

COLOSSIANS

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INTRODUCTION:

1. Ephesians exalts Christ as the Head of the church while Philippians sets forth the mind of Christ, and Colossians sets forth Christ as the head of the church.
2. Christ is exalted above all creation.
 - A. Christ is the sum of every chapter and verse.
 - B. This book has been referred to as the “most Christ centered epistle in the New Testament.”
3. There are three great phrases in Colossians which sum up His supremacy:
 - A. “. . . that in all things he might have the preeminence.” - Colossians 1:18.
 - B. “. . . in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” - Colossians 2:9.
 - C. “. . . Christ is all, and in all.” - Colossians 3:11.
4. Colossians clearly sets forth the nature of Christ:
 - A. God is His Father - 1:3.
 - B. He is God’s dear Son - 1:13.
 - C. He is the image of the invisible God - 1:15.
 - D. He has preeminence of every creature - 1:15.
 - E. He is before all things - 1:17.
 - F. All things are held together by Him - 1:17.
 - G. He is the beginning - 1:18.
 - H. He is preeminent from the dead - 1:18.
 - I. He is preeminent in all things - 1:18.
 - J. In Christ all the fullness dwells - 1:19.
 - K. In Christ are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge - 2:3.
 - L. In Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead - 2:9.
5. The book of Colossians is one of the “prison letters.”

BODY:

1. WHO WROTE THE BOOK?

- A. Internal evidence:
 1. The writer identifies himself as Paul three times - Colossians 1:1, 23; 4:18.

2. Book is very similar to other epistles recognized to have been written by Paul.
3. Paul's "son in the faith" is the companion of the writer - Colossians 1:1.

B. External evidence:

1. About A.D. 180, Irenaeus wrote that Paul, in the Epistles to the Colossians, said "Luke the beloved physician sends greetings." - Colossians 4:14.
2. About A.D. 210 Clement of Alexandria quoted Colossians 1:28 and attributed it to Paul.
3. About A.D. 220 Origin quoted Colossians 2:18, 19 and credited it to Paul.

2. TO WHOM WAS THE BOOK WRITTEN?

A. The "saints" at Colossae - Colossians 1:2.

B. The city of Colossae was one of the three chief cities of Phrygia.

1. It was located 12 miles from Hierapolis and 10 miles from Laodicea.
2. Located at the meeting point of the Lycus and Maeander Rivers.
3. It had declined in importance and was overshadowed by its sister cities.
4. Between the years 223-187 B.C., Antiochus the Great had moved about 2,000 Jewish families from Mesopotamia and Babylon into the area.
5. Population was mainly Phrygian with strong Greek influence.

C. Paul did not establish the church at Colossae.

1. He had "heard" of their faith - Colossians 1:4, 9.
2. It seems that Epaphras, from Colossae, established the church at Colossae, along with Hierapolis and Laodicea - Colossians 4:12, 13.
 - A. He may have been a convert of Paul while Paul lived at Ephesus - Acts 19:10.

3. WHEN AND WHERE WAS THE BOOK WRITTEN?

A. Paul was in his first imprisonment at Rome - Acts 28:30, 31.

B. This imprisonment has been placed at A.D. 60-62.

C. Colossians was written near the end of that time - i.e. around A.D. 62.

4. WHY WAS THE BOOK WRITTEN?

A. The church at Colossae was invaded with a new heresy.

1. It appears to have been a mixture of Greek philosophy, Eastern religions and elements of Judaism - Colossians 2:8-23.
 - A. A later development of this heresy was referred to as "Gnosticism."
2. Greek and Eastern thought considered the body as a prison of the soul.
3. There was believed to be an antagonism between the body and spirit, the physical and the spiritual.
4. God is spirit, but the creation is matter.
 - A. It was argued that due to this fact God did not create directly, but angelic beings.
 - B. Therefore, these angelic beings were to be worshipped - Colossians 2:18.
- B. The writer refuted this heresy by exalting Christ.
 1. As Creator of all things - 1:16, 17.
 2. As the One who redeemed man by His blood - 1:14, 20.
 3. As the One in whom dwelt the fullness of deity bodily - 2:9.
- C. He further pointed out that philosophies and traditions of men have no part in man's salvation - 2:8.
- D. The Law of Moses had been nailed to the cross - 2:14.
- E. Angels are created beings and are not to be worshipped - 2:18.

5. OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS.

- A. Introductory matters - 1:1-12.
- B. Doctrinal matters - 1:13-2:3.
- C. Disputed matters - 2:4-23.
- D. Practical matters - 3:1-4:6.
- E. Concluding matters - 4:7-18.

