

# **Insights From Colossians**

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# Insights From Colossians

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# Introduction

One of the ways I've been studying the Word of God is by making a list of everything that each book of the Bible teaches. This has resulted in more than a thousand pages of material. Although it's interesting and I've learned a lot from writing it, that's a lot of bullet points to read through!

The purpose of this book is to extract the most interesting insights from that massive list. This isn't intended to summarize each book of the Bible because that's what my "Chapter Summary of the Bible" is for. It's also not intended to list the major points of each book because you're probably already familiar with them. Finally, it's not intended to offer in-depth commentary because that's what my regular commentary is for. This book is simply a collection of points that I found interesting.

I hope there's some material here that you find edifying.

Jon Cooper  
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# Colossians

- This letter was written by both Paul and Timothy (Colossians 1:1).
- God is the one who made Paul an apostle (Colossians 1:1).
- It seems that Paul wasn't the one who shared the gospel with the Colossians (Colossians 1:4-5, 2:1). Someone else did that before he wrote this letter.
- The reason Paul prayed that God would give the church wisdom, spiritual understanding, and knowledge of God's will was so they would walk in God's ways and do what was right (Colossians 1:9-10).
- The church should seek to please the Lord in all things and be fruitful in every good work (Colossians 1:10).
- The Bible teaches the "all things" principle. God requires us to be faithful and obedient in all things, to please Him in all things, and to be fruitful in all things. The Bible doesn't teach that we only need to care about a few big things and can safely ignore everything else!
- Churches should seek to increase their knowledge of God (Colossians 1:10). Those who claim they don't need to study their Bibles or deepen their knowledge are wrong.
- Christians should seek to be joyful in the midst of suffering (Colossians 1:11).
- Paul didn't teach that God promised Christians an easy life. Instead he told the church that they needed to be patient and learn how to suffer (Colossians 1:11).
- The plan of salvation came from God the Father, and we should give Him thanks for saving us (Colossians 1:12).

Jesus was carrying out the plan of His Father.

- The Bible teaches that the blood of Jesus is what redeems us and purchases forgiveness for our sins (Colossians 1:14).
- Jesus is the image of the invisible God. We can't see God the Father, but we can see Jesus (Colossians 1:15).
- Jesus is the firstborn of every creature. This is because all of creation was made by Him and for Him (Colossians 1:15-16).
- All thrones and dominions in this world were created by Jesus (Colossians 1:16).
- The reason this universe continues to exist and function is because of a continual, direct, and sovereign act of Christ's divine power (Colossians 1:16-17).
- In the Bible there's no organization or individual who has control over multiple churches. Instead elders have authority over individual churches. The only one who is over the church as a whole is Jesus (Colossians 1:18). Therefore anyone who claims authority over the church as a whole is trying to steal a position that belongs to Jesus alone.
- Jesus is the firstborn from the dead (Colossians 1:18). This is so that He might have preeminence in all things.
- The Father decided that in Jesus all fullness should dwell (Colossians 1:19).
- The cross of Christ reconciles all things in Heaven and earth unto Himself (Colossians 1:20). However, this doesn't mean everyone is saved.



- Before our salvation we were the enemies of God (Colossians 1:21). This means Jesus died to save His enemies.
- The reason Christians are holy is because of the shed blood and death of Jesus. Our holiness comes from Christ, not from anything we've done (Colossians 1:20-22).
- Those who don't continue in the faith but instead abandon the gospel are not saved. Their previous confession won't save them (Colossians 1:23). The apostle John said that those who abandon the faith were never saved in the first place (1 John 2:19).
- Paul said that the gospel has already been preached to every creature which is under heaven (Colossians 1:23).
- When Christians are persecuted they're finishing the afflictions of Christ (Colossians 1:24). In other words, the church (the body of Christ) is suffering on behalf of Christ.
- God made Paul a minister of the gospel in order to fulfill His promise to save the Gentiles (Colossians 1:25-27).
- Paul speaks of a mystery that had been hid in previous ages. This mystery is that God was going to save the Gentiles (Colossians 1:26-27).
- "Christ in us" was a great mystery. It was unknown until God revealed it to mankind in the days of the apostles (Colossians 1:27).
- Paul said that he labored so that he might be perfect. However, in that same verse he also said that God was working in him to make him perfect (Colossians 1:29). Paul didn't say that since God was working in him he could sit back and do nothing. Instead Paul actively

sought to fight against sin and do what was right.

