



our TUESDAY

A WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY FOR YOU, FOR HER, FOR *US*.

APRIL 2017

colossians

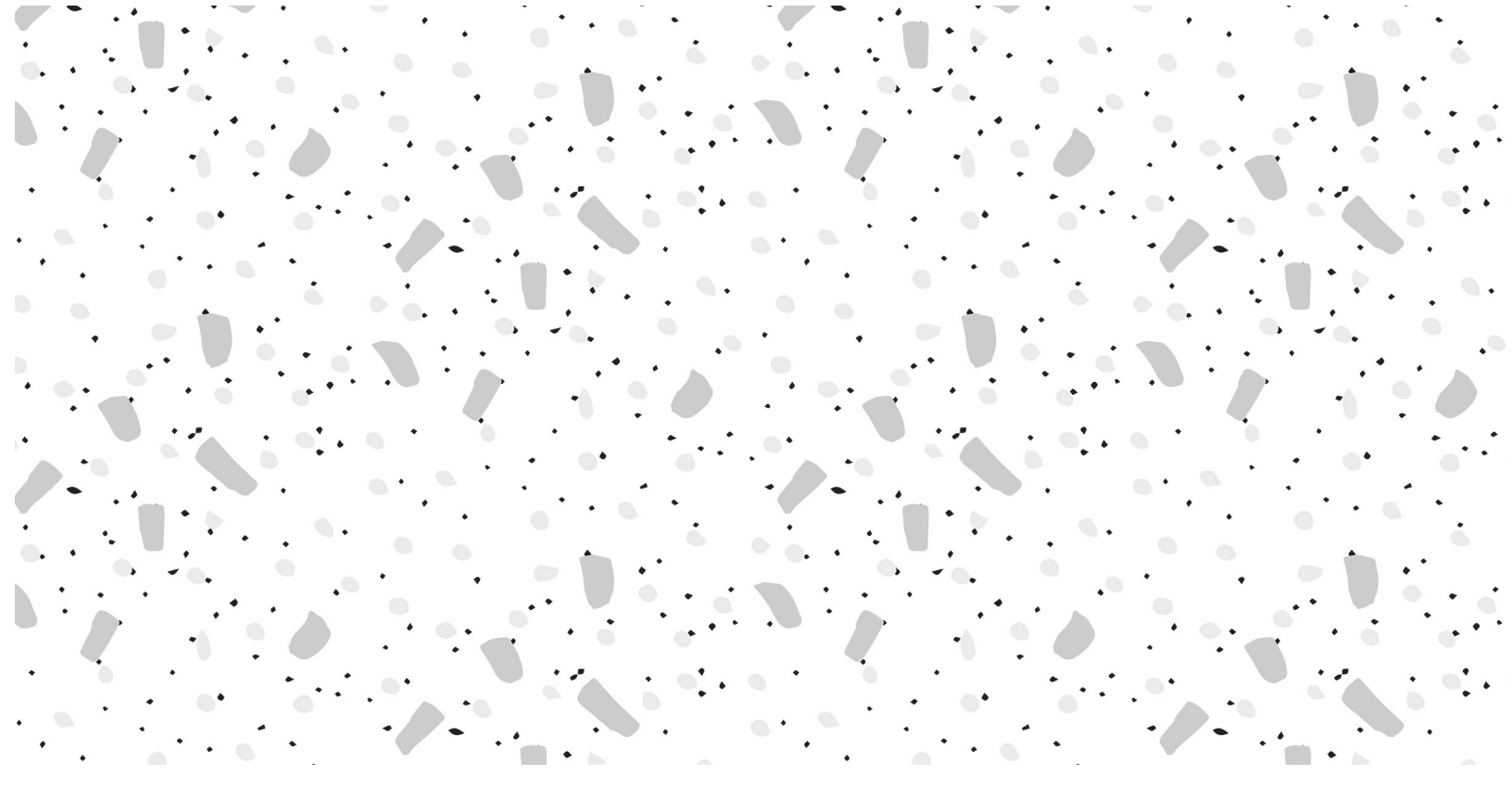


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introduction

Hey you,

If this greeting were to happen in person, I'd come up, learn your name and be obnoxiously excited to walk you through this book myself. I'd tell you how glad I am to have you here on Our Tuesday but more than that, how thankful I am that you're about to dig further into Colossians on your own. No doubt I'd have copious amounts of caffeine in my system because a coffee mug is like my third appendage so everything I said would be VERY EXCITED and SUPER HAPPY. All the exclamation points!

Our Tuesday was a desire of several women and our answer to a rumble among our friends for a women's night dedicated to studying together and worshipping our God in a way only women can. As daughters, mothers, wives, girlfriends, and friends. But most of all, sisters. Side by side in every color, shape, age and size.

Broken.

Beautiful.

Hungry for a fresh word from our Lord.

Our monthly gathering has specific purpose and we are so excited for you to be in on it. The second Tuesday of each month, we hope to rally women together with the goal of sending you out into your everyday fields of influence. Offices, classrooms, desks and kitchen tables: all important and all valuable. While the Tuesday gathering is a huge part of what we do, we believe that the real work begins at home. With you, your Bible and the Lord. Asking, reading, studying and learning. Aside from salvation, nothing has made a difference in my walk with Christ more than study and time in his word every single day. As you immerse yourself into Colossians, I'm praying you get sense of Paul's personality, his deep seated passion for Christ and his unbelievable zeal for his calling. We could all take a page out of Paul's book!

In addition to the homework, you'll enjoy reading a note from Jeff and Courtney Wilkerson about family worship time. They are a couple that truly lives out the message of worship being life, and with 4 small children, nonetheless!

I've learned so much from this short book of the New Testament and hope you have as well. There are certainly ways to go deeper and if you're interested feel free to shoot us an email at **hello@ourtuesday.com**. I'd love to hear what you're learning and recommend other resources if you're as captivated by Paul's writings as I am. We look forward to seeing you at our next gathering on May 9 at 7pm- grab me a cup of coffee on your way in, would you? *grin*

Crack those knuckles and do some stretches, sister. **We've got work to do.**

Grace and peace,

LB and The Our Tuesday Team

a note from jeff & courtney

Hi! We are Jeff and Courtney Wilkerson. We have been married 8 years and we have four wonderful children. We have been worshipping together since before we were married. Family worship time has been a staple in our home. We try our best to devote 30 minutes to an hour once a week for a worship gathering. Sometimes we play instruments, sometimes we play songs from iTunes. It doesn't always look the same and it isn't always easy. I have learned that through the years that the children are getting just as much worship from dancing and laughing as they are closing their eyes and meditating. It is so much better to just enjoy worshipping together (no matter how crazy it gets) than to put an expectation and limit on the spirit.

I was standing in the kitchen a few weeks ago doing the dishes, watching the children play in the back yard out the window. I was (randomly) singing the old hymn, "It is well with my soul." As I was singing I heard "***They need to know the hymns. They need to be able to cling to these words.***" It hit me hard and with such a sense of urgency. I grew up in a pentecostal/non denominational church so I never learned the hymns or felt like they had much relevance in my life. I thought it was strange that the Father would put such a strong desire in my heart for these songs. Jeff, on the other hand, was raised on these songs and he knows the value of the simple truths in each line.

Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the word of Christ dwell richly in all wisdom, teaching, and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

We started our family Hymn study with Doxology. It is such a beautiful song and can really set the tone of your day. We listened to it a few times the first day. I found a fun acoustic version by Craig Rigney and it was really great. I read each line out loud to the children, (we did this right after breakfast so everyone was full and focused) and then we went around the table and said what we thought it meant. It was important for me to hear what they each got from the line we were focused on before I talked about what I wanted them to take away from it. I sang each line and then they repeated after me. We laughed. It is silly and a little embarrassing to sing in front of each other sometimes. We kept it fun. The point in this song is to praise. No matter what that praise sounded like!

We discussed all of our blessings and how God deserves all of the praise. We talked about ALLLLLLL of the creatures “here below.” Elephants, monkeys, ants, and what their praise would sound like. What the heavenly host’s praise would sound like, and when we got to the last line, they had a pretty good conversation on the word “Holy Ghost.” My kids were SHOCKED that the Holy Ghost was another word for Spirit. We will be singing this song for about 2/3 weeks or until we know it by heart.

We are excited to learn more and so excited to share with you and hear your stories too!!

