

# Discussion #1

Monday, August 27, 2019

- THEMES:**
- importance of fellowship, earthly vs heavenly
  - farming: "fruitful", "rooted" • carnal vs spiritual
  - Christ needs to be 1<sup>st</sup> leave behind 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> hand

What do you have to say about someone?

+ or -

• a letter written to someone  
 Paul had never met - only through Epaphras  
 • a dying art - email



**DON'T LET THE SERPENT BEGUILE YOU**

we have the ability to think like **god**

we have this word  
 we also have the ability to think like the **SERPENT**

↓  
 our carnal minds

- walking
- stay focused at Salvation (4:2-8)

**THE FIELD = THE WORLD**

we need to spread God's word to everyone, whether it looks profitable for us or not

(GOD BRINGS THE INCREASE)  
 the parable of the sower

we can't pick + choose  
 we need to live the truth

**DON'T BE ASHAMED!**

**"THE PERFECT TIME IS NOW"**



without the head, the body is dead  
 you can survive without limbs, but the body can't function without the head

Day 1 Wrap up

# Day 1 Wrap up

- Questions
  - Colossian Ecclesia – formation and Epaphras' role
  - Epaphras' characteristics – what do we know about him
  - Col 1:18 – why is this a key verse?
  - Why 3 separate letters?
- Key Points
- Exhortations



# Epaphras' Characteristics

Peel back the curtain

## 1. *Col 1:7 & Col 4:12-13*

- *Fellowservant and Faithful Minister – “our...for you”*
- *'Fellowservant' – co-slave, serving the same master*
- *4:12-13 – Kept them in his prayers, desired to all be complete in Christ*

## 2. *How might Epaphras have presented the Ecclesia to Paul?*

- *V8 – declared your LOVE in the Spirit*
  - *Cp. Rom 15:30*
  - *'declared' – to make plain, signify, taken from Greek to show evidence*
- *Paul starts with the positive, shows a love and care for this ecclesia based on Epaphras' message*

## 3. *So What?*

- *Epaphras was connected to the Ecclesia, acutely aware of their state (Lev 13)*
- *Epaphras shared the positives – not consumed with Ecclesial gossip or individual issues*

# Col 1:18 – key verse?

Eph 4:13-15

*Psa 133:2*

*Phil 2:5; 1 Cor 2:16*

- *Pre-eminence – first place*
  - *Establishing a reference point & a directional heading*
- *We fall short when we don't understand the magnitude of what's been done for us – undervalue it!*
  - *Prov 25:2...kings told to write out the law (Deut 17)*
- *Think of a body, role of the head, and how we connect into the body*

# Elements to address and Paul's approach

After talking with Epaphras & Onesimus, Paul would have understood:

Inter-ecclesial ecosystem – Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis

- Relevant topics to region & opportunities to strengthen/exhort

**Wrote circular letter to entire region (Col 4:16)**

*Letter to the Ephesians*

Ecclesia of Colossae

- Relevant issues facing the Colossian ecclesia

**Wrote letter to Colossian Ecclesia**

*Letter to the Colossians*

Individual issues w/in Colossian Ecclesia

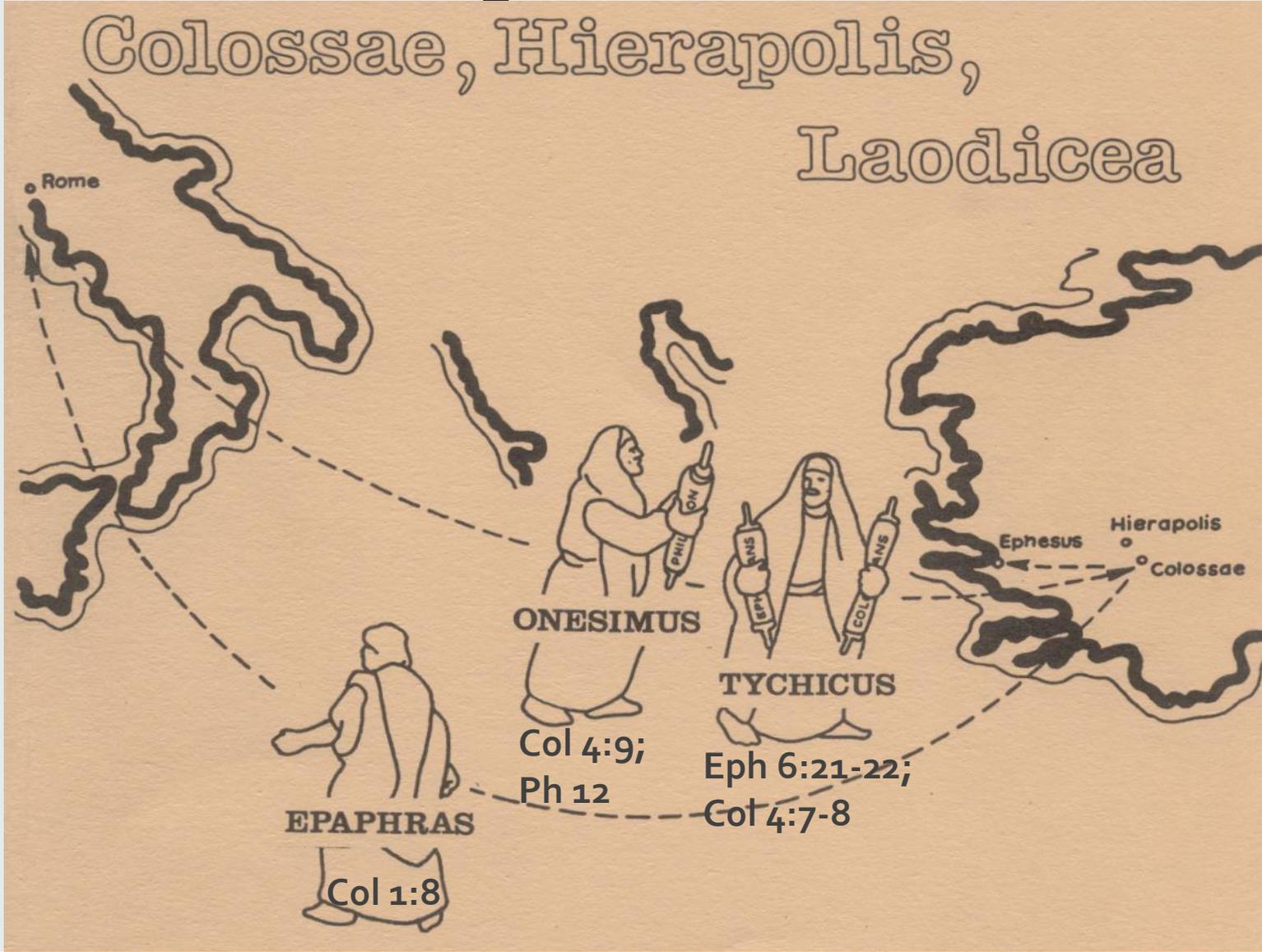
- Breach between Philemon and Onesimus needing to be healed

**Wrote a personal letter appealing for reconciliation**

*Letter to Philemon*

**Taking the time to fully understand an issue is vital (Prov 18:13; 25:11)**

# Delivery of letters to the region



Method of delivery, not just the message, required for effective communication

# Day 1 Summary

- Look for opportunities to connect with other brothers/sisters in your ecclesia & area
  - Young/old, sharing/listening, making time, being vulnerable, positive, sincere
- Theme centers around giving Christ '1<sup>st</sup> place' in our lives
  - 7<sup>th</sup> resurrection, but 1<sup>st</sup> to eternal life... the firstfruits
- Look for lessons God is teaching us based on our surroundings and circumstances of our lives
- Think about a trial that you are presently going through
  - How will you focus beyond your own trial to still care for others?
- Communication – follow Paul's approach
  - Pray, get the facts, presume positive intent, express desire for others to be in kingdom, be specific, be encouraging, consider delivery (time, place, audience, tone)

## Day 1 Challenge: Branching out

- **Members of your ecclesia**
  - **Think about members of your ecclesia - write something positive that they are doing well**
    - **Include members that you are struggling with**
- **Youth Conference**
  - **Commit to having at least 1 meaningful conversation with someone each day at YC this week**