6. LESSONS WE LEARN FROM COLOSSIANS.

- A. The kingdom has already been established - Colossians 1:13.
- B. It is only by the blood of Christ is one redeemed - Colossians 1:14.
- C. The head of the church is Christ - Colossians 1:18.
- D. The gospel was preached to the whole world - Colossians 1:6, 23.
- E. Christ is the Creator of all things - Colossians 1:16.
- F. Baptism requires a burial and a resurrection - Colossians 2:12.
- G. The Law of Moses was nailed to the cross - Colossians 2:14.
- H. Man must have authority for all they do - Colossians 3:17.
- I. The New Testament writings were circulated widely very early in the

history of the church - Colossians 4:16.

CONCLUSION:

1. A religion that is wrong on the person, nature, work or identity of Christ is wrong.
 - A. It does not need to be further examined.
2. Christ must be exalted in every aspect of the life of the child of God and all that he does must have the authority of God behind it - Colossians 3:17.

COMMENTARY, COLOSSIANS

CHAPTER ONE:

Verse 1

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, . . .
 - A. The Apostle Paul begins each of the books that are assigned to him with the inclusion of his name.
 - B. At our introduction to Paul, we see him referred to as Saul - Acts 7:58.
 1. Saul would be the Hebrew name while Paul would be the Greek equivalent.
 2. Other than when speaking of his conversion (Acts 22:7; 26:14), Paul always referred to himself as Paul.
 - A. This was probably due to the fact that he was writing to those of Gentile background.
 - C. Recall that Paul saw himself as having been “called to be an apostle” - Romans 1:1.
 1. Consider Acts 9:1-22; 22:1-16; 26:18 to see how Paul was “called.”
 - D. His reference to his having become an apostle “by the will of God” no doubt was done so to contradict the false teachers who accused him of having made himself an apostle.
 1. This calling came from God - 1 Timothy 1:1.
 - A. He was literally sent by the Lord to be the apostle to the Gentiles.
 2. See 1 Corinthians 9:1-3 and Galatians 1:11-24 for his defense of his apostleship.
2. . . . and Timotheus our brother,
 - A. It was not uncommon for Paul to mention those who were present with him when he wrote - Philippians 1:1.
 - B. Timothy is mentioned some twenty-four times in the New Testament.
 1. Timothy was the son of a Greek father and Jewish mother - Acts 16:1.
 2. Recall how that his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois had taught him the scriptures from his early childhood - 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15.
 3. Paul having referred to him as his “son” no doubt was due to a spiritual connection - 1 Timothy 1:18; 2 Timothy 1:2; 2:1.

A. It is believed that Paul probably baptized him.

Verse 2

1. To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: . . .
 - A. Not two groups of people under consideration but rather, Paul describing the same group with two different descriptions.
 1. The word “saints” had reference to their having been called out of the world to serve God.
 2. While the word “faithful” had reference to how they were carrying out the responsibilities of being “saints.”
 - A. It could be expressed as, “To the holy and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colosse.”
 - B. David Padfield has a booklet entitled “The Biblical City of Colosse.”
 1. It is available at www.padfield.com/acrobat/history/laodicea.pdf
2. . . . Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - A. A common greeting by Paul, although worded a little differently at times.
 1. We see in this Paul’s concern for these brethren.

Verse 3

1. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,
 - A. The use of the plural “we” here suggests that to this point Paul includes Timothy in what is being said.
 1. This does not, though, imply that Timothy served as co-author.
 2. Later, Paul will point out that he wrote with his “own hand,” at least the salutation - Colossians 4:18.
 - B. The word “thanks” is from the Greek word “eucharisteo” and indicates an attitude of freely expressing one’s thankfulness that comes forth from a heart filled with appreciation.
 1. Of the thirteen books known to be written by Paul, he mentions such thanksgiving in all but four - 2 Corinthians, Galatians, 1 Timothy and Titus.
 - C. The reference to God as “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” has reference to the relationship they have with each other.
 - D. Notice that the prayer is directed “to God . . . the Father.”
 1. Don Hatch has written an excellent article entitled “Personal Communication with God” wherein he stated the following,

“Prayers are addressed to the Father. Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and upon the earth (Matthew 28:18-20). However, Jesus remains subject to the Father and is at His right hand. Jesus rules the Kingdom, but one day will deliver it up to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:20-28). The clear pattern of prayer in the New Testament is that they are addressed to God the Father, not to Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit nor individuals. The Holy Spirit, like Jesus, makes intercession on our behalf (Romans 8:26-30).” (Hatch, 2011, p. 7).

- E. We see in this statement from Paul the fact of his understanding of the importance of prayer.
 - 1. Paul indicated that he was constant in his prayer on behalf of the Colossian brethren.