-Jeff & Courtney

| praise god, from whom all blessings flow |

Words: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

Music: attr. Louis Bourgeois, 1510-1561

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise Him, all crea - tures here be - low; Praise

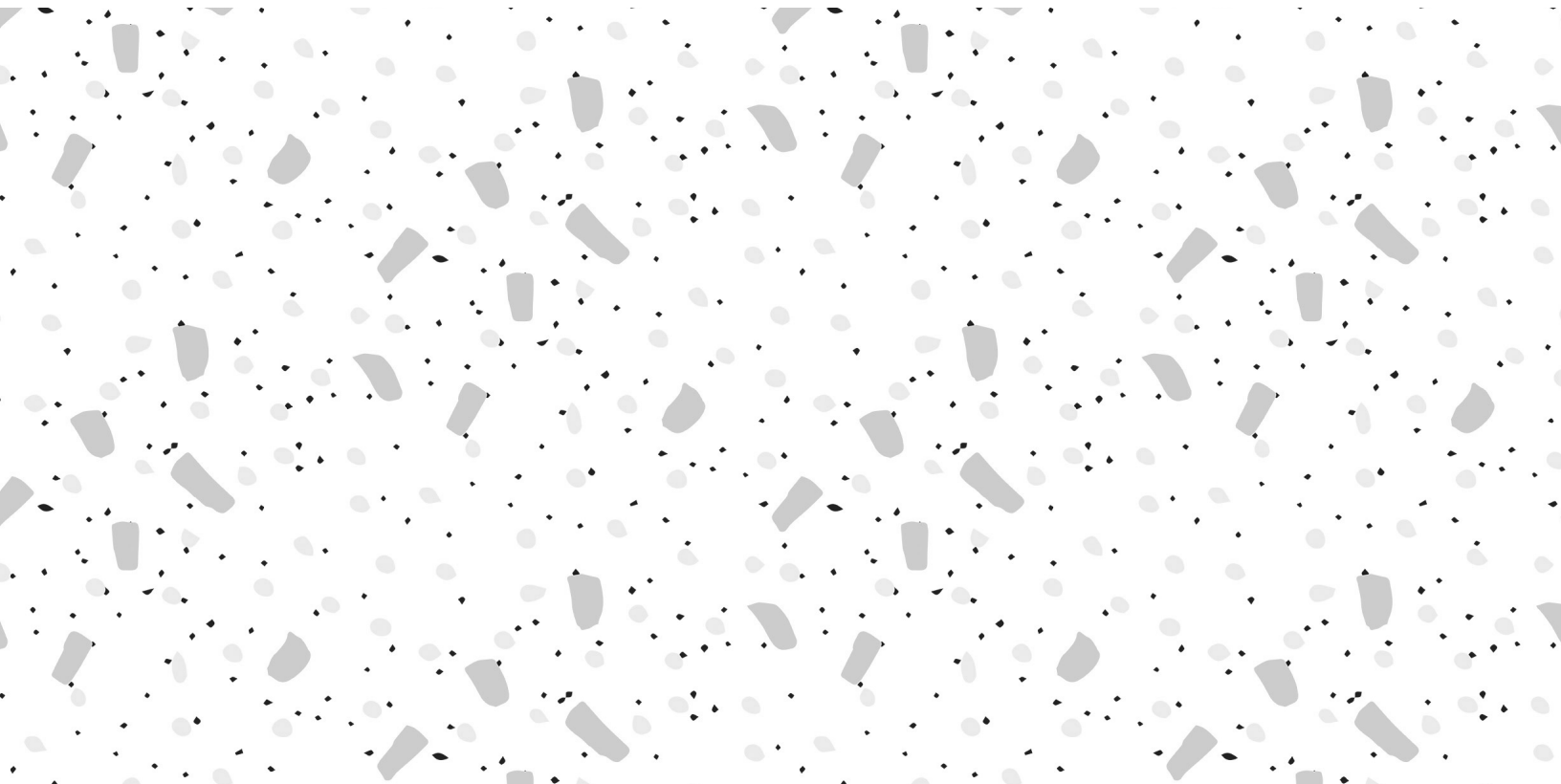
The first system of musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and common time. It features a treble and bass clef. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, with accompaniment in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Him a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host; Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. It includes a measure number '6' at the beginning of the treble staff. The notation concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs. The lyrics are written below the notes.

NO. 1

Thanksgiving & Prayer



| THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER |

As we start today, please read Colossians 1:1-1:14 and ask the Lord to bless your time in His word this morning. Each day, we are going to ask a few questions to help us get our brains working.

1. What is Paul trying to communicate?
2. How does this passage point us to Jesus?
3. What is the Lord teaching you through these verses?
4. If you were to memorize one verse from this excerpt, what would it be? Write it here.

Well hey there, lovely! I hope this first day of Colossians finds you well! Since we've already covered the outline in our time together, let's just cut to the chase. Paul was a busy man . . . and a man of many words. His way was rough, passionate, and sometimes downright offensive to the Gentiles and the Jews in the major textile center of Colossae. In his letter to the church of Colossae, Paul gets worked up about non-believers discovering that salvation is solely in the hands of Jesus and what place Jesus occupies in relation to creation and the church. In true Paul fashion, he takes heady ideas and breaks them down into simple-ish thoughts.

When we step into chapter 1, Paul is speaking out against false teachers in the church that offered other misleading solutions to the creation, redemption and centrality of Jesus. It got him fired up, and Paul was not going to let that happen on his watch.

Like Paul, is there something that you see happening around you that really gets you fired up? Something that keeps you up at night because of the blatant injustice of it?

Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me.

Psalm 42:7

In verse 4 he says, “I’ve heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love you have for all the saints.” Saints is another word for Christians. First, Paul affirms their faith; then, he presses into the issue of the sincerity of their faith. It’s encouraging when our love speaks louder than our words. Here’s the thing though: love has become a 4-letter buzzword in today’s culture. It’s becoming harder to differentiate between love and acceptance. With gospel eyes, we see that love apart from Christ is nothing. The fact that we know love is simply because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). In today’s culture, hot-button issues tend to divide us; it’s important to remember that Christ’s love compels us into deeper, more honest relationships with others (Ps. 42:7). His love allows us to see beyond those differences and angles.

Is there someone in your life who makes it hard to love them? How could you respond differently out of Christ’s love versus worldly love?

Let’s be very clear: Paul holds believers, specifically the believers at Colossae in this letter, to extremely high standards. Extremely. He wants believers to care for the saints and continue to ask for God’s help in growing in knowledge and grace. This section of our reading is all about thanking the surrounding saints and God the Father for his immeasurable grace that He might fill you with all knowledge of his will through all spiritual understanding (Col. 1:9).

Read and write Colossians 1:10 here:

What if you are doing good work and there is no fruit? Does that mean what you are doing is wrong? Have you ever experienced that? If so, how did you handle it?

If you are looking to hear that believers always win and that Christ makes hard times painless, you better go on and close this book now. Ain't happenin'. There are some unbearably tough circumstances, especially in today's world. Whew. And don't you know that we hear about every word, article and snort of negativity from anyone with an internet connection or the ability to mooch off of free Wi-Fi at Starbucks. Culture lives by the rule that he who has the loudest megaphone wins. That's not biblical. And quite frankly, it's not appetizing either.

How do you handle the state of constant information through news outlets, social media, etc.? Does it make you feel empowered to be aware or does it deplete you?

Paul writes of spiritual wisdom. One does not seek spiritual understanding with the intention of prospering or gaining head knowledge; rather, one should pursue their personal walk and relationship with Jesus. May we give thanks to the Father who has graciously shared with His holy people in the Kingdom of Life.

Information is heavy. Knowing things is heavy. There are times when, upon learning information, we simply cannot go back. There's no way to unlearn information. As believers, we have to guard our minds against things that will take us captive. Fears and anxieties grow teeth in darkness. Sin manifests out of darkness. When thoughts threaten to rise and take their unrighteous place in the dark, we must combat with scripture. The first bit of verse 13 is that for me: "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13).

Here's the thing . . . I know myself. I know my thoughts and what I think about at night before I go to sleep. The things I don't tell anyone. And it's not only "not-pretty," it's humbling. How can I walk with the Lord and still struggle with my thought life? That's the work of the Dominion of Darkness. Just as the Lord is fighting for us, darkness is fighting for us too. We are made righteous in God and covered by His spirit, but we live our lives on the enemy's turf.

Christ brings us out of darkness and into the light for a reason: so that he can see us, but more importantly, so that we can see him. Darkness causes you to lose your vision. Your sharpness. Your alertness. It takes awhile to readjust to the light and, at times, it can be painful. Speaking aloud, “He has rescued me from darkness!” is a powerful thing! It puts Satan on notice that we no longer play by his rules.

