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Bible Studies for Women  
from Moody Publishers

A 6-WEEK BIBLE STUDY OF *Colossians*

1-WEEK SAMPLER INSIDE

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# HE IS ENOUGH

LIVING IN THE *fullness* OF JESUS

—  
ASHERITAH CIUCIU

## WHY STUDY COLOSSIANS?

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness.” COLOSSIANS 2:9–10a

You can't get away from it.

From the moment we blearily scroll through our newsfeed in the morning to the moment we rest our heads on the pillow at night, we're bombarded with sales pitches promising a fuller life. Whether it's thicker hair, washboard abs, smoother skin, burgeoning finances, obedient kids, or hip accessories, the world offers us plenty of opportunities to experience the full life.

But the answer lies not in six low payments of only \$19.99 a month . . . but in a personal relationship with Jesus. And by that I don't mean saying a prayer in a church basement years ago, although that may have been a great beginning. I mean an active, growing, fruitful life united with Jesus, filled with the Spirit, and resting in the Father.

Because here's the problem: We might say we believe that Christ is enough, but do we really live that out? Do we understand the theological richness of our union with Jesus? *Do we live as those who are truly full, having everything we need already fulfilled in Christ?* Or do we keep chasing the latest diet, the newest purse, or the hottest multilevel marketing opportunity?

Please hear me: there's nothing inherently wrong with those things, but we need to understand that they'll never really satisfy. As long as we keep reaching for earthly fulfillment, we'll continue to feel empty, longing for more. But when we discover the fullness of the riches that are ours in Christ Jesus—when we realize that our greatest gift is Jesus Christ Himself—we will begin living out the reality of that fullness that is already ours in Him.

Everything we need we already have in Jesus.

The first-century church of Colossae faced these same issues. Sure, theirs might not have been packaged as sleek sales pitches on high-resolution screens, but the root issue was the same: is Jesus really enough, or do we need something else, something more in order to experience the full life?

There were smooth talkers even then, promising secret knowledge that would lead to spiritual transcendence available to the elite few. And there were others who imposed heavy rules and regulations, promising spiritual refinement to those who checked all the right boxes.

It was tempting to try it out. What could it hurt? But in this short letter, Paul packs a punch. No, you don't need secret knowledge. No, you don't need more rules. No, you don't need more stuff. You need Jesus. And if you have Jesus, you have all you need.

Jesus is enough for your salvation. He is enough for your family. He is enough for your finances. He is enough for your health. He is enough for your career. He is enough for your fears, your hopes, your burdens, and your future.

He is enough.

Are you ready to shed cheap imitations and begin living out the fullness that is yours in Christ Jesus?

## MAKING THE MOST OF THIS STUDY

I'm so glad you picked up this Bible study, because over the next few weeks we're going to uncover the riches of Christ Jesus and discover how to live in His fullness. If you stick with me through our study of Colossians, your life *will* be transformed. Because God's Word never returns to Him void. But let's be honest: "I'm doing a Bible study" can be easier said than done.

It's like trying to eat healthy. Most of us know what we should eat and how often, but finding the time to prepare nutritious meals and actually sitting down to eat them can be a challenge. It's tempting to think that if we can't eat healthfully, we might as well skip the meal altogether (or grab a candy bar). Am I right?

We all know this: it's better to grab a nutritious snack than skip a meal. Ask any nutritionist: there's great value in eating small but regular meals throughout the day. (I'm talking healthy snacks here, not candy bars, much to our collective chagrin.)

The same is true when it comes to feeding our souls. Many of us may be tempted to skip Bible study altogether if we can't fit in a 30- to 45-minute inductive study of Scripture. But we're better off grabbing a bite of Scripture or a moment of prayer than completely ignoring our spiritual nutrition.

Listen to an explanation of the Snack and FEAST ways to read the Bible in a short interview on Moody Radio. Go to [myOneThingAlone.com/snack-interview](https://www.myOneThingAlone.com/snack-interview).

After all, there's no command in the Bible that states, "Thou shalt start each morning with an hour of inductive Bible study and prayer." In fact, quite the opposite is true: throughout biblical times, we find great variety and creativity in the ways God's people approached Him from morning through night—praying honest prayers saturated with Scripture, reciting memorized Scripture, offering worshipful songs filled with Scripture, and yes, even reading Scripture. And that's okay.

Because while we may consume Scripture in different ways in different seasons, nothing can replace God's Word in our lives. It is our daily bread, our spiritual sustenance

**Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."**

**JOHN 6:35**

As we nourish our souls in God's presence, His Bread of Life will both satisfy us and make us hunger for more. But whether we eat this spiritual fare in one big meal or in small bites throughout the day is entirely up to us, and this may look different from month to month or even from day to day.

