



Study Guide: Session One

BACKGROUND

of the book of Colossians

The Colossian church was probably founded by Epaphras (1:7; 4:12–13) as the result of Paul’s work in Ephesus (a.d. 55–58; Acts 19). With Paul now under house arrest in Rome (4:3, 10, 18; Acts 28:30–31), Epaphras visited him and told him of heresies plaguing the Colossians. Paul wrote this letter to warn them against those false teachings that on the one hand obscured the majesty and glory of Christ (1:15; 2:8) and on the other hand introduced asceticism (2:16–23). The false teaching was a mixture of ceremonial Judaism (2:16) and oriental theosophy (2:18) that opposed the simplicity and freedom of the gospel and vital union with Christ the risen Lord (2:19; 3:1). It was probably an early form of Gnosticism.¹

IMPORTANCE

of the book of Colossians

Paul explained the greatest antidote to false teaching—*a godly life*. Those who say, “I don’t care what you believe, just so long as you live a good life” are not thinking logically. *What we believe determines how we behave*. If we believe that matter is evil, we will use our bodies one way; but if we believe that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, we will live accordingly.

Wrong doctrine always leads to wrong living. Right doctrine should lead to right living. In the two concluding chapters, Paul applied the preeminence of Christ to the daily affairs of life. If Christ is truly preeminent in our lives, then we will glorify Him by keeping pure, by enjoying fellowship with other saints, by loving each other at home and being faithful at work, and by seeking to witness for Christ and serve Him effectively. Unless doctrine leads to duty, it is of no use to us.

Many Bible scholars have concluded that Colossians is the most profound letter Paul ever wrote.²

¹Willmington, H. L. (1997). *Willmington's Bible handbook* (715). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

²Wiersbe, W. W. (1996, c1989). *The Bible exposition commentary*. "An exposition of the New Testament comprising the entire 'BE' series"--Jkt. (Col 1:5). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

OVERVIEW of the Book of Colossians

THE BIG IDEA: God calls us to confront two common disconnect points

1. A Sub-par view of Christ

- A. Christ is supreme (1:9-18)
- B. Christ is the Savior (1:19-23)
- C. Christ is worthy of service (1:24-29)

2. A Sub-par view of Christian living

- A. Thinking (3:1-11)
- B. Relationships (3:12-17)
- C. Home (3:18-23)
- D. Disciplines (4:1-6)

Reconnection requires *Worship* and *Obedience*

DISCUSSION

What are some factors in life that can lead believers to need a reboot (getting back to the basics of knowing and living for Christ)?

What are some signs that it may be time for a reboot?

What are some sources of “bad spiritual information” that you have encountered?

What aspects of worship are the most meaningful to you and why?

What areas of obedience you found particularly difficult? Share some ideas that may encourage others in remaining obedient to Christ?

ASSIGNMENT

Read through the book of Colossians two times and ask God to reveal Christ to you in a new way.