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Experiencing Christ in Colossians

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Week 4 | [Colossians 2:6–15](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/Col2.6)

## Memory Verse for the week:

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. (Colossians 2:6–7)

# Day 1

## Read

### [Colossians 1:6–7](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/Col2.6) (NIV)

6So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

## Study

* Notice the commands given in verses 6–7. Scholar Douglas Moo observes, “The first clause succinctly restates the key theological argument of the letter to this point: Jesus Christ is Lord, and we have entered into his Lordship. The second clause then summarizes the specific commands and warnings that follow: we are to *continue to live in him*, to work out just what it means in both our thinking and our acting to live under the Lordship of Christ.[[1]](#footnote-2)
* Read the notes on [Colossians 2:6–7](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/Col2.6) from the Faithlife Study Bible. How does their explanation of “received” (Greek *paralambanō*) help you understand verse 6? What does it mean to be “rooted and built up”?

## Think about

* How are Colossians 2:6–7 a good summary of the Christian life? Do you see yourself and your story in these verses? If so, how? If not, why not?
* Scholar N.T. Wright says, “Verses 6 and 7 sum up the center of what Paul wants to say. Everything that’s come so far—in particular the wonderful poem of [1:15–20](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/Col1.15)—prepares for this. Everything that’s going to come after this leads on from it. It might be a good idea, as you read and pray your way through this letter, to write out these two verses and pin them up somewhere where they can remind you not only of what Paul was talking about, but also of what he might want to say to you today.”[[2]](#footnote-3) How can you work on memorizing Colossians 2:6–7 this week?

## Pray

Do you overflow with thanksgiving (2:7)? The practice of gratitude can help us gain perspective on our circumstances and help us discover a clear path forward. In the first part of Colossians, Paul has exalted Christ, and reminded the Colossians of the life-changing, destiny-altering, fortifying, joy-giving knowledge of Jesus Christ. How can you thank God for all that he has done for you right now?

## Talk about

*Have a meaningful conversation about this passage with one of your CF Encouragers, your small group, or join us virtually in the Faithlife Community. (Search groups for Engage God Daily. For full instructions,* [*click here*](https://cfhome-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/lscheffler_cfhome_org/EYNh8cUxJRxClFV-Wt6QNe0BtkK34MHJDqeHamAwxlGmbQ?e=RL3RSh)*.)*

* How can we be established in the faith (Col. 2:7)? Discuss what that means and consider some spiritual practices that help ground people in their Christian faith. (Look in the “Engage God Individually” section of the [Growing Discipleship Pathway](https://cfhome.org/discipleship-pathways-growing/) for some resources.)
* What does it look like for us to be “rooted and built up”? Discuss how we can be more faithful to Christ in our thoughts and actions.

# Day 2

## Read

### Colossians 2:8 (NIV)

8See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

## Study

* The [Faithlife Study Bible](https://biblia.com/books/fsb/Col2.6-15) explains, “The false teaching that Paul opposes in this letter is sometimes called ‘the Colossian heresy.’ This philosophy cannot be identified precisely; it could reflect the influences of several ancient traditions, including Judaism, mysticism, asceticism, mystery cults, and Gnosticism. Regardless of the specific teachings, the fundamental problem Paul identifies is that human rules and traditions are being recommended as necessary supplements to Christ…” For more, look at the [other notes](https://biblia.com/books/fsb/Col2.8) provided for this verse.
* For more on the “hollow and deceptive philosophy” that the church in Colossae may have been dealing with, watch this [short 6-minute video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2UW66oBEsA) from the Bible Effect. It’s worth your time!

## Think about

In warning against being taken captive, Paul is using the language of slavery. If you studied Galatians with us last Spring, Paul’s concerns here should sound familiar (See [Galatians 3:28­–4:7](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/Ga3.28)). Geographically, Colossae is near the region of Galatia. It’s possible that some of the same calls to add to the gospel were happening in Colossae.

Regardless of the specifics, the Colossian Christians were being led to doubt that Jesus was enough. Whether intentionally or not, are there times when Christians so emphasize other beliefs and/or practices that they minimize the sufficiency of Christ? If so, how?

## Pray

In our culture, the latest is often assumed to be the greatest. New information, concepts and strategies are coming at us constantly. Some of them may be worthwhile, but none of them will ever equal the wisdom we find in Christ. Keep praying [Colossians 1:9–10](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/Col1.9) for yourselves, and the people around you – that you would be filled with “all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord.”

## Talk about

*Have a meaningful conversation about this passage with one of your CF Encouragers, your small group, or join us virtually in Faithlife Community. (Search groups for Engage God Daily. For full instructions,* [*click here*](https://cfhome-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/lscheffler_cfhome_org/EYNh8cUxJRxClFV-Wt6QNe0BtkK34MHJDqeHamAwxlGmbQ?e=RL3RSh)*.)*

What are some ideas, concepts, or philosophies that distract or even mislead people today? How can we emphasize the wisdom of Christ, and through meaningful conversations, point people towards a relationship with him?

# Day 3

## Read

### Colossians 2:9–10 (NIV)

9For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.

