

Colossians

The Preeminent One

A Family Study through the Letter of Colossians



by Steven Houser

A Family Study through the Letter of Colossians

Colossians

The Preeminent One

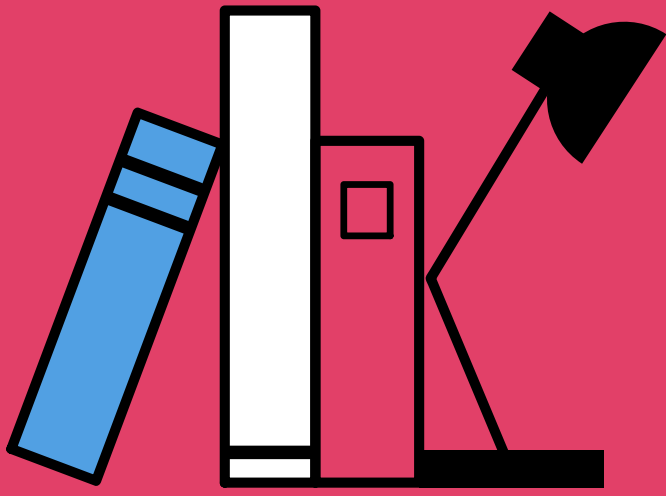
by Steven Houser

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AUTHOR'S NOTE	07
INTRODUCTION.....	09
THEME WHEEL	10
CHAPTER 1	12
01 - THE WILL OF GOD	
02 - RELOCATION	
03 - PRE-EMINENCE	
04 - RECONCILIATION	
05 - A KNOWABLE GOD	
CHAPTER 2	32
06 - THE MYSTERY	
07 - DEITY OF CHRIST	
08 - CANCELED DEBT	
09 - SHADOW VS SUBSTANCE	
10 - DYING WITH CHRIST	
CHAPTER 3	51
11 - CHRIST IS YOUR LIFE	
12 - PUT TO DEATH THE EARTHLY THINGS	
13 - PUTTING OFF THE OLD	
14 - PUT ON THE NEW	
15 - A GODLY FAMILY	
CHAPTER 4	69
16 - PRAYER & WISDOM #1	
17 - PRAYER & WISDOM #2	
18 - BROTHERS & WORKERS	
19 - MATURATION OF A CHURCH	
20 - PAUL'S HANDWRITING	
CONCLUSION	87

AUTHOR'S NOTE

BRING IT HOME FAMILY STUDIES



There is no greater parenting moment than to watch our children begin to understand deep truths of God. The moment it clicks and they ask real questions about the truths of scripture is a beautiful moment of grace for any family.

The Bring it Home family studies were written with these moments in mind. It is my hope that God will use this study as an opportunity to encourage your family devotions with moments that offer hopeful insight into your children's heart.

This study is meant to be a secondary resource to help invigorate your families study of scripture. Always have your Bible open next to this book, and please do not fall into the trap of neglecting to read the passage before the study. The power of any study of scripture is found in the words on the pages of the Bible.

There are a few features of this study that were added to help your family facilitate conversation around the truth that each lesson focuses on.

Helpful Thoughts: The helpful thoughts are thoughts gathered from great theologians and authors that help to emphasize the importance of the lesson.