# Discussion #2

"GRACE + PEACE

FROM GOD OUR FATHER  
↳ only possible if  
they had been  
instructed to convey  
questions - verified  
by God

"(APOSTLE)"

= a messenger,  
ambassador, one  
with authority

↳ ACTS 9:15 Paul knew  
his calling and purpose - do  
we know ours? 2 Pet 3:15-16

prayer



FAITH,  
hope &  
LOVE

is all ACTION

↳ How to help  
others during trial

2 COR 1:11  
= the POWER of  
prayer

MAKE  
TIME  
DON'T  
FIND  
TIME

faith without work  
is dead, love  
must produce action  
or our love is  
vain.

Col 1:1 → Mark 3:35  
"out of God"

CONSISTENCY

IN ALL THE LETTERS  
↳ How are we  
going to imitate

↳ no law & rules + mercy acceptable not  
↳ in parliament because our own  
he needs to apply mercy personally - it  
ecclesial vs. individual (equity) → the work  
of God is to help us

"Grace isn't an  
excuse to do what  
is wrong, instead

v4 - loving God - 1<sup>st</sup> commitment  
loving others - 2<sup>nd</sup> commitment

It's an encouragement  
to do what's right"

Mat 22:37-40  
"BY" - v 16  
= by reason of or for the sake of  
God created all things with  
his son in mind

- to Christ's sake  
Christie studies middle  
v 1-3 → bible & lives

## Day 2 Wrap up

# Day 2 Wrap up

- Questions
  - Grace & Peace
  - Prayer
  - The new creation – visible vs invisible (v.15-20)
  - Christ as 1<sup>st</sup> place – a summary
- Exhortations

# Grace & Peace

## Paul's desire for them expressed

- Introduction (1:2) – God's grace and peace
- Conclusion (4:18) – God's grace

## Common way for NT writers to begin their letters –

- Rom 1:7; 16:20; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; Phil 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Th 1:1; 2 Th 1:2; 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Tit 1:4; Philemon 3; 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Pet 1:2; 2 John 1:3; Rev 1:4
- **Grace – the way God treats us:** His undeserved kindness, mercy and faithfulness toward us – without which we would be hopelessly lost
- **Peace – the result:** God has joined us to him as His family members, uniting us through Christ to bring peace

*"these things have I spoken unto you that ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."* *Jn 16:33*

"These cannot be attained in any other way. Money cannot buy it; influence cannot acquire it." R. Abel

# Pray for Others!

- **2 Corinthians 9:14** - "by their **prayer** for **you**"
- **Ephesians 1:16** - "making mention of **you** in my **prayers**"
- **Philippians 1:4** - "**Always** in every **prayer** of mine for **you**"
- **Philippians 1:9** - "this I **pray**, that **your** love may abound"
- **Colossians 1:3** - "**praying** **always** for **you**"
- **Colossians 1:9** - "**do not cease** to **pray** for **you**"
- **1 Thess 1:2** - "making mention of **you** in our **prayers**"
- **2 Thess 1:11** - "Wherefore also we **pray** **always** for **you**"
- **2 Tim 1:3** - "I have remembrance of **thee** in my **prayers** night and day"
- **Philemon 1:4** - "making mention of **thee** **always** in my **prayers**"



# Christ the Firstborn (vv. 15 – 20)

Image (*eikon*) of invisible God, firstborn (*protokos*) of every creature

- Image – Christ fulfilled design intent of Father 2 Cor 4:4; 2 Cor 3:18
- Firstborn – 1<sup>st</sup> achieve design intent & rise to eternal life 1 Cor 15:20,23; Col 1:18

*“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Rom 1:20)*

- This was the original design intent with creation... man was made in the ‘image’ and ‘likeness’ of God.
  - Design intent was not realized with Adam, but was with Christ
- Jesus Christ is the visible image of all that is invisible in God
  - “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col 2:9)

**God expects us to connect the seen to the unseen to learn of Him (cp Heb 11:1; 1 Jn 4:20)**

# Does Jesus take 1<sup>st</sup> place in our lives?

Paul's strategy for properly placing Jesus as 1<sup>st</sup>

- 1) **Recognize superiority of Christ above all** vv. 15,16,16,17,17,18,19,20
  - Establishes *perspective* on all elements of life
  
