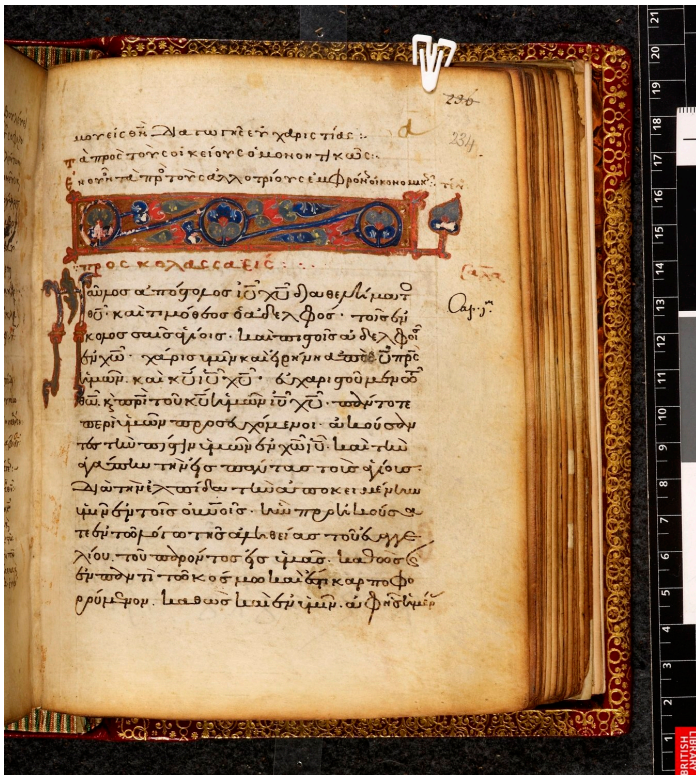


# Small Group Study

## Freedom in Christ

From the sermon series, "Christ in You"



The first page of Colossians in a manuscript from the 12th century. It gives its title as **προς κολοσσαεις**, "to the Colossians".

### SCRIPTURES

Have volunteers read the following scriptures:

#### Colossians 2:6-23

6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. 11 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

### Icebreakers

Use the questions below to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

1. As a child, what did you think a "religious" person was like? How did you feel about that kind of person?

2. Did you consider your parents "permissive" or "strict"? Why?

3. What is one thing you've stopped doing that you used to do either because you realized it wasn't good for you or because you realized it wasn't good for others?



*13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*

*16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. 18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. 19 He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.*

*20 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: 21 "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? 22 These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.*

## QUESTIONS

1. What does "living in Christ" (v. 6) involve? (also see 1:10-12)
2. What does the phrase "rooted and built up" imply to you?
3. What are "the basic principles of this world" (vv. 8, 20) and the "powers and authorities" (vv. 10, 15)? How did Christ give the Colossians victory over these?
4. What kind of circumcision is done by Christ (v. 11)? How did he do it (vv. 12-15)?
5. What experiences does the believer share with Christ (vv. 9-13)? What implications are drawn from this (vv. 13, 16-17, 20-23)?
6. What is the result of trying to base one's relationship with God on rule keeping or on private visions, as the false teachers were doing?
7. When have you felt as if the "roots" of your faith in Christ were barely below the surface? What helps you sink those roots deeper?
8. What additions to the faith have you encountered from people who try to encourage you to be "more spiritual"?
9. Neither immorality nor morality can give us life; only faith *in* and a real relationship *with* Jesus Christ can do that. Which way do/did you tend to lean: immorality or morality?
10. If you said "morality", what convinced you that trying to live up to religious rules couldn't change you on the inside? In what area are you still susceptible to getting caught up in rule keeping?
11. If you said "immorality", what convinced you that following Jesus and learning to obey him was better than your previous way of living? In what area(s) are you still susceptible to wanting *not* to obey Jesus?

God bless,

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