



Barrenjoey Anglican Churches Home Groups

Bible Study Questions - Colossians

Chapter 1

Study 1

- Q1** About the introductory verses [1-2]
- Think about the meaning of the word Apostle (maybe use a Bible Dictionary or the pages at the back of many Bibles?)
 - What does that tell us about how we should regard this book and how much authority it should have?
- Q2** Think about the apostles words of greeting(Grace and Peace verse 2), can you think of a better form of greeting for when we meet or leave one another?
- Q3** About prayer Paul has great and very extensive prayer list for the Colossians - yet he has never met them! How can we pray
- a) For one another
 - b) For the church as a whole
 - c) For Missionaries when we may have never met.
 - d) For Christians in either lands that we also have never met e.g. The Christian suffering under Isis persecution.
- Q4** Now make a personal list of all the individual thing that Paul was praying about for the Colossians Church.

That's the background - Now let's see how this passage applies to us verses 3-14

- Q5** List some of the things in these verses that Paul is asking God for on the behalf of the Colossians Church. Then ask yourself the question:
- a) "How can I pray intelligently for people that I have not met or do not know"?
 - b) What prayer points could I use?
 - c) Were Paul's prayer points good and intelligent?
 - d) Could he have asked God for anything better?

- Q6** “Faith” “Hope” and “Love”. (verses 4 & 5) These 3 words occurs a number of times in Pauls letters. Can you see the progression here?
 a) Their Faith in Jesus is a positive not an abstract thing, which is expressed by
 b) Their Love for one another which have as a future motivator.
 c) Their Hope in the reality of Heaven which is based on the reality of Jesus and His resurrection (Verses 5b and 6 echo’s the words of {Cor 15:1-8})
- Q7** here is an unusual one to discuss.... Look at verse 5 and the words....”you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel”....
 Now discuss amongst yourselves What evidence do we have for believing that the Gospel is true and worth committing to?
 Do not hesitate to send me an email about these after your discussion with any question that you might have on this issue. [neilflower@bigpond.com]
- Q8** A good Bible Study is not just about head knowledge - it is also about practical application of this.
 So..... Why not stop now and spend some time in prayer, perhaps in small groups of 3 - 4, and pray for
 1) Your Ministers (including our Archbishop and Regional Bishops)
 2) Your Linked or known Missionaries
 3) The other members of your home group
 4) And don’t forget yourselves as individuals!
- Q9** Look at the progression or steps in Salvation in verses 12-14...Qualified us v 12
 Rescued us v 13
 Brought us v 13b
 Using these words and other passages of scripture describe how God had worked out His plans of Salvation in Jesus using this progression.
- Q10** Now spend some time thanking God for this

End of Study 1

Your personal question and comments are welcome. Please send any question to [neilflower@bigpond.com]



Study 2 Colossians 1:15-20

The supremacy of Christ

The opening greeting and background of the letter are over - now the apostle begins to address the reasons behind his writing of the letter - the referring to the false teaching about Jesus and the declaration of the reasoned, revealed and consistency with - the - rest - of - the - bible, which alone can open the way to eternal life.

- Q1** Read verses 15-20 together. Does this sound like you are reciting a “Creed”? Can you see 9 attributes / aspects of the person and work of Jesus in these verses. Make a list and see just how integral Jesus is in both creation and salvation. Note however that
- 1) “Firstborn” does not mean the first person born or created, but means in the Biblical sense the one who bears the family name, inheritance and authority and the one who inherits any glory.
 - 2) “Before all things” verses 17 means the “No1” - the Representative, the leader and not the ‘first one made or manufactured’
 - 3) “Firstborn from among the dead verse 18 mean as here 1) above.
- Q2** Discuss how Christians (the members of this body, the church [verse 18]) should regard and honour Jesus.
- Q3** Now look behind the scenes. Ask yourselves “ Is there a link between all the attributes of Jesus in verses 15 - 19 and God’s plan of Salvation? Could salvation for sinners have been achieved if Jesus was anything less than as described in verse 15-19?
- Q4** Think about the meaning of the word “Reconcile” (v.20 - grab a dictionary if you are not sure), then discuss the question “Why did we need to be reconciled to God anyway?” To help you in this see: Habakkuk 1:13, Isaiah 59:1-2 and Romans 5:9-11.