- 2) **Grasp the significance of the price paid** vv. 20a, 22a
  - Establishes *value* of the offer made to us
  
- 3) **Appreciate magnitude of what has been done for us personally**
  - you... alienated → reconciled v.21
  - present you → holy, unblameable, unreprouvable v.22
  - If ye → continue in the faith v.23
  - For you → minister v.25
  - Christ in you → the hope of glory v.27
  - Every man → present perfect in Christ Jesus v.28
  - Creates *thankfulness* and a desire to show it in our lives

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: Proper perspective, correct value, true thankfulness**

# Summary – Day 2

- God has extended His grace to us; will we accept the offer of life in Christ to obtain peace
- Continual prayer, for others, is a hallmark of a true disciple
  - “A prayerless life is a Godless life”
- Must commit to being ‘in Christ’ through baptism to enjoy benefits
- Christ must be 1<sup>st</sup> place in our lives, above all else
  - Prioritization through perspective, value, and appreciation

## Day 2 Challenge: Reaching Up

- Youth Conference
  - Prayer – Find a quiet place each day to offer at least 1 focused prayer to God (self or w/ someone)

# Discussion #3

GOD'S MYSTERY (v2)

a mystery to those who  
the gospel, we can  
understand it  
Mt 13:35; Rom 11:25;  
16:25; Eph 1:9; 3:3-4,9;  
5:32; 6:19

Why a mystery?

it was hidden, but  
now we have the gospel

"BEGUILÉ YOU" (v4)

↳ Gen 3:13 (4-5)

"thou shalt not die"  
the immortality of the soul

OPEN DOOR

Col 4:3

Acts 14:27

GOD DOESN'T WANT  
ROBOTS HE PUT THE  
TREES THERE TO GIVE  
THEM A CHOICE

IT'S EASIER TO  
DRAG SOMEONE  
THAN TO PULL  
SOMEONE

"DWELL" → [EPHESIANS 3:17]

= to house permanently

Christ in you

(1 Cor 3:5-17)

parable of the  
sower

Luke 8:6

built +  
rooted on the  
rock

built + rooted  
in the sand

we need to  
get the moisture  
in us

firm  
secure

easily  
removed

only can be  
tested when a  
storm hits

"spring up" us after  
a conference but  
where are our roots?

on  
Christ

on the  
land

Rev 2 - lawless  
ecclesia - a warning  
for the storm

and home to earthquake

## Day 3 Wrap up

# Day 3 Wrap up

- Questions
  - Mystery
  - Genesis connections
  - Rudiments of world, philosophy
- Exhortations

# Mystery? (vv. 26-27)

Paul reveals the primary goal of God's plan with Jesus Christ

- Always used in NT (27x) to discuss things that were once hidden, but now revealed
- 2 Elements of the Mystery:
  - 1) Messiah must suffer before glorification
    - Forgiveness/salvation are only 'in Christ'
  - 2) Gospel would be open to the Gentiles – not just Jews
    - Called the 'fellowship of the Mystery' – **Paul's focus here**
- Problem: Though revealed, many did not understand it
- Mission: Apostles to make it plain to everyone
- Purpose: **Christ in you, the hope of glory!!**

1 Pet 1:10-12

Eph 1:7-10

Eph 3:3-10; Col 1:26-29

Mt 13:11

Rom 16:25-26; Eph 6:19-20; 1 Cor 4:1;  
Col 4:3 ('door' cp Acts 14:27; 2 Cor 2:12)