So I've structured this Bible study to invite you—whatever season of life you're in—to feed your soul with the daily bread of God's Word.

Each week we'll begin with a short introduction setting up the week's theme, followed by a memory verse coloring page. Throughout this book you'll find many prompts to creatively engage the Word and worship Jesus, and those coloring pages are a way to do just that; as you color, meditate on the words and commit them to memory. What follows are five days of Bible study prompts in *Snack* and *FEAST* sections, and at the very end, a weekend reflection to help you summarize and internalize what you've learned.

If three minutes is all you have, grab the daily *Snack on the Go*. It's a morsel of Scripture that you can consume quickly and reflect on all day long. It will give you energy boosts to keep you going rather than starving yourself spiritually.

If you have more time, sit down to *FEAST at the Table* on Scripture. Each day I'll walk you through an inductive study of the daily passage, complete with observation, interpretation, application, and adoration. By *FEASTing* on God's Word each day, you'll become more confident in your ability to study the Bible for yourself, and by the end of this study, you'll be ready to apply the *FEAST* method to any passage of Scripture.

I developed and tested the FEAST Bible study method a few years ago with the myOneThingAlone.com community, an online sisterhood that loves Jesus and grows deeper with Him through creative spiritual disciplines. Our very first study was on the book of Colossians (which led to this book you hold in your hands), and we discovered that whether we were *snacking* or *FEASTing*, the daily discipline of opening God's Word led to deeper joy in His presence. God was faithful to His promise, taking our *snacks* and *FEASTs* and multiplying them to feed our souls. I hope you'll find the same to be true in your life as well.

We will delve more deeply into the FEAST method in the first week, but just to give you a quick overview, each letter represents a step in inductive Bible study:

**F:** Focus on God (open in prayer)

**E:** Engage the text (read and observe Scripture)

**A:** Assess the main idea (interpret the meaning)

**S:** Spark transformation (apply the main idea to your life)

**T:** Turn to God in worship (respond with adoration)

Don't worry; it's easier than it looks right now, and I'll walk you through it every step of the way. In fact, I've provided a Daily Main Ideas Guide on page 227 in case you get stuck. And for the record, you don't have to fill in every blank or answer every question—if you sense the Holy Spirit leading in another direction, follow His lead! You may find Him prodding you to look up other verses than those that are suggested in this guide. You might want to pause in the middle of your study for a time of spontaneous worship. Or you might find Him convicting you of a phone call you need to make or a person you need to pray for right then and there. Follow where He leads. He knows what you need better than anyone else.

If you find that one day you don't have time to *FEAST*—it's okay. Just grab the *snack* for that day, and return to *FEASTing* when you have the time.

If you're leading this study, you'll find a devotional guide called "Serving and Leading" written specifically for women in ministry to supplement your own personal study of the text. And don't feel like you need an official title to qualify for this role. If you're leading in any capacity, even if it's a group of friends around your kitchen table, you'll find this section especially helpful.

Above all, my prayer is that through this study you'll be filled up with knowledge and love of Jesus, growing to understand all the ways that His supremacy, sufficiency, and beauty overflow into the mundane tasks of your life, so that you may please Him in everything you do, fully aware of His powerful strength, patience, and joy at work in you even right this very moment. Because we desperately need Jesus. And He is enough.

