

# Small Group Rules



**RULE 1:** Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings. Please limit your sharing to 3-5 minutes.

**RULE 2:** We are here to support one another. We will not attempt to "fix" one another.

**RULE 3:** Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the group stays in the group.

**RULE 4:** There will be no cross-talk please. Cross-talk is when two individuals engage in a dialogue, excluding all others. Each person is free to express feelings without interruption.

**RULE 5:** Offensive language has no place in a Small group.

---

**June 8 - 29, 2008**

# C4

**June 8 - John 5:24-25**

**June 15 - Galatians 3:26-29**

**June 22 - Romans 6:2-4**

**June 29 - Ephesians 5:15-16**

---

By Chad Stecker



## Colossians - C4

### Authorship

While traditionally attributed to [Paul](#), disagreements exist among scholars because of issues such as language (48 words appear in Colossians that appear nowhere else in the Pauline corpus, 33 of these occur nowhere else in the N.T.)[\[1\]](#), style (This letter has a strong use of liturgical-hymnic style which is used nowhere else in Paul's work as extensively)[\[2\]](#), and the presence or absence of characteristic Pauline concepts. However, the differences between these elements in this letter and one commonly considered the genuine work of Paul (e.g. [1 Thessalonians](#)) are explained by advocates of pauline authorship by human variability, and the apparent use of an [amanuensis](#) in composition. Paul's authorship is also confirmed by many of the church's early key figures such as [Irenaeus](#), [Clement of Alexandria](#), [Tertullian](#), [Origen](#), and [Eusebius](#), though most of these references are much later than Paul, and several of them have proved unreliable for other identifications.[\[3\]](#) It has also been suggested that the epistle was co-authored by Paul's "apprentice," [Timothy](#) (Colossians 1:1). This might be one of the causes for so much controversy over authorship. For more details, see the article [Authorship of the Pauline epistles](#).

### Occasion of writing

Ostensibly it was written by Paul at Rome during his first imprisonment there ([Acts](#) 28:16, 30), probably in the spring of AD [57](#), or, as some scholars think, [62](#), soon after he had written his [Epistle to Ephesians](#). If the letter is not considered to be an authentic part of the Pauline corpus it might be dated during the late first century, possible as late as the 80's[\[4\]](#)

Like some of his other [epistles](#) (e.g., those to [Corinth](#)), this seems to have been written in consequence of information which had been conveyed to him of the internal state of the church there by Epaphras(1:4-8). Its object was to counteract [false teaching](#). A large part of it is directed against certain speculatists who attempted to combine the doctrines of Eastern [mysticism](#) and [asceticism](#) with [Christianity](#), thereby promising believers enjoyment of a higher spiritual life and a deeper insight into the world of [spirits](#). Paul argues against such teaching, showing that in [Christ](#) they had all things.



## Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown

**15. that**--rather as *Greek*, "See *how* ye walk," &c. The double idea is compressed into one sentence: "See (take heed) *how* ye walk," and "See *that* ye walk circumspectly." The *manner*, as well as the *act* itself, is included. See *how* ye are walking, with a view to your *being* circumspect (literally, *accurate, exact*) in your walk. Compare [Col 4:5](#), "Walk in *wisdom* (answering to 'as wise' here) toward them that are without" (answering to "circumspectly," that is, *correctly, in relation to the unbelievers around*, not giving occasion of stumbling to any, but edifying all by a consistent walk).