End of Study 2

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BARRENJOEY ANGLICAN CHURCHES

Study 3 Colossians 1:21-23

The Reason, Rescue and Results of Gods 'Plan of Salvation'

- Q1** Think about the words "Grace". Try to define it yourselves before you look at the answer at the end of this study.
Grace: "unmerited favour shown toward those who are completely undeserving of it." Someone once made an acrostic of the word. " God's Riches at Christ's Expense".
- Q2** Discuss the idea of being "alienated from God" and "enemies in your mind" (V21) and then look at how God could be a God of Justice before he could show that he was a God of love.
- Q3** Now think about the motivation and plan of God for your Salvation: (V22 is the key here)
a) Do you think that God may be angry over mankind's sin and evil?
b) How would that anger be placated? See 1 John 2:2
- Q4** "Christ's physical body" (V22) Why was it necessary for it to be a "physical" sacrifice?
Was not there another way for God's anger against sin and rebellion to be placated?
- Q5** The word 'holy' (V22) is an often used word. It is a common word in the N.T and has a number linked meanings.
Thus "Holy" is the little Greek word "Hagios" and means to 'separate', to consecrate' - it is also the word that we use for "saint" and (the Latin based) "sanctify",
Put them together and you get the idea of "to separate something or someone for the exclusive use of God. See also here 1 Cor 1:2 where 'Hagios' is used as sanctified' and holy' - with the idea that the Corinthian christians were 'set apart' for God's exclusive use and therefore were to recognise that and to live as 'holy' (set apart) people. Now!
a) In the second part of V 22, what is the link between 'reconciled ' and 'holy'?'
b) Discuss how 'holy' and 'without blemish and 'free' from accusation are linked.
- Q6** Being 'made' or declared' holy is one thing.
a) How can we continue being like that if we still sin?
b) In the Anglican Church services, how is this problem addressed ? (This one's not as hard as you think)
c) Is there a key word in V 23 that we can use, to combat Satan's lies to us about "how we are not 'good enough' for heaven" because we still sin.



Study 4 Colossians 1:24-29

Introduction: The Paradox of Ministry

In this study we take a short break from studying Christology that is the teaching about the person and nature of Jesus, to look how the Apostle shows how this affects both the Biblical teaching about the church, and how the understanding of the church is both communicated and practised - namely the understanding of true ministry and, how this should affect our prayers, as we look for a new Senior Minister here at BAC

- Q1** a) Read 1:24-29 and as you do imagine that you are Paul writing to the Church.
 b) Now discuss together the radical changes in Paul's thinking and behaviour now that he was no longer a leader and ruler of the Jews but had become a servant of Jesus to the Church.

Note: v24 is not an easy verse to understand but is probably best explained, as "Jesus was hated by the rulers and officials and they vented their anger against him and his physical body when he was on earth. The only way for that to continue (because people still hate the Gospel and Jesus) was to persecute and physically harm people like the Apostles. So, Paul was ill treated for the sake of Jesus. Now read together (for an example of this) 2 Corinthians 11:23-29. Paul certainly 'copped it' because he was trying to spread the Gospel.

- Q2** a) Why, (if Prof, Dawkins is right with his 'God Delusion') would Paul want to give up his authority as a ruler of the Jews, to be a 'servant' (the word comes from the idea a 'table waiter' type of servant)?

Was he a Masochist? Was he deluded? Or, had he found real a Saviour, and real indwelling presence of the living God who was not only able to replace what he had given up, but actually exceed it. Don't leave this question till you have read and discussed Philippians 3:7-11.