With much joy,

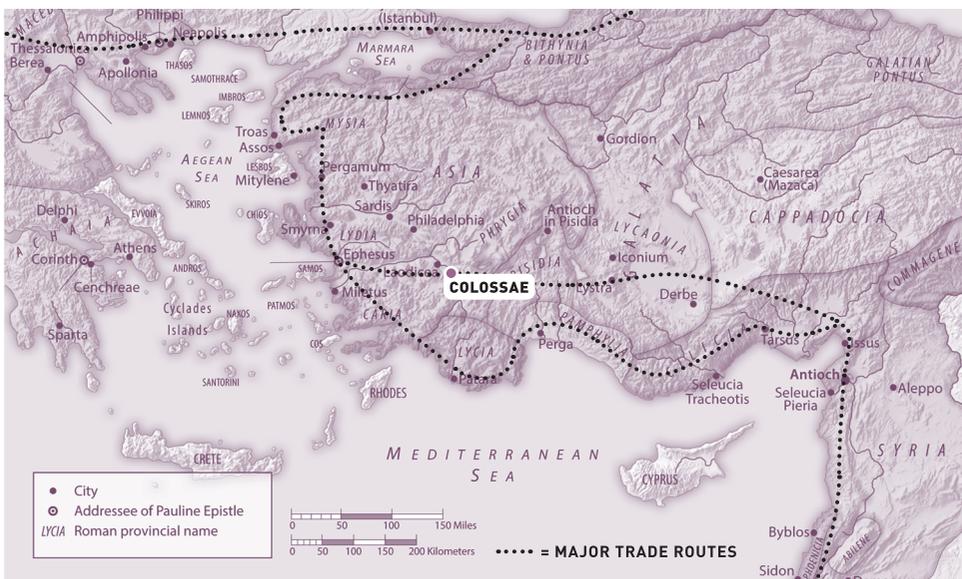
Asheritah

## SOME BACKGROUND ON COLOSSIANS

Sadly, many Christian congregations are often shaped more by the latest ideas or hot topics circulating *about* the faith than the timeless truth of God’s revealed word in the Bible. But this isn’t a new problem—it’s as old as the church itself, as we’ll see in Colossians. Over the next few weeks, we’ll discover that Paul wrote this letter to respond to false teachings that were creeping into the church in Colossae. We’ll see how he points not just to God’s Word in general, but to God’s Word made flesh in Jesus Christ; Christ alone is enough for all who believe in Him.

But before we begin studying the text closely, let’s dig a little bit into the history of this church to better understand who Paul was addressing and what prompted him to write his letter to this church in Colossae in the first place.

The city of Colossae was located in the southwest region of what is now modern-day Turkey, right on one of the great trade routes of the ancient world. Once a thriving center of commerce, Colossae had been quite cosmopolitan in its day, but by the time Paul wrote his letter around AD 60, the city had been declining in importance and prominence. However, some of Colossae’s residual influence was still felt in the eclectic mix of cultures found in the area, including Greek, Roman, and Jewish religions. This unique blend of pagan and Jewish influences affected the spiritual health of the Christians living in Colossae, as we’ll see Paul address both directly and indirectly.



Based on our knowledge of Paul's missionary journeys, it's unlikely that Paul ever visited Colossae in person. However, there's good reason to believe that he led Epaphras to faith through his three-year preaching ministry in Ephesus<sup>1</sup> (Acts 19:10), and that Epaphras later returned to his hometown in Colossae to preach the good news to his fellow neighbors (Col. 1:7, 4:12). This would explain why Paul's letter to the Colossians is filled with pastoral concern and warmth, based on his closeness to Epaphras and his eagerness to address the issues the congregation was facing even though he had never met them in person.

While most of Paul's letters were written in direct response to particular issues the receiving church was facing, it's a bit more difficult to identify what those issues were in the Colossian church. The two major clues we can use to decipher the needs of the Colossian church are:

1. The unhealthy practices Paul brings up: the Jewish observance of food and drink laws, holy days, and circumcision, and the pagan practices of angel worship, secret knowledge, and exaltation of human wisdom and traditions.
2. The doctrines Paul emphasizes throughout his short letter: the centrality, fullness, and sufficiency of the person and work of Jesus Christ.

As you begin studying the book of Colossians, remember that even though the Bible is written *for* us, it wasn't written *to* us. This letter was written at a particular time in history for a particular group of people dealing with particular problems.

So we'll be careful to observe the text in its proper context and to interpret the meaning for the original audience first. Then, only after careful interpretation, will we bring the main truth to apply to our own lives as twenty-first-century women. Because the whole point of Bible information is to lead to God-adoration and spiritual transformation, that we might fulfill Jesus' greatest commandments: to love God and to love others (Matt. 22:37–40).

Are you ready?

Here we go.

# praying through Christ

*The gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world.*

**COLOSSIANS 1:6b**

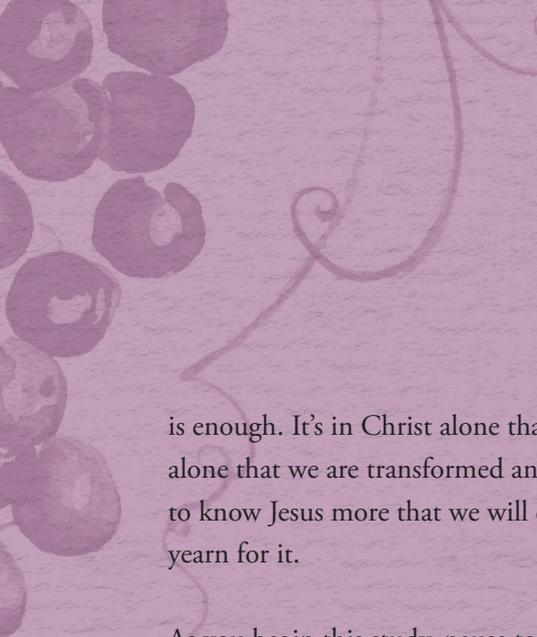
How do you come to know God? How do you access His will and wisdom?

