



Camping out
IN COLOSSIANS

SUMMER SERIES



Welcome to this SUMMER SERIES

WE HOPE TO START THE YEAR WELL:	Sitting In Scripture
Resting In God's Refreshing Presence	Enjoying Creation With Our Creator
Deepening Relationship With Jesus	Releasing The Past & Embracing New Life
Fresh Devotion To Prayer	Discovering God's Power At Work In Us

Each section focuses on a different part of the book of Colossians, and includes space for reflection/writing; creative activity; and discussion questions. During this time, we encourage you to read Colossians (*just 4 chapters*), and make time to try some new spiritual practices.

"Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts." **Col 3:16**

Filled & refreshed IN GOD'S PRESENCE

COLOSSIANS 1 DO YOU NEED TO BE FILLED WITH GOD'S STRENGTH?

In **Colossians 1** Paul prays for God's people to be "filled."
As you read this prayer, consider which phrase stands out to you most.

⁹*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with...*

- the knowledge of his will through
- all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,
- ¹⁰so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and
- please him in every way:
- bearing fruit in every good work,
- growing in the knowledge of God,
- ¹¹being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so
- that you may have great endurance and patience,
- ¹²and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has
- qualified you
- to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.
- ¹³For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and
- brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,
- ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Although this prayer was written to the first century church, these words from Scripture are a prayer for God's people, in all places, at all times. It is a prayer for you.

Reflective question

What part of this prayer stands out to you today?

Re-read the prayer, asking God to fill you in that specific area.

Pause in silence, "soak" in God's presence, and receive.

Pray Share this with another person, and pray for each other.

Action: SOAK AND RECEIVE

Go for a swim	Rest in nature	Have a slow cool drink	Walk to a water fall or fountain
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As you do one of these, picture yourself being filled and refreshed in God's presence.

⁵*"faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven"*

JESUS CHRIST IS THE LIFE-GIVING SOURCE OF OUR REFRESHMENT.

Enjoying Creation WITH OUR CREATOR

COLOSSIANS 1 WHO IS CHRIST?

⁵Christ is the visible image of the invisible God.

He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation,

¹⁶for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth.

*He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—
such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world.*

Everything was created through him and for him.

¹⁷He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.

¹⁸Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body.

He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything.

¹⁹For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ,

²⁰and through him God reconciled everything to himself.

*He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means
of Christ's blood on the cross.*

Reflective question

As you think about God, who created all things, and holds all creation together.

Picture yourself placing all of your life and worries into God's hands.

How does it feel to know that God is in control?

Re-read these verses, as a declaration of worship.

Pray Go on a prayer walk. Give thanks to God for each part of creation you see.

Action: ENJOYING OUR CREATOR

<i>Walk in the bush, the beach, or the garden</i>	<i>Remember the God who created all of this</i>
<i>Sit and enjoy the view</i>	<i>As you sit in God's creation, recognise that God is holding you</i>

CREATION SCAVENGER HUNT

God's Creation SCAVENGER HUNT

LOOK FOR THINGS IN NATURE THAT DISPLAY SOMETHING OF THE POWER, WONDER, DETAIL OR CREATIVITY OF OUR GOD.

6 leaves of different shapes

100 grains of sand (minimum)

3 different coloured flowers

1 interesting piece of litter

1 piece of bark

1 rock (larger than a golf ball)

1 feather

1 container of salt water (the more the better)

1 live shellfish

1 berry (don't eat it!)

1 piece of driftwood

1 live insect

something that is naturally RED coloured

something that used to be in the sea

something AMAZING!

something very old (apart from Dad!)

something that shows how clever God is

Bearing FRUIT

COLOSSIANS 2 ARE THE ROOTS OF OUR LIVES DEEPLY ESTABLISHED IN CHRIST?
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ALIVE WITH CHRIST?
DO OUR LIVES SHOW EVIDENCE OF GOD'S PURPOSE?

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

¹³ You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away.
Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. ¹⁴ He cancelled the record
of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.

The first step to being made alive in Jesus Christ, is to receive Him as the Lord of our life.
Our sinful nature needs to surrender to God's ways and accept forgiveness for our wrong-
doing. We are unable to make our own lives perfect. We need God to make alive with Christ.
We can only bear fruit when the 'roots of our lives' are deeply established in Jesus Christ.