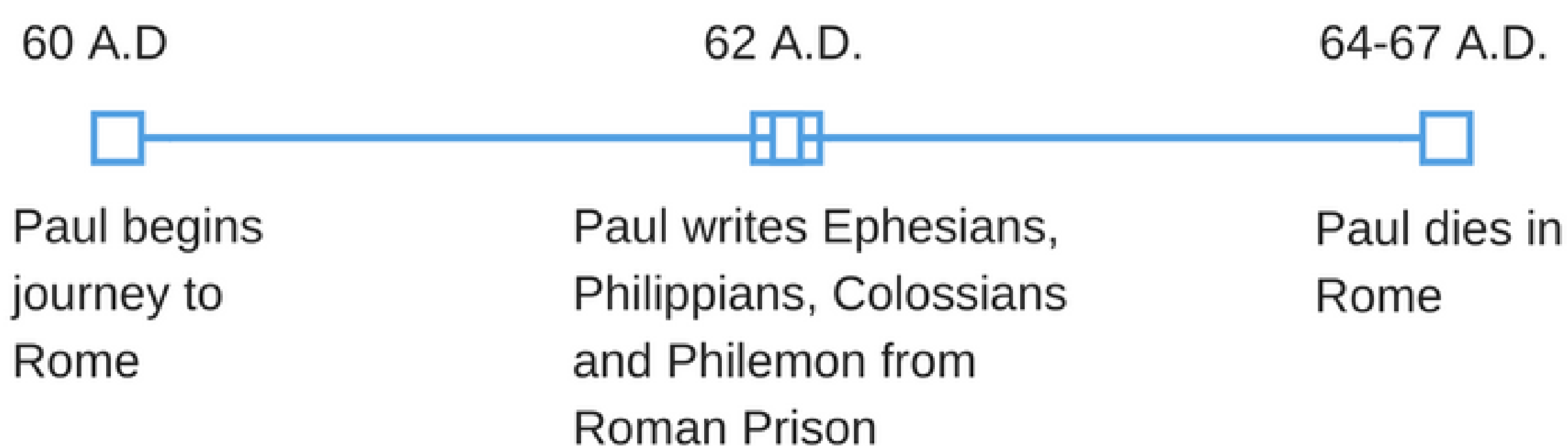
Inductive Study: The inductive study section allow you and your family to organize your thoughts about the passage in a helpful way. Whether writing down details in observation or trying to understand them in the interpretation section or brain storming applications; your family will benefit from the deep work to mine truth.

Think about it: The section is free form and allows your family room to respond to the reading.

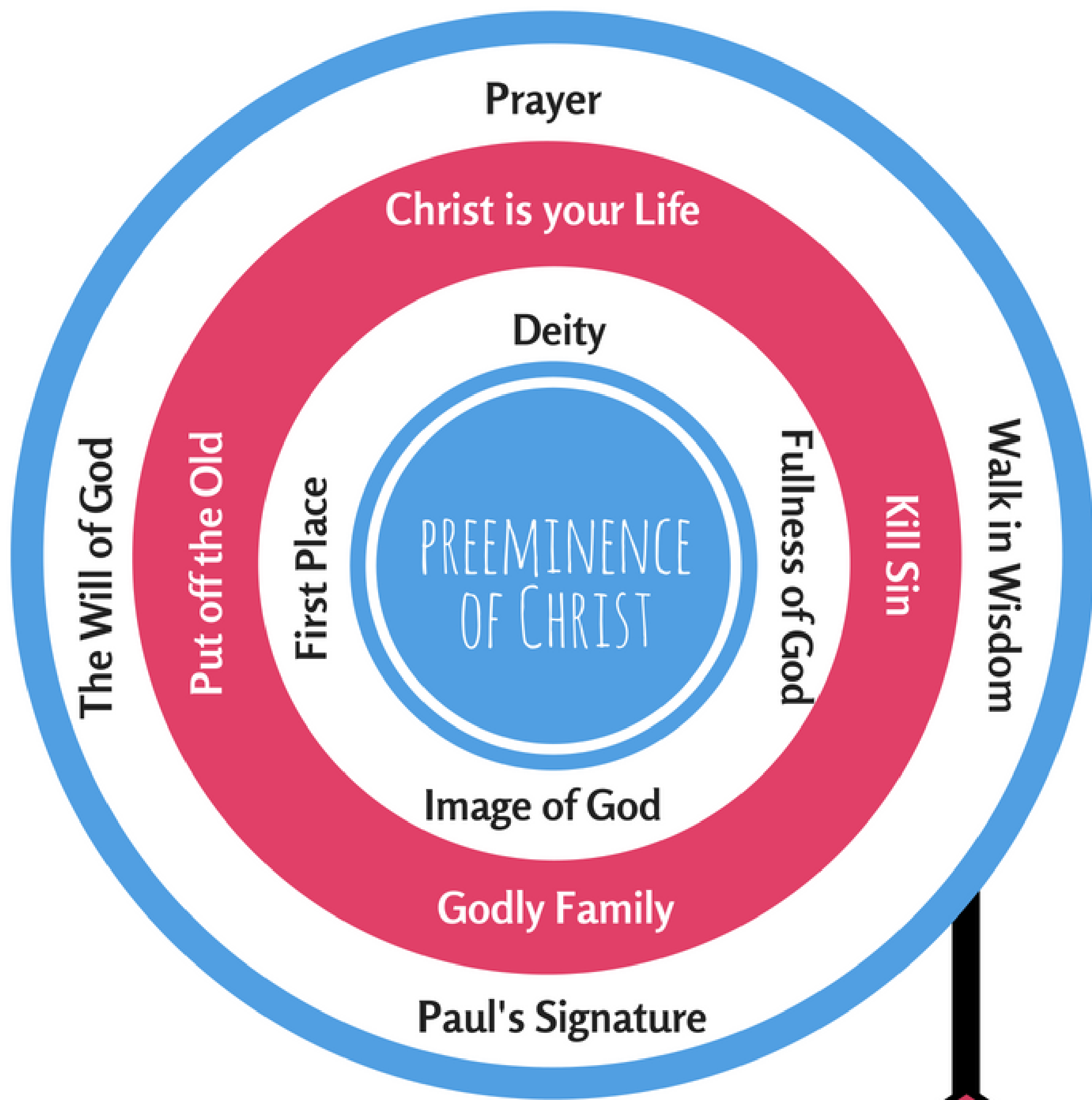
Author Notes: Lastly, throughout the book you will find author notes. These are very personal ways that truths in the lesson have inspired me.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE LETTER OF COLOSSIANS



