

# Walking With God and His People



Sample Lesson





# Walking With God and His People

## Know, Believe, and Live

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Within the elements of each lesson we will be using a head/heart/hands key to indicate an area of focus with the students. Look for the icon or combination of icons shown below as a quick identifier of the area of focus.



KNOW



BELIEVE



LIVE



KNOW & BELIEVE



KNOW & LIVE



BELIEVE & LIVE

# Introduction

## Our Opportunity

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Christian teachers have a unique opportunity to introduce students to who God is, what he does, what he is like (his personality), and to share with them his desire for relationship with us. God wants us to know him and enjoy him now and forever! As students study how God interacted with people in biblical times, they begin to understand the character and nature of God as revealed to us in creation, in the Scriptures, and in the person and work of Jesus Christ. They see that the Big Story of God says “I made you” and “I love you,” “I want a relationship with you,” and “I want you to be a part of my work in my kingdom which has already begun but has not yet fully come.”

We invite students to participate in this ongoing story by entering into a personal relationship with this God through faith and repentance and by learning to obey and serve him throughout their lives. We are encouraging students to journey with God: to learn of him and his ways, to be in constant conversation with him, to accept his offer of salvation, and to commit all aspects of their lives to him. How do we best approach the Story of our world and God its author? How can students understand the Story that began in the beginning and unfolds even to the present moment and on into eternity? How can we nurture belief in our students and embolden them to live this Story?

## Our Hope

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One answer to the “how” question is to provide a sound Bible curriculum as a guide to Christian teachers. What do we hope to accomplish with this Bible curriculum? Our hope is that students will respond with their hearts and minds to God and his world. We want to enable teachers to reach the heads, hearts, and hands of students so that their lives may be changed for today and for eternity to the glory of God.

We want students to be “thoroughly equipped for every good work” and deeply grounded in biblical understanding (2 Timothy 3:16–17). As followers of Jesus Christ, we believe it is only by the study of the Word of God, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, that we understand who we are and grasp our connection to the Story of God reaching out to his people over the centuries. We desire that our students live their lives out of God’s Story and learn to find their place in that Story. We want students to understand the God with whom they are in relationship, to make authentic connections between the stories of God’s people and their own lives, and to understand what

responding to God means. Furthermore, we believe that a deep understanding of the Bible is foundational for understanding all other discovery of God's truth revealed in creation. Our hope for our students is that by the power of the Holy Spirit working through the Word they will better understand what it means "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

## **Encouraging Student Faith Development**

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Understanding God through his world, his Word, and his Son should involve the process of developing students' faith in ways that engage the whole person. So what does connecting the head, heart, and hands of a student mean and how is this accomplished? How do we encourage faith in our youth through the study of God's Story and nurture their walk with God and his people in that Story? The faith we seek to encourage in students involves knowledge/wisdom (head), conviction/choosing (heart), and living/serving (hands). Knowledge is based on conviction in order to be effective. Conviction without knowledge is like shallow seed that grows quickly but then dies from lack of grounding. Action without conviction or knowledge is weak and misguided. Students need all three: deep understanding that goes beyond knowledge to wisdom, desire and conviction that lead to deep commitment, and service that reflects the biblical call to bring forward the kingdom of God. We must maintain a delicate balance between an academic focus (knowing) and an application to life focus (believing/living), all the while connecting intellect, imagination, and identity within students. It is our comfort to be able to rest in the fact that the Holy Spirit is at work in our students' hearts and minds; our calling is to be obedient servant-tellers of the Story (2 Timothy 2:2).

Each lesson within this curriculum includes lesson steps specifically identified with head, heart, hands, or some combination of these areas of focus with the students. We indicate this by the use of icons throughout the lessons keyed to the words *Know* (head), *Believe* (heart), and *Live* (hands) as descriptors for those icons. Not every lesson will involve all three areas of head, heart, and hands, but throughout the units students will have ample opportunity for their heads, hearts, and hands to be involved and engaged.

## **Understanding the Bible as a Connected Whole**

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The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is one book telling one Story. In the many individual books and passages written by different people, in different centuries, for various reasons, we hear in one voice the unique story of God's salvation for the human race. In a time when much of life and culture as we know it is fragmenting and many are opposing the truth that the Bible reveals, the following points remind us of the importance of understanding why and how the Bible is a connected whole.