Whether you realize it or not, how you answer those questions reveals as much about your relationship with Jesus as it does about your theology. And this isn't a new discussion . . . it's been brewing for thousands of years, as shown in Paul's opening prayer in his letter to the Colossians.

Paul begins his letter with two prayers, each of which reveals his confidence in Christ alone for the work of the gospel in the church in Colossae. As we'll study this week, these prayers lay the groundwork for the rest of the letter, as every other concern Paul brings up comes back to his confidence expressed in these two prayers.

At the heart of these prayers—and indeed this entire letter—is Paul's earnest desire that the Colossians come to rest in the sufficiency of Jesus Christ's finished work on the cross and the continued work of His Spirit in and through the lives of those who believe in Him. He is enough, both for saving us and securing us for eternity.

Spoiler alert: it's not our good works and it's not some secret knowledge that lead us to God, as the heretics in Colossae were teaching. It's Jesus Christ Himself. He



## WEEK ONE

is enough. It's in Christ alone that we come to know God, and it's through Him alone that we are transformed and made fruitful for God's glory. It's only in getting to know Jesus more that we will experience the fullness of God's presence as we yearn for it.

As you begin this study, pause to examine your heart: Do you desire Jesus more than anything? Are you hungry to know Him more through His Word?

Be honest with yourself and with God. He already knows your heart. If the answer is, "Umm, not really," then tell Him so. And then ask Him to stir in you a hunger for Him.

If the answer is yes, then thank Him for placing that desire in you (because we know it only comes from Him), and ask Him to grow that hunger and thirst for Him. Because Jesus promises, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

Either way, friend, we are in for the adventure of a lifetime.

Let's dig in.



IN THE SAME WAY,  
the gospel  
is bearing fruit  
and growing  
throughout THE  
Whole World.

COLUSSIANS 1:6





## WEEK 1 | DAY 1

### SNACK ON THE GO

As a missionary to the Gentiles, Paul was frequently traveling and starting churches throughout Asia minor, as well as discipling others, like Epaphras, to go and start other churches throughout the region (1:7).

The gospel thus spread throughout the Roman empire, as followers of Jesus shared the good news with those they encountered, and when several people believed, they came together to form a church. Many of these first-century churches were small groups of people, tiny compared to most contemporary churches today, and lacking the liturgy and structure to their services that are familiar to us. Several of the apostles wrote letters to encourage these believers to continue in the way of Christ and to refute false teachings that were infiltrating the churches; these letters were read out loud first in the recipient church and then circulated among the surrounding churches (see Col. 4:16).

Today, we have the luxury of owning personal copies of these letters, holding them in our hands, lining our bookshelves with these pages. But often we lack the zeal of those first-century believers to read and share the truths found within these epistles.

Write out your own prayer for this study, asking God to awaken within you a hunger and thirst for His Word and His presence in your life.

Use Jeremiah 15:16 (NLT) as a starting point: “When I discovered your words, I devoured them. They are my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God of Heaven’s Armies.”

## FEAST AT THE TABLE

### FOCUS ON GOD

Open your Bible to Psalm 119:10. Write it out as a prayer to the Lord as you begin your study of His Word today.

Are you a visual learner? Go to [myOneThingAlone.com/quickstart](https://myOneThingAlone.com/quickstart) to watch a short video tutorial on the FEAST Bible study method within our Bible Study Quickstart Guide.

## ENGAGE THE TEXT

Read Colossians. Yep, the whole book. Out loud. (It only takes about fifteen minutes. I timed myself.) As you read, imagine yourself seated among those first-century believers.

What themes are repeated over and over again? What stands out to you as you read?

Who wrote this letter (see 1:1 and 4:18)? What do you already know about the author?

Who was it written to (see 1:2)?

What do we know about this church (see 1:3–8)?

According to 1:7–8, who planted this church?

## ASSESS THE MAIN IDEA

Reread the historical background (in the introduction of this study) to familiarize yourself with the Colossians' culture, and write down three to five observations about the historical setting.

Based on what you've learned about the historical background, write down a few ways the original audience is similar to you, and a few ways they are different.

Write out the main idea of Colossians, as you understand it today, in a single sentence.

## SPARK TRANSFORMATION

One of the main themes of Colossians is that Jesus Christ is supreme and sufficient. In the coming weeks, we'll look at what that means in our lives in specific ways, but for now, spend a few minutes asking the Holy Spirit to reveal areas in your life in which you haven't believed that Christ is enough. If He shows you anything specific, feel free to write it down; but even if not, make this your daily prayer:

*Lord Jesus, You are enough for me, and You are all I need. Please show me how to live out this truth in the coming weeks.*

## TURN TO GOD IN WORSHIP

As you read Colossians today, you may have noticed that it includes several beautiful passages that point to Christ's sufficiency. Use one of them as a guide to worship, personalizing the passage and praising Jesus for the ways He is enough for those who believe.

