



**MOVING FORWARD:  
What Does That Look Like For You?  
January 24, 2016 – Pastor Stephen Mason  
SERMON-BASED STUDY GUIDE**

**Connect**

1. Reflect on and consider sharing with your group about a time when you remember feeling greatly 'encouraged' by another person. What did that person do or say that caused you to feel so encouraged?

**Engage**

- *Have a member from your group read aloud the 'Historical Background' of Colossians (located on the reverse side of the page)*

**• *Read Colossians 2:6-15***

1. What does "living in Christ" or "walking in Christ" (vs. 6) involve (see 1:10-12)? What does the phrase "rooted and built up" imply to you?
2. What kind of circumcision is done by Christ (vs. 11)? How did he do it (vs. 12-15)?
3. Read Colossians 2:13 and then read Romans 6:11-13. What does it mean to be "dead to sin"? If we are dead to sin, how is it that Christians still sin? What does it mean to practice the teachings in Romans 6:11-13?

**Apply**

1. In what area of your life, or in what relationship do you feel you need to be dead to sin but alive to God?
2. Read Romans 12:9-18. Which verse or verses strike you the most, where you most feel God is calling to you?

## **COLOSSIANS**

### ***Historical Background***

Although Paul never visited Colossae, a town about 100 miles east of Ephesus, the church there was probably established as a result of his extended ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19:8-10). While in prison in Rome, Paul was visited by Epaphras, a native of Colossae, who founded the church there.

His report of a developing problem in the Colossian church prompted Paul to write. It seems that the church was coming under the influence of certain false teachers. The problem for the church seems to have been that of 'syncretism,' ie. combining various teachings from different religions to come up with something new.

Apparently, Greek philosophy, cultic practices, Christianity and Jewish speculations were blended together to offer a "fuller" type of spiritual experience. Jesus was seen as one of several "deities" through which one approaches the Divine. Rigorous ascetic disciplines were used as a means to experience trance-like "visions."

In contrast, Paul presents Jesus as the true Lord of the universe (1:15-18; 2:9-10) and highlights love, thankfulness and forgiveness as the marks of true spirituality (3:12-17).