

TERM 2, 2025

DNA BOOKLET

Christ **OUR ALL**

4 WEEK SERIES IN COLOSSIANS

... JUST AS YOU RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS AS LORD, CONTINUE TO LIVE IN HIM, ROOTED AND BUILT UP IN HIM...

LIFE
actually

5 WEEK SERIES IN ECCLESIASTES

TERM OVERVIEW

This term we're doing not one, but two of my favourite books of the Bible - Colossians and Ecclesiastes. It'll be a lot of goodness to squeeze in. A bit like going out for dinner, looking at the menu and choosing both the steak and the burger (or both the falafel wrap and the tofu curry, if that's more your style).

For our four weeks in Colossians, we'll be reminded again and again and again and again (four times in fact) that Jesus is totally and completely sufficient. We'll be assured that we never need to move on, or up, or away from him. Colossians 2:6-7 is a key verse and well worth some deep reflection. It says, *"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."*

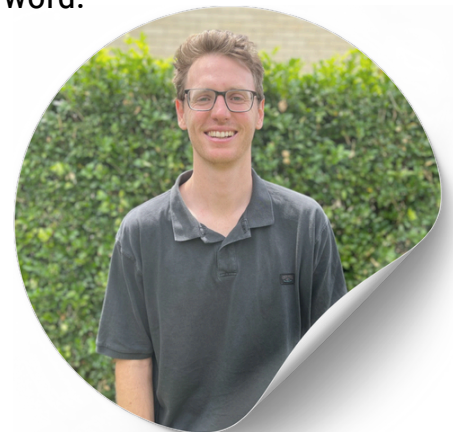
After our Colossians series, we'll hold our annual Food for Thought event. This is an opportunity to invite a friend along to hear a clear and thought-provoking message from the Bible, as well as to enjoy some good food together. As in previous years, there will be food trucks at Lismore High in the morning and our evening gathering will be at 2 Mates Brewery.

Food for Thought will kick off our five-week series in Ecclesiastes. Across both the first talk and the rest of the series, we'll see what life actually is - a mist, a breath. Here now, gone tomorrow. Like smoke you try to grasp hold of, but it keeps slipping through your fingers. But as we'll see, the misty, temporary nature of this world doesn't need to lead us to despair, the author of Ecclesiastes says that understanding this fact is actually vital to helping us live well in the world.

I hope you're looking forward to the term ahead together in God's word.

James Ritchie

Preaching & Mission Pastor



HOW TO BE GROWING FOLLOWERS OF JESUS

AS YOU STUDY GOD'S WORD...

IN COMMUNITY



It's good to study the Bible by yourself but it's even better to do it with friends. Bible study is best when it happens in the context of community. Bible study shouldn't be just an unrelated add-on to the rest of your busy life, it should be an essential part of an integrated whole—Christian friends doing what Christian friends do. There are two key ways we should be making use of God's word in community: "word to life" and "life to word".

WORD TO LIFE



When we study the Bible together we're letting God set the agenda. That's very important! We listen to God speak in the Bible, we work hard to help each other understand exactly what he's saying, and then together we apply what God is saying to our lives in the confidence that our loving Creator and Redeemer knows what's best for us. The important thing to remember is that we actually need each other throughout this whole process. It's great to study the Bible together!

LIFE TO WORD



The second crucial way that we should be making use of the Bible in community is in day-to-day conversation, starting with the everyday happenings of our lives and applying the gospel to those situations. The great thing is that the better we get at moving from "word to life", the better we'll get at moving from "life to word" and the more our communities will be shaped by the gospel of Jesus! So enjoy—make the most of it—and let's watch as God shapes us to be more and more like his glorious Son!

SAVE THE DATE

FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

SUNDAY JUNE 1, 2025

9:30AM @ LISMORE HIGH

5PM @ TWO MATES



SOUTHERN CROSS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



WHAT IS LIFE
actually?

SAFARI | JULY 12-16



Kick-off: before jumping into God's WORD, it's worth taking a few minutes to reflect on your own thoughts and attitudes and on the thoughts and attitudes you encounter in the WORLD...

