

# Discovery Group - Colossians

## (1) Overview

### **A**ccountability

Share how your obedience commitment from last week went, and who you shared with.

### **B**ible: Book of Colossians

Read the entire book aloud

- What does this book teach about who God is?
- What does it teach about people?
- What are some of the major themes that this book carries?
- What would you say is Pau's overall intent in writing this?

- \* Read the article on the second page.
  - Any further comments or questions

### **C**ommit

What is Jesus calling you to do in ***obedience*** this week?

Who can you ***share*** this with? Who can you reach out to in order to make disciples?

***Abide:*** Read and meditate on the following passages this week:

Colossians 1:1-14

## Colossians

The book of Colossians was written by Paul, along with Timothy. The city of Colossae is in present day Turkey - an area the New Testament refers to simply as Asia. Paul did not begin the church in Colossae, nor had he visited it. It had been started through the efforts of one of Paul's co-workers, Epaphras. It is possible that Epaphras was from the city of Colossae and came into the sphere of Paul's ministry during the time the apostle was living in Ephesus. While Paul was ministering in Ephesus, "all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the Province of Asia heard the word of the Lord." (Acts 19:10). Followers of Jesus were actively proclaiming the good news throughout the region and beginning churches.

Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter. His purpose seems to have been to encourage this community of believers in their faith, to protect them from deception, and to further strengthen them to live fruitful lives.

As with other communities in Paul's network, he counted on the Colossians to accurately and powerfully live out the gospel in their context. They were to be the long-term witnesses of Jesus in their city, and it was of utmost importance that they do this well.

He begins by expressing gratitude for this church and by relating how he prays for them. Throughout the first two chapters, Paul expresses the wonder of who Jesus is and what He has done. This is both a basis for abundant thanksgiving and a protection against false teachings.

There seems to have been a popular teaching gaining ground in this city that was contrary to the gospel. Scholars are divided as to the exact nature of this heresy, but a couple of things appear likely. For one, it sought to add to the gospel. Following Jesus and putting trust in Him is good, but in order to be truly "in" you need to do more. Secondly, believers were being convinced to trust in philosophy and the 'elementary principles of the world' (Col 2:8). Paul warns that this worldly wisdom is in fact contrary to Christ.

Beginning in chapter 3, Paul gives instructions on how to live the life of faith - what it looks like to bear good gospel fruit. He urges the Colossians to leave behind wickedness of all kinds and to put on the character of Christ. He also gives a picture of how this new life is manifest in the context of household relationships. In the closing chapter Paul gives final exhortations and greetings.