**not as fools**--*Greek*, "not as unwise, but as wise."

**16. Redeeming the time**-- ([Col 4:5](#)). *Greek*, "Buying up for yourselves the seasonable time" (whenever it occurs) of good to yourselves and to others. Buying *off from* the vanities of "them that are without" ([Col 4:5](#)), and of the "unwise" (here in Ephesians), the opportune time afforded to you for the work of God. In a narrower sense, *special favorable seasons for good*, occasionally presenting themselves, are referred to, of which believers ought diligently to avail themselves. This constitutes true "wisdom" ([Eph 5:15](#)). In a larger sense, *the whole season from the time that one is spiritually awakened*, is to be "redeemed" from vanity for God (compare [2Co 6:2](#); [1Pe 4:2-4](#)). "Redeem" implies the preciousness of the opportune season, a jewel to be bought at any price. WAHL explains, "Redeeming for yourselves (that is, availing yourselves of) the opportunity (offered you of acting aright), and commanding the time as a master does his servant." TITTMANN, "Watch the time, and make it your own so as to control it; as merchants look out for opportunities, and accurately choose out the best goods; serve not the time, but command it, and it shall do what you approve." So PINDAR [*Pythia*, 4.509], "The time followed him as his servant, and was not as a runaway slave."

**because the days are evil**--The days of life in general are so exposed to evil, as to make it necessary to make the most of the seasonable opportunity so long as it lasts ([Eph 6:13](#); [Ge 47:9](#); [Ps 49:5](#); [Ec 11:2](#); [12:1](#); [Joh 12:35](#)). Besides, there are many *special* evil days (in persecution, sickness, &c.) when the Christian is laid by in silence; therefore he needs the more to improve the seasonable times afforded to him ([Am 5:13](#)), which Paul perhaps alludes to.

---



## Week Four

### Ephesians 5:15-16

15Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

- Why is it so important to be careful how you live?
- What does it mean to be wise in the way you live?
- How do you make the most of every opportunity?
- Why does Paul say that the days are evil?

"Of all the pursuits open to men, the search for wisdom is most perfect, more sublime, more profitable, and more full of joy."

-Thomas Aquinas

### Application

Do you consider yourself a wise person?

Are there different levels of wisdom, or are you either wise or unwise?

Do you make the most of your opportunities? If so, how do you do it? If not, how can you start making the most of every opportunity?



He sets forth the majesty of his redemption. The mention of the "[new moon](#)" and "[sabbath](#) days" (2:16) shows that [Gnostic](#) ascetics were judging the body of Christ for "eating and drinking" and observing the "feasts, New Moons, and Sabbaths." In response, Paul commands the saints to "let no one judge you...but the body of Christ," i.e. the Church itself, which was observing these biblical holy days (Matt. 5:17-19; Rom. 3:31). Paul focuses much of his epistle to the Colossians in combating the teachings of the early Gnostic sects, particularly ascetics (see Col. 2:4-23).

---

### Notes:

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---





## Week One

### John 5:24-25

24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. 25 I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.

- Why do you think that Jesus felt like he needed to say “I tell you the truth...?”
- Why is it so important to not just believe in Jesus, but the one who sent Him?
- What does Jesus mean when he said, “he has crossed over from death to life.”?
- Who are the dead that will hear the voice of the Son of God?
- What must you do to live and Why?
- How has believing in Christ helped the way you live your life on a daily basis?

### Application

What practices can you have to help you hear God’s voice with a better understanding?

How can you help others hear the voice of the Son of God as you do?



## Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown

**Therefore we are**--rather, "were" (it being a past act, completed at once).

**buried with him, by baptism into death**--(The *comma* we have placed after "him" will show what the sense is. It is not, "By baptism we are buried with Him into death," which makes no sense at all; but, "By *baptism with Him into death* we are buried with Him"; in other words, "By the same baptism which publicly enters us into His *death*, we are made partakers of His *burial* also"). To leave a dead body unburied is represented, alike in heathen authors as in Scripture, as the greatest indignity ([Re 11:8, 9](#)). It was fitting, therefore, that Christ, after "dying for our sins according to the Scriptures," should "descend into the lower parts of the earth" ([Eph 4:9](#)). As this was the last and lowest step of His humiliation, so it was the honorable dissolution of His last link of connection with that life which He laid down for us; and we, in being "buried with Him by our baptism into His death," have by this public act severed our last link of connection with that whole sinful condition and life which Christ brought to an end in His death.

