

Series: *Colossians: The Supremacy and Sufficiency of Christ*
Part 2: *Living out the Sufficiency of Christ (chapters 3-4)*
Lesson: *A Review of Colossians*
Text: *Colossians (L16)*
Date: *Sunday, May 13, 2012*

*Colonial Hills
Baptist Church*

Key



= Teacher Information



= Discussion Starter

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TEACHING TIP

Consider using visual aids and or other teaching aids. For example, you could have a printout of the text of Colossians with all the references to Christ highlighted in yellow to visually demonstrate the saturation of this book with Christ. If you have some kind of tablet (e.g., iPad) or small laptop, you could prepare an accompanying PPT with your lesson.

INTRODUCTION

In the Background Information section of Lesson 1, the following helpful summary of Colossians was included from *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*.¹

Greetings, brothers (1:1-2). We thank God for your faith and love (1:3-8). And we ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His will. We pray this so that you will be fruitful for Christ who has redeemed you (1:9-14). For Christ, our Creator and Head, is supreme in all things (1:15-20). And through Christ's death God has reconciled you who were aliens and enemies (1:21-23). So I rejoice that I can suffer for the church so that God's fullness can be known by the Gentiles (1:24-27). To this end we labor that everyone may be perfect in Christ (1:28-29). For all true wisdom and knowledge is found in Christ (2:1-5). Therefore, brothers, just as you began with Christ, continue in Him (2:6-7).

Now don't be deceived: God's fullness is in Christ alone and not in vain human philosophy (2:8-10). And since you have been identified with Christ in your baptism, you have no need to live under Jewish laws (2:11-17). And don't let anyone rob you of your prize by forsaking Christ your Head (2:18-19). For you died with Christ, so you need not submit to worldly (legalistic) rules (2:20-23). And since you were raised with Christ, you should set your hearts on heavenly things above (3:1-4). So put to death your sinful worldly practices (3:5-11). And clothe yourself with Christ's virtues (3:15-17).

¹ Walvoord, John F., Roy B. Zuck and Dallas Theological Seminary. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, Vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983. P. 668.

In view of your new exalted identity with Christ, I exhort wives to submit to their husbands; husbands to love their wives; children to obey their parents; fathers not to embitter their children; slaves to obey their masters; and masters to be fair with their slaves (3:18-4:1).

Brothers, pray for me that I may preach this message effectively and clearly, and you live wisely toward outsiders (4:2-6). My coworkers in the gospel send greetings to you (4:7-15). Exchange letters with the Laodiceans and exhort Archippus to complete his ministry (4:16-18).

As we review Colossians for a final time together, we'll attempt to trace four major themes throughout the book. And, as we do so, we will discover God's desire for His people: **God wants His people to be Christ-identified, gospel-centered, discipleship-driven, missional-minded Christians.**

CHRIST-IDENTIFIED: THE SUPREMACY AND SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST

1. *I believe that Christ is supreme & sufficient.*

- Christ is supreme in creation (1:15-17; 2:9).

What do we learn about His supremacy in these verses?

- Christ is sufficient for recreation (1:13-14, 18-22; 2:10-15; 3:9-11).

In what ways is Christ's sufficiency highlighted in these verses?

According to 2:8-23, what is insufficient for spiritual "fullness"?²

2. *Therefore, I live like it.*

- His sufficiency demands my commitment—grounded and growing (1:21-23; 2:6-7).

What are possible excuses for not being committed and how were they already answered in point 1?

- His sufficiency demands my loyalty—against human philosophy and self-effort (2:8-23).

Why are human philosophy and effort deficient and therefore to be disregarded?

- His sufficiency demands my identity—Jesus as "Lord" in all areas (3:1-4:6).

What aspects of my identity should conform to my belief in Christ as the Source of spiritual fullness?

Transition: A Christian should be Christ-identified—his belief in Christ will affect his life in Christ. The way he does that is by staying gospel-centered.

GOSPEL-CENTERED: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GOSPEL

1. *I must proclaim the message of the gospel to others.*

- I should recognize that the gospel is spreading and bearing fruit in the whole world (1:5-6).

How will this recognition help me proclaim the gospel to others?

- I should help "fulfill" the spreading of God's Word to the world (2:25-29).

Why are self-help messages or just encouraging talks inferior to God's Word for the lost (cf. vv. 26-27)?

- I should pray for and take opportunities of local evangelism (4:2-6).

What key principles for evangelism are taught in these verses?

² For "fullness" see 1:9, 19; 2:9-10.

2. I must proclaim the motivation of the gospel to myself (i.e., “preaching the gospel to yourself”).

- The gospel should be growing and bearing fruit in me (1:5-6).

How do I know if it is (cf. v. 10)?

- The gospel will provoke a commitment (1:21-23).

According to verse 23, is the gospel something we believed or something we believe, something we accepted or something we accept?

- The gospel will affect my heart (3:1-4), behavior (3:5-11), church (3:12-17), home (3:18-21), workplace (3:22-4:1), and community involvement (4:2-6).

What gospel-language do we find Paul preaching to himself and his readers throughout the commands of these verses?

Transition: A Christian should be gospel-centered—his growing appreciation for and understanding of the gospel will deepen his love for Christ and for others. These two loves come together to make the believer discipleship-driven.

DISCIPLESHIP-DRIVEN: THE NECESSITY OF DISCIPLESHIP

1. We ought to be thankful for one another (1:3-8).

What can we be thankful for?

2. We ought to be praying for one another (1:9-14).

How do these prayer requests fit with the Christ-wrapped injunctions of 3:1-4:6?

3. We ought to be struggling for one another (1:24-2:7; 3:16).

What should our struggling accomplish?

Does our American society help or hinder us here? In what ways?

4. We ought to be partnering with one another (4:7-18).

In what ways can we be partnering together?

Transition: A Christian should be discipleship-driven—his desire will be to present everyone perfect in Christ Jesus, even as Christ is doing to him. This experiential burden will cause him to be missional-minded.

MISSIONAL-MINDED: THE MISSION OF LIFE

“This is your life.” Or, as Paul puts it in 3:1-4, “Christ is your life.” This is true of us positionally, spiritually, and heavenly; and Christ wants it to be true practically and physically on earth. As “in all the world,” we should yearn to experience 1:6 here, too. And we can, if we allow the life and mission (indeed, the two words are synonymous) of Christ to dominate us.

Where are you failing in this?

CONCLUSION

A Christian will be missional-minded—having been wrapped-up in Christ himself, both in position and in practice, he will speak and show the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ, so that Jesus is glorified as other people are wrapped-up in Christ.