**Mystery revealed is how God saves by developing Christ in us!**

# Connections to Eden – *highlighting the 'new creation' in Christ*

Concept	Colossians	Genesis
Fruit	1:6,10	1:28; 3:2-3
Desire to be filled w/ knowledge	1:9,10	3:6
God has made us	1:12	1:26-27
Light/darkness	1:12-13	1:2
Forgiveness of sins	1:14	3:21
Image of God	1:15; 3:10	1:26
Created	1:16; 3:10	1:1
Beginning	1:18	1:1
Beguiling with enticing words	2:4, 18	3:4-5, 13
Absent in flesh, with you in Spirit	2:5	3:8
Separation in Garden, reunited in Christ	1:27	3:23-24
Deceit, Lie	2:8; 9	2 Cor 11:3
Hid	3:3	3:8,10
Evil Desires	3:5	3:6
Children of disobedience vs obedience	3:6,20	3:17
put off old man	3:9	3:7, 21
put on (clothing oneself)	3:10, 12	3:21
Wives submit to husband	3:18	3:16

\*filled with knowledge against His will

\*new beginning with Christ vs Adam

\*voice of God... *ruach* of the day

**This was nothing new...  
Colossians were in danger  
of going down same path  
to death as in the Garden**

# Don't let yourself be carried away captive! (2:8-15)

Philosophy = *philosophia* – 'love (pursuit) of wisdom' (1 Tim 6:20)

Vain deceit = empty lies

Tradition of men – see usage in Mk 7:6-13

Rudiments of the world = base elements of the Jewish world (*kosmos*)

- Circumcision – outward show of need to spiritually cut off works of flesh (v. 11)
- Unclean foods – instruction to personal holiness (vv. 16, 21)
- Holy days – create framework to enable godly living and devotion (v. 16)
- Voluntary fastings – teach self-control and focus the mind (vv. 21-23)



**Overemphasizing this life and reducing worship of God to rituals will enslave us**

# Summary – Day 3

- God's mystery has been revealed through Christ
  - Lk 11:52:
    - are we looking for open doors to share w/ others...
    - are we walking through that door ourselves?
- Godly habits are very helpful in cultivating good ground
  - But we can't reduce godliness to ritual or a series of metrics
  - God requires transformation of heart, not compliance to ritual

## Day 3 Challenge: Rooting deep

- Youth Conference
  - Identify an aspect in your life where you have roots into something that is not actively helping you to grow fruit. Commit to doing something about it moving forward (*it is ok to start small – Col 1:10*)

Discussion #4

APPEAR  
= to shine  
DAN 12:3

dead to sin  
alive to GOD

why?  
Rom 8:9  
Christ can't dwell in us  
if (x) (x)

DONT  
Focus on  
the world  
to think about  
what not to do  
Amos 5:14-15  
what are you  
going to do instead?

IF  
the wages of sin  
in the Bible  
ROMANS 6:20: 5:1

KICK to the head  
Heb 12:1

ABOVE

where Christ is  
all we need to know about  
earthly things is at Colossians

WIVES

of GOD CALLOUSNESS  
redeeming the time  
JUST DO IT 7:11

Social media  
texts, emails

the truth  
is our life  
ARE YOU  
HOW BUSY

death

from root out that  
has breathed his last  
but... God gave you  
we don't have a grade  
or a paycheck  
in His hand  
don't cancel

SET - Ps. 16:8  
Christ did

So should we  
make an appointment  
with God

# Day 4 Wrap up

# Day 4 Wrap up

- Questions
  - Mortifying the flesh
  - Hid with Christ
  - *Scythian, Barbarian... what is the message?*
  - Mind on things above
  - Covetousness... how to overcome
- Exhortations