The letter to the Colossians was addressed to the church in the city of Colossae; a city belonging to the Roman province of Asia Minor, found in modern day Turkey. This church was most likely started by Epaphras, a follower of Jesus who was trained by Paul the Apostle. Paul describes Epaphras as a fellow minister of Christ (Colossians 1:7-8), who had faithfully taught the Colossian people the message of salvation, and struggled for them in prayer. Epaphras seems to have kept in touch with his discipler and even joined him on one of his missionary journeys; visiting Paul in prison. It is thought then that though Paul may have never visited the Church at Colossae, he had a deep love for them because of the time he spent with Epaphras. It was Epaphras visit that prompted this letter to the Colossian Church



**THEME
WHEEL**
Colossians

In each of Paul's letters we see themes emerge. This is because he is writing to real churches filled with real people who are all dealing with real struggles. His writing is always to encourage and challenge them follow Christ alone and not to fall into the trap of adding or subtracting from the Gospel. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul's theme is clearly the pre-eminence of Jesus and sufficiency of His sacrificial death.

Having received reports from Epaphras, Paul pens this letter to encourage and correct the believers in Colossae between the years 60-62 AD.

Paul targets the church's slip from the truth of the Gospel by focusing on the major themes of the sufficiency of Jesus and the significance of His sacrificial death. Paul often makes mention of the darkness of a life before Christ; a life most likely rooted in passion chasing and idolatry, which was characteristic of the Roman culture. These vices, combined with rising social and political pressure on Christians was a mixture prime for deteriorating faithfulness.

This problem was not isolated to the Colossian church. All across the Roman world, churches were being planted by Paul and his associates that were subject to the same kind of temptation. Paul wrote this letter for the purpose of being distributed among the Greek church network that included the churches at Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. He praises the work of Epaphras among each of these cities and instructs this letter to also be delivered and read to Laodicean church (Colossians 4:16).

Philippians < **Colossians** > 1 Thessalonians

Colossians 1

THE CHURCH

PAUL'S PURPOSE FOR WRITING THIS
LETTER WAS TO ENCOURAGE AND
CORRECT THE COLOSSIAN CHURCH

THE WILL OF GOD

READ COLOSSIANS 1:1-8

Each of Paul's letters begin with an introduction. He introduces himself as an apostle, clarifying his authority straight away. He was called by the will of God and set apart for the ministry of the Gospel; sent to be a witness to the resurrected savior and a bearer of the message of reconciliation.

Paul was sent by the will of God, as a servant of God, with the message of God; specifically to the non-Jewish people in the Roman world. His calling from God was daunting and difficult, but he believed that God's will was more important than his own comfort.

God's will is worth following no matter the difficulty that lies ahead. Christians have dealt with persecution, disease and even death with great dignity and grace, because they are comforted by their faith in the will of God.

The safest place we can find ourselves in this life is within the will of God. Paul was sent by the will of God, as a servant of God, with the message of God.



