

Soaring Oaks Presbyterian Church: Adult Bible Study Questions for 12/31/2006  
Colossians 2:1-15

Start by reading the whole passage.

1. Reread Colossians 2:1. Read Colossians 1:7, 1:9, 1:29, and 4:16; 1 Timothy 4:9-10. Paul speaks of his great struggle on behalf of many for the sake of the gospel. He is particularly concerned for those who have not met him personally.

(a) By what means (methods) or in what ways did Paul conduct this struggle?

(b) Which of these might you be neglecting in your struggles for the kingdom of God? How would you relate Colossians 1:29 to previous neglect of but future engagement in this struggle?

(c) Why do you think Paul was especially concerned about those who did not know him personally? Explain any connection you see between your answer and God's command to the church in Hebrews 10:25.

In Colossians 1:9-10, Paul told the Colossians of his prayers for them that they be filled with knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord. In Colossians 1:27, Paul wrote of "Christ in you, the hope of glory." In the remainder of this lesson and through the next three lessons (through Colossians 4:6), Paul gives specific teaching on the spiritual basis for knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and hope along with these apply to daily life as believers put them into practice.

2. Reread Colossians 2:2-4 and 2:8-10.

(a) In Colossians 2:2, what does Paul say will help us reach understanding and knowledge of Christ.

(b) "Mystery" religions opposed Christianity in Paul's day. These claim to have special access to hidden knowledge, without which one could not gain entry into spiritual harmony. Similar teachings ("New Age" religions, etc.) are found today. How does Paul counter such teaching in Colossians 2:3-4 and 2:8-10? What knowledge or authority can others claim to have outside of or beyond what resides in Christ?

3. Reread Colossians 2:5-7.

(a) Let's have a little fun illustrating biblical lessons by proposing unbiblical ones. Example #1: The Bible says we are to "walk in [Christ]," so believers should not use any other mode of transportation than walking! Example #2: Paul says we are to abound in thanksgiving, so all believers must eat turkey, mashed potatoes, and gravy as often as possible! Make up some others if you feel like it.

OK, back to the seriously satisfying stuff.

(b) Try to put Colossians 2:6-7 in your own words, using at most four sentences. Prepare to share your work in class, if you are willing. The point here is not to improve on the Word of God, but to help each one of us take it to heart and apply it. Words, or course, mean things, and key words in this passage are: receive, walk, rooted, built up, established, taught, and abundant thanksgiving.

4. Reread Colossians 2:11-13.

(a) Find the seven places in Colossians 2:1-15 where Paul uses the words “in whom,” “in him,” or “with him.” List the things or ideas connected with these words in each case.

(b) Circumcision was the ceremonial act by which a Hebrew male was identified with the covenant God made with Abraham. Circumcision was considered a “sealing” of covenant relationship. Paul speaks of our identification with Christ in terms of a different type of circumcision. Read Deuteronomy 10:16, Deuteronomy 30:6, Romans 2:29, Romans 4:11, 1 Corinthians 7:19, Galatians 5:6, Galatians 6:15, Ephesians 1:13-14, and Ephesians 2:11-13. What in a believer is circumcised? By whom is this circumcision done (read all passages before answering)? What undesirable thing is “put off” as a result? What desirable relationship is accomplished through this circumcision?

5. Reread Colossians 2:13-15.

(a) From Colossians 2:13-14, what was nailed to the cross, and how does this benefit you?

(b) Although this topic is deep and potentially controversial, what do other scriptures say in relationship to guilt under the law and redemption under grace? We will not dwell on this larger question in class this Sunday, but we may make it a topic of discussion over lunch after the service.

(c) Colossians 2:15 ways that powers and authorities were disarmed at the cross as God triumphed over them. Since “Satan” means “accuser,” how do you think Satan was defeated and disarmed at the cross?