

# The MYSTERY

## Hidden for Ages

# Is Now REVEALED

*A Study of the Book of Colossians*

LESSON 4

This Week's Passage:  
**Colossians 1:12-14**  
 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>9</sup> 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, <sup>10</sup> 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, <sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, <sup>12</sup> **and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.** <sup>13</sup> For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

**Memory Verse: Colossians 1:12**

<sup>9</sup> 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, <sup>10</sup> 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, <sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, <sup>12</sup> **and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.**

### Day One: Read Colossians 1.

- Part of "liv[ing] a life worthy of the Lord" (v. 10) is "joyfully giving thanks to the Father" (vv. 11-12). For what are the Colossians to be thankful? (v. 12)
- The Colossian believers were once *not* qualified to share in God's inheritance but now *are* "qualified...to share in the inheritance of the saints" (v. 12). Fill in the chart below to explain this change.

	Why were they once not qualified to receive this inheritance?	How are they now qualified to receive this inheritance?
Titus 3:3-7		
Eph. 2:11-13		

## Day Two: Read Colossians 1.

3. Under the old covenant, God gave 11 of the 12 tribes of Israel portions of the Promised Land as their inheritance. However, the tribe of Levi did not receive a portion of land. What did God promise them that was even better than land – a promise that gives us a glimpse of our greater new covenant inheritance? (Deut. 10:8–9)

4. Under the new and better covenant God lavishes his riches upon us. What are some of the benefits of our inheritance?  
Mt. 19:29

Mt. 25:34

2 Cor. 5:1

Heb. 1:14

1 Pet. 1:3–5

Rev. 21:1–2, 4–6

What can we look forward to that is even better than these riches? (Rev. 21:3, 7)

5. “The fact that [our] share in the inheritance is a matter of *sovereign grace* and has nothing to do with human merit is clear...from the very word used, namely, *inheritance*: one *receives* an inheritance as a gift; one does not *earn* it.”<sup>1</sup>
- a. What assurance do we have regarding our inheritance? (Eph. 1:13–14)
- b. With whom do we share this inheritance? (Col. 1:12)

### Saint

The word “saints” in the Bible refers to all believers. “Saint” means “holy” or “set apart.” This setting apart is accomplished by the saving work of Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

6. What does living “in the kingdom of light” (v. 12) look like?  
v. 13

Jn. 8:12

Eph. 5:1–16

### **Day Three: Read Colossians 1.**

7. Look again at verse 13. Most interpreters think that in this verse “Paul alludes...to the rescue of God’s people from Egypt.”<sup>2</sup> In the passage below from Exodus 6:6–8, highlight all that God will do to deliver his people from the Egyptians. (Hint: Look for all the “I will...”)

<sup>6</sup>“Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment.’ <sup>7</sup> I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. <sup>8</sup> And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD.’”

What parallels can you see between the passage above and what God has done for us in Christ?

### **Day Four: Read Colossians 1.**

8. Paul never tires of rehearsing the gospel and reveling in what God has done. In verse 13, he switches to using the pronoun “us” to include himself in God’s wonderful work of salvation. Let’s take time to explore the personal benefits of our salvation.
- What has God done for us? (v. 13; Eph. 2:1–7)
  - What does the phrase “dominion of darkness” (v. 13) convey about our condition before he saved us?

- c. What has being rescued from “the dominion of darkness” looked like for you (in the past and in the present)?
  - d. How would you explain your “rescue” to someone who doesn’t know God?
9. Continuing to unpack the good news, Paul says “we have redemption [in Jesus], the forgiveness of sins” (v. 14). The Greek word for ‘redemption’ conjures up the idea of a slave being bought out of slavery.<sup>3</sup>
- a. Why do you think Paul uses this term to describe what Jesus has done for us? (📖\* Jn. 8:34–36; Rom. 6:6–7; Gal. 4:3–7)
  - b. How does “the forgiveness of sins” (v. 14) fit with your answer to the previous question?

## Day Five: Read Colossians 1—4.

10. Think about a person or situation or place where “the dominion of darkness” has taken hold. Pray that “the kingdom of light” will break through.

Think about a person or situation or place where “the kingdom of light” has taken hold. Thank God for his gracious work.



### **A Closer Look**

As you look back through Colossians 1:12–14 you’ll see that God has taken all the initiative to act on our behalf. This is true not only in these verses, but throughout the book of Colossians. Using your print-out of Colossians, mark any references that show God/Jesus acting on our behalf.

For example: “the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance”

\* 📖 Indicates verses for further study

<sup>1</sup> William Hendriksen, *Philippians, Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), 60.

<sup>2</sup> Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 103.

<sup>3</sup> Hendriksen, 65.