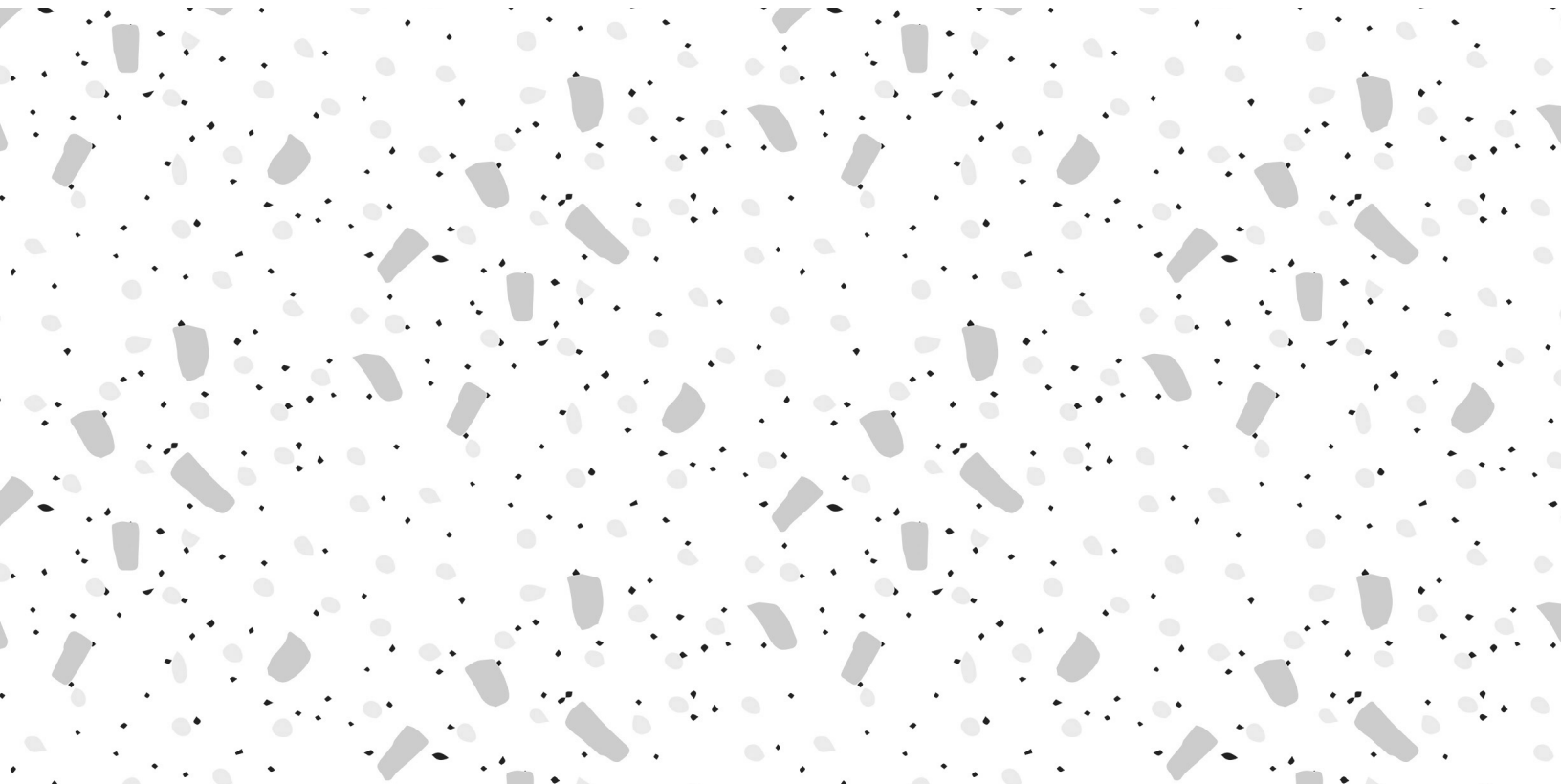
Let’s sharpen our eyes and wake ourselves up! It’s time we focused more on the one who brought us into the light of redemption and removed the attention from the puppeteer who hides his face in darkness. Watch a YouTube tutorial on how to apply war paint, because it’s getting real. May we walk boldly into the light of the one who knows and sees and loves anyway. I’ll be right beside you.

“For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Colossians 1:13

NO. 2

The Supremacy of Christ



| THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST |

As we start today, please read Colossians 1:15-1:23, and ask the Lord to bless your time in His word this morning.

1. What is Paul trying to communicate?
2. How does this passage point us to Jesus?
3. What is the Lord teaching you through these verses?
4. If you were to memorize one verse from this excerpt, what would it be? Write it here.

When we had the dream for this Bible study, and it was but a dream, one thing I knew was that I respected other women so much. You are intelligent, smart, creative, fashionable, and kind. You are not just one thing, one type, or one category. All over the board, all walks of life and all ages. From 16-96, I wanted everyone to feel included. However, because I feel so strongly about that, I want to speak to the intelligent part of your hearts, too. I want us to learn, together, how to enjoy the Lord beyond emotions and Pinterest platitudes. Turns out, those don't float you in times of need. But Christ does. He always, always does.

Supremacy. Sustaining. Substitute.

Not words in my regular rotation, but I like them. I also love alliteration, so high five to all the other book nerds in the room. What images do those three words conjure up in your mind? Good things? Negative emotions?

The Supremacy of Christ rests in the fact that Genesis 1:1 tells us that God just was in the beginning. There was no other and no other has come since. He rules and reigns in full supremacy and authority over all the heavens and the earth (v. 19).

When reading portions of scripture that walk us through the enormity of what it means to worship a supreme and before-all-else God, little quips like these are hidden gems: *All things were created by Him and for Him* (v. 16). Even you. Especially you. Even snakes. And rats. And the human versions of those sneaky animals. Everything. All things.

Write Colossians 1:16 here:

The end of verse 16 ends with “*all things were created by him and for him.*” I feel like that’s a small part of a verse that I could skip right over if I wasn’t paying attention. Perfect example of why we ask the Lord to bless our time in His word—so we have eyes to see details like this! For anyone who has ever struggled through insecurity, hearing that we were created by God and for God could have life-changing implications.

As women, we get a bad rap in the insecurity conversation. If this doesn’t apply to you, then by all means move along. Goodness knows I most definitely fall into this camp though. It’s the thorn in my flesh (2 Cor. 12:6-8). Insecurity can sneak up from behind and grab me around the throat before I know what hit me. It is paralyzing and suffocating when it rules and in no way a kind or judicious master.

Have you ever felt like the exception? As if surely that applies to everyone else but not me? Explain.

So if we’ve established that he is before all things, created all things, and holds all things together, we can look at the cross reference for verse 17.

Colossians 1:17 references back to Hebrews 1:3: “*The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.*”

He sustains all things by His word. Just His word. Through speaking, God keeps our planet, solar system, and entire universe in motion. Everything from atmospheric pressure to rotating orbits to the fact that squirrels still mate and run around my yard every minute of every day. I am breathing, living, and doing today because God has chosen to not change the oxygen makeup. That’s staggering to think about. We are here because, much to our dismay, He wants us to be here. Make no mistake, if he didn’t we would not wake up to another sunrise. Period.

Do you think that insecurity is something that we can overcome or is it a byproduct of living in a fallen world? Discuss.

When the Lord sustains us, he doesn’t just sustain us, he strengthens us. Much like bone that is broken, when treated properly, it heals stronger than it was before. I also really like the word *Preserve*. To think he sustains, preserves and strengthens us is awe-inspiring to me. Goodness, am I grateful for it.

Lastly, let’s talk about *substitute*. *Reconcile*. *Mediation*. Christ procures peace for his people and pardon for sinners. All of us fall short of heaven. No one can make it on our own. The only thing the Bible makes clearer than that fact is His redemption story and how to make ourselves right with God.

Verses 19 and 20 say, “*For God was pleased to have all of his fullness dwell in him and through him to reconcile to himself all things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*”

How does it make you feel to hear that you are/were lacking and that Christ had to make a way for you to have peace with God? Does it bring you to your knees in thankfulness or does it make your skin prickle with defense?

May we not miss the fact that Christ made peace through his blood. He could have made peace through any method, but he chose a sacrificial, difficult and downright messy way to complete His will. We would be wise to remember that in our everyday dealings that sometimes peace comes through hard work and messy situations. It can be hard won and righteous and still be disheveled and sticky. In fact, aren't those the things we remember most? The marriage we fought for? The kids that bloodied our knees from so much prayer? The family relationships that we put it all on the line because we so desperately wanted them to know we loved them?

Paul is telling us in several different ways how we once were alienated from God, and quite frankly, he calls us enemies of God. *“But now, he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body to present you . . . if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel”* (v.22).

Remaining established and firm is a two-part deal. We must mentally know we are established in God’s word and that He keeps us firmly in His hand (John 10:27-29). But also we are responsible to make wise choices throughout our days that keep us grounded and unhindered by the sin that so easily entangles (Heb. 12:1).

Prayer: Lord, help me see what’s holding me back and how I can shake entanglements off. Give me the ability to pinpoint what the heart issues are so that I can move toward the freedom and peace that you offer me.

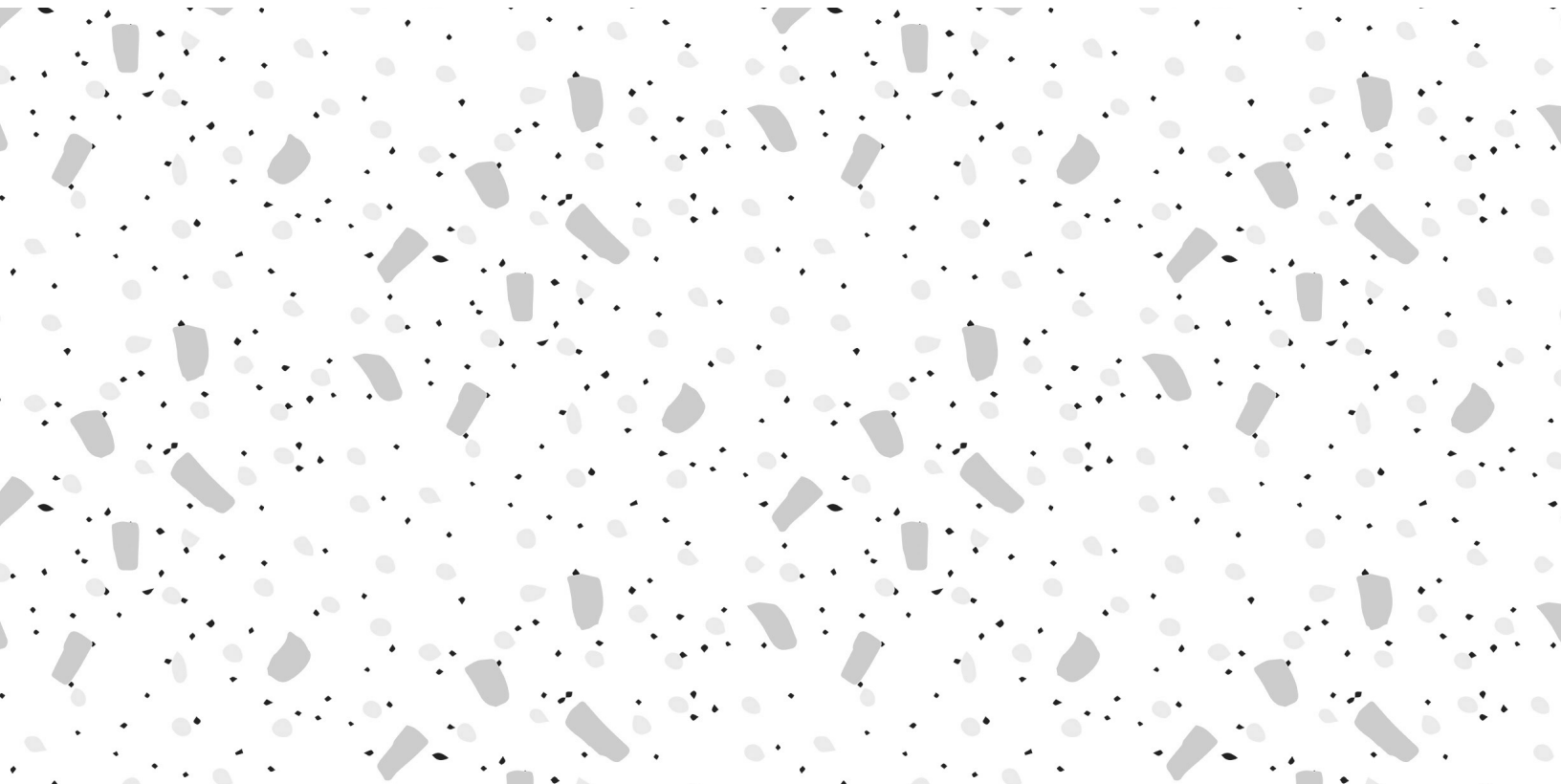
**I give them
eternal life,
and they shall
never perish;
no one will
snatch them
out of my
hand.**