In the space below, list out the letters of the alphabet, from A to Z, and write down His attributes, at least one for each letter. Then take some time to worship God for all He is, using the book of Colossians for inspiration.

For example, you might begin like this:

Dear God, I praise You because You are *almighty* and *attentive* to every detail in the universe. Jesus, You are the *Author* and *Finisher* of my faith and *awesome* in power.

You are *bountiful* in Your gifts and *brilliant* in splendor and glory.

You are the *Creator* of all things, the *Christ* who saves us from our sins, and the *Coming One* who will take us home to be with You.

A

B

C

D

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Z

Praise Him for all of His wonderful ways, and use this list as a worship prompt throughout the week, turning your thoughts to worship whenever you see the alphabet.



## WEEK 1 | DAY 2

### SNACK ON THE GO

We live in a hectic world. There's hardly a moment of silence from the moment we wake up to the moment we close our eyes to sleep. And yet, it's in the midst of this busyness that our heavenly Father wants to speak to us, to remind us of who He is and who we are in Him.

Open your Bible to Colossians 1:1–2, and read these verses out loud. Write down the following:

How Paul describes God:

How Paul describes himself:

How he describes the believers in Colossae:

What one word or phrase jumps out to you? Write it in the space below. Why do you think that is connecting with your heart today?

Ask the Lord to help you believe that what He says is true. Then consider writing that word or phrase on your wrist, so you can see it and be reminded of your Scripture Snack throughout the day. Ask the Holy Spirit to continue to teach you what His Word means, and meditate on His truth, allowing it to shape your life.

## **FEAST AT THE TABLE**

### **FOCUS ON GOD**

Open your Bible to Psalm 119:11. Write it out as a prayer to the Lord as you begin your study of His Word today.

### **ENGAGE THE TEXT**

Read Colossians 1:1–2 out loud, and then write it in the space below.

Write down anything that immediately stands out to you.

How does Paul describe himself in verse 1? What does this say about his identity in Christ?

We begin our study of Colossians with a startling description of the church members. How does Paul describe the Colossians?

What do each of those terms mean? (If you're unsure, you can use a regular dictionary or find a Bible dictionary online.) Define them in the space below.

Find Bible dictionaries and commentaries at **[biblestudytools.com](http://biblestudytools.com)** or **[biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)**.

What is Paul doing by calling them “brothers and sisters in Christ”?

What type of familial bond holds them together?

What salutation does Paul open with?

What do each of those words mean?

How does Paul refer to God in this passage? What is the significance of that term?

What do you learn about God in this text?

## ASSESS THE MAIN IDEA

What did this mean to the original audience?

Write out the main idea of this passage in a single sentence. Make it precise, concise, and memorable.

## SPARK TRANSFORMATION

When you think of yourself, what words immediately come to mind?

Would you consider yourself holy? Faithful? Why or why not?

As you begin this study of Colossians, write a prayer below asking God to search your heart and help you identify any false labels you may be wearing. Ask Him to remove those lies and to write on your heart your new identity in Christ Jesus.

## TURN TO GOD IN WORSHIP

Paul begins his letter by blessing the Colossians with the grace and peace that come from God, whom he calls “our Father.” As you wrap up your time in the study of Scripture, turn your heart to praise God, who has called you to be His child, and who makes you holy and faithful in Christ, a member of His family. Thank Him for being the giver of all grace, and the One who speaks peace over the most tumultuous storms of life. End by being still before Him, receiving His fatherly love toward you.

*If you'd like, you can write down your prayer in the space below.*

## WEEK 1 | DAY 3



### SNACK ON THE GO

Paul begins most of his letters, including this one to the Colossians, with thanks to God for His work in the lives of believers. Although Paul speaks highly of the faith, hope, and love displayed by the church in Colossae, he never attributes these characteristics to human effort but rather always points to God, who is the source of these virtues:

**We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people. COLOSSIANS 1:3-4**

Take a moment to reflect on your own life and recognize the ways God is working in you. What can you thank Him for today? Write a prayer of thanksgiving to Him below or in your journal.

## FEAST AT THE TABLE

### FOCUS ON GOD

Open your Bible to Psalm 119:14. Write it out as a prayer to the Lord as you begin your study of His Word today.

### ENGAGE THE TEXT

Read Colossians 1:3–8 and write it below.

