** Lesson I: Introduction**

Jesus: Preeminent & Sufficient

*Colossians 1:1-2*

**The Opening of Colossians (vs. 1-2)** ~ Who/where was the author of this letter?

* Author: Paul, who was called by God to be the apostle to the Gentiles.
* His situation: Paul was imprisoned in Rome.
* His company: Timothy, a dear brother in Christ and one of Paul’s most valued disciples.
* His audience: The saints and faithful believers of Jesus in Colossae.
* His greeting: Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**The City of Colossae** ~ What was this city like?

* Location:
  + Colossae was a rural town in west Asia Minor, about 120 miles east of Ephesus in the Lycus River Valley. It was near the base of Mount Cadmus.
  + It was also near two other key towns: Laodicea and Hierapolis.
* Size/Strength of Colossae:
  + Colossae was at one point a powerful and dominant city in the world, but it was now a run-down, “has-been” city.
  + Colossae became an agricultural “cow-town.”
* Population: A mix of Greeks, Romans, diaspora Jews, and more. Because of the city’s grand history, it was a melting pot.
* The city was ravaged by a couple catastrophic earthquakes.
* Religious Climate:
  + Colossae worshipped Greek and Roman gods.
  + People mixed different religions together (syncretism).
  + Colossians were scared of spirits and other powers.
  + There was extreme religious behavior, like self-induced abuse of the body.

**The Church in Colossae** ~ Where’d this church come from?

* This church was founded by Epaphras, who was likely saved during Paul’s time in Ephesus (Acts 19:9-10).
* They met in the home of Philemon (Phile. 2).

**The Conflict in the Colossae** ~ What was going on?

* What was the bad teaching in Colossae?
  + Jewish part- Do everything right in a legalistic way.
  + Pagan part- Find secret truths in a mythical/magical way.
  + Christian part- Put these first two into your Christian ways.
* Where did this go wrong?
  + Self-inflicted abuse
  + Lived by unnecessary spiritual rules
  + Worship of angels and spirits
  + Focus on crazy visions
  + Minimizing the power and importance of Jesus

**The Case of Colossians** ~ How does Paul fight this bad teaching?

* The heresy attacked two parts of Jesus’ character: His preeminence and sufficiency (vs. 1:18; 2:6-7; 2:10; 3:11).
  + They didn’t believe that Jesus was all-powerful.
  + They didn’t believe that Jesus was enough.
* Very simply, Paul challenges the Colossians to believe that Jesus is **above all** and **always enough**.

*Christian, believe this:*

*Jesus is above all; Jesus is always enough.*

**Prayer**

**Scripture**: And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn of the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Colossians 1:18

**Single Focus/Cross Impact Requests:**

* Cross Impact
  + Preparations for Next Fall
  + Approvals for starting events
  + Meeting students over the next few weeks
* Single Focus
  + Upcoming events (Mini Golfing, State Fair, SNF’s, IUPUI events)
* Purdue Cross Impact Effort & UIndy

**Specific Requests**:

* Dornbirers’ dad with radiation and fatigue problems.
* Ryon’s dad with medical difficulties
* John Barfield in Lebanon
* Jack and Kendall Elms in military training/service
* Henry’s unsaved friend Jeff
* Tyler May’s Family

**Announcements:**

* August 5- 7:00pm- Mini Golfing at Birdies Mini Golf in Westfield- Sign up at singlefocusindy.org
* August 7- ~~Fellowship at the Elms~~- *Postponed TBD*
* August 11- State Fair Activity- Meet at church at 6:30pm- bring $3 for entry
* August 20- Move-In Day @ IUPUI (pending IUPUI approval)- Followed by hangout at the Coca-Cola place in Bottleworks District- Sign-up going around tonight
* August 21- Sunday Night Fellowship at the Knoedlers
* August 24- Cornhole/Spikeball Tournament @ IUPUI (pending IUPUI approval)