# Mortifying the flesh – Taking up the cross (Col 3:1-9)

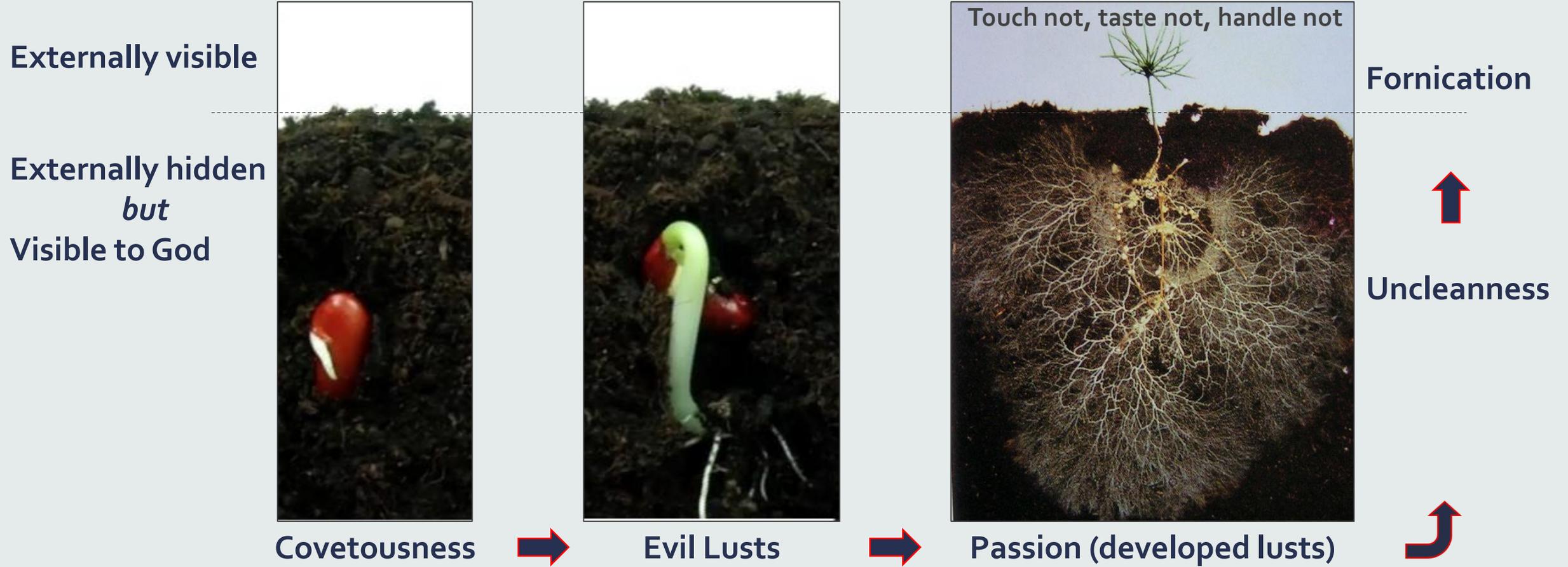
This means striving to put to death the root cause of sin in our lives

- Mortify = 'put to death'
- Members = limbs of the human body (Matt 5:29)
  - Fornication – *Porneia* = illicit sexual intercourse
  - Uncleanliness = a state of being separated from God resulting from ungodliness
  - Inordinate affection – *pathos* = Lusts that have developed into passionate desires
  - Evil concupiscence = evil lusts/desires... the source of sin
  - Covetousness = a greedy desire to have more (Thayer)... idolatry!

**External and Internal 'members' identified. But why this order?**

# Take up his cross – from root to fruit (3:5)

Colossians were very focused on 'external' elements. Paul trying to get them to look deeper...



It all starts with desiring something we don't have, which leads us down a path away from God

**By the time sin becomes externally visible, a raging infection is rampant in the body**

# Life is hid with Christ in God

- Context – v4 - Christ appearing, us in glory
  - V3 - “for ye are dead” – as far as the old man is concerned (2:12)
    - Christ did not die instead of the believer, rather the believer is buried with him in baptism
  - V3 - “and your life” – our new life in Christ
    - Gal 2:20 – “yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” – our life is hidden with Christ, not to be seen until he appears
- ‘is hid’ – *to hide* (Col 1:26, 2:3) – like a treasure, **life eternal** is concealed for the present with Christ, but it will become manifest in the future. When Christ appears, we shall be glorified (1 Jn 3:2)
- Life eternal will be open to view, “when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” Col 3:4 (RSV)
- Rev 20:12 – names in the book of life to be revealed – hidden from us now...
- What comes next in Col 3...