- Q3** Refer again to V25b
- a) Discuss together how just from the second half of V25 we can get a real understanding of just what “the ministry” is all about.
 - b) Some people don’t seem to like the Old Testament. How does this idea fit in with “the word of God in it’s fullness?”
 - c) How can we show to those who won’t believe in great slabs of the O.T that this idea is not Christian doctrine?
 - d) Now about these words” the mystery hidden for ages.... now disclosed to the saints...”.(V25). Can you see truth in the old adage “The New (Testament) is in the Old (Testament) concealed - The Old is in the New revealed”. Also look at Revelation 19:10 (almost the last words of the Bible)
 - e) The Colossians did not have the N.T (it was still being written!) So, the “glorious riches(v27) about Christ could only have been found in O.T
 - a) Think about this and then discuss it together... Is the “glorious riches” of V. 27 just sentimental “pie in the sky” or can it be known as a present reality?
 - b) Do you, as an individual know it as such?
- Q4** This question is about the depth and fulness of Christian ministry.... Read v. 28-29 together.
- a) Here is a tricky one for you: Is the pattern of ministry the Apostle describes here....
 - i) Only for Apostles?
 - ii) Only for Bishops?
 - iii) Only for Senior Ministers?
 or
 - b) Could it be a pattern and example for all who serve in any way in the church to follow? e.g, Youth Leaders, Sunday School teachers, and even the church cleaners?
 - c) Could it be that there are 2 standards of ministry in God’s Church.
- Q5** “To present everyone perfect or mature in Christ (V28) This was the Apostles goal. Should it be ours also? How far should we go to achieve it? (V.29)

End of Study 4

Your personal question and comments are welcome. Please send any question to [\[neilflower@bigpond.com\]](mailto:neilflower@bigpond.com)



Study 5 Colossians 2:1-7

Pauls love for the Church

Introduction:

The Apostle Paul had great love for Christ's Church and in this study we see some characteristics of what a true Gospel minister should be like.

Also in this passage we have the purposes or goals that the Apostle had for the Church. These desires, hopes, goals (all apply here) are absolutely crucial and essential for Christian growth both in individual Christians as well as for Congregations.

So, let's examine the Apostolic desires and hopes of what the local Christian assembly and its members should be like, and how godly ministers should be teaching and helping to fulfil these goals.

- Q1** Think about V 1 for a while then discuss these 2 "big W's".
- Why is the apostle "struggling" so hard for people he has never met and doesn't know? (A clue, but not a complete answer is found in 1:28b-29)
 - What is so important about the (right or correct) answer to part a) above?
What is so important about
 - The Colossians and / or
 - The people in this Church at BAC?
- Q2** What (according to vs 2-3) really is the purpose of life and living?
(And it's not 42, either!)
- Q3** If you were being told that what you had been taught was different and that you needed 'more' or 'special' teaching (see Vs 4-8); then discuss this:
- How can you have more, than all? (See 1:15-20 and 1:21-23.) (what do you, or can you, possibly give to the person who has everything?)
 - Can you see the link between being "encouraged in heart" and united in love: (V 5) and having "the full riches of complete understanding", on the one hand, and knowing Christ as real helper, Saviour and constant companion? Spend some time on this one - there's a lot in it!
- Q4** Perhaps, according to V6, the key is in the 'how' and the 'who' of the person that you believe that you "have received."
- Does what you understand Christ to be really matter?
 - Isn't a simple loving heart all you need?
 - With all the various sects and cults giving us different versions of who Jesus is, how would you define 'who' or 'what' you believe Jesus to be, and what difference that has made or is making, to you and your daily life?

- Q5** One last thing we need to see how this passage translates into practical, daily, Christian living. (Vs 6 & 7)
- How does your understanding of Christ do this for you?
 - Is it satisfying?
 - Once you have discussed the above then read together the paragraphs below...
- Having *received* Him, we are to *live* in Him (6)
Having our *foundation* in Him, we are to be *built* up in Him (7) and
Having been taught Christ, we are to be strengthened and thankful (v.7)
 - It is Christ only that we need. We may want many other things, but they may not be of any use or help to us. It would be well for you to stop and read here 1Corinthians 3 especially verses 10-15.
 - But here is also a warning to us. There are many diverse teachings among the varieties of Christianity, but let us test just two of them - not exhaustively, but by this one simple passage. Some Denominations insist that to be sure of your salvation, you must faithfully submit to the discipline of "mother church" and participate in the sacraments decreed by her. Do you see that in these verses here? At the other extreme, some other groups insist that to know fullness of the experience of God, you must experience some form of second blessing after conversion - some call it baptism in the spirit, speaking in tongues, the second blessing - etc. Do you find that in these verses?
- Q6** Finally a question about a real missing dimension in so many Christian's lives...(7b) that of having an overflowing sense of thankfulness.
- Being thankful is almost impossible unless we understand the bigger or ultimate picture. We need to make our world view expand to fit the revealed, known and proven promises of God in our lives.
 - In all his trouble, the saintly Job (one the greatest men in the Old Testament), never lost that ultimate world view as to Who was in charge, and Who keeps the Christian's faith going even when all seems lost.
 - Discuss this concept of thankfulness together, then pray together that God will fill you with it!