Verse 4

- 1. Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints. . .
 - A. Due to their previously having heard of the faith, love and hope of the Colossians, Paul always prayed for them.
 - 1. It was not unusual for Paul to hear of reports concerning congregations of which he was associated.
 - A. Remember his remarks concerning “the care of all the churches” - 2 Corinthians 11:28.
 - 2. Due to his position he often responded to the reports.
 - A. He wrote to the church at Philippi concerning the issue between Euodia and Syntyche - Philippians 4:2.
 - B. He wrote to Timothy about Hymenaeus and Philetus - 2 Timothy 2:16-18.
 - C. He, likewise, wrote Timothy concerning Demas who had deserted him - 2 Timothy 4:10.
 - 3. It is important to keep in mind that such did not involve his meddling in the affairs of others where he had no business.
 - A. Such would be nothing other than gossip, which is forbidden - Romans 1:29; 2 Corinthians 12:20.
 - B. Paul’s involvement in these and other issues was due to his concern for those involved, rather than just to “hear what he could hear” about problems of congregations or individuals.

Verse 5

1. For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;
 - A. Biblical “hope” (elpis) is more than desire.
 1. It is better understood as hope plus expectation.
 2. It is interesting to note that rather than “faith” and “love” being the reason for “hope,” they are presented here as the result of “hope.”
 - A. The Colossians’ “hope” produced “faith” and “love.”
 3. We see in association with “hope” the necessity of “faith working through love” - Galatians 5:6.
- B. Their “hope” was “stored up” in heaven, where “treasures” are to be “stored” - Matthew 6:19, 20.
 1. The Greek word used here, “apokeimenen,” is translated “appointed” in Hebrews 9:27.
 2. The idea was, those who were “in Christ” had a place reserved for them in heaven - John 14:1-3.
- C. The message from which their “hope” was derived had already been delivered to them - Colossians 1:7, 23; 2:6.
 1. This message is seen by Paul as “the word of the truth of the gospel.”
 - A. Paul used similar wording when writing to the Ephesians - Ephesians 1:13.
 2. The “gospel” (“euangelion”), is the “power of God unto salvation” - Romans 1:16.
 - A. It is by and through the “truth” (i.e. word) that man is saved - John 8:32; 17:17; James 1:21.

Verse 6

1. Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; . . .
 - A. God’s desire is that none should perish - 2 Peter 3:9.
 1. Because of that, instruction has been given for the gospel to be taken to the world (“kosmos”) - Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:16.
 2. The gospel must be taken to the world so man may hear and learn - Romans 10:14-17.
 - B. The phrase “all the world” most likely is in reference to the whole of the Roman Empire, which would have been no easy task given the

size of the Roman Empire and the difficulties associated with travel.

C. The early church “went everywhere preaching the word” - Acts 8:4.

1. We ask why we are not seeing results like the early church.

A. The answer is simple; we aren’t doing what they did.

2. . . . and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, . . .

A. Not only was “fruit” being “brought forth,” but it was “constantly” so as is seen in the New American Standard Version.

1. This is seen as the result of the preaching and lives of the early Christians.

A. Peter instructed wives concerning their lives and teachings -
1 Peter 3:1-3.

B. As with any agricultural project, if “seed” is not sown, there will be no harvest (fruit) - Luke 8:4-15.

C. “Fruit,” in the lives of the Colossians, would be seen in the righteousness practiced by each of them.

1. Recall what “the fruit of the Spirit” is - Galatians 5:22, 23.

3. . . . since the day ye heard of it, and knew. . .

A. Early on the church at Colosse was active in spreading the gospel.

B. Knowing the truth is better seen as their having “understood” it, as seen in the English Standard Version.

1. A form of the Greek word “epegnote” was used here, and expressed the idea of fully knowing something due to teaching and experience.

A. A full comprehension is seen here.

2. This reminds us of the question asked of the Ethiopian nobleman - Acts 8:30.

4. . . . the grace of God in truth:

A. “Grace” is from the Greek word “charis,” referring to God’s favor extended to them.

B. This “favor” of God is only found in relation to “truth” - Titus 2:11-14.

Verse 7

1. As ye also learned of Epaphras . . .

A. “Epaphras” was a contraction of “Epaphroditus,” who we see mentioned in Philippians 2:25; 4:18.

1. These are two distinct individuals.

B. It is believed that he is the one who first brought the gospel to

Colosse.

2. . . . our dear fellowservant, . . .
 - A. The New American Standard Versions states “our beloved fellow bond-servant.”
 1. Recall how Paul saw himself as a “slave” (“doulos”) of Christ - Romans 1:1.
 - B. Paul viewed Epaphras as a “fellow slave” to the Lord.
3. . . . who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;
 - A. The word “faithful” here was in reference to the dedication and reliability of Epaphras as a “slave.”
 - B. The word “minister” (“servant”) is from the Greek word “diakonos” in reference to one who willingly serves another.
 1. “Diakonos” is used in both an “official” (1 Timothy 3:12) and non “official” sense, such as here.
 2. Paul’s commendation of Epaphras was brought on due to his being faithful in serving the Lord.
 - C. Later versions than the King James Version have this portion of this passage to say “. . . who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf” as per the English Standard Version.
 1. This presents the problem of how the word “our” was to be understood?
 - A. The question arises as to whether the word “our” comes from the Greek word “hemon” or “humon.”
 2. Olbricht provides this explanation “The meaning is not greatly changed with either translation. If *humon* is the correct reading, then Epaphras helped Paul in sharing the gospel, benefiting Paul’s work and those who heard him preach. If *hemon* is correct, then Paul was indicating that Epaphras had Paul’s full approval as a messenger of Christ to the Colossians.” (Olbricht, 2005, p. 69).