What messages does the world around us like to reinforce?

Discover: the "D" in DNA stands for DISCOVER. It's now time to read God's word and discover what God wants to teach us and why it matters...



READ COLOSSIANS 1:1-23

1. What are the features of the prayer found in verses 3-8?
2. What are the features of the prayer found in verses 9-14?
3. What do we learn about Jesus from verses 15-20?
4. What do we learn about ourselves from verses 21-23?

5. When Paul says in verse 23 *"This is the gospel"*, what are some verses that best illustrate the gospel he is referring to?

Nurture & Apply: the "NA" in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God's word...

6. Paul powerfully models prayer in verses 3-14. What aspect of his prayer most strikes you? And what aspect/s do you think are weakest in your own prayer life?

7. How does the truth of who Jesus **is** from verses 15-20 challenge the way you view and respond to him?

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Imagine you're building a puzzle that represents your life - your experiences, relationships, beliefs, everything that makes you, you. Take 2-3 minutes to reflect quietly where you feel you have 'fullness' in this life puzzle. Where do you feel there are missing pieces?

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Keep in mind that Paul is loud and clear that **Jesus plus nothing = fullness, but **Jesus plus something = nothing** as we read Colossians 1:24 - 2:23.**



READ COLOSSIANS 1:24-2:23

1. Paul was tasked by God to reveal God's Word to the Lord's people (Col 1:24-25). This Word (Col 1:27) Paul calls a "mystery" but not the way we usually understand "mystery" as a secret. What does the context suggest this meaning is?

2. Colossians 1:28-29 says more of how Paul achieves verse 25. Why does Paul emphasise that Christ is for 'everyone' three times, considering the likely secret nature of the false claims or ideas they faced?

3. If it is true that in everything Jesus has supremacy (i.e. Jesus provides salvation and ongoing life, see 2:6), what made the false claims so appealing (see 2:4), and why is Paul emphasising fullness or completeness in Christ?

4. Paul tells the Colossians to “continue to live your lives in Christ” to combat these false claims (vv.6-7). What does this mean and what does “with thankfulness” have to do with it?

5. Identify Paul’s reasons to reject false claims and his warnings about them in verses 9 - 23?

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6. Think of alternative ways you are tempted by to have “full life” in our context today and how would Colossians 1:24 - 2:23 instruct you to counter them?

7. Paul stresses in different ways that the risen Jesus is sufficient for every aspect of life (Christ in you, the hope of glory!). But paradoxically, not only must we receive Jesus but take hold of him by continuing “to live your lives in him”. So, being connected to Jesus is vital to live a life that is ever increasing and getting ‘fuller’. Being vitally connected to Jesus is the key to maturing life. How do we cultivate it?

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Why does the world (e.g. your colleagues, neighbours etc.) think we should do good things?

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READ COLOSSIANS 3:1-4:1

1. a) In verses 1-4 why does Paul say things like 'you died', 'you have been raised' and 'you will appear with him glory'?
- b) What does it mean to set our hearts and minds on things above? How do we do that?
2. Write down all the things we are called to 'put off' and 'put on' in verses 5-17. If there are any reasons given, include them in the next column. Discuss afterwards.

PUT OFF	WHY?

PUT ON	WHY?

3. Which of the vices do you find hardest to put off? Which of the virtues do you find hardest to put on?

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4. How are verses 3:18-4:1 also intended to be a picture of how to live in response to what Jesus has done for us?

5. As you aim to live a life pleasing to God, which aspect of the gospel do you most need reminding of today (for inspiration look over verses 1-4, as well as all the reasons in the table)?

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What might be some reasons people watch the news?

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READ COLOSSIANS 4:2-18

1. In verse 2, what might being "watchful and thankful" have to do with Paul's call to being devoted to prayer?
2. In verses 3-4, what are the priorities of Paul's request for prayer?
3. In verses 5-6, Paul instructs the Colossians regarding the way they act towards outsiders. Who are these "outsiders"? And what might conversation "full of grace" and "seasoned with salt" look like?

