

Welcome to

# Journey through the Bible



Book by book  
Bible study

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## Colossians

Christ is fully  
God and we  
find fulness  
only in Christ

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### Paul's thanksgiving for them

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people—the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel that has come to you. (1:3–6)

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### The global spread of the gospel

All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God's grace. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

(1:6–8)

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**Paul's prayer for them**

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: (1:9–10)

**What does that worthy life look like?**

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**Christians live a new kind of life**

bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, giving joyful thanks to the Father, ...  
(1:10–12)

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**We live in a new kingdom!**

who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For He has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.  
(1:12-14)

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**Christ is God, He is over all creation**

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, in him all things hold together.  
(1:15–17)

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**Christ is Savior & head of the church**

He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

(1:18–20)

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**Our new status and identity in Christ**

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel.

(1:21–23a)

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**Paul's calling and gospel ministry!**

This is the gospel that you heard ... of which I, Paul, have become a servant. I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— (1:23–25)

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**In Christ, we are bound for glory!**

—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

(1:26–27)

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**That is what and why Paul preaches!**  
so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. ... My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (1:28-2:3)

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**We find our identity, fullness in Christ**  
Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. (2:6-9)

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**Christ has made it all possible**

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. (2:13-14)

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**In Christ we have a new outlook on life!**

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (3:1-4)

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**It is time to leave the past behind!**

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. (3:5–8).

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**Off with the old! On with the new!**

... you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and in all. (3:10-11).

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**Believers have a new wardrobe!**

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. (3:12–14)

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**The make-over starts inside!**

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom ... And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (3:15–17)

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**It changes our life at home!**

Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.  
(3:18–21)

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**It changes our life at work!**

Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; ... Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, It is the Lord Christ you are serving. ...

Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.  
(3:22–4:1).

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**The outward starts with the upward!**

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ...

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (4:2–7).

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**Philemon  
In Christ- a slave  
becomes our brother!**

**How Christianity broke the  
back of slavery in Rome**

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### **Distinctives of Philemon**

- ☆ Impact of the gospel on slavery
- ☆ How the gospel changed the world
- ☆ Example of christian grace in action
- ☆ Intimate, personal correspondence
- ☆ Supposed “absence” of doctrine
- ☆ Prime example of imputation, God’s righteousness on the undeserving

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### **Slavery in Ancient Rome**

Slavery was common in the Roman empire. Some were soldiers captured in war, some were born into slavery, and others were enslaved because of debt. Slaves had few rights under Roman law, but in a few cases could purchase, or be granted their freedom. Runaway slaves were subject to harsh treatment, were beaten and could be put to death!

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### **Background of Onesimus**

Onesimus means “useful” though by running away he proved “useless” to Philemon. He fled to Rome where he could be lost in the crowd. Somehow he found his way to Paul in prison, became a believer and a valuable helper to Paul. He was from Colossae. Later in history there was a bishop in that church named Onesimus, a remarkable transformation!

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### **Paul is shackled but unbowed!**

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,

To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker—also to Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier—and to the church that meets in your home:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (1–3)

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**Paul's thanksgiving and prayer**

I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your love for all his holy people and your faith in the Lord Jesus. I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. (4–6)

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**Paul's joy transcends his suffering**

Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the Lord's people. (7)

**Covid virus has robbed many of joy!**

**Where or in what do you find joy?**

**How can I/we encourage others?**

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**Paul's gracious personal request!**

Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love. It is as none other than Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—that I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. (8–10)

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**From useless to useful-  
transformed by God's grace**

Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me. I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you. I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

(11–13)

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**The slave is now your brother!**

Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever—no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord. (14–16)

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**Paul’s personal appeal!**

So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self. (17–19)

**An example of “imputation,” Christ assumed our debt and credited His own righteousness to our account!**

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**Paul’s confident expectation**

I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask. And one thing more: prepare a guest room for me; because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers. (20–21)

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**See you next week!**

**1 & 2 Thessalonians  
Christ is coming!**



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