1. The Bible is a metanarrative—a grand, overarching, all-encompassing story that gives meaning and order to past, present, and future life. It tells the story of God’s creation, the fall of creation into sin, and the redemption and restoration of all creation by Christ.
2. God reveals his desire for relationship with people repeatedly throughout the course of the biblical narrative.
3. The history of God’s saving work illustrated in the Old and New Testaments culminates in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.
4. God desires an ongoing relationship with each person and through the work of the Holy Spirit moves people and history to achieve his sovereign and gracious purposes.
5. Our obedient response to God’s love and claim over creation is to seek to help transform and restore God’s created order, which was broken by the sinful disobedience of humankind.
6. When we enter into God’s story we understand who we are, who is the source of all life, our purpose in life, and how we should respond to God’s grace and claim on our lives. We are challenged to shift our focus from ourselves to God and to join in his kingdom work of redeeming creation.
7. It is important to view the Bible as a connected group of divinely inspired writings with purpose and interrelated integrity as a sequence of books, as events within particular books, and as texts within a certain book.
8. We believe that Paul’s words to Timothy are instructive for our work with students: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

## The Task of the Teacher

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The teacher, of course, is a key influence in the delivery of this Bible curriculum. If we are to inspire students to know, believe, and live the truth of God, it is critical that teachers demonstrate knowing, believing, and living the truths of the Bible to their students and model a passion for God. In our *Teacher Guide for Bible* (1936) we find these succinct statements about what a teacher should know, do, and be (paraphrased):

1. The teacher must *have* before he or she can *give*. The teacher should know the Bible and related subjects.
2. The teacher must have a purpose, a carefully mapped out plan, and ask for divine guidance.
3. The teacher should be a living example of the kind of life we want every child to live. He or she must be a sincere lover of childhood and of the Master. Where there is no love, there can be no great teaching.

It is critical how you as a Bible teacher view this work—is it just an assignment or a life-changing opportunity? In the introduction to our *Revelation-Response* Bible curriculum (1974), these cautionary yet encouraging words were given:

If you consider Bible teaching only another one of your duties, the chances are that Bible learning will be only another duty for your students. If, on the other hand, you delight in it, you will create much enthusiasm in the classroom. Your faith, your enthusiasm about God, your love for each other, your experiences with God and his Word, and your participation in the Church will have a greater impact than any materials could have.

Be positive, thankful, imaginative, inventive, and open to the Spirit of God. Live and teach in such a way that even if each of your students lived only as effectively as you live, the Church and our society would benefit greatly.

Within their own classrooms, teachers need to create community where Christlike behavior becomes the norm. Students should be encouraged to live out being the body of Christ, which includes acceptance of all people as created in God's image, honoring each other's gifts, and the commitment to work through the brokenness that shows itself in daily life. Teachers need to seek shalom (peace and wholeness) within their classroom and in working together with colleagues. Authentically allowing the Spirit to mold us so that we model Christian community, inside and outside of the classroom, is a true witness to students of the power of Christ.

## Walking With God and His People Development Process

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The process used to develop this curriculum revision is a significant part of what makes this product unique. At CSI, we believe that classroom teachers are truly the experts in making the curriculum come alive with students and have the best understanding of student needs at a given grade level. We sought to have diverse representation among our writers and advisors, in terms of gender and geographic location, as well as of teaching situation.

1. **Writers.** Through an application process 20 writers were selected for grades P–8 curriculum revision work. CSI staff provided the revised curriculum scope and sequence expectations for the writers and guided the writing efforts.
2. **Grade level advisors.** Each writer was connected with one to three grade level advisors. These advisors are other classroom teachers who offered helpful feedback on their writing, suggested resources and teaching ideas, and led focus groups of teachers who reviewed sample lessons.
3. **Focus group participants.** Grade level advisors selected other teachers at their grade level to review sample lessons selected by CSI staff and writers for review and feedback. These participants met in groups or responded by e-mail. Their feedback was used for this current curriculum and ongoing development needs.

This curriculum demonstrates the biblical concept of community: the beauty of Christian teachers operating together as a body, each member contributing his or



her gifts for the good of all. Throughout this process we have attempted to honor the experience, training, and expertise of our teachers to bring about the best possible product for those we exist to serve: the students of our schools and their parents, who depend on our teachers to give sound biblical instruction to their children.