John 10:28

“He is before all things and in him all things hold together”
Colossians 1:17

NO. 3

Paul's Labor for the Church



| PAUL'S LABOR FOR THE CHURCH |

As we start today, please read Colossians 1:24-2:5 and ask the Lord to bless your time in His word this morning.

1. What is Paul trying to communicate?
2. How does this passage point us to Jesus?
3. What is the Lord teaching you through these verses?
4. If you were to memorize one verse from this excerpt, what would it be? Write it here.

Paul speaks on struggling with his own sin more than anyone else in the New Testament. If you're having a hard go at life right now, you'll find yourself right at home in the pages of Paul's letters. In this subheading, Paul is giving an exposé on all that he's worked to accomplish and learned. He's constantly telling the Church at Colossae, I know this life is hard, BUT . . . there's Christ. Most of us have experienced seasons throughout our faith journey where we are waving smoke signals and desperately trying to get His attention, perhaps even by doing wrong things. Any attention is better than feeling forgotten, right?

Have you ever felt forgotten by the Lord? Or as if he isn't hearing your prayers?

There are other times Christ finds us in hardships: when we hide and when we don't want him to see us. It's too painful. It's too gut-wrenching to tell Him what's really going on. Our relationships are failing and we feel like we are in one of those cheap fair rides with a conductor that won't let us off. We've started the ride of our own accord and we tell ourselves, "How bad could it be?" and yet here we stand (or sit huddled in a corner) and there is no one else around. Everyone has left us.

What's the next move for a motion-stricken adult whose conscious taunts at them that they should have known better.

Paul's answer? *"I want you to know that I am struggling for you and those at Laodicea and for those who have never met me personally. My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding. In order that they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."* Colossians 2:1-3

Paul wants the Church to know:

- ▶ He's struggling for you.
- ▶ Be encouraged in heart.
- ▶ United in love.
- ▶ Know the full riches of complete understanding. The mystery is unveiled! It's Christ!
- ▶ All wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him.

Was there a season in your life that you felt as though you were stuck on the carnival ride? How'd you get off?

Paul was not the typical Bible man. He was a hater and a murderer of Christ-followers. A Damascus Road transformation hit him and he simply was never the same. To say he had a special place in His heart for those of us who have a past is an understatement. He is always talking through the cost of sin, proclaiming and admonishing saints and laboring for the Church. Redeemed people sing a song of redemption. End of story. When we understand so clearly the cost of our sin, we will sing all the louder. We know the song to our bones. That Jesus Lives! And he made reconciliation for us on that cross! Because of Him we have a way!

Do you relate to Paul? Is there a song of redemption that you sing?

Colossians 1:28 says, “*We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.*”

To proclaim is to “call out to properly.” Not to be confused with “getting called out” for doing something wrong, which is akin to getting in trouble by the teacher. This is more that we are speaking Christ to those he’s called us to minister. To constantly be speaking about the one who calls. He is faithful (Ps. 145:13).

In proclaiming Christ, we are speaking about Him, teaching about Him, and calling out to those in need of hearing about Him . . . everyone! He even uses “everyone” twice!

If verse 28 is the rally cry, then verse 29 is the middle of the night sentence we speak into the darkness to remind ourselves that morning is coming. “To this end I labor, struggling, with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.”

This is it. This is the goal. Struggle though I may, I will advance with His energy because it powerfully works in me.

What is your goal? How does it feel different when you use your own energy versus God’s energy inside you?

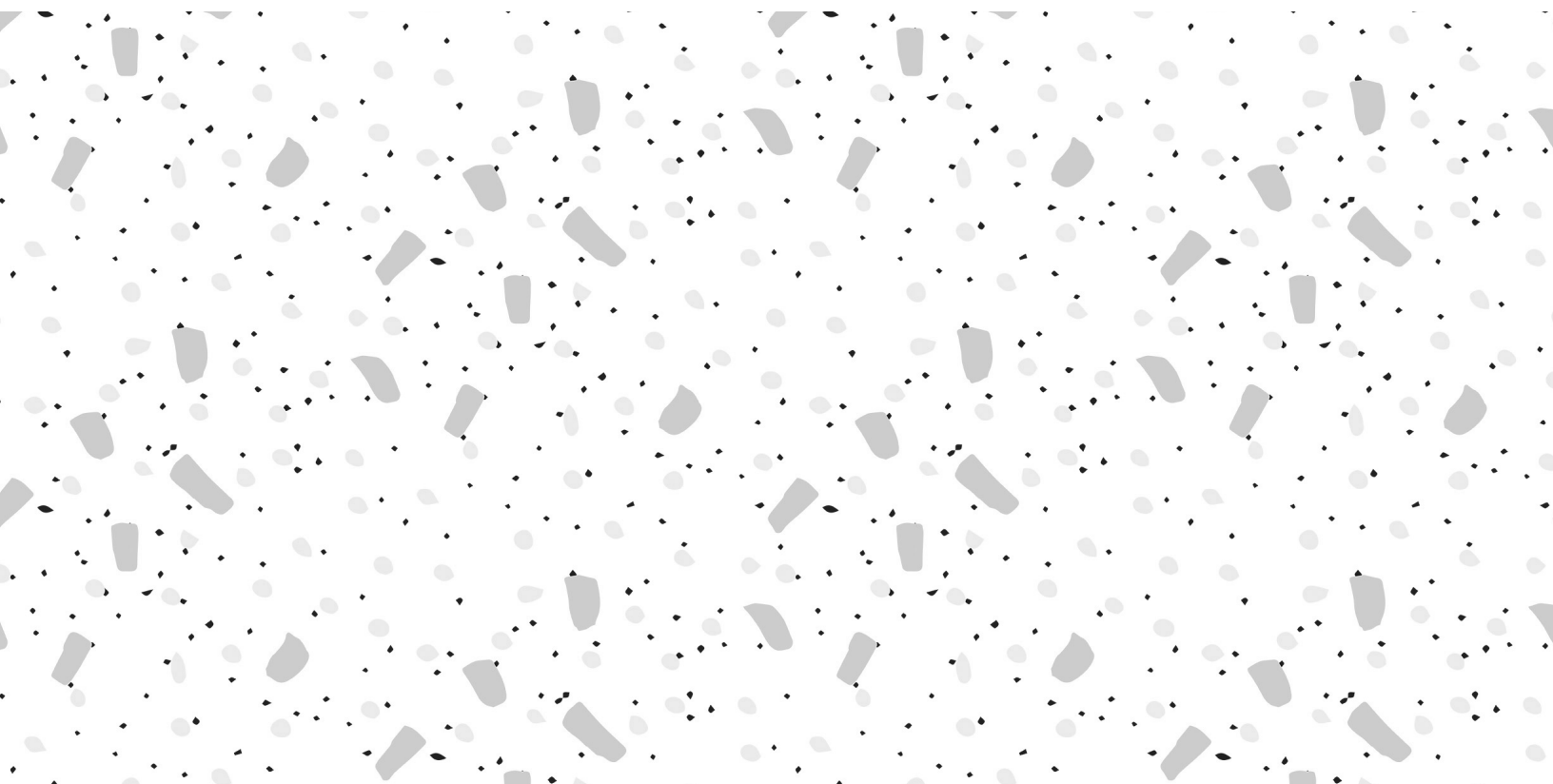
***“To this end, I labor, struggling with all his energy,
which so powerfully works in me.”
Colossians 1:29***

**Your
kingdom
is an
everlasting
kingdom,
and your
dominion
endures
through all
generations.
The Lord is
trustworthy
in all he
promises
and faithful
in all he does.
*Psalm 145:13***

NO. 4

**Freedom from Human
Regulations through Life
with Christ**

AKA- Christ versus the Colossian Heresy



| FREEDOM FROM HUMAN REGULATIONS THROUGH LIFE WITH CHRIST |

As we start today, please read Colossians 2:6-2:23 and ask the Lord to bless your time in His word this morning.