Write down whatever jumps out to you in the text.

What are Paul and Timothy thankful for?

What words are repeated in this text, and how does each new mention of the word add more nuance to its meaning?

What are the main markers of the believers in Colossae?

How are faith and love interwoven in this text?

How does hope (v. 5) relate to faith and love (see also Titus 1:2)?

According to verses 5 and 6, what does the gospel do wherever it goes?

The verb in the phrase “the gospel is bearing fruit and growing” in verse 6 is a present continuous passive tense verb in the Greek, which in plain English means the action is ongoing, with or without your participation. What does this verb choice communicate about the power of the gospel, apart from human intervention?

What effect has the gospel had in the church in Colossae?

This idea of bearing fruit, increasing, being fruitful, etc., is common in Scripture. Look up Mark 4:8 and Genesis 1:28. What connection points do you notice in these texts?

The phrase “your love in the Spirit” in verse 8 implies that the Holy Spirit is the source of Christian love. What other “fruit” (see v. 6) does the gospel empowered by the Holy Spirit bear in believers’ lives (see Galatians 5:16–25)?

### **ASSESS THE MAIN IDEA**

What is the gospel? In your own words, describe this good news Paul writes of, in one or two sentences.

Write out the main idea of this passage in a single sentence. Make it precise, concise, and memorable. (Consider the following question: What effect does the gospel have in the lives of believers?)

### **SPARK TRANSFORMATION**

Have you believed the gospel of Jesus Christ? If not, or if you’re not sure, take some time before going further in this study to read and understand the good news of Jesus Christ. If you’re already a follower of Christ, review the truths of the gospel so you’re comfortable sharing the good news with others.

Before I share the good news of the gospel of Jesus and show you the way to begin a relationship with Jesus, I have to start with the bad news.

The bad news is that we are all dead in our sins, having broken God's commandments and turned away from Him. And God is holy, set apart from anything sinful, so we cannot enter God's presence or have a relationship with Him in our sinful state. The payment for sin is death, eternal separation from God.

But the good news is that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. God showed His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins. Though the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Salvation is a gift—we do not earn it or deserve it, but God gives it freely to all who believe in Him, and through Jesus we have peace with God.

But the good news gets even better! Jesus didn't remain dead—He came back to life on the third day, and God exalted Him to the highest place, and He rules as Lord over all. When we choose to accept Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf, we receive God's forgiveness of our sins, and we surrender control of our lives to Jesus.

Whether you're accepting Christ for the first time and committing your life to Him or you're already a believer, these verses are helpful to know and meditate on to more fully understand the great salvation message: **John 14:6; Romans 3:10–12; 5:1, 8; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:4; Ephesians 1:5; 2:4–5, 8–9; Philippians 2:9–11; Hebrews 4:16; 1 John 1:9; Jeremiah 29:13.**

What happens then is our dead spirits come to life, and we begin a relationship with God that continues for the rest of our lives and into eternity. We are adopted into God's family as His children, so we no longer fear God but instead run to Him as our Father. God welcomes us into His presence every day, and His Spirit lives inside us, empowering us to accomplish God's work here on earth and teach-

ing us more and more about our heavenly Father. We can now boldly approach God's throne of grace to find help in our time of need. And though we may still miss the mark of God's perfection and holiness, when we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all wrongdoing. He frees us to live the life that He created us to live, filled with amazing projects, dreams, and good works that God prepared in advance for us.

The Christian life is not a set of rules, but rather it's a relationship, and God wants us to grow deeper and deeper in our intimacy with Him by intentionally seeking Him every day. Though there is no three-step formula to Christian growth (after all, what relationship works that way?), there are spiritual disciplines that we can practice to open ourselves to God's work in us, as He grows us in spiritual maturity. The most common ones practiced by Christians throughout history include prayer, worship, reading the Bible, and gathering with other Christians in church.

If you want to begin a relationship with God, tell Him so in a simple prayer from your heart. Or, you can use the prayer below to guide you:

*Dear God, I realize that I'm a sinner, and my sin separates me from You. I believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins, and that He rose again on the third day. I accept Jesus as the Savior and Lord of my life, and I believe, based on what You promised, that I am saved from my sins. Thank You for the gift of eternal life, for sending Your Spirit to live inside me, and for welcoming me into a relationship with You. Teach me how to grow deeper with You, and I look forward to an eternity of getting to know You more. Amen.*

I encourage you to look up these Bible verses that I've included in the sidebar to cement these truths in your heart and mind.

How confident do you feel in your ability to articulate the gospel to others?

What effect does the gospel empowered by the Holy Spirit have on your life today?  
In what way(s) can you grow in faith, hope, and love?