HELPFUL THOUGHT....



"By the will of God; not by the will of men, for he derived no authority and power, nor received any doctrine from men; nor by his own will, of his own head, by any usurpation of his; he did not take the office upon himself, but was invested with it, according to the secret will and purpose of God"

JOHN GILL



INDUCTIVE STUDY

1) OBSERVATIONS

2) INTERPRETATIONS

3) APPLICATIONS



THINK ABOUT IT.....



RELOCATION

READ COLOSSIANS 1:9-14

Light and dark are vastly different. In the dark we get lost and confused; in the light we can see our surroundings and find our way home. Darkness brings mystery and gloom; the light illuminates and brightens. Darkness represents evil and death; light represents good, hope and life.

Paul describes salvation as a glorious rescue from the domain of darkness, and a deliverance to the kingdom of God's beloved Son. The truth of the Gospel is that we were in the dark and unable to find our way to God, yet God sent Jesus to shine brightly into our darkness and enlighten our souls to the beauty of His holiness.

This relocation is offered through the forgiveness and removal of sin, by an opening of blinded eyes and a passionate pursuit of the holiness of God; all of this is obtained by faith in the promises of God.

Since being freed from slavery in the kingdom of darkness, we turn in affection to serve our King in His domain of pure light. Our thankfulness and love motivate our service and give us constant hope as we stay near our Savior.



HELPFUL THOUGHT....



Mark, here is the beginning of our salvation-- when God delivers us from the depth of ruin into which we were plunged. For wherever his grace is not there is darkness...From this you may gather that the whole world, with all its pretended wisdom and righteousness is regarded as nothing but darkness in the sight of God, because, apart from the kingdom of Christ, there is no light.

JOHN CALVIN



INDUCTIVE STUDY

1) OBSERVATIONS

2) INTERPRETATIONS

3) APPLICATIONS



THINK ABOUT IT.....

PRE-EMINENCE

READ COLOSSIANS 1:15-20

We all have people in our life who are special, who hold personal significance to us. Generally our immediate family members (grandparents, parents, and siblings) have a special place in our hearts, but also friends, teachers, writers, or musicians can take on a special significance in our lives. What makes these people special to you? What makes them different than others? Sometimes these questions can be hard to answer.

For a Christian, Jesus holds a special place in our lives. We believe in Him. We trust His words. We follow His teachings. We look to Him as an example and we believe that one day we will live forever with Him.

What is it that makes Jesus so special? Why do Christians claim allegiance to Him? The answers is simple and especially plain in this passage. The Son of God, to whom believers belong after being transferred into His kingdom, has no equal. He is preeminent over all things because

“All things were created through Him and for Him.” He belongs in the first place, before all things, because all things are held together by His power. And in Him, the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. Christians have experienced the truth of Jesus’ true identity and the benefit of a relationship with Him. We believe that He is worthy of all honor and praise; of our worship and adoration; of our bowed knees before His pre-eminence.



HELPFUL THOUGHT....



Beneath the dark clouds that hide the sun, we mourn the absence of the great orb of day, but think how brightly the sun is shining above those clouds! Borrow an eagle’s wings and soar above the clouds, and then you shall see the sun shining in his strength. So is it with Christ, the Sun of Righteousness! Get away, by faith, from this poor earth, and you shall see Him shining in His glory, whether it is day or night, summer or winter!

CHARLES SPURGEON



INDUCTIVE STUDY

1) OBSERVATIONS

2) INTERPRETATIONS

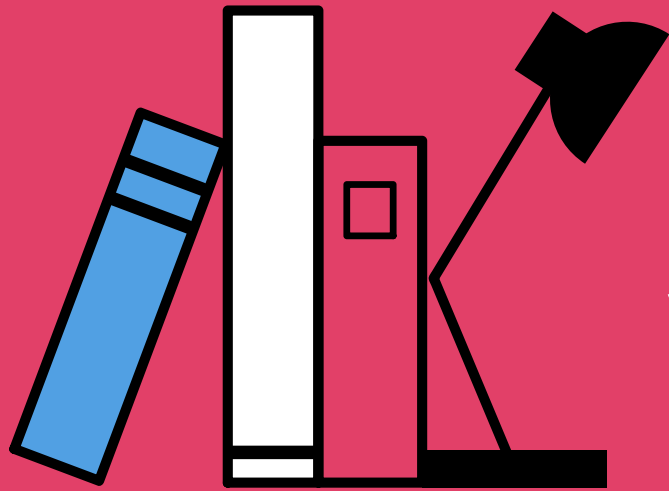
3) APPLICATIONS



THINK ABOUT IT.....