1. What is Paul trying to communicate?
2. How does this passage point us to Jesus?
3. What is the Lord teaching you through these verses?
4. If you were to memorize one verse from this excerpt, what would it be? Write it here.

I've learned that Paul has a cadence in his writing that can soothe a weary soul or incite hoorays at a pep rally. It's pretty impressive from a literary standpoint. There is no sleepy time on Paul's watch. He's most definitely that friend. The one that is always ready for an adventure, and also the one that probably gets you into more, ahem, interesting adventures than you'd bargained.

This subheading is a little off-putting, I'll be honest. Human Regulations feel like the name of a department in the basement of a 20 story office building that has two lifelong employees and enough fluorescent light to flood Times Square. Regulations feel so oppressive to me . . . and for good reason — it is. Another way to phrase it could be the Human Judgement or the Human Sentence. Outside of Christ, our life in fleshly chains is all we have. But Christ offers so much more. *Freedom from Human Regulations through Life with Christ* might not roll off the tongue, but it does have incredible application.

Through Christ. Freedom. From rules and requirements that humanity brings.

Do words about regulations and rules make your skin crawl or do they make you feel safe?

Are boundaries and rules synonymous? Explain.

In this particular chunk of our beloved Colossians, Paul does not hold back. A few phrases that he repeats and says in different ways:

Receive Christ but do not be deceived. Stay rooted and built up. Strengthened in your faith and overflowing with thankfulness. Human tradition are the basic principles of this world. We were dead in sin but buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God. He cancelled out the written code with it's regulations through his forgiveness of all our sins. We must not lose connection with the body. Beware: some regulations had the appearance of wisdom with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body.

Read 1 Timothy 4:8 and paraphrase here:

If Godliness is of more value than training, why do we learn and study?

For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

1 Timothy 4:8

Here's the deal – in a world of Pinspiration (Pinterest's version of inspiration) pictures of clouds with mottos and sayings simply are not enough. They will leave you weary and heavy laden. There are not 5 quick and easy steps to Godliness. Trust me, I've looked for them! We must be women that look past the surface and past platitudes and open our Bibles to find spiritual guidance. There. Is. No. Other. Way. Christ is the way to freedom, and He is the Freedom. He is the only one worthy of our time and thoughts; to look to Human Regulations is to trust in human limitations.

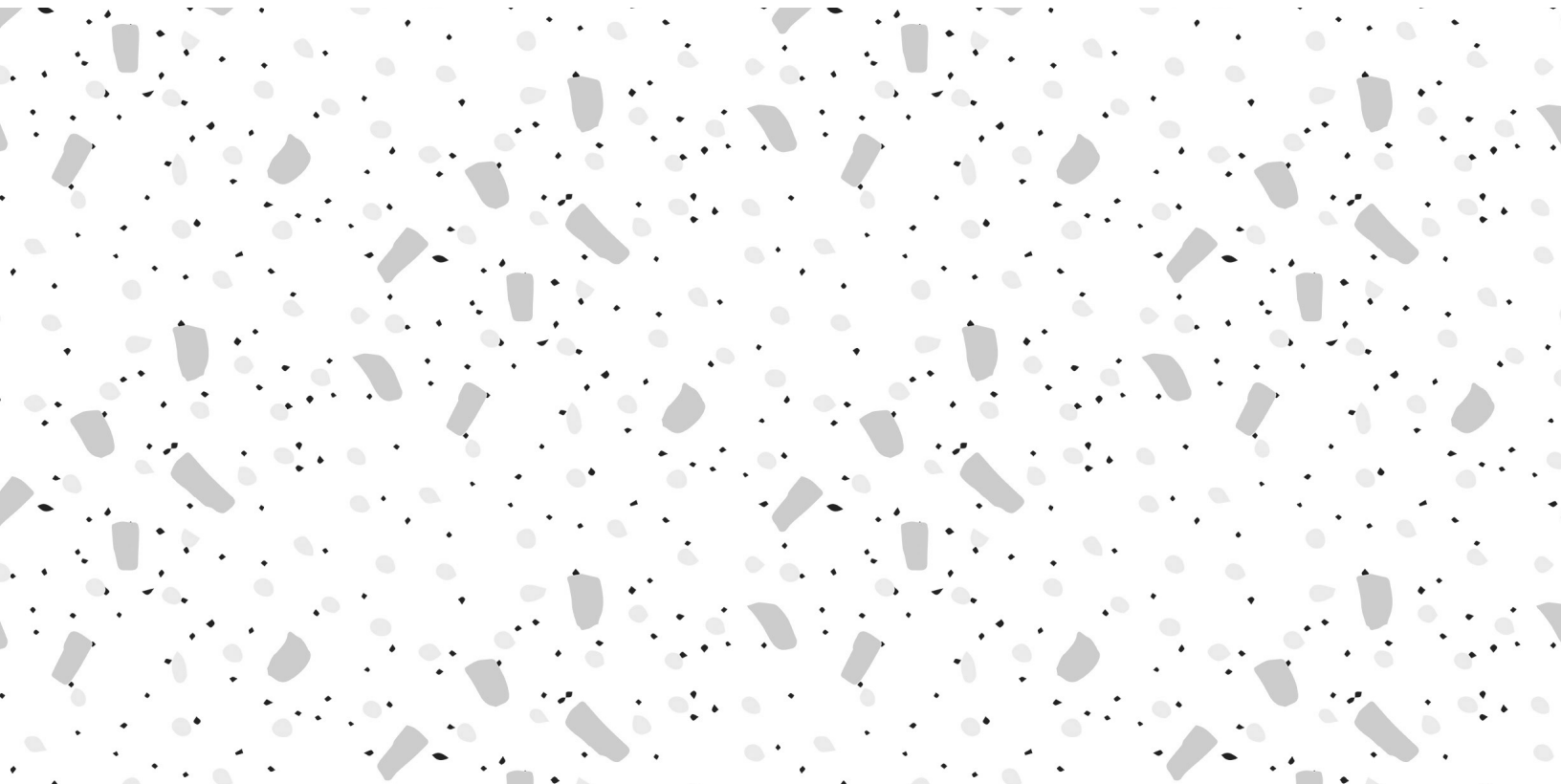
I don't know about you, but that's not what I'm signing up for. I know that I was dead in my sin and that God made me alive with Christ and forgave all of my sins (Col. 2:13). If we have received him, then we all can live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as we've been taught by those before us and overflow with thankfulness (v. 6). This is not a carrot dangling in front of our faces; this is the reality for those who hide themselves in the Lord. Thanks be to God, who doesn't leave us to our own devices. May we sharpen our senses against the enemy's attacks and learn to fight darkness with truth and grace. We are no longer subject to Human Regulations but have the opportunity for freedom in Christ!

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is head over every power and authority.”

Colossians 2:9-10

NO. 5

Rules for Holy Living



| RULES FOR HOLY LIVING |

As we start today, please read Colossians 3:1-17 and ask the Lord to bless your time in His word this morning.

1. What is Paul trying to communicate?
2. How does this passage point us to Jesus?
3. What is the Lord teaching you through these verses?
4. If you were to memorize one verse from this excerpt, what would it be? Write it here.

Raise your hand if you've ever felt like the Bible was just a big rule book of things you cannot do? *silently raises hand* I have most certainly felt that way before. And that emotion usually comes when I already feel guilty about something. Funny how that happens. Everyone comes across judgmental when we already feel shame about our own life. We usually displace our own emotions on others. We feel angry, so surely everyone else must be angry at us. We overthink a conversation, so our friends must overthink every conversation we have together, etc.

The 17 verses in this subset actually do tell us things we shouldn't do. Turns out, as believers there's a lot we shouldn't do! But you knew that already. The good news is that as we plough through this list of don'ts, we already have the first two chapters of Colossians under our belt. We know why Paul is writing these things because he just spent the last 52 verses telling us who we are in Christ. He wanted his readers from the early church to understand the foundation before he expounded upon things to avoid. Make no mistake, there is much to learn from the fact that this passage was written thousands of years ago, yet all of these sins are prevalent today.

Read Romans 6:1-2 and write it here.

Paul again is talking to the church in Rome, “What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?” I love that line: “What shall we say then?” What do we have to say for ourselves! We know truth and simply cannot continue to act in our old way. End of story. Perhaps as you are reading this today, the Lord is confirming that there is something that needs to change in your life. Today. Immediately. Delayed obedience is disobedience.

Feel free to write out steps that you could take to move forward.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:7

The journey through Colossians shows us Paul’s love for the church and his people, the supremacy of Christ, who found us dead in our sins, and that in Him, we are raised to life to walk new again. And after this new beginning, we see what true freedom could look like aside from human tradition and then what to stay away from. So now we are in the part where he talks about things to add into our everyday lives.

We are to clothes ourselves (Col. 3:12) with humility (you know my ears perked up when I saw clothes!) and then the fruits of the spirit. Bear with one another (v. 13). Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts since as member of one body you were called to peace (v. 15). We are called, as believers, to be peaceable (Titus 3:1-2).

Read and write the following:

John 14:27

1 Corinthians 7:15

Philippians 4:7

What's our common thread?