- At the time Paul wrote this letter he hadn't visited the Colossian or the Laodicean churches (Colossians 2:1).
- All of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in God (Colossians 2:3).
- It's possible to be absent from a church in the flesh and yet with them in spirit (Colossians 2:5).
- The church should be characterized by thanksgiving (Colossians 2:7).
- The traditions of men and the rudiments (principles) of this world are the enemy of the gospel (Colossians 2:8).
- In Christ all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. This means that Christ is divine and is much more than just a man (Colossians 2:9).
- Paul uses the term "Godhead" instead of "trinity" (Colossians 2:9). The concept of the trinity is biblical, but "Godhead" seems to be the term the Bible actually uses. (See Acts 17:29 and Romans 1:20 as well.)
- Jesus is enough to make us complete. We don't need something else in addition to Him (Colossians 2:10).
- All Christians are circumcised. This isn't a physical circumcision, but a putting off of the man of sin (Colossians 2:11).
- All of the sins of Christians have been forgiven (Colossians 2:13). We don't need to go through purgatory or anything else in order to be forgiven and purified.
- All of the sins of Christians were forgiven at the cross, because that's where Jesus took upon Himself the wrath

of God on our behalf (Colossians 2:13-14). Our sins were paid for *at the cross*. That means we were forgiven when Jesus shed His blood and died, not when we repented and believed. Our sins were actually paid for before we were born! This points to predestination, because our salvation was accomplished before we ever existed. Once we reached the time in our life when we repented of our sins and believed in Jesus, God did several things: He raised us up from being dead in our sins, He credited the perfect righteousness of Christ to our account, He filled us with His Spirit, and He made us new creatures in Him. However, our sins were forgiven at the cross because that's when and where Christ was punished for our sins.

- Jesus has already triumphed over the principalities and powers of this world (Colossians 2:15).
- It's not a sin to eat meat, or to abstain from eating meat. It's not a sin to drink wine, or to abstain from drinking wine. Since Christians have liberty in these matters we must not judge one another over these things (Colossians 2:16).
- God has given liberty to the church liberty in some areas where He withheld it from Israel during the Old Testament. For example, under the Mosaic Law the Jews were required to keep all seven of the yearly festivals that God instituted (Passover, Firstfruits, Tabernacles, etc.), but the church isn't required to keep any of them (Colossians 2:16).
- Food, drink, and holy days are all shadows of things to come (Colossians 2:16-17).
- It's possible for Christians to lose heavenly rewards if they succumb to false teachings and fall into sin (Colossians

2:18).

- Those who worship angels will lose their reward (Colossians 2:18).
- The commandments and traditions of this world aren't binding to Christians (Colossians 2:20-22). Note that this is *not* talking about being subject to the government and its laws.
- There are Heavenly things, and we must seek them (Colossians 3:1-2).
- Since Christians are dead in Christ, we must not love the things of this world. Instead we must put those desires to death and learn to love the things of Heaven instead (Colossians 3:1-3).
- Paul used the doctrine of the rapture to teach the church that they need to seek Heavenly things instead of earthly things (Colossians 3:4-5).
- Knowledge is important to our spiritual renewal (Colossians 3:10). It should be pursued, not shunned.
- In Christ we aren't divided by nationalities. Instead we're all part of the same body of Christ, the church (Colossians 3:11).
- Christians should make use of hymns to teach and admonish one another (Colossians 3:16).
- The things we do in this life are being done for the sake of Jesus, not for other people. Therefore we must do them whole-heartedly (Colossians 3:23-24). Paul doesn't say that only certain spiritual things are done for the Lord while the rest of our lives is secular.

- One day Christ is going to reward us for the things we've done in this life (Colossians 3:24).
- People who are in authority must pay their servants a just and equal wage (Colossians 4:1).
- Everyone in this world is under the authority of someone (Colossians 4:1).
- Paul waited until the end of his letter to mention the fact that he was in prison when he wrote it (Colossians 4:3). When he wrote this letter he didn't emphasize his problems or make the letter all about him. Instead he focused on the needs of the Colossian church.
- The speech of Christians must be full of grace but seasoned with salt (Colossians 4:6).
- Paul called Luke the beloved physician (Colossians 4:14).
- In the apostolic era Christians didn't meet in church buildings. Instead they met in people's homes (Colossians 4:15, Philemon 1:2, Romans 16:5, 1 Corinthians 16:19). The pattern that the Bible gives us is of Christians meeting in people's homes, not in church buildings. There are no exceptions to this in the New Testament and no hint that Christians should one day build dedicated buildings to meet in. The apostles never hinted that meeting in homes was inferior and that one day Christians should find a better solution. In fact, the early church (which owned no buildings) was spectacularly successful in spreading the gospel!
- Paul expected this epistle to be read aloud to both the Colossian church and the Laodicean church (Colossians 4:16). This means the apostles intended their letters to be passed around to the churches.

- There was a letter to Laodicea that Paul wanted to be read aloud in the Colossian church (Colossians 4:16). That letter has not been preserved in the canon of Scripture. This isn't the only letter that the apostles wrote which wasn't preserved! The Lord only preserved in the Bible the specific letters that we needed, not everything that was ever written. What He did preserve is everything that we need (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- Paul had a message for Archippus: fulfill the ministry that he received from the Lord (Colossians 4:17). It seems that if God gives us a ministry then we need to fulfill it.
- Paul ends the letter with a salutation which was written by his own hand (Colossians 4:18). This seems to be the way he demonstrated that the letter truly came from him (2 Thessalonians 3:17).