## Curriculum Implementation Suggestions

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1. This curriculum is very complete and offers multiple options within lessons. Each school using this curriculum has a unique set of instructional pacing circumstances in terms of time schedules, days in a school year, and academic focus. It is the responsibility and task of each teacher and each school to make professional judgments about the selection of lessons at each grade level and across a school program so that a guaranteed and viable curriculum is presented to students. To this end we recommend that you consider both the student outcomes and the scope and sequence overviews included here as you make these instructional decisions.
2. Bible memorization is a key instructional strategy for students to place God's Word in their heads and hearts. While we make memory work suggestions throughout these lessons, we also recommend that schools consider constructing a Bible memory work program that is both systematic across the grades and reasonable in terms of student expectations. Examples of such programs may be accessed from CSI via our Web site.
3. CSI will continue to add resources to enhance this curriculum year by year. These resources will be provided free through our Web site or for a fee through our online store. We also intend to continue identifying best instructional practices, strategies, and resources and to make them available to teachers using this curriculum.
4. We recommend that each student have access to the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible, which has been used throughout this curriculum. We also recommend that teachers own a copy of both the *Songs for Life* (1994) and *Sing With Me* (2006) songbooks so that they can easily find the words and music referenced in lessons. Likewise, the curriculum was written with reference to the *NIV Textbook Bible* (1984) for students and the *NIV Study Bible* (2002) for teachers, both featuring updated color maps (© 2005). NIV editions with older maps may be used, but some adjustments for differing map numbers may be necessary. These and other NIV Bibles and songbooks are available for purchase through CSI.
5. Teachers may also find the articles and notes in the *Archaeological Study Bible* (2005) helpful in regard to understanding and explaining the Bible's archaeological, historical, and cultural backgrounds to students. It is illustrated with hundreds of color photographs of millennia-old texts and artifacts, ancient weapons of war, ancient children's toys, and so on. Also helpful as a literary guide to the entire Bible is the *Literary Study Bible* (2007), which explores in detail the Bible's story lines, characters, historical settings, literary genres, motifs, theological themes, imagery, and important terms.

## Scope and Sequence Overview

1. Grades P & K are arranged chronologically by Bible characters and Bible themes.
2. Grade 1 concentrates on the Old Testament connections between testaments.
3. Grade 2 concentrates on the New Testament connections between testaments.
4. A flexible epistle unit is included at the beginning for grades 1–6 to assist students in responding to and applying God's Word.

	Genesis	Exodus, Deuteronomy	Joshua	Judges	Ruth	1 & 2 Samuel	Psalms	Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes	1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles	Prophecy	Ezekiel, Daniel, Esther	Ezra, Nehemiah
P												
K												
1												
2	R	R	R	R		R			R	R	R	R
3												
4	R	R	R									
5	R	R	R	R		R						
6												
7	R	R	R	R	R	R			R			
8												

R = Review of core curriculum



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In Grade 6 the Epistles are studied in depth and, as in Grades 1–5, Colossians is the “featured” epistle book at the beginning of the year.

# CSI Bible Curriculum Student Outcomes

\* Standards 1–6 focus on Bible literacy and Bible study

\* Standards 7–10 address worldview/doctrine: God, truth, creation, people

\* Standard 11 addresses application

	K–2	3–5	6–8
<b>1.</b>	<b>Students know key biblical passages, characters, and events.</b>		
1.1	Retell and respond to Bible stories	Retell and respond to Bible stories	Retell and respond to Bible stories
1.2	Sequence Bible stories, characters, and events	Sequence Bible stories, characters, events, and eras	Sequence Bible stories, characters, events, and eras
1.3	Recite identified Bible passages	Recite identified Bible passages	Recite identified Bible passages
1.4		Identify relationships between characters and/or events	Explain relationships between characters and/or events
<b>2.</b>	<b>Students know the historical and cultural context of the Bible.</b>		
2.1		Explain Old Testament events	Explain the history of God's people from creation through the Book of Acts
2.2	Tell how God was visibly with his people in Bible times as he is today		
2.3	Identify Israel as God's chosen people	Identify characters and events in history that impacted the history of God's people	Explain characters and events in history that impacted the history of God's people
<b>3.</b>	<b>Students understand various Christian and non-Christian religious views.</b>		
3.1	Differentiate between God's chosen people and pagan nations	Describe the influence of false religions on God's people	Identify fundamental biblical beliefs
3.2		Describe and compare ancient and contemporary religious practices	Describe and compare the beliefs of various Christian churches
<b>4.</b>	<b>Students understand how geography and culture impacted the biblical story.</b>		
4.1	Describe Jewish worship and how worship changed because of Jesus	Describe the Jewish and Middle Eastern cultural practices	Describe ways in which the Jewish religious culture impacted the relationship of the people of Israel to God
4.2	Identify key locations, including Israel	Identify key geographic features of the land of Israel and the Mediterranean world	Describe the impact of geography on Bible stories