# Barbarian, Scythian...

- Context - v5-10
  - A former way of life – ‘put off...old man’
  - A new way of life – ‘put on the new’
- List of 8 groups of people – a regional specific inclusion...
  - Barbarian – ‘foreigner, alien’ - one not of the Roman empire, by implication, uneducated and uncultured – 1 Cor 14:11
  - Scythian – Class of people thought to be the lowest class of people, some note them as possible cannibals
- **The lesson** – In Christ, there is no national privilege, no difference in legal standing, and no difference in social status. This comes only when we are in Christ.
- Margins! – Gal 3:26-29

# Mind on things above (3:10-17) – building the body

We must grow (*renew*) the new man/woman in knowledge

*Though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor 4:16)*

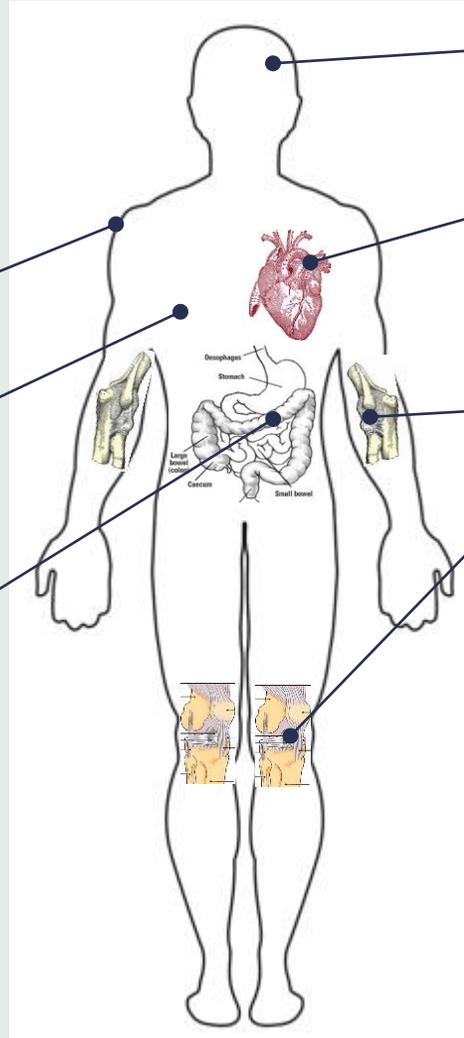
Developing the image of God (v.10)

One body = our calling as believers (3:15)

Inside us = word of God dwells (3:16)

Bowels = mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forbearance, forgiveness (3:12)

**Christ in you... the Hope of glory!**



Head = Christ (1:18; 2:19)

Heart = Peace of God rules (3:15)  
= filled w/ thankfulness (3:16)

'bond'  
Joints & ligaments = love (2:19; 3:14)

Rather, speaking the truth **in love**, we are to **grow up** in every way into him who is the **head, into Christ**: from whom the **whole body**, joined and **held together by every joint** with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the **body grow** so that it builds itself up **in love**.

Eph 4:15-16 ESV

# Follow me (3:10-17) – learning to be thankful

Thankfulness is a state of being... it is learned over time (1 Tim 6:5-12)

- 1) Define success correctly (v.6)
  - Godliness with contentment... not gain *and* godliness
- 2) See this life for what it is - transience (v.7)
  - We brought nothing in and can carry nothing out
- 3) Set expectations correctly (v.8)
  - Be content with basic necessities of life (food, clothing) in all circumstances
- 4) Pursue God's character and flee from pursuits of this life (v.9-11)
  - Follow righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness
- 5) Keep pressing forward with confidence in God and Christ (v.12)
  - Define ourselves based on relationship with Christ, not worldly position/possession

**Thankfulness is the antidote to covetousness...**

**we won't want more if we're thankful for what we have**

# Summary – Day 4

- Must dig deep to put to death internal desires
  - If we focus on external appearance, we will completely miss the mark
- Hid with Christ – we take action now, to obtain eternal life in the future
- One body of Christ is only possible when all members grow together in God
- Strive to eliminate covetousness by developing thankfulness
  - Jesus must take 1<sup>st</sup> place in all we do – giving thanks to God

## Day 4 Challenge: Stepping Forward

- Think about the elements of the 'new man/woman' as observed in your own life
  - Recognition: Which 1(s) are you doing well at developing – how will you continue to grow in it?
  - Reproof: Which 1(s) has the biggest opportunity – how will you be more purposeful in growing in it?

# Discussion #5

Wives -> Peter 3:1-5

two-sided relationship  
wives -> submit  
husbands -> sacrifice

## WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE?

(v.25) - to glorify God or yourself?