Pray In your own words, dedicate your life to Jesus.
Ask God for forgiveness for wrong doing.
Receive God's loving grace and new life.

Share this with someone else and ask them to pray with you.

Action: FINDING FRUIT

Find fruit, vegetables, flowers or seeds	God's creation scavenger hunt
Think about Colossians 1:10 and what it means to bear fruit in every good work	

"so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God." Col 1:10

Old + NEW

COLOSSIANS 3 GOD CALLS US TO EXCHANGE THE OLD SELFISH LIFE WITH NEW LIFE IN JESUS. IT'S A BIT LIKE GETTING RID OF SMELLY OLD WORN OUT SHOES, AND PUTTING ON FRESH FOOTWEAR TO WALK IN GOD'S WAYS.

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Jesus calls us to get rid of the old ways of anger, rage, bad language, lying, sexual immorality and greed (Col 3:5-8). Another way the Bible illustrates this is to "die to self." It's strong language. It points us back to the cross, where Jesus gave His life. The only way this exchange of the old and new can happen is through Jesus. We find new life in Christ when we let go of the old ways. "...having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead" **Col 2:12**

Pray Ask God to show you the things he is asking you to let go of. Write these down.
Ask God to show you how to do this.
As you think about the list you wrote, picture yourself taking off the old shoes, and putting on new shoes to walk in God's ways.

Action: **GETTING RID OF THE OLD**

As a symbolic way of letting go, you could consider:

burn or shred the list as a symbol of repenting and letting go

throw stones in the ocean to remember how far God has removed our sin from us

ask a trusted person for help with the areas that are a struggle

Action: **MAKE SOMETHING NEW**

Create something new to wear, to symbolise new life in Jesus.

A cross or necklace to wear

A friendship bracelet

Reflect

Take time to think deeply about Col 3:12.

How does it feel to see yourself as chosen? holy? and dearly loved?

A Prayerful PATHWAY

COLOSSIANS 4

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.” Col 4:2

Our new life in Jesus needs new tools to help us walk with God. Devotion to prayer is not meant to be a burden, it is supposed to be a life-giving gift of freedom and fresh relationship with Jesus!

Here are two simple ways you can help develop your prayer life...

Action: **A PRAYER WALK**

Go for a walk by yourself, but imagine you are walking with Jesus beside you.

As you enjoy creation, say a prayer of thanks (in your head or out loud).

As you reflect on previous day, whisper a prayer of celebration for the good parts, and a 'sorry' prayer of confession for the parts that you need God's help.

As you anticipate the day ahead, ask God for help, wisdom, peace.

As you think about people, pray for them.

Listen to worship music or the sound of the birds and waves, and worship

Jesus who is walking beside you.

As you walk, ask and listen “Lord, what are you telling me today?”

Reflection: **START A PRAYER JOURNAL**

Here are some questions for all ages that can help start a conversation with Jesus.

Dear Lord,

I love you because...

I am sorry for...

Thank you for...

Please help me...

Today I am praying for...(name of a person)

Favourite Bible verse from my daily reading...

What are you telling me today?...

God's POWER IN ME

COLOSSIANS 1 IMAGINE MOWING THE LAWN WITH SCISSORS. IT WOULD BE HARD WORK AND TAKE AN EXTREMELY LONG TIME. NOW IMAGINE MOWING THE LAWN ON A RIDE-ON MOWER. IT'S STILL WORK, BUT SITTING ON A POWERFUL MACHINE.

“Jesus is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the enemy Christ so powerfully works in me.” Col 1:28-29

The verse above describes the important task of following Jesus and sharing our faith. Paul says we strenuously labour, but we rely on Christ's power and energy, not our own strength. A bit like mowing the lawn with a ride on mower.

Walking with God is not about trying hard to be perfect. It's not about earning salvation in our strength. It's not about self-improvement. It's not about guilt, shame or condemnation. Jesus has done it all! We now walk with Jesus in the free gift He has given. We work with the power God has given through the Holy Spirit.

Action:

Mow the lawn and think about how hard the task would be without a lawn mower. As you mow the lawn, invite the Holy Spirit to bring power, energy and strength to your journey with God.

Declare:

Make a sandcastle or artwork that communicates the gospel or something from this journey through the book of Colossians.

Reflect:

Write a statement of faith and commitment to God for the year ahead.

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” Col 3:15

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