



Group Guide

Colossians 1

December 15, 2024

Main Passage: Colossians 1

Theological Theme

Christ is our hope, and we have the privilege and responsibility to share this hope with the world, to the glory of God.

Introduction

- 1. Name some places, other than Jesus, where people try to find hope.
- 2. What is the danger in looking for hope in things outside of Christ?

1. Gospel Transformation (Colossians 1:1-14)

Paul's letter to the Colossians begins as many of his other letters—with a greeting. After identifying himself, he encouraged the Colossians by referring to them as faithful saints. Paul may not have met the Colossians in person, but he took seriously his opportunity to encourage, bless, and teach these believers. Notice that Paul described himself as an apostle. As an apostle, he was qualified to address the church with authority, and they would receive it with due respect.

- 1. Paul called the Colossians faithful. What spiritual identifiers might people use about you from looking at your daily life?
- 2. Why are all believers bonded together in love, even if we've never met one another?
- 3. Application: What are some things we are tempted to focus on instead of the things of God? How does a lost focus hinder our spiritual growth?

2. Preeminence of Jesus (Colossians 1:15-23)

In this passage we read that Christ is “the image of the invisible God,” and we know from Genesis 1 that man was created in the image of God. We were made in God's image but once sin entered the world, God's image was marred, though not lost, in His creation. Humans continued in the image of God but imperfectly so. When Jesus arrived, He alone reflected the perfect image of the invisible God. He came as the exact representation

of God Himself. Verse 15 goes on to say that Christ is “the firstborn over all creation.” Through His resurrection and ascension, Christ leads the way for all of creation to be restored to God as it was originally intended.

- ❓ What does it mean practically that all people are made in God’s image, but we don’t reflect Him perfectly due to sin? How should this affect the way we interact with every person we meet, believer or not?
- ❓ What made Christ uniquely able to pay the penalty for our sin? Why is it impossible for us, or anyone else, to do this apart from Christ?
- ❓ Application: Where do you currently need to remain steadfast in your way? What threatens this faithfulness in your life?

3. Hope in Him (Colossians 1:24-29)

Paul’s claim of completing “what is lacking” in Christ seems at first to be audacious. But Paul was not saying Christ’s atoning act was insufficient or incomplete; rather, Paul emphasized that the redemption of creation required followers of Christ to follow in His example of suffering too. In this way, Paul was faithful to complete this work.

- ❓ How might we be called to follow Jesus in suffering today? What makes this difficult? What makes it easy to avoid this call in our context?
- ❓ How does our response in suffering show others what we believe to be true about God, our lives, and the whole world?
- ❓ Application: In what situation do you need God’s power to work through you? How will you seek His strength this week?

Conclusion

- ❓ Where does spiritual drift threaten you regularly? How can you seek to be strengthened in Christ to draw nearer to Him?
- ❓ How can we encourage one another as a group toward steadfastness in Jesus?
- ❓ Who can you share with about Jesus as the central figure of the whole world?