4. In verses 7-9, what do we learn about the purpose of Paul sending Tychicus and Onesimus? What benefits might there be in the Colossian church being thoroughly informed of “everything that is happening”?

5. Verses 10-18 are all about greetings. What do we learn about all those with Paul? Why do you think Paul was so detailed in recounting all those who sent their greetings?

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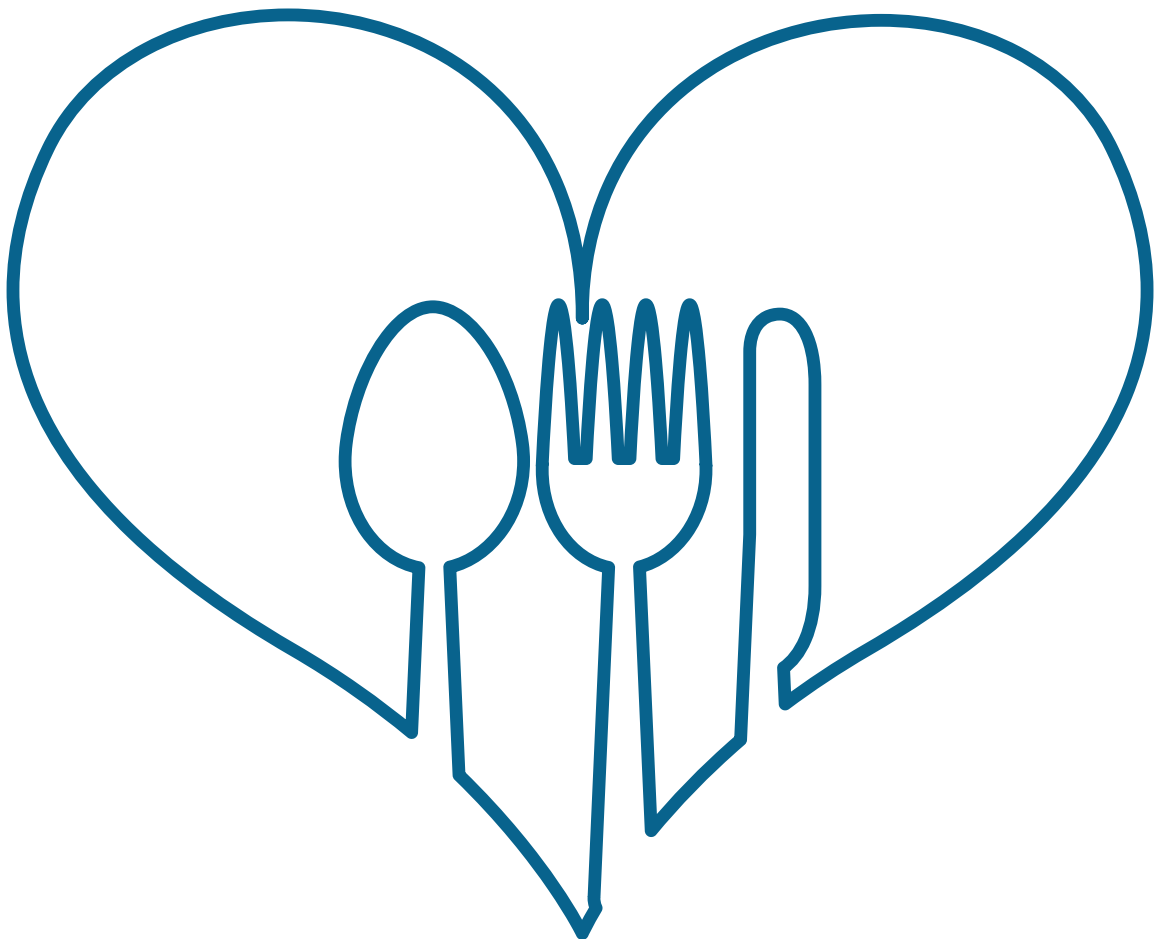
6. How does your prayer life align with the call to be devoted, watchful and thankful?

