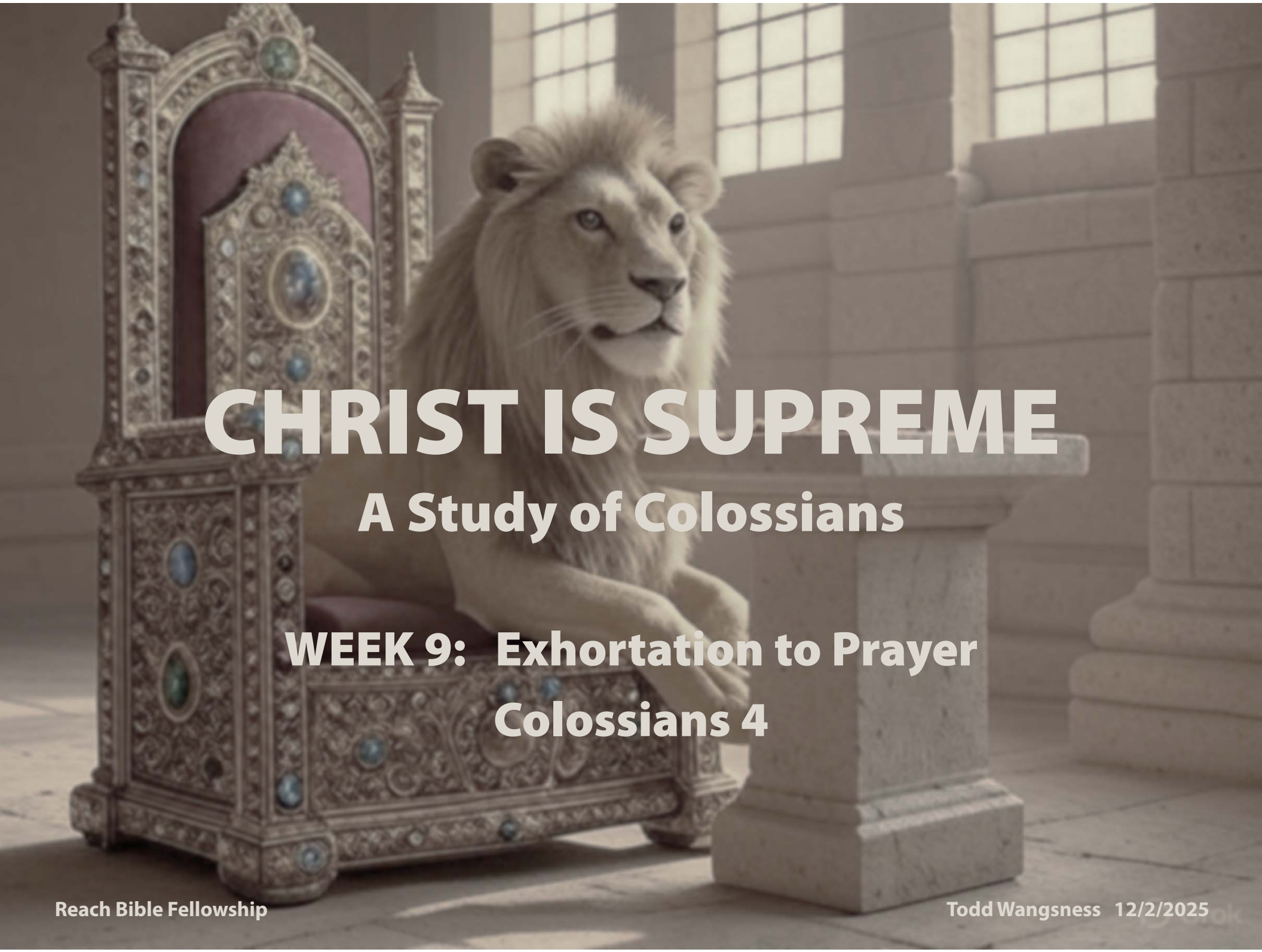


CHRIST IS SUPREME

A Study of Colossians

WEEK 9: Exhortation to Prayer
Colossians 4

Reach Bible Fellowship

Todd Wangsness 12/2/2025

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

WEEK	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
Week 1	Overview	Overview of the book of Colossians
Week 2	Col 1:1 – 14	Introduction and God's Redemption
Week 3	Col 1:15 – 20	The Preeminence of Jesus Christ
Week 4	Col 1:21 – 29	The Mystery of the Ages
Week 5	Col 2:1 – 10	Gnosticism is Alive and Well
Week 6	Col 2:11 – 23	The Futility of Legalism
Week 7	Col 3:1 – 17	Set Your Mind on Things Above
Week 8	Col 3:18 – 25	The Christian Home
Week 9	Col 4:1 – 18	Exhortation to Prayer and Final Greetings