Verse 8

1. Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.
 - A. Epaphras brought a report to Paul and Timothy concerning the progress seen in the lives of the Colossians.
 - B. There is some question concerning the phrase “in the Spirit” as to whether the word Spirit should be understood as referring to the Holy Spirit or the human spirit.
 1. Normally, when referring to the Holy Spirit Paul either precedes

the word “Spirit” with the word “holy” or the definite article.

A. Neither of which is found here.

2. If referring to the Holy Spirit, it would be saying that the love they have is the product of the Spirit - Galatians 5:22, 23.

A. This does not demand, as advocated by some, a literal indwelling of the Spirit for this to be accomplished.

1. Compliance with God’s Word, which has come from the Spirit, results in love - 2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 1 John 2:4.

3. If referring to the human spirit, it would be referring to that which emanated from the human spirit consistent with one walking after the Spirit - Galatians 5:25.

Verse 9

1. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, . . .

A. Literally, “because of this” Paul and others prayed for the Colossians.

1. We see in this the importance of prayer but, also, we see it qualified concerning those for whom prayer is to be offered.
2. Recall what John had to say about not praying for those who had sinned “a sin unto death” - 1 John 5:16.

A. Even though the “prayers of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16), the one for whom the prayers are being offered must be living according to the way God would have him.

2. . . . and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

A. The word “filled” here is the Greek word “pleroo,” and speaks of the concept of completion.

B. “Knowledge” is from the Greek word “epignosis,” and referred to thoroughly understanding something brought about by teaching and practice.

C. Paul and his companions prayed that the Colossians would have “wisdom and spiritual understanding.”

1. Wisdom would be sound or proper judgment developed by knowledge.

A. You might notice Proverbs 1:12 regarding this.

2. Paul’s point was that they would have full knowledge of God’s will for them in respect to “wisdom and spiritual understanding.”

A. No doubt, we can understand the value in this.

3. The “understanding” here is going to involve the ability to “critically think,” which is absent from so many today.
 - A. Such is necessary in order to ascertain between right and wrong.
4. The “wisdom” needed to act accordingly with God’s will is that which needs to be prayed for - James 1:5.
 - A. But let’s not make too much of that.
 1. Prayer without effort is asking for God to do what He is not going to do.
 2. It has been said, “We should pray as if everything depends on God and work as if everything depends on us.”
 - A. Good advice!
5. Be sure to keep in mind, though, what the source of “wisdom” is.
 - A. Nothing here is relative to the “wisdom of the world” such as Paul condemned - 1 Corinthians 1:17-25; 2:13.
 - B. Rather, it is that “comparing spiritual things with spiritual” - 1 Corinthians 2:13.

Verse 10

1. That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, . . .
 - A. Paul expressed in this passage four very distinct desires for the Colossian brethren.
 - B. As important knowledge is, application of that knowledge is just as important - James 4:17.
 1. To attain the knowledge under consideration here, one must know the Scriptures - 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Timothy 3:15.
- B. Walking “worthy” (desire # 1), is to focus on what God would have them to do.
 1. Notice the preliminary aspects of the prayers offered - “wisdom and spiritual understanding.”
 - A. Absolutely necessary for the proper “walk.”
 - B. We are reminded of Solomon who prayed from these same qualities so as to rule Israel properly - 2 Chronicles 1:10.
 2. Paul presented a similar challenge to the church at Ephesus - Ephesians 4:1.
 3. Since their salvation came by “grace” (not grace only - Ephesians 2:8-10), not an implication that they somehow were to walk in a way that would merit God’s blessings.

- C. “Pleasing” (desire # 2) is in reference to what they must do to “please” God.
 - 1. God was “well pleased” with Jesus - Matthew 3:17; 17:5.
 - A. Why was that?
 - 1. Because of the way He “walked.”
 - 2. Jesus has left “an example, that” man “should follow his steps:” - 1 Peter 2:21, 22.
- 2. . . . being fruitful in every good work, . . .
 - A. God is only glorified when His children bring forth much “fruit” (desire # 3) - John 15:8.
 - B. The “fruit” here appears to be the natural results that come forth from the one who is walking “worthy of the Lord.”
 - C. We sometimes sing, “Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.”
- 3. . . .and increasing in the knowledge of God;
 - A. Not just knowledge about God, but “knowledge of God” (desire # 4).
 - 1. Like Abraham, who not only believed in God, but also believed Him (Galatians 3:6), the Colossians were instructed to increase “in knowledge of God.”
 - B. Room for growth is seen here.
 - 1. Jesus “increased in wisdom and stature” - Luke 2:52.
 - C. Man's eternal destiny depends on knowing God.
 - 1. Those who do not know Him face condemnation - 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.
 - 2. This is so, because eternal life depends on knowing Him - John 17:3.

