

## The Book of Colossians

# 6

## Morning Devotions

In your devotions this morning, read **Psalm 118**. Note the similarities between this psalm and yesterday's psalm, **Psalm 56**. As you read, talk to the Lord about the content of this psalm. When you have finished, go back and find one or two verses and meditate prayerfully on them.

## Morning Study

This morning we begin reading the book of Colossians. In order to fully appreciate this letter, let's first acquaint ourselves with the background of Paul's mission to the city of Colossae (also spelt Colosse).

Although once a leading city in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey), first century Colossae had been reduced to a second-rate market town, surpassed in importance by the neighboring cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis (note **Colossians 4:13,16**). What made Colossae important to Paul's mission was that during Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus, one of Paul's converts, Epaphras, had carried the Gospel to Colossae (note **Colossians 1:7-8**).

### Read Acts 19:8-10

Paul wrote to the Colossians during his first imprisonment in Rome, where he spent at least two years awaiting trial before Caesar (read **Acts 28:16-31**), and he wrote it at about the same time as his letters to the Ephesians and Philippians, and his letter to Philemon. It is important to remember that Paul was not at this time in a deep dungeon (as when he wrote **2 Timothy**), but was under house arrest in his own rented home, free to preach the Gospel to all who visited him.

Paul's purpose in writing to the Colossians was to refute a heresy called Gnosticism which had begun to infiltrate the Colossian church. Paul seeks to prove to the Colossians the superiority of Christ compared to the emptiness and powerlessness of human philosophy. Note particularly the word "fullness" as it repeats throughout the letter.

Well, let's find a comfortable seat and read the book of Colossians right through in one sitting. As you read, ask yourself: What is Paul seeking to say to his readers? What is the most important thing on his heart?

# MEMORY VERSE

Set your minds on things above,  
not on earthly things. For you died,  
and your life is now hidden  
with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:2-3

Here are a few suggestions that may help you to memorize your memory verse:

- ➡ Ask the Lord to help you remember his Word (see [John 14:26](#)).
- ➡ Use the version of the Bible you are most familiar with. What you normally read in your Bible is what you need to be memorizing.
- ➡ Don't just memorize the contents of the verse; memorize its "address" (the verse reference) as well. You can do this by following this pattern: Step 1: **reference**; Step 2: **verse content**; Step 3: **reference**. Then repeat steps 1-3. Note that you are quoting the reference twice as many times as you quote the actual verse content. This gives the verse a clear "reference tag."
- ➡ After you have read your memory verse out aloud several times, try going through your memory verse *without* reading your computer screen.
- ➡ Look up your memory verse in your Bible. Look at its immediate context and read the verses that come before and after your memory verse.
- ➡ Print out your memory verse or jot it down on a piece of paper. Take this paper with you when you go to work or do other daily activities. Meditate on the meaning of the verse throughout the day.
- ➡ During your noon appointment with the Lord, take out your memory verse and go over it again. Talk to the Lord about what this verse means to you personally.
- ➡ In the evening (at either your evening study or your evening devotions), see if you can quote your memory verse from memory. Then, without looking at the memory verse itself, see if you can find it in your Bible.
- ➡ The next day, before you begin committing a new verse to memory, rehearse your previous day's memory verse and see if you can remember it (without cheating!).
- ➡ Finally, at the end of the week (possibly on the Sunday), collect all your week's memory verses, rehearse them and see if you can recall them without reading them. Spend a little extra time on any verses you have difficulty recalling.
- ➡ Remember: Don't just memorize a verse. Put it into practice ([James 1:22](#)). It is not being able to quote a verse from memory that counts. It is His Word *abiding* in your heart that counts ([John 15:7](#)). When you actually apply a verse consistently to your daily life, that is when you *truly* know that verse!