	K–2	3–5	6–8
<b>5.</b>	<b>Students know how the Bible is organized, the types of literature the Bible includes, and how to read the Bible.</b>		
5.1	Identify that the Bible is divided into Old and New Testaments and into books	Identify the sections of the Bible, including the Pentateuch, books of prophecy, Gospels, Epistles, etc.	Identify where key events and passages in the Bible are located in terms of books and section
5.2	Recite the books of the Bible		
5.3	Identify poetry and narrative	Identify the characteristics of various genre and apply them to a passage	Use the characteristics of various genre to determine the meaning of a passage
5.4	Read Bible stories with appropriate oral expression	Use understanding of the passage's purpose to read expressively	Use understanding of the passage's purpose to read expressively
<b>6.</b>	<b>Students use a variety of reference materials.</b>		
6.1	Use maps	Use various reference materials appropriately, for example, maps, Bible dictionaries, concordances, online, etc.	Use various reference materials appropriately, for example, maps, Bible dictionaries, concordances, online, etc.
<b>7.</b>	<b>Students understand what the Bible teaches about God.</b>		
7.1	Describe God in terms of his attributes	Identify which of God's attributes a Bible story reveals	Use Bible stories and life experiences to describe attributes of God
7.2	Identify the persons and work of the Trinity	Recognize the persons and work of the Trinity in Bible stories	Give Bible evidence for the Trinity and the work of each person in the Trinity
<b>8.</b>	<b>Students understand what the Bible teaches about truth.</b>		
8.1	Identify the Bible as the infallible Word of God	Explain that the Bible is the infallible Word of God	Defend the Bible as the infallible Word of God
8.2	Identify what the Bible teaches about faith and behavior	Explain how the Bible guides us in matters of faith and behavior	Defend the Bible as the guide for faith and behavior
8.3	Understand biblical values, including shalom, justice, mercy	Explain biblical values, including shalom, justice, mercy	Understand biblical values, including shalom, justice, mercy
8.4		Recognize a variety of valid biblical beliefs with the Christian community	Describe a variety of valid biblical beliefs with the Christian community
8.5	Identify how Bible characters responded to culture	Identify Christian responses to culture (separation, identification, transformation, incarnation)	Explain Christian responses to culture (separation, identification, transformation, incarnation)
8.6	Identify what we learn from God's creation	Explain what we learn from God's creation	Defend general revelation as a way of knowing truth

	K-2	3-5	6-8
<b>9.</b>	<b>Students understand what the Bible teaches about God's creation.</b>		
9.1	Identify God as the Creator	Give examples of God's attributes revealed in creation	Describe what creation teaches us about God
9.2	Identify God's promises about creation	Describe God's covenant with creation	Explain God's covenant with creation
9.3	Retell the stories of creation, fall, and redemption	Explain creation, fall, redemption, and restoration	Explain how Christians should respond to creation, based on creation, fall, redemption, restoration
9.4	Explain how people were created to take care of creation	Explain the biblical concept of stewardship in terms of taking care of God's creation	Defend the biblical concept of stewardship in terms of taking care of God's creation
<b>10.</b>	<b>Students understand what the Bible teaches about people.</b>		
10.1	Retell how people are created in God's image	Describe how people are God's image bearers	Explain that as God's image bearers, people are inherently religious
10.2	Tell how people have sinful hearts	Identify the nature and consequences of sin resulting in separation from God and death	Explain how sin has alienated people from God, creation, others, and themselves
10.3	Tell how people, by God's grace, can have a relationship with him	Identify God's grace and the plan of salvation	Explain God's plan of salvation
10.4	Explain the idea of covenant related to Bible characters	Recognize covenants in Bible stories	Explain the implications of the covenant relationship
10.5	God's plan for man has a start and a finish	Understand time line of biblical events	Defend the idea that creation has a starting point and an ending point