Verse 11

- 1. Strengthened with all might, . . .
 - A. This “strengthening” would come through the knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual understanding just considered.
 - 1. It goes back to God doing His part while man does his.
 - B. This “strength” comes by the Holy Spirit through the Word - Ephesians 3:16; 6:10-18.
- 2. . . . according to his glorious power, . . .
 - A. A sense of degrees here.
 - 1. The strength supplied is according to the “power” (ability) of the One providing it.
 - A. Coffman stated, “Thus the strengthening of the Christian

‘according to’ the might of God’s glory is beyond all calculations.” (Coffman, 1977, p. 330).

- B. Note that not only is God’s “power” seen here, but so is His “glory.”
 - 1. We see the form in which God expresses Himself as He provides the “power” necessary to endure.
- 3. . . . unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;
 - A. A sense of “attaining” steadfastness and patience.
 - 1. You might say a purpose statement.
 - 2. What we see is their “goal.”
 - A. They were to become mature in these areas.
 - B. A sense of “endurance” is to be had, which requires assistance from God.
 - 1. Too many Christians try to make the “trip” from earth to heaven alone.
 - A. A promise has been made - Matthew 28:18; Hebrews 13:5.
 - 2. Even in the most difficult times, God is with His children - Psalm 23:4.
 - C. Some “conflict” among the “scholars” as to where to associate the “joyfulness.”
 - 1. Some say, with verse 11 while others say with the “thanks” in verse 12.
 - 2. To me, it seems better to associate it with the endurance.
 - A. Thus, a “joyful endurance.”

Verse 12

- 1. Giving thanks unto the Father, . . .
 - A. Thanksgiving is seen here being given to “the Father.”
 - 1. Such “giving of thanks” is an ongoing response to “the Father” for His ongoing blessings - Ephesians 5:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:8.
 - B. We should notice the One to who thanks was to be given.
 - 1. It is “the Father.”
- 2. . . . which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:
 - A. Paul’s point here is that “the Father” had “qualified” (meet - “hikanosanti”) them so they may receive the “inheritance.”
 - 1. Literally, the idea was they had been made “fit” to “share” in the “inheritance.”
 - B. There is some question on the Greek word “hemas” (“us”) or “humas”

(“you” as seen in the English Standard and New International Versions).

1. Specifically, if “humas” was used, reference would be to the Colossians, while if “hemas” was used, a broader meaning would be seen.
 - A. Of course, if “hemas” was used, it could be “argued” that the Colossians are representative, generally so, of all Christians.
- C. The word “partakers” is from the Greek “meros,” and spoke of “sharing” or having “a portion” with others in that which could be divided - Acts 8:21; 16:12; 2 Corinthians 6:15.
- D. “Inheritance,” from the Greek “klerou,” in reference to that which was allotted - Hebrews 3:7 - 4:11.
 1. “Lots” that were “cast” came from the word “klerou” - Matthew 27:35; Acts 1:16.
 2. The promised “inheritance” under the New Covenant is far superior to the “inheritance” promised under the Old Covenant - Hebrews 8:6.
 - A. This was due to the temporality of the Old Covenant “inheritance.”
 3. An “inheritance” is in store for the rightful progeny - Romans 8:16, 17; Galatians 4:6, 7.
 - A. This is so due to the fact of proper qualification due to childhood status.
 1. Of course this status comes either by adoption or birth physically or spiritually - Romans 8:15; 1 Peter 1:3.
- E. The word “saints” comes from the familiar root word “hagios” in reference to their having been “sanctified” or set apart.
 1. This “sanctification” comes by the Word of God - John 17:17.
- F. Those who are “sanctified” become “children of light” - Acts 26:18.
 1. It seems that the phrase “children of light” here has a broader perspective than just referring to those of the first century church.
 - A. At the least, this would cover those who had come to the “light” and established a communion with God, who is light under the New Covenant - 2 Corinthians 4:16; 1 John 1:5.
 - B. A broader understanding would take into consideration those of the Old Testament era who were faithful.

1. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, . . .
 - A. The New International Version states “For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness, . . .”
 1. The New American Standard Version gives a similar reading, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, . . .”
 2. The word translated “delivered” (rescued) is the Greek word “rhuomai,” and refers to the idea of one being “rescued from, . . . and so, to deliver.” (Vine, n.d., pp. 290, 291).
 - A. It is used to describe deliverance from several things in the New Testament - Matthew 6:13; 27:43; Romans 7:24; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2 Peter 2:9.
 3. We see in it the idea of a prisoner being “rescued” or “delivered” to freedom.
 - B. Paul compared those who were in sin (spiritual “darkness”) to those who were being held captive.
 - C. The “power” here is understood as being under the “authority of” or “domain” of sin.
 1. It is from the Greek word “exousias,” and is seen in Acts 26:18.
2. . . . and hath translated us into the kingdom . . .
 - A. “Translated” may be seen as “transferred,” as is seen in the English Standard and New American Standard Versions.
 1. The picture here is one being moved from one location to another.
 - A. God had, through Jesus, moved the Colossians from being under the domain of Satan to being under the authority of Jesus - Matthew 6:24.
 - B. Three distinct steps are seen in this context, resulting in one being in the “kingdom” - “qualified,” “rescued,” and “transferred.”
 - C. At the time of Paul’s writing the Colossian letter, A.D. 62, the kingdom was already in existence.
 1. If it was yet to come, as argued by the Premillennialists, how was it that Paul was able to write what he did here?
3. . . . of his dear Son:
 - A. Literally, the kingdom that belonged to God’s “beloved Son.”
 1. We see God’s reference to the Son using these words - Matthew 3:17; 17:5.
 - B. His being “beloved” was due to His having obeyed the Father - John 15:10.

C. Recall the spiritual nature of the kingdom due to the fact that Jesus said that his kingdom was “not of this world” - John 18:36.

1. The whole point here is relative to rule or authority, rather than geography!

Verse 14

1. In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:
 - A. Notice where “redemption” is found.
 1. Literally, “in Christ.”
 - A. This is where one is following his having been “baptized into Christ” brought about by “faith in Christ” - Galatians 3:26, 27.
 - B. This is where “spiritual blessings” are found - Ephesians 1:3.
 - B. Some conflict concerning the precise meaning of “redemption” and whether it refers to the paying of a ransom or the result of their being set free.
 1. It seems to me, that the normal view of seeing this passage is most likely correct.
 - A. These are viewed as having been “bought back,” having been “sold” into “slavery” to sin - Romans 6:16-23.
 2. On the other hand, there seems to be some merit in considering their “redemption” as the result of His having shed His blood - Acts 20:28.
 - A. Perhaps, in the end, there isn’t all that much difference here.
 - C. The words “thorough his blood” are missing from a considerable number of the older manuscripts.
 1. Even if omitted, the point is still there as the shed blood of Christ was the purchase price - 1 Peter 1:18, 19.
 - D. “Forgiveness of sins” is in connection with the “shedding of blood” - Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:22; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5.

Verse 15

1. Who is the image of the invisible God, . . .
 - A. Starting here, and continuing through verse 20, we see the emphasis of the supremacy of Christ being set forth.
 1. It has been suggested that these verses constitute a hymn what was sung by the early church.
 - A. However, there is no evidence of this.
 - B. The word “image,” from the Greek word “eikon,” presents the idea of

an “express likeness.”

1. There is no doubt; Jesus revealed the Father - John 1:18; 12:45; Hebrews 1:3.

A. It could truthfully be said, “To see Him, was to see the Father” - John 14:9.

2. What has to be understood, though, is what is in mind here when we discuss this “likeness.”

A. “God is spirit” (John 4:24), so a physical “likeness” is not under consideration.

B. Rather, we see a “likeness” of nature.

1. Deity shares a common attitude, character, will, etc.

- C. The phrase “the invisible God,” speaks to the deity and “spirit being” of God.

1. No one has “seen God” in a physical sense - John 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:15.

2. So, it is from this perspective that Jesus displayed the very nature of God to man.

2. . . .the firstborn of every creature:

- A. The word “firstborn,” comes from the Greek word “prototokos,” and may be understood a couple ways.

1. First, it may be viewed in the sense of one who is the “first born” in a family - Genesis 19:34; 27:19.

A. This, clearly, would not be the case here.

2. Secondly, it may be viewed in the sense of one who held a position of superiority in a family structure.

A. This would go to the aspect of authority or dominion as it relates to status.

3. The point Paul made was, Jesus, as the “firstborn,” occupies the position of supremacy when it came to the creation.

4. His preeminence is seen here - Jeremiah 31:9.

- B. It is evident that He was not the “firstborn” in the sense of birth or creation, as He is viewed as being without beginning or end, i.e., He is eternal - Hebrews 7:3; Micah 5:2.

Verse 16

1. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, . . .

A. Paul begins this verse with the word “hoti,” (“for”), as a note of

explanation.

