

THIS WEEK, I WILL FOCUS ON THE  
GOSPEL BY:



WEEK 1 – A PREEMINENT  
INTRODUCTION (FIRST IMPRESSIONS)  
COLOSSIANS 1:1-2

TODAY'S VERSES:

Colossians 1:1-2  
Colossians 4:3  
Colossians 2:1  
Colossians 1:7-8  
Colossians 4:12  
Philemon 1:23  
Colossians 4:7  
Colossians 1:26-27  
Colossians 1:4  
Colossians 1:6  
Colossians 2:9-10  
Colossians 1:9-2:7

Colossians is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to a church he had never visited. The church in Colossae was planted by a disciple of Paul named Epaphras. Paul is writing this letter to introduce himself and correct a problem(s) in the church at Colossae.

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**Why do you think first impressions matter? What are some good and bad first impressions you have personally experienced?**

Paul addresses many things in this letter that indicate a bizarre mixture of religious beliefs had started to move this church away from the truth of the Gospel. Rather than the church influencing the surrounding culture, the church was primarily being influenced by the culture.

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**How have you seen culture influence the church today? When should/shouldn't the church listen to culture?**

**Jesus + anything** is not the Gospel. What is the Gospel? We are separated from God because we have all run our own way (we call this sin), but God, in His infinite mercy, sent Jesus for us. Jesus lived the perfect life we could never live and substituted Himself in our place. On the cross, Jesus exchanged our sin for His righteousness and our death for His life. Paul expresses two aims:

1. That believers, who he has never met, would grow in their knowledge of Christ.
  2. That they would recognize and refuse the heresy that had infiltrated their ranks.
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**What issues arise when we replace Gospel truth with cultural ideals?**

## What were the problems?

1. Paul mentions “spiritual rulers and authorities” and reminds his audience that Jesus triumphed over these rulers/authorities on the cross.
  2. Paul will mention the “Creator and creation” because there became a focus on spirituality and angelic spirits, elevating them to the same level as Jesus.
  3. Paul will point out that many were relying on philosophical reasoning and human tradition.
  4. Paul will speak of the mingling of law and grace. Some Jewish practices were now being falsely identified as “crucial to sanctification.”
  5. Paul will say there is an unbiblical response to “fleshly desires.” There was pressure to observe manmade laws in order to make sure you didn't sin.
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**Do any of the problems in the Colossian church sound like something you've witnessed today? How so?**

**Paul's Message:** You are complete in Christ. Christ is preeminent over all! Focus your life on Jesus! The centrality of Christ in this letter is seen over and over; it is what we call a “Christological focus” in every section.

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**If you asked your friends what the focus of your life is, what would they tell you? How is Jesus greater than anything else that might become our focus?**

Jesus is not only Paul's dominant topic; Jesus is the heart of Paul's message. **Col 1:27 Christ in you, the hope of glory.** The Colossians (and people today) don't need saints, angelic mediation, the Mosaic laws, or an aesthetic life lived in a monastic commune...we need Jesus.

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**If we devoted ourselves to a GOSPEL-centered focus, how would our lives and relationship with God and others grow?**