Admittedly, peace in today's world feels almost laughable. Far-fetched as it may be, we each are responsible for peace in our homes, our relationships and our conversations. Paul ends this portion of his letter with the following benediction of thanksgiving:

“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” (Col. 3:17).

Words or deed. Marches that are loud or marches that are silent. Marriages that are flourishing or ones that are holding on by a shred of hope. Prayer requests answered or unanswered. Jobs we love or hate. Seasons we despise or thrive in. Whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

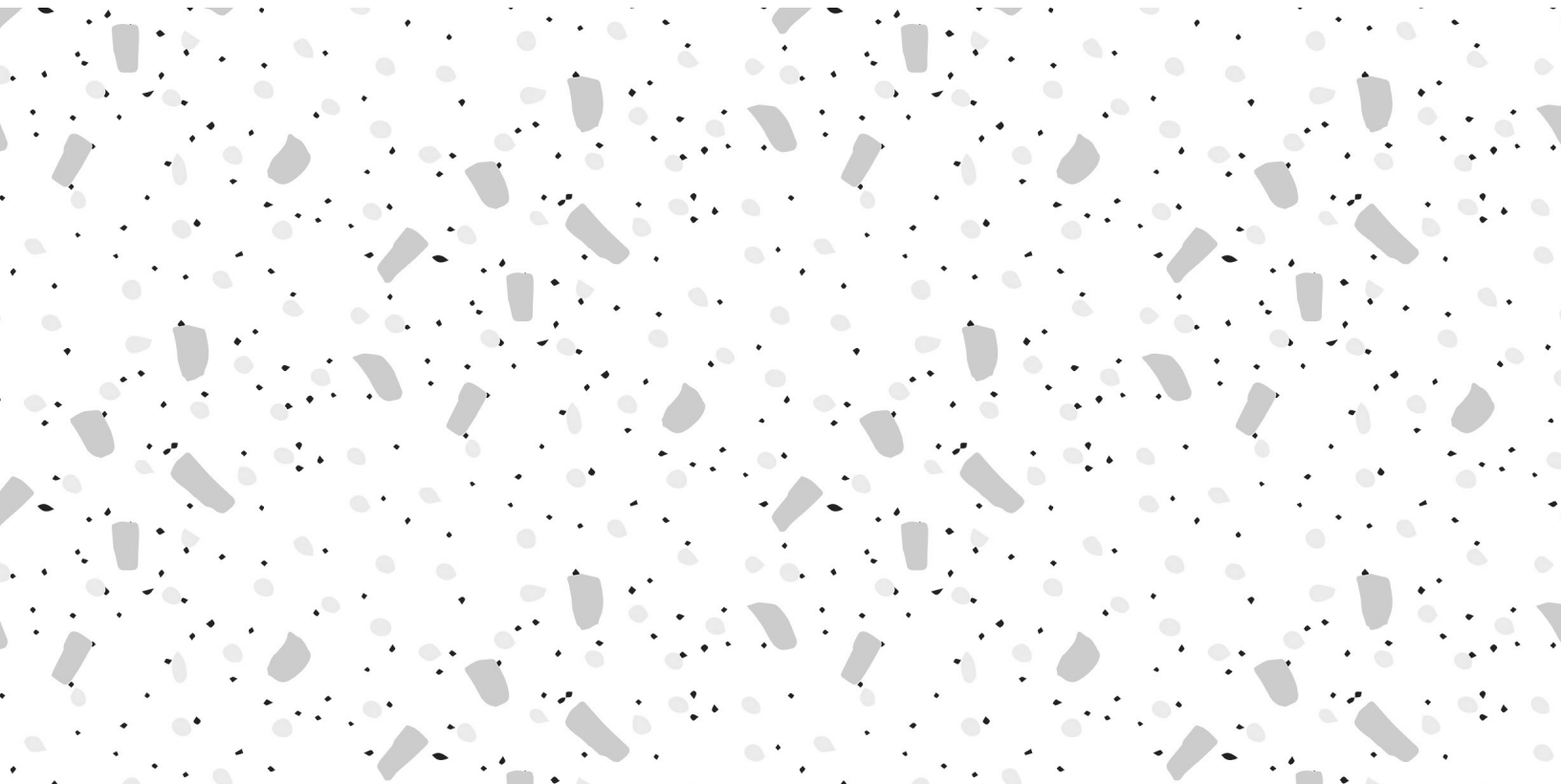
I'm rooting for you, sister. Make peace.

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.”

Colossians 3:1

NO. 6

Rules for Christian Households



| RULES FOR CHRISTIAN HOUSEHOLDS |

As we start today, please read Colossians 3:18-25 and ask the Lord to bless your time in His word this morning.

1. What is Paul trying to communicate?
2. How does this passage point us to Jesus?
3. What is the Lord teaching you through these verses?
4. If you were to memorize one verse from this excerpt, what would it be? Write it here.

Hi. My name is LB Sinclair, and somehow I've worked myself into leading a bible study AND covering the most shudder-inducing topic in the Bible: submission. Don't be too jealous of me right now.

Alright, let's just get on with it. And hopefully I don't need to say this, but I feel the need: I'm no expert on this. To say the Lord has taught me so much on this often maligned topic would be an understatement. I came into my marriage almost 11 years ago with protest signs raised and bras-a-burning. Granted, it was under the veil of Christianity, but I can assure you that my attitude deep down was about two steps north of obstinate and one step east of downright irritating.

Now that I've painted you the picture, let's just rip off the bandaid. Wives, submit to your husbands as unto the Lord (v. 18). Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them (v. 19).

Paul was writing this as a single man. From prison. There clearly were issues arising in the churches he mentored because he wrote the same message to Ephesus. Our friend Jeremy Gardner put it this way: Think of Ephesians as the theology that Paul taught while Colossians is the personal application.

Read Ephesians 5:21-33

Write verse 21 here:

Let's level for a minute. Woman to woman. If you're looking for a friend to validate your mistreatment and belittling of your husband, this is the wrong study for you. Remember my above statements? The Lord changed my heart gradually through a man that loved me unconditionally. He never once rolled his eyes at me . . . ok, maybe once. But he didn't quote scripture at me until I felt shamed and bent into submission. He loved me well and shepherded our family well. Out of it came this respect that I never knew I could feel.

Andy Stanley did a sermon series on marriage years ago, and I took away a simple phrase to apply to our marriage.

“You first.”

How can I serve you? How can I help you spread your wings? How can we work together on this? What do you need from me? Help me, help you. What can I do for you today?

All questions we do our best to ask regularly. After a decade of marriage, I get that we are still sort of novice. And I'm sure you've got much more experience at it than I do. But it's very important for me to take Paul's prison-soaked words to heart. The Lord spoke those into a quiet prison cell to a man that had never been married. As far fetched as that sounds, he was right. And it works. When both parties are willing to say, “you first,” incredible things happen. There's no ground to fight over when both of you are looking out for the other.

(Of course there are times that this isn't the case and for that I'm deeply saddened. I cannot let it go unsaid that abuse is never right. Always seek help in those cases.)

Write verse 23 here:

Does that sound familiar? (Hint: peek at Col. 3:17) How does it differ?

Paul talks about inheritance. While Paul didn't shy away from talking about what is to come in the eternal, it's interesting that he brings it up in this instance. He talks about rewards (v. 24) and then in verse 25, he doesn't mince words about favoritism or wrongs being repaid.

Paul was adamant that his people know that the structure of the Christian household might look commonplace on the outside, but inside their four walls they must be governed by three Christian principles:

1. Submission to the Lord first and then to one another.
2. Christian love to others.
3. The prospect of Divine judgement.

Out of those three principles, which needs immediate attention in your home?

This is a safe place here because, goodness knows, there's no turning in homework around here. Sometimes I think it's just good to write things out. Makes it harder to ignore. Forming words under the pressure of our pens can be healing, if we allow it to be. Writing out scripture. Writing out our prayers. It's absolutely how I process. It also leaves you with a bit of a souvenir from this season.

I want you to know that the Lord hears your prayers. Even when it doesn't feel like he does. Even when there is no movement for days

**...and to
present her
to himself
as a radiant
church, with-
out stain or
wrinkle or any
other blemish,
but holy and
blameless.
Ephesians
5:27**

or weeks or years. He hears every letter, syllable and word. He cares how you spend your days and your relationship with your man. That's why he literally compares it to Christ and the church (Eph. 5:25-27). His highest compliment, no doubt.