1. What is about to be written explains why Jesus should be seen as the “firstborn.”
 - B. “All things” were “created,” or “brought into existence” by Him, therefore, He should be seen as the “preeminent” One.
 1. The whole of the cosmos is viewed as having been “created” by Jesus.
 - A. He is portrayed as the means by which all was created.
 - B. He is shown to be the mediating cause.
 - C. The word “heaven” is better seen as “heavens,” from the Greek word “ouranois.”
 1. Literally, the entirety of the creation is found in Christ as creator.
 - D. We see with the statement the scientific accuracy associated with the scriptures - Hebrews 11:3.
 1. Particles, not discernible with the “naked eye,” necessary for the existence of matter, were created by Him.
2. . . . whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: . . .
- A. This very well may be a “swipe” at the Gnostic theory of dualism, which suggested such powers existed of their own power.
 1. It would, also, deny what has been referred to as the “Colossian heresy,” which involved the worship of angels - Colossians 2:15-20.
 - B. Whatever “powers” there may be, they fall under the supremacy of Jesus - Hebrews 2:14; 1 Peter 3:22.
3. . . . all things were created by him, and for him:
- A. Some have suggested that Paul, when writing what has just been considered, had in mind the creation of “satanic beings.”
 1. But this statement seems to speak contrary to that.
 - A. How would it be that such “beings” were “created . . . for him?”
 1. All that we see in this context was “created” for the specific purpose of bringing glory to Jesus.
 - A. How would “satanic beings” do this?
 - B. I like the way Fields puts this, “a. All things were created *in* (or by) him. b. All things were created *through* him. c. All things were created *unto* (or for) him.” (Fields, 1969, p. 149, emp. his).

Verse 17

1. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.
 - A. The word “before,” from the Greek word “pro,” is used to convey priority in time or rank, with the text determining which usage should be chosen.
 1. James 5:12 and 1 Peter 4:8 both use “pro” relative to Jesus being “above all.”
 2. Here it is evident that both usages are seen.
 - A. It is important to take note how Paul expressed this.
 1. He said that Jesus “is before all things.”
 2. This is suggestive of an ongoing matter.
 - A. In other words, Jesus was not just of the past, but of the present and the future.
 - B. Jesus previously indicated that “before the world was,” He was with the Father - John 17:5.
 3. Jesus, then, is seen herein as being both eternal and superior to all that He created.
 - B. Not only was it the truth that Jesus created everything good, but by His power all things continue - Hebrews 11:3; 2 Peter 3:5-7.
 1. The English Standard Version has this portion saying, “. . . and in him all things hold together.”
 - A. Expressive of both past and present.

Verse 18

1. And he is the head of the body, the church: . . .
 - A. A continuation of the list of things expressed by Paul concerning Christ.
 1. He is the image of God.
 2. He is the firstborn of all creation.
 3. He is the Creator of the universe.
 4. He is the Sustainer of the universe.
 5. And, He is the head of the church.
 - A. Note the use of the word “is,” (“est”) indicative of the ongoing relationship that the Lord had (has) with the church, as He is all the other things mentioned.
 - B. As the “head of the body, the church,” Jesus functions in such a way so that He controls the church as the head controls the body, whether animal or human.

- C. Pay careful attention to the fact that Paul draws attention to the oneness of “the body.”
 - 1. No mention of a plurality of “bodies.”
 - 2. Every occasion in the writings of Paul, concerning the body or the church, the singular was used except in Romans 16:16, when Paul was writing concerning the combination of local congregations in Rome.
- D. The Greek word “ekklesia,” translated “church” originally was used when referring to a political body or some other type of body that regularly assembled.
- 2. . . . who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; . . .
 - A. We have previously seen what Paul had in mind when writing of Jesus being the “firstborn,” which concept is seen here.
 - 1. Here, now, Jesus is seen as the “firstborn from the dead,” where he had previously been described as “the firstborn of all creation.”
 - B. It is easily recognized that the concept of His being the “firstborn from the dead” could not be in reference to His having been the first to be raised from the dead.
 - 1. We see several occasions in both the Old and the New Testaments wherein the Bible describes those who were resurrected from the dead prior to the resurrection of Jesus.
 - A. The son of the widow of Zarephath - 1 Kings 17:21, 22.
 - 1. This involved Elijah.
 - B. The son of the Shunammite woman - 2 Kings 4:34-36.
 - 1. Involving Elisha.
 - C. The man who was tossed into the grave of Elisha - 2 Kings 13:20, 21.
 - D. The daughter of Jairus - Mark 5:22, 35-42.
 - E. The son of the widow of Nain - Luke 7:11-15.
 - F. Lazarus - John 11:43, 44.
 - 2. Paul’s point is, Jesus is prominent, having come from the dead.
 - A. Recall Peter’s sermon on Pentecost, and the point he made concerning Jesus sitting on the throne of David - Acts 2:30, 31.
 - B. Also, consider Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, and the point he made concerning Jesus having ascended, following His resurrection, to rule over all - Ephesians 1:20-23.

