

## **“Who’s Watering Down Your Faith?”**

Jesus at the Center of It All—Part 1  
*Colossians 1:1-2*

### **The World We Live In**

- Toleration is the mantra of our day.
- Toleration means: one religion is just as good as another.
- Evangelical churches are in danger of diluting the faith in their attempt to make everyone feel accepted.
- When we dilute our doctrine to make everyone feel accepted we create our own religion and our own Jesus.
- If we are going to stay true to God, our faith must be in the Christ of the Bible. He must be our focal point and our motivation for faith and life.

### **The City of Colosse**

*Epaphras is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis.*  
*Colossians 4:13*

- Colosse was one of three cities located about 100 miles from Ephesus.
- Colosse set at the crossroads of an important trade route. It was a meeting point of East and West.
- Colosse had a large Gentile and Jewish population.
- Colosse had a constant influx of new ideas and doctrines coming in from the East.

### **The Church in Colosse**

*...all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.*  
*Acts 19:10*

- The Church at Colosse began as an outgrowth of Paul’s three years in Ephesus.
- When we examine Paul’s ministry in Ephesus, we discover two men who came to faith in Jesus Christ who were residents of Colosse, Epaphras and Philemon.
- Philemon hosted church, meeting in his home, and it is likely that Apphia and Archippus, mentioned in Paul’s letter to Philemon, were Philemon’s wife and son.
- It also seems that Archippus became the pastor in the Colossian church, according to Colossians 4:17.

### **The Crisis at Colosse**

*See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.*  
*Colossians 2:8*

## A Question of Identity

**Question:** Christian, do you know who you are?

*Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.*

*Colossians 1:1-2*

**1. You get your identity by what God says about you.**

**What God says:**

- You are God's child. John 1:12
- You are Christ's friend. John 15:15
- You are a saint. Ephesians 1:1
- You are a citizen of heaven. Philippians 3:20
- You are God's co-worker. 1 Corinthians 3:9

**2. You are part of a family because you belong to Christ.**

**Lifework:** How do you see yourself? Do you see yourself as a saint—holy, set apart for the purposes of God, dedicated to the family of God? What you believe about yourself will determine how you live your life.

Is Jesus prominent or is He supreme in your life?

### Memory Verses

*He is the visible image of the invisible God. He is supreme over all creation, because in connection with him were created all things—in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, lordships, rulers or authorities—they have all been created through him and for him. He existed before all things, and he holds everything together.*

*Colossians 1:15-17 (CJB)*

*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.*

*Colossians 2:6-10*

*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.*

*Colossians 3:12-14*