



Week of January 7, 2019: Introduction to Colossians

Discussion Questions Set #1

In sermon, we understood that the letter to the Colossian church was written to a “young” church – probably no older than 5 years – in a cosmopolitan and pagan city. The city of Colossae was filled with people of all kinds of different cultural and religious backgrounds because the city existed as a meeting place between the Roman world to west and India and China to the east.

1. Imagine that you are Epaphras, the founder of the Colossian church. What difficulties do you think you’d immediately face if you tried to plant a church in such a city?
2. Imagine that you are planting a new church in Mount Albert in 2019. What difficulties in common with Epaphras might you have? What are other difficulties that you might face in planting a church in Mount Albert in 2019? What in our present cultural or religious background of Canada in 2019 might pose a problem for the healthy growth and development of a church?

Discussion Questions Set #2

“I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.” (Colossians 2:1-4)

In Paul’s rationale for writing to the Colossian church, we understood that teaching had been occurring in the church that had removed Jesus from his central and primary place of importance in the life of the follower of Jesus.

1. Why do you think it is critical to permit Jesus the primary place of importance within our individual lives? Why do you think it might be important to ensure that Christ occupies primary importance in the life of a church?
2. The outcomes of the Colossian church’s issues are threefold – discouragement, disunity, and a lack of knowledge of Jesus. Why do you think these outcomes are related to failing to permit Jesus a central position of priority in one’s life?
3. If, as Philippians 2:9 tells us “**God exalted [Jesus] to the highest place**”, why do you think we sometimes struggle to do likewise.

Discussion Questions Set #3

“Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him...” (Hebrews 5:8-9)

“And by [God’s] will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Hebrews 10:10)

“X plus Jesus” Formulas to Following Jesus

In sermon, we learned that one of the key problems facing the Colossian church was that they had augmented their understanding of what it meant to be saved. In all cases, they suggested that faith in Jesus wasn’t sufficient for salvation, but that other realities – the gaining of secret knowledge, adherence to ceremonial tenets, or the pursuit of angelical mediators - assured or made real one’s salvation.

1. Why is it such a problem to follow an “x plus Jesus” formula to faith?
2. What “x plus Jesus” formulas might we see in our world today?
3. How might we guard against the development of “x plus Jesus” formulas in our lives or in our church?