	K-2	3-5	6-8
<b>11.</b>	<b>Students apply biblical teaching to all of life and learning.</b>		
11.1	Identify personal practices conducive to a growing relationship with Jesus	Explain personal practices conducive to a growing relationship with Jesus	Defend personal practices conducive to a growing relationship with Jesus
11.2	Identify the fruit of the Spirit	Explain the fruit of the Spirit	Analyze a case study as an opportunity for application of the fruit of the Spirit to the scenario
11.3	Identify God and the Bible as the key sources for making decisions	Recount a process of Christian decision making	Analyze a process for Christian decision making
11.4	Identify what the Bible teaches about behavior	Explain what the Bible teaches about behavior	Use Bible teaching to defend personal behavior choices
11.5	Respect and love themselves and others as being created in God's image and having certain gifts	Respect and love themselves and others as being created in God's image and having certain gifts	Respect and love themselves and others as being created in God's image and having certain gifts
11.6		Use biblical teaching to constructively examine community/cultural values and practices	Use biblical teaching to constructively examine community/cultural values and practices
11.7	Retell what the Bible teaches about an issue	Explain what the Bible teaches about a issue	Explain a biblical response to a perspective and/or social issue
11.8	Retell how service opportunities are designed to help others	Identify how service opportunities are designed to help others	Explain how service opportunities are designed to help others
11.9	Retell Bible teaching about leaders	Identify ways Christians can demonstrate servant leadership	Explain how Christians demonstrate servant leadership
11.10	Explain how conflicts can be resolved in Christian ways	Explain how conflicts can be resolved in Christian ways	Apply biblical principles of conflict resolution to case studies

# Grade Six Overview

Unit	Focus	Bible Memory	Time
<b>1. Colossians</b> Setting (1) Paul's Instructions (2–6) Unit Review (7)	Paul, in prison, wrote an encouraging letter to the church in Colosse to teach the Colossians what it means to be a Christian and follow Christ today. Paul gives practical advice on how to live a holy life. He also stresses the importance of prayer and encourages human responsibility to spread the gospel.	Colossians 3:12–17	7 days
<b>2. The Setting of God's Story</b> God Speaks (1) 5 Ws of the Bible (2–6) Lookout Point (7) God's Promises (8–9) God's Faithfulness (10) Unit Review (11)	The Bible reveals God, his plan for creation and redemption, and his plan for our lives. The stories in the Bible are all part of the story of God and his people. He showed his love for his creation by making and carrying out a plan to save his people from the consequences of their disobedience.	2 Timothy 3:16–17 Names and Categories of the Books of the Bible	2½ weeks
<b>3. Later Judean Ministry</b> Jesus Teaches (1–11) Unit Review (12)	Jesus taught his followers about the kingdom of heaven. Jesus used parables as stories to equate familiar scenes or objects with the kingdom of God.	1 Samuel 16:7b Luke 16:10–13 Luke 19:7–10 John 10:14–16	2½ weeks
<b>4. Triumphal Entry through Passover</b> The Triumphal Entry (1) Cleansing the Temple (2) Jesus Outwits the Pharisees (3) Teaching about the Last Days (4) Passover (5–9) Unit Review (10)	Jesus entered Jerusalem as a king on Palm Sunday, and the people praised him. The Jewish leaders steadfastly plotted against Jesus and tried to trap him. Jesus celebrated the Passover with his disciples and gave the Passover elements new meaning. The Holy Spirit is promised and Jesus explains he is going to heaven to be with his Father and to prepare a place for his followers.	1 Corinthians 11:23–26	2 weeks
<b>5. Jesus' Death</b> Jesus' Last Days (1–8) Unit Review (9)	This unit focuses on the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion and death, starting in Gethsemane. Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled with the crucifixion at Golgotha. Jesus suffered and died as the once-for-all atonement, the substitutionary sacrifice for our sins.	John 14:1–14	1½ weeks
<b>6. Jesus' Resurrection</b> The Empty Tomb (1–3) Appearances (4–8) Ascension (9) Unit Review (10)	Jesus rose from the dead and appeared after his resurrection on many occasions to men and women who were his followers. Jesus appeared to his disciples and commissioned all who believe to go and make new disciples from all nations. Jesus ascended to heaven, where he reigns with the Father and intercedes on our behalf.	1 Corinthians 15:20–22 Matthew 28:18–20	2 weeks



