This Study Meant for Me?

Without a doubt you have gained much knowledge concerning the Christian faith in your study of Colossians. Paul underscores many Scriptural doctrines. But to have knowledge about words is only part of the story. We need insight into their meanings. In fact, words mean different things to different people. To the definitions of words we add feelings, experiences, images. For instance, the dictionary defines the word *forgiveness* as *receiving pardon*. But none of us has the same concept of what it means to receive pardon. The experiences that we have had with forgiveness, the images we have formed of what a forgiving person is like, the feelings we have developed because someone has forgiven us – all these shape and color our concept of the word forgiveness. So, it is with many words.

Listed below are some of the key words used in this letter, words that are basic to our Christian faith. Choose some of those listed (or others in the letter) that have become most meaningful to you through this study. Write down the understanding which you have received of the word during this study of Colossians.

WORDS: *faith, love, hope, grace, peace, truth, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, life, fruit, glory, inheritance, holy people, redemption, forgiveness, image, qualified, rescued, brought us into, reconcile, supremacy, fullness, mystery, buried, raised, dead, alive, sins, riches, treasures, rooted, built, established, old and new self, alienated, enemies, holy, without blemish, mature, put off, put on, rule, dwell.*

What these words mean to me \_\_\_\_\_

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# GROWING... in Christ

## 4. What Have I Done about this Study?

We can know a lot of words about the Lord Jesus Christ and about the way we should reflect Him in our lives. We can have deep insights into the meaning of the words, but unless we live them, we will be, as Jesus says, foolish people:

*<sup>24</sup> Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. <sup>26</sup> But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. (Matthew 7:24-26)*

Our response to the Gospel is reflected in our relationships with people. Have you noted that when the Lord describes a life of response it nearly always has something to do with the way we treat others?

*<sup>8</sup> 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. (Micah 6:8)*

Note these references for similar emphasis: Matthew 18:5,6; 25:31-46.

After studying this letter, what changes has the Lord made in your life in any of the following areas?

- Regarding your understanding of God’s Word? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- Regarding your personal faith? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- Regarding your appreciation of the church and what it does for you? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- Regarding your family? your work relationships? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- Regarding your prayer life? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- Regarding your disposition and attitudes? \_\_\_\_\_  
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- Regarding your concern for the lonely, the needy, and those who do not know Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
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## 6. How to Respond

Reflect... on the importance of nourishment. In our study our theme has been “So Live in Him.” A person cannot live unless he is nourished. To maintain physical life, we need food. In like manner, our spiritual lives need daily nourishment. The Bible speaks about eating. Jeremiah wrote: “*When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, Lord God Almighty.*” (Jeremiah 15:16). We find nourishment for our life in Christ as we make use of the means of grace, as we partake of the Lord’s Supper, as we worship, as we study God’s Word, as we fellowship with other believers. But eating implies activity - chewing, swallowing, digesting. Unless we are actively involved, we get very little nourishment.

You have been actively involved in this study - reading, writing, thinking meditating, sharing, praying. But you have not received enough food for a lifetime. Now, go on eating if you are to continue to be rooted and built up in him and established in the faith.

Pray... that your life might be abounding in thanksgiving because of the riches which you have in Christ Jesus. Someone has described abounding as a cup running over.

Write a prayer of thanksgiving for what Christ has done for you.

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