#### **TURN TO GOD IN WORSHIP**

Without the Holy Spirit of God working in us, we are helpless. But when He works out in our lives the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection for our sins, He empowers us toward radical lives of continual transformation into the image of Jesus Christ. We cannot change on our own, but the Spirit of Jesus is more than sufficient to transform us. End your time of feasting by expressing your neediness to God. Open your life wide and declare to Him, "I need You!" Confess to Him the ways in which you have failed to show hope, faith, and love, and thank Him for His forgiveness and restoration (1 John 1:8–10). Then praise Jesus for being enough and caring enough to work out His hope, faith, and love in your life.

Write a prayer of praise below.



## WEEK 1 | DAY 4

### SNACK ON THE GO

Oftentimes we'll tell friends, "I'll pray for you," with the best of intentions, but when it comes to actually praying for them, we're at a loss for words. What exactly should we pray? How do we lift our friends to God without reducing God to a genie-in-the-bottle who rushes to do our every whim? How can we learn to pray powerful, God-honoring prayers?

The answer comes in praying Scripture. Paul's letters are filled with powerful prayers, rich in theology and practical in applications, like this one in Colossians 1:9:

**We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives.**

When's the last time you prayed that for someone? Perhaps not in recent memory. And yet, we know and believe that God's Word is powerful, and it does not return to Him without producing the work it's intended to do, so let's begin praying Scripture over our lives.

Who is someone you can pray this passage for today? Rewrite the verse in your own words in the space below, inserting your friend's name as needed.

## FEAST AT THE TABLE

### FOCUS ON GOD

Open your Bible to Psalm 119:16. Write it out as a prayer to the Lord as you begin your study of His Word today.

### ENGAGE THE TEXT

Read Colossians 1:9–12 out loud.

Write out the passage in the space below. If you enjoy grammar, try diagramming—it's enlightening, especially for Paul's long sentences. Look for nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs. But even if you don't like grammar, you can still map out this passage by main idea, secondary supporting ideas, clarifying ideas, and so on. Make this as simple or complex as you like, but stay true to the flow of the passage.

Verse 9 starts with the phrase “for this reason.” What’s the reason? Reread verses 3–8 and write down the reason Paul goes on to write the rest of this passage.

Today’s text is a beautiful and powerful prayer that Paul prays for the Colossians and that believers have prayed for each other throughout the centuries. Let’s dig into it a little more deeply. What does Paul specifically pray for? List out his requests in the space below.

As you read the passage again, circle the connecting phrases (e.g., “for this reason,” “in order that,” “so that”). How does each clause in this passage further explain or expound upon the preceding clause? (In other words, how does Paul drill deeper with each additional thought?)

The idea of fullness is a common theme in Colossians. Let’s take a closer look at where Paul prays that God would fill the Colossians. Look up the word translated “fill” in the original Greek. What is the meaning of that verb?

Doing original word studies can be a lot of fun, but they can also be confusing, especially when you’re just getting started, so we included some help for you in the Bible Study Quickstart Guide. Watch a video tutorial on how to do a word study at [myOneThingAlone.com/quickstart](https://www.myOneThingAlone.com/quickstart).

According to Paul’s prayer, what’s the purpose of the knowledge of God (see v. 10)? How is spiritual knowledge different from just possessing facts? Check James 1:22–25 as a helpful cross-reference.)

Who accomplishes the work of sanctification in verses 6, 8, 9, and 11?

What role does the believer have in the process of sanctification described in Paul’s prayer?

According to this passage, how do God’s grace and believers’ good works intersect daily life? (See also Ephesians 2:8–10 and James 2:14–26 for further clarification on this topic.)

## **ASSESS THE MAIN IDEA**

Let’s take a look at what other Christians throughout history have noticed in this text.

In his commentary on Colossians, church father Chrysostom notes that “with faith Paul always couples conduct” and Augustine comments on the importance of displaying our faithfulness through our living, stating, “As then we acknowledge the part played by the will when these commands are given, so let him acknowledge

the part played by grace when these petitions are offered.”<sup>2</sup> For even walking worthy of the Lord is made possible by God Himself, not by our own human will.