Unit	Focus	Bible Memory	Time
<b>7. Pentecost</b> Matthias Joins the Eleven (1) Pentecost (2) The Early Church (3–10) Unit Review (11)	This unit focuses on stories of how the apostles spread the gospel in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and into the world. The Holy Spirit provided the early church with power and direction and the early church grew and matured as a result of persecution.	Acts 2:1–4 Ephesians 6:13–17 Apostles' Creed	2½ weeks
<b>8. Paul's First Missionary Journey</b> Paul's Work (1–4) Unit Review (5)	God specifically chose Paul and empowered him to be the church's apostle to the Gentiles. The central message of Paul's preaching and letters is that we are saved only by God's grace offered in Jesus Christ.	Galatians 2:20–21	1 week
<b>9. Journey Two</b> Paul's Work (1–7) Unit Review (8)	Paul takes Silas and Timothy with him on his second journey. The Spirit continued to initiate Paul's mission to the Gentiles; leading them into Europe. Paul and his companions continued to preach the gospel despite persecution and Jews and Gentiles became believers in Christ. Paul preached in the synagogue first, where he was rejected, and then preached to the Gentiles.	Galatians 5:22–26 1 Corinthians 1:4–9 James 1:2–4	8 days
<b>10. Paul's Journeys Continue</b> Journey Three: Ephesus (1) Eutychus (2) Paul Says Good-bye (3) Paul's Arrest (4–7) Paul's Journey to Rome (8) Storm and Shipwreck (9) Arrival in Rome and Preaching (10) Unit Review (11)	This unit starts with Paul in Ephesus on his third journey. Paul is accused by the Jews in Jerusalem of desecrating the temple; and as a Roman citizen he asked to be brought to trial before Caesar in Rome. God protected Paul during his arrest and gave him bold words of the gospel as he gave his defense. God fulfilled his promise to be with Paul and to bring Paul to Rome to stand before Caesar.	Romans 1:16–17 Ephesians 3:14–21 Philippians 2:5–11	2½ weeks
<b>11. Letters to the Churches</b> The New Testament Letters (1) Paul's Letters to the Thessalonians (2–4) First and Second Corinthians (5–7) Hebrews: Marathon of Faith from Old to New (8) First Peter: Suffering and Hope (9) James and Jude: Faith That Works and Fights (10) First John: God's Love and Ours (11) Unit Review (12)	This unit covers how God instructed and encouraged many individuals and churches through letters written by Paul and others.	1 Corinthians 13:1–13 Hebrews 12:1–3 1 John 4:7–12	2½ weeks
<b>12. Revelation</b> Prophetic Writing (1) John's Situation (2) Seven Churches (3) Worthy Is the Lamb (4) Jesus' Second Coming (5) New Heaven and New Earth (6) Unit Review (7)	Revelation, the last book of the Bible is a blend of apocalyptic literature and prophecy. John tells about Jesus' attributes and his presence with us in our hard times. John holds before us the vision of life in the eternal city where God will dwell with us.	Revelation 11:15	7 days

# Freedom in Christ

UNIT  
1  
LESSON  
4

## Bible Reference

Colossians 2:6–23

## To the Teacher

The Internet, movies, television, and games bombard students with a myriad of mixed messages every day. Messages about values, worth, and fulfillment come from every direction. This lesson gives students practical tools to be able to discern what messages they are listening to and the influence those messages are having on them.

## Preparation/Materials

- \* 6–8 transparencies of magazine advertisements that promise to make young people feel happier or look better
- \* Activity sheet, one per student

## Lesson Highlights

- \* Paul warns Christians not to give in to the hollow influences of the world.
- \* Paul encourages believers to keep their focus on Christ.
- \* Students will be challenged to discern temporal messages that continuously bombard them through the entertainment industry.

## Background

Colossians is a book of connections. Writing from prison in Rome, Paul combated the false teachings that had infiltrated the Colossian

church. The problem was syncretism, the combining of ideas from other philosophies and religions (such as paganism, certain strains of Judaism, and Greek thought) with Christian truth. The resulting heresy only later became known as Gnosticism, which emphasized a secret, special knowledge of salvation, along with humanly devised regulations, such as circumcision and the mandatory observance of certain religious festivals, and denied Christ as God and Savior. To combat this devious error, Paul stressed Christ's deity—his connection with the Father—and his sacrificial death on the cross for sin. In Christ, Paul insists, are hidden all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Only by being connected with Christ through faith can anyone have eternal life, and only by a continuing connection with him can anyone experience powerful living. Jesus Christ is God incarnate, and he is the only way to forgiveness and peace with the Father. Paul also emphasized believers' connections with one another as members of Christ's body on Earth. Our love for Christ should also translate into love for others—friends, fellow believers, spouses, children, parents, and others. We are to continuously communicate with God through prayer and to take every opportunity to tell others the good news. In Christ we have everything we need for salvation and for living effective Christian lives.

## Lesson Steps



### Bridge

1. Show the transparencies of magazine ads that promise to make young people feel happier or look better.

2. Tell students, “We are bombarded with messages every day—messages meant to move, change, and challenge us. What we value, think, and ultimately do in life is influenced by the messages we’re exposed to.”
3. Emphasize that “who you listen to will mold and shape who you are.”
4. Ask students to provide examples of this truth. What would we be like if we believed the messages of all the ads we saw?
5. Read the background information on “Freedom in Christ” (page 2) in the student text.