7. What is one way your conversation with outsiders can be more graceful and salty?

8. Who is one local gospel worker you can encourage? And who is one global gospel worker you can be sharing your life and ministry with, as well as be praying for?

No DNA study this week!

Instead, gather around a table for good food and great company. Organise a meal together and bring along some friends - it's the perfect chance to connect, share, and enjoy meaningful conversations.



You might like to use this page as you think about how Ecclesiastes 1 could challenge, encourage, or intrigue someone who hasn't encountered Jesus before. As you read and reflect, you might like to note some questions you could use to prompt curiosity and discussion at your meal with friends.

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What are the biggest things your friends/colleagues chase after? (E.g. fulfilling jobs, renovated houses, new experiences etc.)

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READ ECCLESIASTES 2

1. In verses 1-11, the Teacher tries many things in his search for pleasure. What are each of the things he tries? What is his conclusion (2:10-11)?
2. In verses 12-17, what does the Teacher say about wisdom, folly and madness? Why does he conclude that wisdom is also 'meaningless'/'mist'?
3. In verses 18-23, what is the Teacher's verdict on our work?

4. What hints are there in verses 24-26 about how to live the good life?

5. From what we've read so far, do you think the Teacher is positive or negative about life under the sun?

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6. When do you fall into the trap of chasing after the wind? What are you likely to chase after?

7. What do you most need to learn from Ecclesiastes 2?

8. How does Matthew 6:19-21 also help us to understand Ecclesiastes 2?

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When is it good for someone else to be in control? When is it bad? Give an example.

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READ ECCLESIASTES 3:1-15

1. Look over the "Time Poem" in verses 1-8. What does the poem make you feel? Circle as many options as are true for you...

- depressed - confused - at peace - amazed
- encouraged - frustrated - thankful - something else _____

Why does the poem make you feel this way? What feeling do you think it is designed to convey?

2. Think about your own life experience. How much control have you had over "the times" described in the poem?

3. What is the “burden” the Teacher is talking about (3:9-11)?

4. From verses 9-15, in what ways is God different to us? Why is that a good thing?

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5. What is the key to finding satisfaction in the toil and seasons of life?

6. Why do we find it hard to simply accept as a gift the times and seasons that God gives us? What are the benefits of doing this?

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How often do most people think about death? Is it helpful to think about or not?

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READ ECCLESIASTES 7

1. In verses 1-6, the Preacher appears to be saying that funerals (the house of mourning) are of more value than parties (the house of feasting). Why is he saying that? What is the value of seeing death as a teacher?
2. The Preacher examines greed (v7), impatience (v8), anger (v9) and nostalgia (v10) in view of death. What impact should death have on each of these in our lives?
3. What are the positive qualities of wisdom described in this chapter (especially verses 10-12)?

4. What are the limitations of wisdom? What can't it achieve (especially verses 13-14 and 23-24)?

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5. How could a closer examination of death help you personally to live well in the world (think in particular of how it could help you with the four attitudes mentioned in question 2)?

6. Hebrews 2:15 gives us the good news that we have been freed from slavery to fear of death through Jesus. How do we both rejoice in the victory Jesus has won over death, while still carefully examining our lives in view of death, like Ecclesiastes encourages us to do?

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Has there been a period of your life you felt you wasted? If so, why?

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READ ECCLESIASTES 12

1. What must we remember (v1)?
2. Verses 2-7 give us a vivid picture of aging and death. Why do you think the Teacher includes it?
3. What does it mean to remember your creator (v1)? What does it mean to fear God and keep his commandments (v13)? How are the two related?

4. The author of Ecclesiastes has spent a lot of the book talking about how everything in this life is meaningless (literally: a breath) and how chasing the things of this world is like chasing the wind. How does his conclusion in verses 13-14 fit with the rest of the book? How has he been leading us towards it?

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5. How does remembering our Creator help us make the most of life now (i.e. to not waste our life)?

6. From the whole series, what's your 'take home' - the thing you want to remember or put into practice for the rest of your life? Take a moment to reflect and write down your answer before sharing.



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