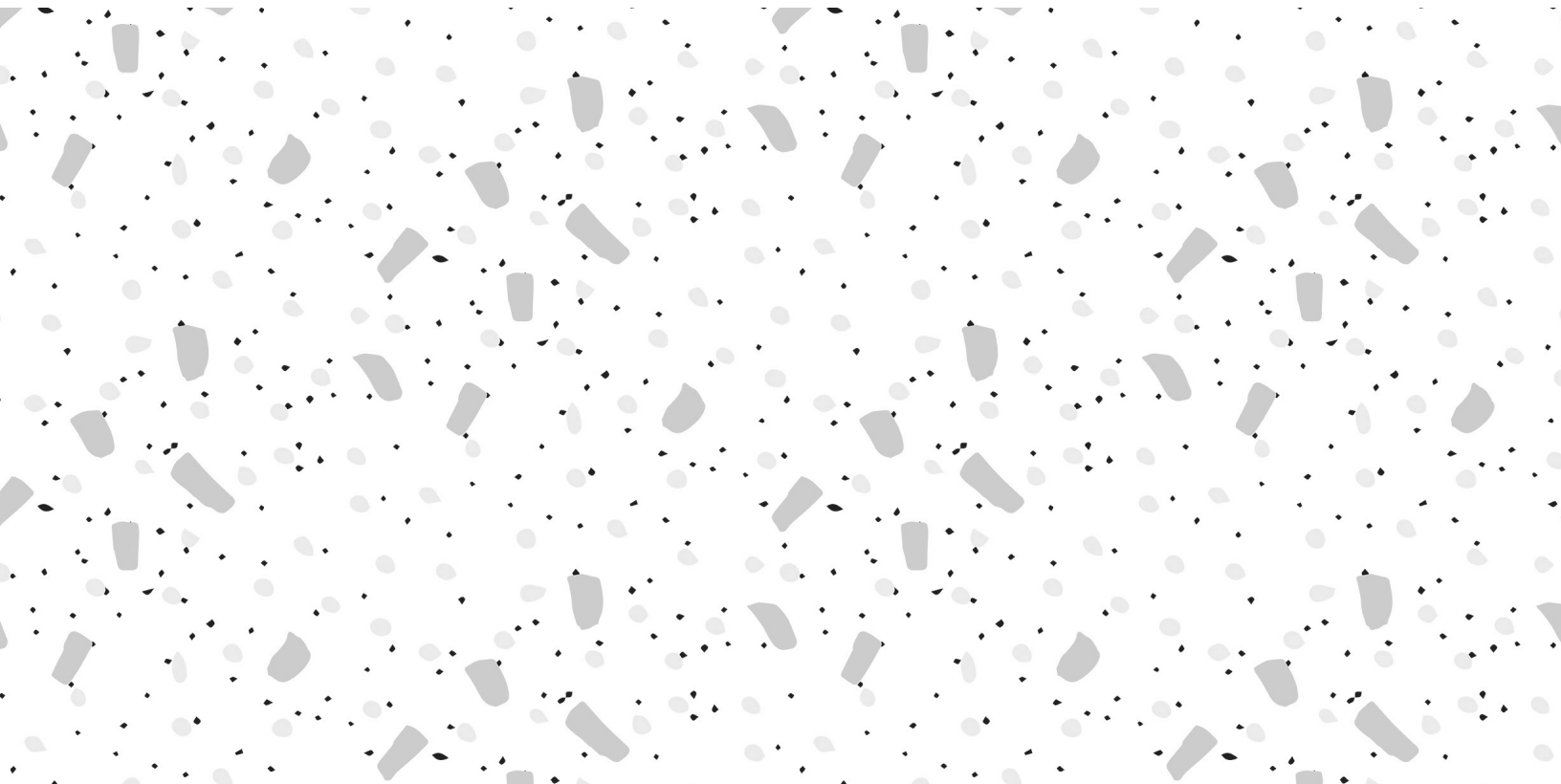
Know that as a reader of this session, I've prayed for you on my knees. I'd love to hear your story sometime.

***“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as
working for the Lord, not men, since you know that
you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.
It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”***

Colossians 3:23

NO. 7

Further Instructions



| FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS |

As we start today, please read Colossians 4:2-6 and ask the Lord to bless your time in His word this morning.

1. What is Paul trying to communicate?
2. How does this passage point us to Jesus?
3. Is the Lord is teaching you anything through these verses?
4. If you were to memorize one verse from this excerpt, what would it be? Write it here.

On this next to last session, let's think of this as Paul's recap of his entire conversation. Obviously, we've seen him say some heavy things. Some easier to apply than others. This is his way of saying, "I just want to make sure I was clear," in the way you yell out parting instructions to your teenager walking out the door.

Here's a bulleted list for you:

- ▶ Devote yourselves to prayer being watchful and thankful. (v. 2)
- ▶ Pray for us [Paul and Timothy], too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ for which I am in chains. (v. 3)
- ▶ Pray that I may proclaim it as early, as I should. (v. 4)
- ▶ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. (v. 5)
- ▶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (v. 6)

To break these down, verses 2-4 are intercessory requests while verses 5-6 are relationally evangelistic in nature. I cannot skip over the fact that as outspoken and forthright as Paul has been, he not only feels the need to repeat himself multiple times, but he also doesn't shy away from asking for prayer for His calling. Lest we be confused, Paul was not mystified about how he was supposed to spend his

days. Granted, at this point in his life, there wasn't much choice since he was in prison. Even in prison, I see him praying over wardens and pouring over these letters with blood, sweat and tears mixed with dirt from the floor.

He. Was. In. The. Game.

These final instructions were not from the sidelines. There was no seclusion or isolation in his running. He ran his race hard and with many others beside him, as we will see in the next lesson. The importance of prayer, intercession and testimony were oozing out of him faster than he could write. I see him as a restless sleeper (my own interpretation), as one so compelled by the gospel that sleep was merely a means to an end. Food was simply fuel to keep walking from town to town and conversation to conversation. He was no doubt brisk and forthcoming, but make no mistake, Paul didn't have to tell people he was authentic. They knew it from the second they met him.

As women who love the Lord, may we take our directives from Christ through Paul. Ask for what you need. Be confident in who God made you to be. At some point the insecurity will get old. You will be faced with a decision: am I going to stand up, battered and bruised to complete the work he has set before me, or am I going to wallow in self-pity until Jesus comes home? Then he will ask what we did with the gifts he gave — are we to hold up empty hands and say, “I just didn't believe in myself”?!

I can only imagine this, but I can see him emphatically calling out to us that he never asked us to believe in ourselves. That is carnal philosophy. He asked us to believe in HIM. In his purposes and his grace and his life-changing sacrifice on the cross. The world tells you to believe in yourself, but the Cross tells you to die to yourself and BELIEVE IN CHRIST.

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.
Colossians 4:6

If you had a last minute recap of your life's message, what are a few things that would be on the list? Jot a few down.

This list will tell you something about yourself, if you answered truthfully. It will tell you what you value. And where your heart is. And quite frankly what your life's message portrays. Verses 2-6 feel very much like Paul is blurting out his last instructions for fear of them being missed. They were important to him. Nuggets of truth and wisdom he desperately didn't want to be missed.

Read and write Mark 9:50.

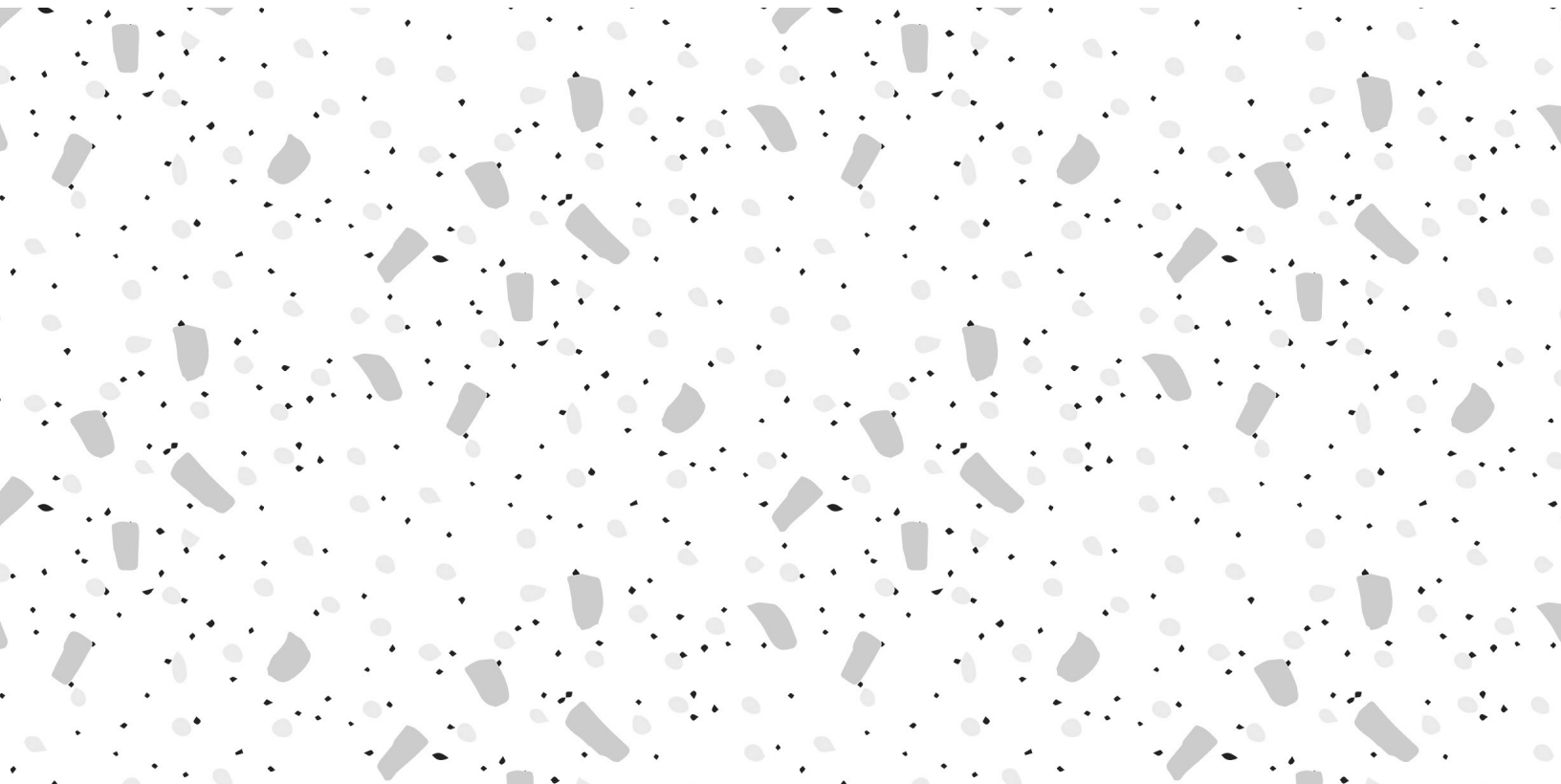
We are to be salt and grace to the world, but we must first have salt in ourselves. **AND BE AT PEACE WITH EACH OTHER.** (Session 5 anyone? Bueller?)