### **FREEDOM IN CHRIST**

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul stresses knowledge. Paul was refuting the heresy of Gnosticism, which emphasized a secret, special knowledge of salvation beyond that which we have in Christ. In Christ, Paul insists, are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Paul was counteracting Gnostic heresy that taught, in part, that for salvation one needed to combine faith in Christ not only with such secret knowledge but also with humanly devised regulations, such as circumcision and the mandatory observance of certain religious festivals.

Colossians is a book of connections. Writing from prison in Rome, Paul combated the false teachings that had infiltrated the Colossian church. The problem was syncretism, the combining of ideas from other philosophies and religions (such as paganism, certain strains of Judaism, and Greek thought) with Christian truth. The resulting heresy only later became known as Gnosticism, which not only emphasized this special knowledge but denied Christ as God and Savior. To combat this devious error, Paul stressed Christ’s deity—his connection with the Father—and his sacrificial death on the cross for sin.

Only by being connected with Christ through faith can anyone have eternal life, and only by a continuing connection with him can we experience powerful Christian living. Jesus Christ is God incarnate, and he is the only way to forgiveness and peace with the Father. Paul also emphasized believers’ connections with each other as members of Christ’s body on Earth. Our love for Christ should translate into love for others—friends, fellow believers, spouses, children, parents, and others. We should continuously communicate with God through prayer and take every opportunity to tell others the good news of the gospel. In Christ, and Christ alone, we have everything we need for salvation and for living an effective Christian life.



### **Scripture Link**

1. Read Colossians 2:8. Warn students: “Don’t be led astray by empty and hollow messages. There are a lot of messages that promise something they can’t possibly deliver. Advertising says: ‘If you have this or look like this, then you’ll be happy, significant, and have value.’ TV and movies teach that happiness is found through wealth, power, and physical satisfaction. Remember, though, that what you see isn’t always what you get.”
2. Read Colossians 2:6–7. Remind students that God calls us to focus on Christ, not on cheap imitations of real life. Instead, we are to genuinely grow through our relationship with our model teacher, Jesus Christ.

3. Read Colossians 2:13–15 and challenge students: “When you have a relationship with Christ, you have freedom to serve him. God created each of you as a unique and gifted individual. Together we possess talents and abilities that allow us to serve him in a variety of ways. We all need to beware of judging others by our own limited perspectives or standards.”
4. Read Colossians 2:16–19. Urge students to ignore the false messages of the world’s advertisements and, instead, to seek Jesus with all their hearts.
5. Read Colossians 2:20–23. Invite students to “live as an original, a person who is molded by God. When we buy into ads from magazines, TV, and the Internet, we accept the world’s hollow and empty messages to become what others, not God, want us to be. As you walk with God and look to him, you will begin to change from the inside out, becoming more and more like him.”



## Student Activities

1. Equip students with the following, easy-to-remember “TEST.” On the board write:  
**T**—Is it true or trustworthy?  
**E**—Is it edifying to others?  
**S**—Is it seen in God’s Word?  
**T**—Is it a trap? Is it enslaving?
2. Distribute the activity sheet. Have students complete it individually.

**Freedom in Christ:  
To Whom Do You Listen?**

..... Name

1. List some of the messages that bombard us every day and the influence they have on our world.  
**Answers will vary.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do these messages pass the TEST? If not, what parts do they fail?  
**Answers will vary.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. List some of the messages that are powerful in your life.  
**Answers will vary.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do these messages pass the TEST? If not, in what ways do they fail?  
**Answers will vary.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

5. List some messages with which we should be filling our lives. If they are Scriptural and you can locate them in the Bible, possibly with the help of a concordance, jot down references.  
**Answers will vary.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

6. What steps can we take to fill our lives with God’s messages?  
**Answers will vary.** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**T** Is it true or trustworthy?

**E** Is it edifying to others?

**S** Is it seen in God’s Word?

**T** Is it a trap? Is it enslaving?

UNIT 1 LESSON 4

9



## Enrichment

- \* **Art.** Have students create ads that send the message of what we as Christians are to become in Christ.
- \* **Art.** Have students make a booklet featuring a variety of magazine ads and addressing how such ads can positively or negatively shape their lives.
- \* **Cultural discernment.** Download ads from the Internet and put together a PowerPoint presentation to identify the harmful messages they convey in terms of our relationship with Christ.
- \* **Language arts.** Have students write an essay on how the Internet (e.g., MySpace, instant messaging, etc.) can be used positively and/or negatively by young people. Instruct them to write four paragraphs, touching upon the four points of TEST. (See Student Activities.)

