



KNOWING CHRIST

Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

COMPLETE IN CHRIST

Colossians 3:1-25 – 4:1

Inductive Discovery Lesson 20

Since we have the Bible, “the soundest and saltiest work ever written, why do we tend so easily to become confused about spiritual things?”¹ The short answer is that we're no different than the Colossians. They were ordinary people listening to the prevailing “wisdom” of their day. They needed sound instruction to counteract the distorted reasoning of men who thought they could be spiritual apart from the Spirit.

Paul just finished warning the Colossians not to confuse philosophy or man-made religion for genuine spirituality. All that rule-keeping may look good on the outside, but it can't change who you are within. In this chapter, Paul reminds believers they have more to live for than just this life. *Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.* Some take this verse to mean that being spiritual requires you to isolate yourself from this life and concentrate on the next. But keep reading! In the rest of this letter, Paul explains *how* to live our earthly life with a heavenly point of view.

¹ A.W. Tozer, *The Size of the Soul*

Working Text for Colossians 3:1-25 – 4:1
New International Version (NIV)

1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. **2** Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. **3** For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. **6** Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. **7** You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. **8** But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. **9** Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices **10** and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. **11** Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **13** Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **14** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. **15** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. **16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. **17** And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

18 Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. **19** Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. **20** Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. **21** Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

22 Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. **23** Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, **24** since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. **25** Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism. **4:1** Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.



Use the second column to record information you gather from other sources such as a dictionary, concordance, maps, etc. You can also use this section to jot down **your thoughts, impressions or questions that come to mind.** *Do your best to follow Paul's train of thought.* Does he emphasize a particular topic? Are his words urgent? Encouraging? Commanding? What issues or problems does he address? What questions does he ask?

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

4

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

This image shows a full page of primary-ruled paper. It features two vertical columns of horizontal lines. Each column contains 20 lines, all of which are dashed. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of their respective columns, leaving a small margin at the top and bottom of each column. The entire page is white, and there are no other markings or text present.

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

[illegible]

Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Colossians 3:1-24 – 4:1.

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“**set** your mind” (vs. 2) _____

“Let the peace of Christ **rule**” (vs.15) _____

“Let the word of Christ **dwell**” (vs.16) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Colossians 3:1-11

Lesson: _____

Application: _____ ?

Colossians 3:12-21

Lesson: _____

Application: _____ ?

Colossians 3:22 – 4:1

Lesson: _____

Application: _____ ?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

**Whatever you do, in word or deed,
do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
Colossians 3:17**

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And find one self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of she who heard—
One glance most kind,
That fell like sunshine where it went—
Then you may count that day well spent.

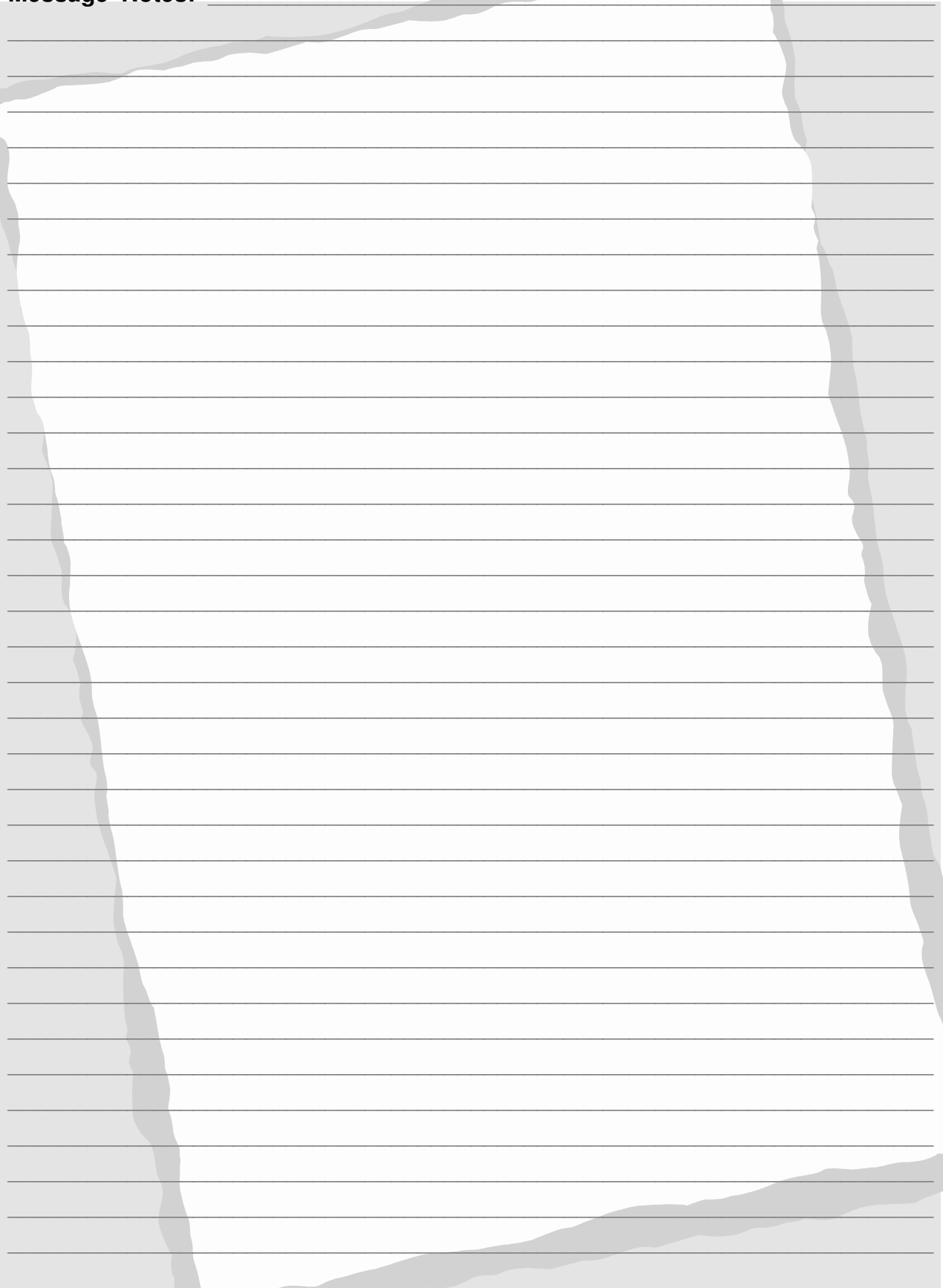
- George Eliot -



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

Message Notes:



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