Before you end this session, please read back over your "life recap" and pray over each one. Asking the Lord who that message is for and the best way to deliver it.

***"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders;
make the most out of every opportunity."
Colossians 4:5***

NO. 8

Final Greetings



| FINAL GREETINGS |

As we start today, please read Colossians 4:7-18 and ask the Lord to bless your time in His word this morning.

1. What is Paul trying to communicate?
2. How does this passage point us to Jesus?
3. What is the Lord is teaching you through these verses?
4. If you were to memorize one verse from this excerpt, what would it be? Write it here.

Eleven. Eleven people. Eleven people plus the church at Nympha's home. That's how many people Paul gave shout-outs to in his final greetings. A specific word to each of them. Let's divide the people that Paul so graciously sends words into two groups, Jews and Gentiles. This is important because we know that Paul was raised and trained as a devout Jew, and then after his radical coming-to-know-the-Lord, he was essentially called to the Gentiles to preach and serve. But, he still had many fellow Christian converts that traveled with him—they are in the Jewish category below.

Jews:

Tychicus
Onesimus Aristarchus
Mark
Jesus- called Justus

Gentiles:

Epaphras
Luke
Demas
Nympha & her church Archippus
Church in Laodicea

Let's briefly walk through each, because it's just so fascinating to me. I love a flow chart or list with the best of them. Of note, the first five coworkers we talk through are also mentioned in Philemon, except for Justus. The fourth and final letter Paul wrote was from prison. These four books are commonly referred to as the Prison Epistles and are a huge addition to the Canon. (The collection of scriptures we refer to as the Bible can also be referred to as the Canon — all 66 books combined.)

Tychicus // We know he delivered the letter to the church at Colossae (Book of Colossians). He also was the deliverer of the letter to the church at Ephesus (book of Ephesians). He traveled extensively with Paul in Greece and Rome. He was a “*dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant*” (v. 7).

Read Acts 20:1-5. Where were they and what was happening?

Read Ephesians 6:21-22. Summarize Tychicus' involvement here.

Onesimus // “*Faithful and dear brother who is one of you*” (v. 9). I really like him. I don't know why, but my heart feels soft toward him. Probably because of this story:

Read and paraphrase 2 Timothy 1:16-18.

Aristarchus // “*fellow prisoner*” (v. 10). He also got into a little trouble apparently and had travelled with Paul in Greece (Acts 20:1-5).

Mark // Yep, the gospel writer, Mark. Cousin of Barnabas — Paul's “person.” Paul and Mark had a falling out in Paul's early ministry days. Essentially, no one trusted Paul had really come over to the

Christian side. And let's be honest, who could blame them? Paul was a bad man and not in the "he's so bad, he's good" type of way. The two men eventually came to terms, but it was a widely known feud. So when Paul not only sends his greetings to Mark, but also feels the need to send instructions to be nice to him, there were clearly repercussions of their previous tension.

Jesus (called Justus) // Honestly, we don't know much about him. This is his one and only appearance in the New Testament, but since we know that Paul is so fiercely protective of His people and his circles, Justus must have made quite an impression on our beloved prisoner.

Epaphras // Gentile, and what we would call an Intercessor. His gift was clearly praying on behalf of others. I love the imagery used here of "wrestling in prayer," and he did that because he wanted for the members of the Church at Colossae to (1) stand firm in the will of God (2) become mature and (3) be fully assured. I appreciate the phrase "fully assured." Sends chills up my spine, if you want to know the truth. The good kind, of course. What a thing to be said about our character? She stood firm, was mature and fully assured in her faith. All the heart eyes.

Luke (the doctor and gospel writer) and Demas // They send their greetings. We know that Luke gave up his practice to travel with Paul, and there are extensive recordings of their travels together. Demas, not as much. While we don't have a ton of information on him, Paul references Demas in Philemon and 2 Timothy. So, they clearly were on the same path of forging the new church pathway.

Nympha and the church in her house // Come on now, this should make you jump up and down, ladies! She was a woman, and she hosted Church. For the record, it doesn't say that she pastored her church, but still! So fun that Paul mentions her and her home by name! 2 points for Paul!

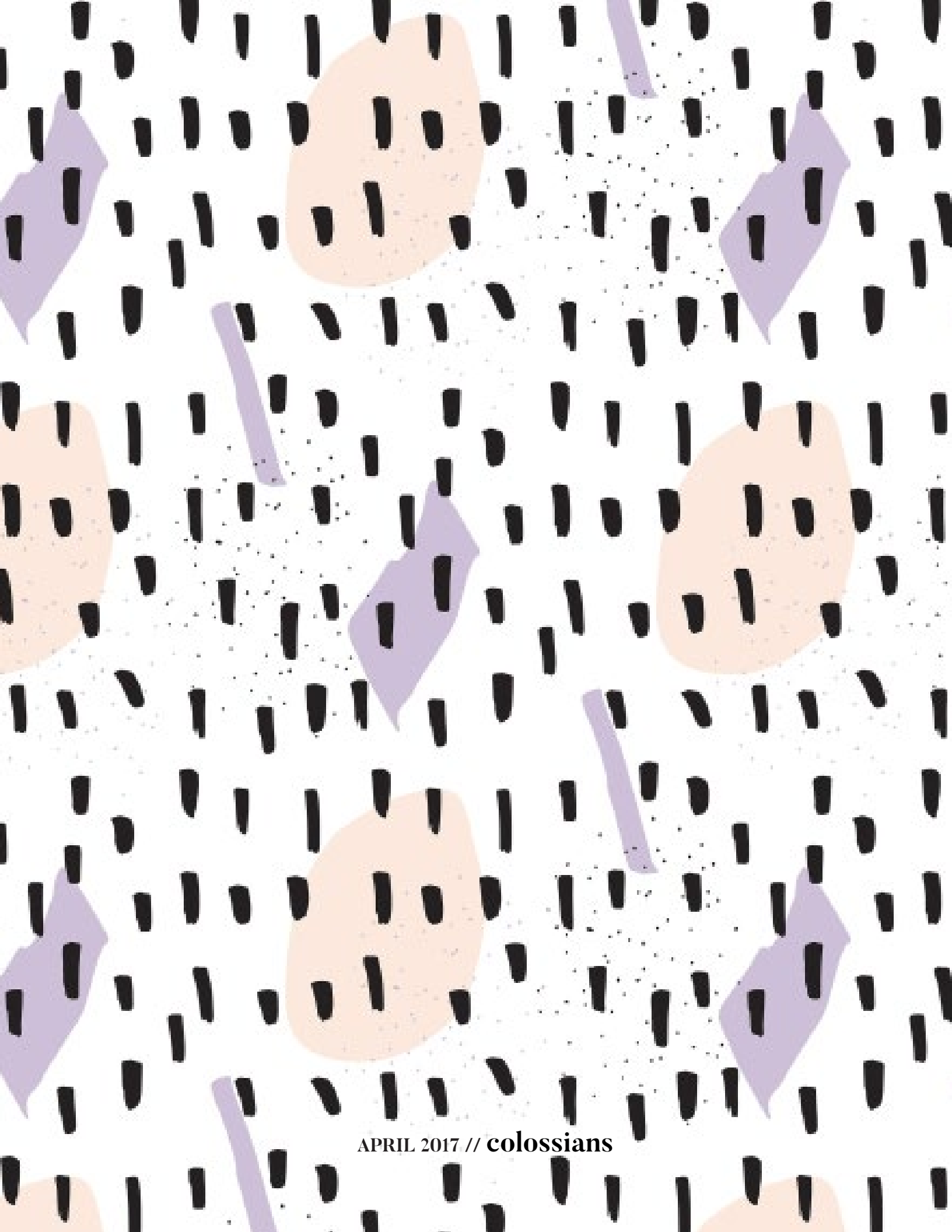
Lastly, we have **Archippus** // He's my favorite. Here's why. Because Paul literally speaks directly to him in a private message, but I have zero doubt that Archippus knew EXACTLY what Paul was talking about. The HCSB reads, 'Tell Archippus to pay attention to the ministry you have in the Lord, so that you can accomplish it.' We'd all be wise to 'pay attention' to our ministry!

Write Colossians 4:17 here:

In closing, Paul wanted us to know that he wrote this with his own hands, and to remember His chains. His physical chains. The chains that were around his wrists as he wrote this letter from the floor of a prison cell in ancient days. Not a prison of the mind. He literally couldn't get out on his own accord. Let's not sugar coat his story or tell ourselves that we serve a God who doesn't understand our woes. We very much serve a God that not only understands them but has walked the entire journey with us. We're in good company with Paul. He struggled to get his act together and even when he did, he never forgot who got him there, kept him there, and moved him outta there. We'd be wise to do the same!

"Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured."

Colossians 4:12



APRIL 2017 // **colossians**