

Leader Guide

Revive, Resolve and Restore

Spring 2026 | Week 8

Message Date 5/24/2026

THE GOAL

This week Pastor Craig sought to help us understand the reviving power of God's Word in the face of past bondage, present pressure, and the kingdom of darkness pressing in around them. This week we dive into Colossians where Paul writes to a young church in Colossae that is surrounded by thirteen-plus pagan cults, demonic activity, and the constant pull of a life they've already been delivered from. Rather than dismantle each and every cult, Paul shows them Jesus; His preeminence, His finished work, and the citizenship transfer that has already taken place for the believer.

The goal this week is for us to unpack and apply three key truths: (1) the kingdom of darkness no longer has legal authority over the believer; (2) the only remaining power the enemy holds is the lies a believer keeps agreeing with; and (3) God's Word is the means by which He revives us when affliction tries to bury us.

MY STORY

- 1) If you could trade your current passport today for citizenship in any fictional kingdom — Narnia, Wakanda, the Shire, Hogwarts, Asgard, anywhere — where would you move and what is the first thing you would do as a brand-new citizen?
- 2) What is one item in your house right now that you absolutely refuse to throw away — even though everyone in your family thinks you should — and what's the story behind it?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

Read **Colossians 1:1–26 (ESV)**

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

²To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father. ³We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, ⁶which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, ⁷just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf ⁸and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

⁹And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; ¹²giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

¹⁷And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

²¹And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²²he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

²⁴Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, ²⁵of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.

- 4) In a culture where surveys show roughly 17% of practicing Christians strongly agree that AI is a spiritual authority worth listening to (and the best AI is only about 64% accurate on Christian theology), why does it matter where you go for spiritual truth, and where are you most tempted right now to outsource your discernment?

The moment we get fuzzy about who has authority to speak into our spiritual lives, we drift. Today the noise is louder than ever. Podcasts, influencers, social-media theology, and now AI tools that will confidently give you wrong answers about Scripture more than a third of the time. The survey data is sobering: a significant percentage of practicing Christians say they will “hear AI out” on spiritual questions. This is the easy way and without theological training it is hard to spot the mistakes that are out there

- 5) Paul tells the Colossians the Gospel is “bearing fruit and increasing in the whole world.” What is he doing for them by saying that, and why do we need to hear the same thing today?

At the end of the day these are Jesus stories. This is why we tell stories of life transformations here at our church. They encourage our souls. Paul is encouraging the Colossians because they live in a dark time in a dark place. I could make a similar claim about our world today; we live in a dark time not a dark place and it is always encouraging to my soul when I hear stories of the Gospel spreading.

- 6) Paul prays first that the Colossians would be “filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.” What is the difference between knowing about God and being filled with the knowledge of His will. How would that same prayer impact your life if you prayed that for each other in your group over the next couple of weeks?

Paul makes a careful distinction here. He doesn't pray for more information about God — he prays for the knowledge of God's will, applied with spiritual wisdom and understanding. There is a real difference between knowing the right answers and knowing how to walk them out. I have this conversation on a regular basis with people. It's one thing to know it, it's another thing to know how to live it out. I think it could be a powerful testimony if we prayed for each other this way.

- 7) Paul prays not for the Colossians' comfort but for their “endurance and patience with joy.” What does that tell us about how God revives His people in hard seasons, and what would change in your prayer life if you prayed this for yourself?

Paul's prayer is clear, it's not to evacuate them out of the situation they're in. Instead, it's to strengthen them with endurance and patience with joy in the midst of their situation. This tells me that joy is not necessarily circumstantial. I can feel joy in any environment because it comes from Jesus. God meets us where we are, He does not rescue us from the situation. I hope that's an encouragement because in our hard times God is present.

- 8) Paul uses the language of a citizenship transfer. What does that mean practically for a believer who is still surrounded by reminders of their old life, and where do you still feel the pull of that old “country”?

This is one of the most freeing sentences in the New Testament. “Delivered” and “transferred” are past-tense, completed actions. You are not trying to get free — you have already been moved. Picture switching your citizenship from one country to another. The old country no longer has any legal claim on you. Even if you walk back

into it, you walk back as a citizen of a different kingdom, with different rights, a different ruler, and a different identity. Here is the truth that revives us. The kingdom of darkness has no legal authority over you anymore. The only thing the enemy still holds against you is the lies you keep agreeing with. Figure out what the lies are that we believe. Stop agreeing with them.

- 9) In one paragraph Paul tells us Jesus created every throne and authority in existence and then bled to death on a cross for the people who rebelled against Him. What does this teach us about Christ's character and how does it encourage you?

It really shows me the supremacy of Christ--there is nothing above Him. And in the fact that He created all He chose to step down from the role of Creator and His supremacy to rescue us from ourselves and from the sin that we are entangled by. And to move us into His new Kingdom. It shows me His love, and it shows me that He did it for me.

- 10) Paul ties our reconciliation to one important condition — “if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast.” What does perseverance look like in real life, and what practices keep you stable when your faith feels shaky?

(Justin) Don't trust my feelings. Get in the Word every day. Praying all the time. If it crosses my mind, I pray about it. If I think about someone else, I pray about them. It's an ongoing conversation I have with Jesus. I don't have a looking glass that can tell me about tomorrow, all I can do is be faithful today. And a bunch of todays strung together become weeks, become months, and become years. I personally don't chase tomorrow, I just do my best today.

- 11) In what ways do you need Jesus to revive your soul this week?

(Justin) For me it's the continued stories of what God is doing in and through the lives of other people. That always encourages me and revives my soul.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

- 1) Sit quietly with Colossians 1:13–14 each morning this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to name one lie from your past that is still acting like it has authority over you. Surrender that lie to Jesus and ask Him to help you with the truth.
- 2) Pray Psalm 119:92–93 back to God as your own words. Name the affliction you are currently walking through and ask Him to revive you by His precepts in that exact place.
- 3) Who can you encourage and strengthen this week with what you have learned? Call them and share it with them.