AUTHOR'S NOTE

COMFORTED IN PAIN



In January 2013 our daughter was born with complications in her lungs. The diagnosis was grim and she immediately entered a fight for her life. This was a scary and painful time as we faced the brevity of life and questioned the purpose of pain.

Why did our daughter have to face death so early? Why did her mother have to recover before being able to hold her daughter? Why couldn't we hold her and fight with her in the NICU? And ultimately what would we believe if she were to die?

We knew the truth about sin and the corruption that it caused. This sin-filled world is a pain-filled world. We all experience pain in this life; if you are experiencing pain right now, you are not alone. Sin has caused a curse on creation that leads to pain and death. We knew this

to be true, yet there is very little comfort in knowledge of the problem.

During this time we turned to scripture. Colossians 1:15-20 was a passage that gave us great comfort as we sought for hope in midst of our pain. Our comfort is that our daughter was created by Jesus and for His own purpose. That meant that she would honor Him in her life and death, no matter how many breaths she breathed along the way. As hard as that was to face, there is comfort knowing that our God is in control and that her life was in His hands.

It makes no difference what you are dealing with in this life, Jesus is the preeminent King. All things belong to Him and He holds them all together by the power of His word. He is in control and will work all things together for the glory of His name and the good of His people. Take comfort today in your sovereign Lord.

RECONCILIATION

READ COLOSSIANS 1:19-23

In the beginning the world was good and right. The creator was pleased by walking throughout His creation, maintaining close relationships with His creatures. He was very pleased with everything that He had created and had a special appreciation and love for the people whom He had created to work His garden and worship Him. Yet sin, which entered creation through these people, destroyed the innocence of creation itself; setting creation on a spiral to futility and the mess of the curse.

In the midst of the problems caused by sin, Paul tells us that it pleased God not only to walk with His creation again through Jesus, but also to work reconciliation of all creation through Him. Reconciling all things, both heaven and earth to himself through the blood Jesus spilled on the cross.

The reconciliation and restoration purchased by the sacrifice of Jesus would change the fate of

people (like you and me) who have been led away from God by our sin. Offering forgiveness for evil deeds, Jesus presents His people holy and blameless before their creator.



HELPFUL THOUGHT....



He is the mediator of reconciliation, who procures peace as well as pardon for sinners, who brings them into a state of friendship and favour at present, and will bring all holy creatures, angels as well as men, into one glorious and blessed society at last: things in earth or things in heaven

MATTHEW HENRY



INDUCTIVE STUDY

1) OBSERVATIONS

2) INTERPRETATIONS

3) APPLICATIONS



THINK ABOUT IT.....

A KNOWABLE GOD

READ COLOSSIANS 1:24-29

God's will for Paul was a ministry of introducing all people (especially non-jewish people) to the knowable God. Paul's experience of the risen Christ convinced him that God had revealed Himself in Jesus and would be available for all who would believe in Him.

This ministry would bring suffering and struggle to the apostle, yet he counted his life as nothing compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ and making him known. So he pressed on in ministry for the sake of Jesus name being exalted throughout the earth. He proclaimed to everyone the greatness of God and the riches of glory revealed Jesus. He warned people of the disaster sin had caused and taught them the Gospel's offering of salvation.

Paul's greatest ambition was to bring people into a knowledge of God's saving work and to present everyone mature in Christ .

Rejoice that God has made Himself known. His gracious forgiveness makes way for a friendship that would never had been possible if God did not initiate restoration in His son.



HELPFUL THOUGHT....



This is to say that people cannot know Christ better without knowing the scriptures better. It is only through an expository ministry of the word of God can be fully known: and it is only through the word of God that Christ can be fully known.

JOHN STOTT



INDUCTIVE STUDY

1) OBSERVATIONS

2) INTERPRETATIONS

3) APPLICATIONS



THINK ABOUT IT.....