

# COLOSSIANS

## A B O V E A L L



### **COLOSSIANS: ABOVE ALL**

Paul writes to the church at Colossae to show that Jesus Christ is greater than Caesar and what they already have in Christ Jesus is sufficient and supreme. Jesus truly is above all other rulers. His kingdom reign is above all governments. His work is above all other accomplishments. And all who are in Christ can live a life above all that the world offers. And that greater life can be experienced and expressed in everything we do, everywhere, every day.

### **PART 7: HOW WE CHANGE**

Read the text: Colossians 3:1-17 (vs. 1-11 include below)

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised

and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Paul lays out a clear picture of where we start, what he calls the “old self.” It is marked by misplaced, consuming desire and by living in falsehood with each other. This “self” is never satisfied and constantly creates a false, or pretend, self to protect it from shame, guilt, or fear. On the other hand, Paul also paints a picture of the “new self”, which is marked by love, peace, and contentment. This self is who we were created to be. To be this person is to become more like Jesus and to find your true self. The big question Paul goes on to answer is “how do we change from the old self to the new self?” It starts with God’s work. He is the one who changes their identity. Then, they must SEE & RECEIVE. He tells the Colossians they must “see” Jesus (seek, set your mind). As they behold Him, they will become like Him. They must also “see” their new identity and that Jesus is the one who ultimately satisfies. As they “see”, they must then “receive” the love of the Father and their new relational identity as sons and daughters. As they “see and receive”, they will be changed.

### **Discussion Questions:**

*These questions are written for DNA groups, but you can use them in any setting, including missional communities. Because they were written for the intimacy of DNA friendships, you may need to adjust for larger groups.*

1. The “old self” is marked by a misplaced, consuming desire that is never satisfied because it is constantly looking to be satisfied apart from Jesus. Is there an area of your life where you have been looking to something other than God to ultimately satisfy you? It may even be one of God’s good gifts (like sex).
2. The “old self” is also marked by living “falsely” with one another. When we live falsely, we create a “false self”...a pretend self that we present to people to gain their affirmation, acceptance, and approval. Are there specific ways you live “falsely” like this with others? What does that look like for you?

3. What is one area where you want God to change you to become more like Jesus? More loving, more peaceful (non-anxious), more content (thankful)?
4. Is there a difference between knowing intellectually that God loves you and knowing intimately? Do you think you have truly received the Father's love for you?
5. We talked about three means that help us See Jesus and Receive His love: practicing gratitude, His Word in us, and a Jesus-like community. Which of these three means do you need to take a step in? What will that step be? (Be specific and actionable.)