

# Small Group Guide: The Supreme Life - Colossians 1:1-18

## Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

**Icebreaker Question:** What's your favorite pizza topping combination? (Or share a favorite meal from your childhood that brings back good memories.)

## Sermon Overview

This week we began a new series called "The Supreme Life" walking through the book of Colossians. Paul wrote this letter from prison to encourage a church he'd never visited, reminding them of Christ's supremacy and what it means to live in light of who Jesus is.

## Key Scripture

**Colossians 1:3-18** (Focus verses: 9-14)

## Discussion Questions

### Understanding the Text

#### 1. Paul's Encouragement (Colossians 1:3-8)

- Why do you think Paul began his letter with encouragement rather than correction?
- How does it make you feel knowing that Paul prayed continually for churches he'd never even visited?
- Who in your life needs to hear a "good report" or word of encouragement this week?

#### 2. Filled to Bear Fruit (Colossians 1:9-10)

- Shawn used the analogy of eating a huge meal and then needing to use that energy. How does this apply to spiritual growth?
- What's the difference between having spiritual knowledge and having spiritual wisdom?
- What happens when we receive God's Word but don't put it into practice?

#### 3. Three Reasons for Joy (Colossians 1:12-14)

- **Qualified:** How does knowing God has qualified you (not your own qualities) change how you approach serving Him?
- **Rescued:** What does it mean that God has rescued us from the dominion of darkness? What are you still allowing to have power over you?
- **Brought In:** How does the image of Jesus personally escorting us into God's kingdom impact your view of belonging?

## Going Deeper

#### 4. Joy vs. Happiness

- Shawn explained that happiness depends on circumstances, but joy comes from our identity in Christ. Do you agree? Why or why not?
- Paul wrote about joy while in prison awaiting trial. What circumstances in your life are currently challenging your joy?

- How can we cultivate joy even in difficult seasons?

#### 5. **The Dead Tree Analogy**

- What causes a Christian to become like a "dead tree" spiritually—having everything they need but not growing?
- What "water and sunlight" has God provided for your spiritual growth?
- Are there areas of your life where you're spiritually stagnant right now?

#### 6. **The Supremacy of Christ (Colossians 1:15-18)**

- What does it mean that Jesus has "supremacy" in everything?
- In the Roman world, Caesar was considered supreme. What competes for supremacy in our modern world?
- What would change in your daily life if you truly lived like Jesus is supreme over everything?

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### Key Takeaways

1. **We are not alone** - The gospel is spreading worldwide, and we're part of God's global family
2. **Knowledge must lead to action** - Being filled with God's truth requires us to bear fruit, not just sit still
3. **Joy is rooted in identity** - Our joy comes from being qualified, rescued, and brought into God's kingdom
4. **Christ is supreme** - Jesus holds the highest authority over all creation, including our lives

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### Practical Applications

#### This Week's Challenge (Choose 1-2):

##### 1. **Encourage Someone**

- Write a note, send a text, or make a call to give someone a "good report" like Paul did for the Colossians
- Be specific about what you've observed in their faith journey

##### 2. **Put Knowledge into Practice**

- Identify one truth from Scripture you know but aren't living out
- Take one concrete action this week to apply that truth

##### 3. **Examine What's Supreme**

- Make a list of what actually gets priority in your schedule, money, and thoughts
- Compare it to what you say is most important
- Identify one area where you need to make Jesus supreme

##### 4. **Practice Joy**

- When you face a difficult circumstance this week, pause and remind yourself:
  - God has qualified me
  - God has rescued me
  - God has brought me into His kingdom
- Journal about how this changes your perspective

##### 5. **Read Colossians**

- Read through the entire book of Colossians (it's only 4 chapters!)
- Write down questions or insights to share next week

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### Prayer Prompts

- **Thanksgiving:** Thank God for qualifying, rescuing, and bringing us into His kingdom
- **Confession:** Confess areas where we've allowed other things to be supreme instead of Jesus

- **Intercession:** Pray for churches in our community and around the world spreading the gospel
  - **Petition:** Ask God to fill us with knowledge, wisdom, and understanding that leads to fruitful living
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## Looking Ahead

Next week we'll dive deeper into Colossians 1:15-20 and explore what it means that Jesus is "the image of the invisible God" and that "in everything He may have supremacy."

**Preparation:** Read Colossians 1:15-20 multiple times this week and come ready to discuss what it means that Jesus is supreme over all creation.

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## Closing Question

*What is one thing God spoke to you about today that you want to remember and act on this week?*

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**Leader Tip:** Don't feel pressured to cover every question. Choose the ones most relevant to your group and allow the Holy Spirit to guide your conversation. The goal is transformation, not just information!