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

Notable quote on Colossians 4

"'Continue in prayer.' Do not grow weary because the blessing is delayed. Though the merchantman tarry, wait thou for him. 'Continue in prayer.' Though when ye pray ye do not at once receive the answer, be not staggered, for it shall surely come… And while you continue in prayer, be watchful. Watch for the answer, watch for yourselves lest ye faint and grow weary; watch for fresh temptations that may prevent your continuing; watch for opportunities of increased intercession; watch against the flesh, for it will soon make you drowsy in this exercise. 'Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.' Never let your prayer lack thanksgiving. When you began to pray you were thankful that God had spared you, that He had given you desire to pray; be thankful now that He has kept you waiting, for this is a great mercy. Thank Him for the exercise which waiting has afforded you; thank Him for being still able to pray, for having still a heart that desires, and a mind that longs for His blessing."

- **Charles Spurgeon**

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Col 4:1 ***Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.***

- **Paul wraps up the topic of personal relationships he began in chapter 3**
- **This verse focuses on masters (employers)**
- **This would have been a foreign thought to the Hellenistic world as slaves were considered *things,* not people**
  - ***Masters* had free reign to treat slaves however they wished**
- **Paul directly addressed this issue in the book of Philemon**
  - **Philemon was a wealthy slave owner in Colossae and hosted a house church**
  - **He owned a slave named Onesimus who ran away and became a fugitive**
  - **Onesimus somehow met Paul while Paul was in prison**
  - **Paul urged Philemon to receive Onesimus back and to treat him '*no longer as a slave … but as a dear brother*'**
  - **Paul expressed confidence that Philemon would do '*even more than I ask*', which was a not so subtle nudge toward granting Onesimus freedom so that he could return and help Paul in spreading the gospel**

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Col 4:2-4 ***Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; 3 meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, 4 that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.***

- **The tongue is a mighty instrument … words matter**
- **In the book of James, the tongue is described as:**
  - **a *bridle* (Jam 3:2)**
  - **a *rudder* (Jam 3:4)**
  - **a *fire* (Jam 3:5-6)**
  - **a *poisonous animal* (Jam 3:8)**
  - **a *fountain* (Jam 3:11)**
  - **a *fruitful tree* (Jam 3:12)**
- **It has the power to**
  - ***direct***
  - ***bless***
  - ***destroy* or *curse***
  - ***delight***

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- Prayer and worship are the highest uses of the gift of speech
- Paul did not hesitate to ask his friends to pray for him
- Even though he was an apostle, he needed prayer support for himself and his ministry
- If he believed he – as an apostle – needed prayer support … how much more do we need the prayers of our brothers and sisters in Christ?

Four characteristics of a healthy prayer life

1. Our prayer life needs to be *faithful*
2. Our prayer life needs to be *watchful*
3. Our prayer life needs to be *thankful*
4. Our prayer life needs to be *purposeful*

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

1. Our prayer life needs to be faithful

- ***"Continue in prayer"*** - **Means to be steadfast and devoted in your prayer life**
- ***1 The 5:17 "… pray without ceasing …"***
- **This does not mean we walk around muttering prayers under our breath 24/7**
- **Rather we should be in such constant fellowship with God that prayer is as normal to us as breathing**
- **This does not mean God is reluctant to answer our prayers**
- **He enjoys answering our prayers … but frequently delays the answer to increase our faith and devotion**
- **All prayers receive an answer that is *according to God's Will***
  - ***Joh 14:13-14 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you [a]ask anything in My name, I will do it.***
  - **We – in our human understanding – can't fathom the mind of God**
  - ***Isa 55:8-9 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.***

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2. **Our prayer life needs to be watchful**
   - ***Luk 21:36 Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.***
   - ***Mar 13:33 Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.***
   - ***Eph 6:18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints***
3. **Our prayer life needs to be thankful**
   - ***Phil 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.***
4. **Our prayer life needs to be purposeful**
   - **The purpose of prayer isn't to get man's will accomplished in heaven**
   - **Rather, it is to get God's Will done here on earth!**
   - **Prayer is our window into the mind of God, that we may know His Will**
   - **Then, we are to boldly pray that His Will be accomplished**

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

Col 4:5-6 ***Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.***

- **We are never to say or do anything that would make it difficult to share the gospel**
- **"Redeeming the time" means to *buy up* any opportunity to share the gospel with unbelievers**
  - **It is term of commerce and pictures the believer as a faithful steward who knows an opportunity when he/she sees one … just a merchant seizes a bargain when he finds one**
- **Our speech should be full of grace and seasoned with salt**
  - ***Luk 4:22 So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"***
  - **Salt is a preservative, a catalyst, and an enhancing flavor**
  - ***Mat 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.***