More recently, Bible scholars have noted the common themes of fullness and knowledge, both introduced here in verse 9:

Paul used two key words, “fill” (*plēroō*) and “knowledge” (*epignōsis*, also used in v. 10 and 3:10). The first suggests a filling out to completeness, and the latter suggests a full, deep understanding. Such knowledge of God’s will does not come from a fleshly mind (which “puffs up,” 1 Cor. 8:1), but from the Holy Spirit who enlightens a believer’s inner person (1 Cor. 2:5–6, 13), and from the Word of God. God’s will, revealed in the Bible, is made known to believers by the Holy Spirit’s teaching ministry. To this Paul added, **through all spiritual wisdom** (*sophia*; used six times in Col. 1:9, 28; 2:3, 23; 3:16; 4:5), that is, practical know-how which comes from God (James 1:5; 3:15), **and understanding** (*synesis*; also used in Col. 2:2), which speaks of clear analysis and decision-making in applying this knowledge to various problems. By contrast, the false teachers offered only “an appearance of wisdom” (*sophia*; 2:23), which captivated their minds and lives in legalistic regulations. But true spiritual wisdom is both stabilizing and liberating (Eph. 4:14). Knowledge (or understanding or intelligence) and wisdom are often connected in Scripture (cf. Ex. 31:3 [“skill” in the NIV is the Hebrew word for wisdom]; Deut. 4:6; Isa. 11:2; 1 Cor. 1:19). And the fear of the Lord is the beginning of both (cf. Prov. 1:7; 9:10).<sup>3</sup>

Using this insight, what did this passage mean to the original audience?

Write out the main idea of this passage in a single sentence. Make it precise, concise, and memorable. (Consider the following question to get you started: What does Jesus’ grace accomplish in a believer’s life?)

## SPARK TRANSFORMATION

What comes to mind when you think of the word “theology”?

Theology is defined as the study of the nature of God. Would you consider yourself a theologian? Why or why not?

One of Paul’s main themes in this letter is the transformational power of spiritual knowledge, specifically about God. And according to verse 12, God has “qualified you” to share in this knowledge of Him.

What’s one specific way you can apply today’s passage in your life to become a more confident theologian?

## TURN TO GOD IN WORSHIP

Take a few moments to reflect on what this passage says about the character of God, then turn to Him in worship, praising Him for those attributes you see in the text and any other characteristics that come to mind.



## WEEK 1 | DAY 5

### SNACK ON THE GO

Read Colossians 1:12–14 out loud.

What is one thing you learn about God in this text? Write it in the space below.

How does this truth about God affect you? Your identity? Your worth? Your actions? Write down one specific application to your life today.

Write a short prayer, responding to God's Word to you today.

## FEAST AT THE TABLE

### FOCUS ON GOD

Open your Bible to Psalm 119:18. Write it out as a prayer to the Lord as you begin your study of His Word today.

### ENGAGE THE TEXT

Read Colossians 1:12–14 out loud, then write it in the space below.

Write out whatever immediately jumps out at you in this text.

How has the Father “qualified” believers for His holy inheritance?

What is the inheritance mentioned in this passage? Why does Paul call it an inheritance?

Paul uses light and darkness as powerful symbols in this passage.

What do they each signify?

In what other passages of Scripture do you recall this same imagery being used? You might check a concordance to jog your memory.

Why would Paul employ this symbolism here?

Throughout Scripture we read that God used various means to accomplish His work on earth—individuals, the godly, the ungodly, nations, angels. But when it came to the work of our eternal salvation, God did not entrust it to any of these.

According to this passage, who does the work of redemption?

How was this “rescue” from one kingdom to another accomplished? (Hint: read on through verses 15–23.)

### **ASSESS THE MAIN IDEA**

In light of the heretical teachings facing the Colossian church (see this week’s introduction), what was Paul trying to communicate to the Colossians in this passage?

### **SPARK TRANSFORMATION**

Jesus Christ’s grace meets us where we are but it doesn’t leave us as we are. His Spirit continues to work out sanctification in our lives, and as we continue studying this letter, we’ll see how God’s grace transforms us.

In what ways can you open yourself to the Holy Spirit’s transformative work in your life?

### **TURN TO GOD IN WORSHIP**

This passage beautifully describes redemption, which is “the deliverance and freedom from the penalty of sin by the payment of a ransom, the substitutionary death of Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

What does this passage teach us about God, both in our redemption and our sanctification?

Worship God for the finished work of Jesus on the cross and the work He continues to do through His Spirit in your life. Then take a few moments to simply be still in His presence, acknowledging that because of Jesus, we don't have to hustle to gain God's favor; we can rest in His finished work of redemption and ongoing work of sanctification. (If this is your first time trying to practice stillness, set a timer for two minutes and quiet your mind and heart. Simply enter God's presence and rest.)

See more practical suggestions for practicing stillness at [onethingalone.com/practice-stillness-in-gods-presence](https://onethingalone.com/practice-stillness-in-gods-presence).

## WEEKEND REFLECTION

What did you learn about God this week?

What did you learn about yourself?

In what way is Jesus inviting you to trust that He is enough?

What do you most want to say to God right now?

Continue to dive deep with  
*He Is Enough*

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