Purpose:  
1 Godly - *Sanctified*  
2 forgotten - *ill*  
3 lost - *imprisoned*

### 24 - IF YOU SERVE GOD FIRST YOU WILL BE BLESSED

Joseph - slave -> second in command  
Daniel - captive -> governor

## JESUS' VIEW ON MARRIAGE

Matt 19:3-6  
God created marriage like he created everything  
else - laws of gov't govern our lives  
if you jump off a roof, you have to face the consequences (gravity)  
don't mess with marriage -> baptism  
it's not just a piece of paper

## BE AN EXAMPLE

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

## CHRIST

Is. 50:4  
"word in season"

## REDEEM THE TIME

we have a limited amount - what are you doing with it?  
ROM. 12:1-2

## SEASONED WITH SALT

Mk. 9:50  
Mt. 5:13  
your words need to taste good  
Eph. 5:3-5



# Day 5 Wrap up

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- Summary
- Exhortations
- Encouragement

# MYC Summary

- Look for opportunities to connect with other brothers/sisters in your ecclesia & area
  - Young/old, sharing/listening, making time, being vulnerable, positive, sincere
- Christ must be 1<sup>st</sup> place in our lives, above all else
  - Prioritization through perspective, value, and appreciation
- Godly habits are very helpful in cultivating good ground
  - But we can't reduce godliness to ritual or a series of metrics
  - God requires transformation of heart, not compliance to ritual
- Must dig deep to put to death internal desires
  - If we focus on external appearance, we will completely miss the mark
- One body of Christ is only possible when all members grow together in God
  - Thankfulness is the antidote to covetousness
- Redeem the time!
  - Buying up every opportunity to develop Christ in us and in each other

# Challenges

## Day 1: Branching out

- Members of your ecclesia
  - Think about members of your ecclesia - write something positive that they are doing well
- Commit to having at least 1 meaningful conversation with someone each day at YC this week

## Day 2: Reaching Up

- Prayer – Find a quiet place each day to offer at least 1 focused prayer to God (self or w/ someone)

## Day 3: Rooting deep

- Identify an aspect in your life where you have roots into something that is not actively helping you to grow fruit. Commit to doing something about it moving forward (*it is ok to start small – Col 1:10*)

## Day 4: Stepping Forward

- Think about the elements of the 'new man/woman' as observed in your own life
  - Recognition: Which 1(s) are you doing well at developing – how will you continue to grow in it?
  - Reproof: Which 1(s) has the biggest opportunity – how will you be more purposeful in growing in it?

## Day 5: Reflecting Inward

- How will the letter that you wrote to yourself impact your daily life?

# Processing the Week...

## - Energized –

- **Col 1:9-12** – Filled with *personal* knowledge, walk worthy, bear fruit, increase!
- **Col 4:13** – Zeal of Epaphras, shared amongst the believers – attitude has an impact!
- **Rev 3:19** – Zeal put forward as the antidote for the Laodicean attitude, get energized!

## - Anxiety –

- **Col 1:27-29** – Christ working IN US! (*Deut 30:6*)
- **Col 3:16** – Let the word of Christ make a permanent habitation in us (input: songs, hymns)
- **Rev 2:10** – Fear nothing, be faithful, receive the crown
- **Rev 3:19** – ‘As many as I LOVE I rebuke and chasten’
- **Where to Begin** – **Col 1:10** ‘walk worthy’ – (*Deut 7:22; Ex 23:29-30*)

# Processing the Week...

## - Loneliness –

- **Col 4:7-8** – Tychicus sent to comfort their hearts...body fitly framed, working together!
- **Rev 3:9-10** – 'I have loved THEE...I will keep thee' – God is with us!
- **Heb 12:1-2** – 'Compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses'

## - Inadequate –

- **Col 2:13** – Gods mercy extended to us in the forgiveness of sins...
- **7 Letters to the Ecclesias** – Recall the patience of our Lord, the mercy of our God...
  - *Disappointment does not equal rejection.*
- **2 Thess 2:13** – God hath 'chosen you to salvation'

“Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it...  
Grace be with you. Amen.”

Col 4:17-18