# Living as Christ's Chosen People

UNIT  
1  
LESSON  
5

## Bible Reference

Colossians 3:1—4:1

## To the Teacher

The Book of Colossians has much valuable advice for students as they journey through life. This lesson, however, provides the most practical information for holy living. The Christian community has much to learn and gain from Paul's advice to the citizens of Colosse.

## Preparation/Materials

- \* Make a copy of the teacher resource sheet (on page 31) and cut the Scripture references into paper strips. Make enough to distribute one strip to each student.
- \* Option 1: Inflated balloons on strings with paper slips containing Bible verses

from the teacher resource sheet inserted inside each of them, one per student

- \* Activity sheet, one per student

## Lesson Highlights

- \* Paul gives practical advice on how to live a holy life.
- \* Paul offers specific, targeted advice to both parents and children.
- \* Paul helps God's chosen people see their responsibility for living at peace within the community of the redeemed (the church).

## Background

Paul continues in his letter to clarify and flesh out the concept of holy living. With his positive tone, Paul helps the Christian community in Colosse realize that human responsibility and divine sovereignty go hand in hand.

Paul also emphasizes the peace of Christ—a peace that Jesus Christ alone can instill. Peace, not bitterness, he emphasizes, is to rule in all of our human relationships.

## Lesson Steps



### Bridge

#### OPTION 1

1. Allow each student to select a balloon.
2. Have students hold their balloon until you direct them to break it.
3. Students may choose how they will break their balloon (sit on it, step on it, prick it, etc.).
4. Direct each student by name, one at a time, to break his or her balloon.

#### OPTION 2

1. Hand each student one strip of paper with a Bible verse from the teacher resource sheet written on it.
2. At your signal, have each student, one at a time, leave his or her seat, face another student, and greet the classmate with the salutation "Grace and peace to you!" In

order to make certain no one is left out, you might want to ask students to do this systematically (next person in line, person at the beginning of the next row, etc.).

3. After the exchanged greetings, have each student read the sentence on his or her strip of paper to the classmate.
4. Have students repeat the process with other classmates. At this point you may want to allow all students to wander around the room and share with as many classmates as possible.



## Scripture Link

1. Have students stand in order, according to the Scripture passage on their paper strip.
2. Begin reading Colossians 3:1–4 to students to set a more serious tone. Then have students read their passages in order, as they are lined up. (Colossians 3:6–7 has been omitted.)
3. Discuss the verses with the class as they are read.



## Student Activities

1. Remind students that when Paul wrote this letter he was under house arrest in Rome. A guard was with him at all times (see Acts 28:16).
2. Ask students whether they remember the name of the minister from Colosse who visited Paul in Rome. (Epaphras)
3. Ask students to identify the location of Colosse. (Asia Minor near Ephesus and Laodicea)
4. Distribute the activity sheet.
5. Have students fill in the activity sheet individually.

**Paul's Advice**

Dear Paul,

I recently became a Christian. Do you have any advice about how I should live?

Puzzled

Dear Paul,

What exactly is expected of me now that I have been "raised with Christ?"

Concerned

Name \_\_\_\_\_


Use the references from Colossians 3 to complete Paul's responses to the letters below.

*Dear Puzzled,*

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." (Colossians 3:1–4)."

*Dear Concerned,*

"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all" (Colossians 3:5–11).




This is all pretty complicated, this "new-self" stuff. Do you have any practical advice on how I am to conduct myself on a day-to-day basis?

Insecure

*Dear Insecure,*

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:12–17).



Thanks for your advice. It's a lot to live up to, but I'll try. The most challenging place for me to live my Christian life is right in my own house with my family. I wish my parents wouldn't fight so much. What does God say about that?

Puzzled, Insecure,  
and Concerned

*Dear Puzzled, Insecure, and Concerned,*

"Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged." (Colossians 3:18–21).

6. Introduce the memory work and allow students time to familiarize themselves with it.

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:12–17).



## Enrichment

- \* **History.** Research the difficult circumstances and the persecution Christians faced under Caesar Nero and Caesar Domitian.
- \* **Math.** Have students calculate the distance between Rome and Colosse to see how far Epaphras traveled to seek Paul's advice. Read the sidebar "How Far Did Epaphras Travel to Seek Paul's Advice?" (page 3) from the student text for the answer.

### **HOW FAR DID EPAPHRAS TRAVEL TO SEEK PAUL'S ADVICE?**

Because of Epaphras's concerns over Gnosticism, he made a dangerous and exhausting 1,000-mile trip from Colosse to Rome to seek Paul's advice.

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