## Study

* Scholar N.T. Wright says of Colossians 2:9, “if you want to find the true God, you need look no further than Jesus himself. Verse 9 is perhaps the sharpest and clearest statement in all [Paul’s] writings of his belief that Jesus quite literally embodies the one true God, God in all his fullness… The church in our own day still needs to recapture that vision of the supremacy of King Jesus over all other authority.[[3]](#footnote-4)

## Think about

* Christ really is all we need! The fullness of God is in Christ and in Christ we have been brought to fullness. Contemplate what that means for you and your life.
* Why do you think N.T. Wright asserts that the church today needs to “recapture that vision of the supremacy of King Jesus over all other authority”? What difference would that make in the church? What about in our posture toward the world?

## Pray

You sometimes hear people use the phrase “that’s above my paygrade” when faced with a decision they’re not able to make. There is nothing above Jesus’ paygrade! He is the ultimate authority. As you meditate on Colossians 2:9–10 in prayer, ask the Spirit to help you find your hope and security in Christ. He is in control! Also ask him to show you any areas where you are not submitting to Christ’s headship.

## Talk about

* With all the uncertainty in the world, people are more anxious than ever. Discuss how the message of Colossians can give people assurance and peace. How can we share that peace and assurance through meaningful conversations with people around us?

# Day 4

## Read

### Colossians 2:11–12 (NIV)

11In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, 12having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

## Study

* Paul makes a connection in Colossians 2:11–12 between circumcision and baptism that he will develop more fully in the next few verses. For now, take a look at [The Faithlife Study Bible notes](https://biblia.com/books/fsb/Col2.11) that help explain these verses.
* Look up the following cross references: [Deuteronomy 10:16](https://biblia.com/reference/Dt10.16); [Deuteronomy 30:6–7](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/Dt30.6); [Jerimiah 4:4](https://biblia.com/reference/Je4.4); [Romans 2:29](https://biblia.com/reference/Ro2.29). What do you learn about circumcision?

## Think about

Circumcision was a sign of God’s covenant with Abraham’s descendants, the people who became the nation of Israel. God would be faithful to hold himself to those promises, even though his people would wander far from him. For many Jews in Paul’s day, the symbol had become more important than what it represented. Here, Paul reminds them of the true meaning of circumcision and why it is no longer needed.

Jesus fulfilled the promises that circumcision symbolized. Now baptism would be the symbol of the spiritual reality of our union with Christ in his death and resurrection.

## Pray

Look at our whole passage for the week, [Colossians 2:6–15](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/Col2.6) and notice the repetition of the phrase “in him” or “with him.” Throughout Colossians, Paul has not only stressed Christ’s matchless supremacy, but has emphasized our union with him. In his book, *Union with Christ*, Rankin Wilbourne reflects, “Becoming a Christian is not simply coming to believe certain things about a God who remains outside of you. And being a Christian is not simply about what you do or don’t do…this is what God has saved you for — communion, relationship, and intimacy with himself. This is what Christ suffered for.”

Prayerfully meditate on your union with Christ today.

## Talk about

* How can you encourage one another to live out our union with Christ? Because we are united with Christ, how should we live?

# Day 5

## Read

### Colossians 2:13­–14 (NIV)

13When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

## Study

* Read the Faithlife Study Bible’s explanation of our [legal indebtedness](https://biblia.com/books/fsb/Col2.14) (note for 2:14). How does that help you understand what Christ accomplished on the cross?
* Read [Romans 8:1](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/Ro8.1) and [1 Peter 2:24–25](https://biblia.com/books/niv2011/1Pe2.24-25). How do they amplify what Paul has said here in Colossians 2?

## Think about

What do we need to be right with God? To find wisdom for life? To experience peace and wholeness?

From N.T. Wright: “Paul’s answer is quite simple, and by now we ought to know what it is before he says it. All you need is **Christ**, the king. Hold fast to him and you’ll have all you need. He is the head of the ‘body’, as Paul said already in 1:18. The body gets its life from the head, through what it thinks, sees, smells, hears, eats and drinks. In the same way, the body which is the church is nourished and sustained, in all its joints, muscles and ligaments, not by embracing this or that new teaching, but by holding fast to the Head.” [[4]](#footnote-5)

Imagine the sigh of relief coming from the Colossians? We can release that same sigh! We can find what we need in our union with Christ.

## Pray

How good does it feel to know that you’ve been completely forgiven and set free from all your sins? What peace do you find in knowing that Christ completes you completely. You can find strength and vitality in him. You can find peace and rest in him. Whatever you need today, take it before the Lord in prayer. Praise him for his unfathomable grace and ask him to fill you with his Spirit.

## Talk about

* What have you learned from Colossians this week? Discuss new insights the Spirit has given you and talk about how you’ll apply them to your life.

1. Douglas J. Moo, [*The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*](https://ref.ly/logosres/pntccolphm?ref=Bible.Col2.6&off=202&ctx=e+second+(2:6%E2%80%934:6).+~The+first+clause+suc), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2008), 177. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Tom Wright, [*Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon*](https://ref.ly/logosres/evryprisep?ref=Bible.Col2.1-7&off=7361&ctx=s+leads+on+from+it.+~It+might+be+a+good+i) (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Tom Wright, [*Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon*](https://ref.ly/logosres/evryprisep?ref=Bible.Col2.8-12&off=6950&ctx=e+head+of+them+all.+~The+church+in+our+ow) (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Tom Wright, [*Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon*](https://ref.ly/logosres/evryprisep?ref=Bible.Col2.13-19&off=6439&ctx=t+type+of+teaching.%0a~Paul%E2%80%99s+answer+is+qui) (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2004), 172. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)