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

Col 4:7-9 ***Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. 8 I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts, 9 with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will make known to you all things which are happening here.***

- **What we know about Tychicus**
  - **Native of the province of Asia, probably Ephesus**
  - **One of Paul's most trusted inner-circle associates for at least ten years**
  - **Repeatedly chosen as the official carrier of extremely important letters (Ephesians, Colossians, and probably Philemon)**
  - **Traveled with the Jerusalem collection money — a role that required absolute trustworthiness**
  - **Personal emissary and mouthpiece of Paul to major churches**
  - **Capable of stepping in for Timothy in Ephesus and for Titus in Crete — i.e., Paul considered him competent to lead two of the largest and most strategic churches in the Gentile mission**

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

Col 4:10-11 ***Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him), 11 and Jesus who is called Justus. These are my only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision; they have proved to be a comfort to me.***

- **What we know about Aristarchus**
  - **Native of Thessalonica in Macedonia**
  - **Already a committed companion by the time of the Ephesus riot (AD 57)**
  - **Present at some of Paul's most dangerous moments: the Ephesus mob, the Jerusalem collection journey, the shipwreck voyage, and Roman imprisonment**
  - **One of only two people (with Epaphras) called Paul's "fellow prisoner"**
  - **One of only two companions (with Luke) who stayed with Paul all the way from Caesarea to Rome**
  - **Served for at least 5–6 continuous years at Paul's side, probably longer**
  - **Never criticized, never highlighted for any failure — simply rock-solid faithfulness**
  -

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

Col 4:12-15 ***Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. 13 For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis. 14 Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you. 15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that is in his house.***

- **What we know about Epaphras**
  - **Founder of the Colossian church**
  - **A passionate prayer warrior**
  - **One of only two men (with Aristarchus) whom Paul calls "my fellow prisoner"**
  - **Paul praises him more warmly and in stronger terms than he does most other famous co-workers**
  - **Tradition has it that he became bishop of Colossae**
  - **Loved the churches enough to "agonize in prayer" for them daily … and paid for it with his own freedom by standing with Paul in Rome**

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

- **What we know about Demas**
  - ***2 Tim 4:10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica — Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.***
  - **Demas was originally from somewhere in the Roman Empire (possibly Thessalonica itself, since he went there)**
  - **He was a genuine Christian co-worker of Paul for several years and traveled with him or assisted in ministry**
  - **At the end, when Paul's situation became extremely dangerous (second imprisonment under Nero, after the Great Fire of Rome in AD 64 and the subsequent persecution of Christians), Demas bailed out**
  - **The phrase "in love with this present world" suggests he prioritized safety, comfort, or worldly opportunities over loyalty to Paul and the gospel in a time of severe trial**

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

Col 4:16-17 ***Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea. 17 And say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."***

- **What we know about Archippus**
  - **Archippus was a member of the wealthy and influential house-church-hosting family in Colossae (almost certainly the son of Philemon and Apphia)**
  - **He had been given some specific, recognized "ministry/service" by the Lord (or by Paul/Epaphras) — perhaps leadership of the Colossian church after Epaphras left for Rome, or a teaching/preaching role, or a special mission**
  - **By the time Paul writes, there is concern that he was not carrying it out fully — hence the public exhortation in Colossians 4:17**

Christ is Supreme: Exhortation to Prayer

Col 4:18 This salutation by my own hand — Paul. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. Amen.

- Paul reminded them to continue in prayer for him and his chains
- We should also remember our brothers and sisters in the Lord who are now in chains and undergoing persecution
- *Heb 13:3 Remember the prisoners as if chained with them — those who are mistreated — since you yourselves are in the body also.*

Christ is Supreme: Review of Colossians

Study of Colossians Review

1. What was the Colossian Heresy?
   - Gnosticism with a blend of legalistic Judaism
2. Can you name the emphasis of Christ's Ministry in the following books?
   - Ephesians: Prophet
   - Hebrews: Priest
   - Colossians: King
3. What passage in Colossians is considered to be the "theme" of the book?
   - *Col 1:15-20 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.*

Christ is Supreme: Review of Colossians

Study of Colossians Review (cont.)

4. Can you complete each phrase below that defines the *Paradigm of Salvation?*
   - Justification (Past): Separation from the **Penalty** of Sin
   - Sanctification (Present): Separation from the **Power** of Sin
   - Glorification (Future): Separation from the **Presence** of Sin

5. What three harsh taskmasters' authority over us did Jesus death, burial and resurrection terminate?

Our Sin Nature: *Rom 6:6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*

The Law: *Rom 7:6 But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.*

Satan & Demons: *Heb 2:14-15 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*