**that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father**--that is, by such a forth-putting of the Father's *power* as was the effulgence of His whole glory.

**even so we also**--as risen to a new life with Him.

**should walk in newness of life**--But what is that "newness?" Surely if our *old* life, now dead and buried with Christ, was wholly sinful, the *new*, to which we rise with the risen Saviour, must be altogether a holy life; so that every time we go back to "those things whereof we are now ashamed" ([Ro 6:21](#)), we belie our resurrection with Christ to newness of life, and "forget that we have been purged from our old sins" ([2Pe 1:9](#)). (Whether the mode of baptism by immersion be alluded to in this verse, as a kind of symbolical burial and resurrection, does not seem to us of much consequence. Many interpreters think it is, and it may be so. But as it is not clear that baptism in apostolic times was exclusively by immersion [see on [Ac 2:41](#)], so *sprinkling* and *washing* are indifferently used in the New Testament to express the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Jesus. And just as the woman with the issue of blood got virtue out of Christ by simply *touching* Him, so the essence of baptism seems to lie in the simple *contact* of the element with the body, symbolizing living contact with Christ crucified; the mode and extent of suffusion being indifferent and variable with climate and circumstances).



## Week Three

### Romans 6:2-4

2By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

- What does it mean to truly die to sin?
- What did Paul mean by saying that we have also been baptized into Christ's death?
- How does baptism help us live a new life? How should we live in this new life?
- What is Paul saying about living in the world after accepting Him into our hearts and dying to sin?

### Application

Have you died to your sins? What are you doing to prevent yourself from living in sin?

How are you living a new life right now? How are you different from before?



## Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown

24. believeth on him that sent me--that is, believeth in Him as having sent Me. I have spoken of the Son's right not only to heal the sick but to raise from the dead, and quicken whom He will: And now I say unto you, That life-giving operation has already passed upon all who receive My words as the Sent of the Father on the great errand of mercy. hath everlasting life--immediately on his believing (compare [Joh 3:18](#); [1Jo 5:12, 13](#)). is passed--"hath passed over" from death unto life--What a transition! (Compare [1Jo 3:14](#)).

25-29. The hour cometh--in its whole fulness, at Pentecost. and now is--in its beginnings. the dead--the spiritually dead, as is clear from [Joh 5:28](#). Here He rises from the calmer phrase "hearing his word" ([Joh 5:24](#)), to the grander expression, "hearing the voice of the Son of God," to signify that as it finds men in a dead condition, so it carries with it a resurrection-power. shall live--in the sense of [Joh 5:24](#).





## Week Two

### Galatians 3:26-29

26You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,  
27for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

- How does having faith in Jesus unify fellow believers?
- What does this verse say about the family of God?
- How does it clarify the worthiness of all people?
- What does Abraham's seed have to do with belonging to Christ?
- What is the promise that is awaiting those who belong to Christ.

### Application

Do you honestly consider other believers that are very different from you a part of your spiritual family?

What ministries within our church are you a part of? At some point in this series, try and attend a ministry in the church that you don't normally attend in support of your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.



## Matthew Henry Concise Edition

Real Christians enjoy great privileges under the gospel; and are no longer accounted servants, but sons; not now kept at such a distance, and under such restraints as the Jews were. Having accepted Christ Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, and relying on him alone for justification and salvation, they become the sons of God. But no outward forms or profession can secure these blessings; for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. In baptism we put on Christ; therein we profess to be his disciples. Being baptized into Christ, we are baptized into his death, that as he died and rose again, so we should die unto sin, and walk in newness and holiness of life. The putting on of Christ according to the gospel, consists not in outward imitation, but in a new birth, an entire change. He who makes believers to be heirs, will provide for them. Therefore our care must be to do the duties that belong to us, and all other cares we must cast upon God. And our special care must be for heaven; the things of this life are but trifles. The city of God in heaven, is the portion or child's part. Seek to be sure of that above all things.