End of Study 5

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Study 6 Colossians 2:6-15

Theme: "You - yes you - are complete, in Christ".

Introduction to this Study:

Many years ago, a city missionary in London was called to an old tenement building where a woman lay dying in the last stages of a terrible disease. The room was cold and she had nowhere to lie but on the floor. When the missionary asked if there was anything he could do, she replied, "I have all I really need; I have Jesus Christ."

Deeply moved, the missionary went home and penned these words;

In the heart of London City,
 Mid the dwellings of the poor,
 These bright and golden words were uttered,
 "I have Christ. What want I more?"
 Spoken by a lonely woman dying on a garret floor,
 Having not one earthly comfort,
 "I have Christ. What want I more?"

This illustrates the point of the title from today's Bible passage... "Complete in Christ".

Before we start on today's study, let's just summarise the last 2 verses of last week's passage:

The Essence of the Christian Life V6.7

Having *received* Him, we are to live in Him (6)

Having our *foundation* in Him, we are to be *built up* in Him (7) and

Having been *taught* Christ, we are to be strengthened and thankful (7)

So today:

- 1) Read 2:6-15 together and try to see the connection between Christ revealed, and victorious in the New Testament and
- 2) Christ prophesied and prefigured in the Old Testament, (They are inextricably linked, and this is vitally important if we are to understand the 'flow' and plan of the whole Bible as God's Word and Revealing of Himself.
- 3) Don't get "hung-up" on the meaning of circumcision - understand it to mean "entering into a Covenant relationship with God" or a sign and symbol of acceptance by God.
- 4) The concept of Baptism (v12) is similar - it is a sign only of washing and cleansing and therefore entering into a covenant relationship with God.
- 5) So, as you read 2:9-12 you could almost substitute the words "accepted into the Covenant: for "Circumcision". Try it now for some discussion questions.

2 Don't return to slavery (v8).

The essence of what Paul is condemning is wisdom based simply on human reasonings. Which reasoning has been marred or prevented by sin.

Reasoning is part of God's gift to us as people, just as our bodies are.

But when a man comes to Christ his whole being is sanctified including his reasoning. Use the brains God has given you for Him and His sake judge everything you hear and are taught by His standards of knowledge and understanding as we have it in the Scripture.

- Q1** Last study we looked briefly at the concept of having a world view that was based on and shaped by, the Scriptures.
How can we,
a) Identify
b) Resist
c) Refute
The many and various world views that are increasingly thrust upon us today?
- Q2** Can you see the contrast that exists between humanistic or secular world views and the revelation from God about Himself and His way of salvation through Jesus? V8
- Q3** What is our basis for comparison?
- Q4** Read John 14:9-13 and compare this with V9. If the Father is in Jesus, and we are in Jesus... then... How would you complete this sentence and still be in accordance with Scripture?
- Q5** Look at V 9 and 10 again?
All the fullness of God lives (still) in Christ, and you have come to that same fullness in him.
Jesus will fill your life as God always meant it to be full.
If you are not filled with Christ's fullness, what will you fill your emptiness with?
What ultimately satisfies?
- Q6** Freedom through Christ v. 13-15
- "Understand the cross and it is impossible to miss what God has done for us."(Lucas)
 - Look at John 8:33-36.
 - There are spiritual powers, but you don't have to be subject to them any longer. You are in Christ. He is in you by His Spirit.

Christ has made you free from all of these other powers.

Free from:

- the effects of past failures
- self-accusation
- compulsive patterns of behaviour
- dependence on the opinions and criticism of others

Conclusion: So, if you have come to Christ, then you should be able to go home with an enormous sense of freedom and peace. May it be so!

End of Study 6

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