3. . . . that in all things he might have the preeminence.
 - A. Jesus is pictured as holding the position of preeminence over “all things.”
 1. In this we recognize his position of authority - Matthew 28:18.
 - A. This position was “given unto” Jesus by the Father who put “all things” under Him - 1 Corinthians 15:27.
 - B. Of course, man’s free will must submit to that rule, which results in the enemies of Christ still yet to be subdued to Him - 1 Corinthians 15:25, 26.

Verse 19

1. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;
 - A. The English Standard Version states, “For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.”
 1. God’s “pleasure” was previously expressed by the Father at the baptism and transfiguration of Jesus - Matthew 3:17; 17:5.
 - A. This “pleasure” was brought about by Jesus’ compliance with the Father’s will - John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38.
 - B. It was due to this that God bestowed upon Jesus “a name which is above every name” - Philippians 2:9.
 - B. The word “fullness” expresses the idea of completeness.
 1. The point that Paul made was that they did not need to turn to any other source when it came to that which was needed - John 14:6; Acts 4:12.
 - C. The word “dwell” (“katoikeo” in the Greek), indicates a continued “dwelling” of the “fullness of God.”
 1. We will see later that Paul indicated that “the fulness of the Godhead” “dwelleth” (continued action) in Christ - Colossians 2:9.
 2. He further indicated that it was in Christ that the Colossians “are complete” - Colossians 2:10.

Verse 20

1. And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, . . .
 - A. Sin results in man being alienated from God - Isaiah 59:1, 2; Ephesians 2:12, 13; James 4:4.
 1. Thus the need for a means whereby man may be brought to “peace” with God.
 - A. Man could not provide that means.

- B. It was man who caused the alienation, but God who sought to bring about the reconciliation.
- B. It is by the “blood of his cross” that man is brought back to a peaceful relationship with God - Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 1:18, 19.
 - 1. It was on the cross that Jesus shed His life’s blood - Matthew 26:28; Philippians 2:8.
 - 2. Man is “reconciled” “in one body by the cross” - Ephesians 2:16.
- 2. . . . by him to reconcile all things unto himself; . . .
 - A. Reconciliation is found only in Christ - John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 2 Corinthians 5:19.
 - B. “All things” would encompass “all” that had been alienated by sin.
 - 1. As large as the problem was, so was the solution.
 - 2. Actually, the Greek text does not include the word “things.”
 - 3. If there is no need for “reconciliation,” there is no need for one to reconcile.
 - A. Husbands and wives who are separated need reconciliation.
 - B. Those that are not separated do not need such.
 - 4. “Reconciliation,” like grace, is extended to “all,” but not all will accept such - Titus 2:11; Matthew 7:21-23.
 - A. Only the obedient are saved because they have accepted the grace and offer of reconciliation - Hebrews 5:9.
- 3. . . . by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.
 - A. The American Standard Version better presents what Paul had in mind, “whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.”
 - 1. Not a reconciliation of “things on the earth with things in heaven.”
 - 2. Some difficulty here, but when understood that all Paul was saying was that those that were in need of reconciliation were provided the opportunity to have such.
 - A. So as broad as was the need, so was the provision.
 - B. Some commentators see a connection here with Paul’s words to the Romans - Romans 8:19-23.
 - 1. But that seems, at least to me, somewhat of a stretch.
 - 2. Robertson well sums it up with these words, “Much needless trouble has been made over this phrase as if things in heaven were not exactly right. It is rather a hypothetical statement like verse 16 not put in categorical form . . .” (Robertson, 1931, p. 481).

Verse 21

1. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, . . .
 - A. One is “alienated” from God due to sin - Isaiah 59:1, 2.
 1. As such, they are “enemies” of God due to the hostility that comes from a mind that is hostile to God.
 - B. Those who do evil are enemies of God if they refuse to do what He would have them to do to be reconciled - James 4:4.
 1. A continued rejection of His will for them will result in God no longer loving such persons - Hosea 9:15.
 2. The fact is, God’s wrath will be upon those who continue their hostility toward Him until the end of their lives - John 3:36; Romans 1:18; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.
 - C. The “mind” is viewed within Scripture as the source of thought and understanding.
 1. Thus, a worldly minded person is unwilling to accept the reconciliation that is offered through Christ.
 2. With “hostile” or “evil” thoughts comes similar ways - Psalm 10:3, 4.
 - A. We are what we think - Proverbs 23:7.
 3. When one’s mind is made up, all the evidence in the world will not change it.
 - A. This was the problem with the Gentiles.
 1. Even though sufficient evidence was available to prove God’s existence, they intentionally refused to accept Him - Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:19, 20, 28.
2. . . . yet now hath he reconciled
 - A. Those that changed their attitude toward God had been reconciled.
 1. This is where repentance and obedience comes in - Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9; Hebrews 5:9.

Verse 22

1. In the body of his flesh through death, . . .
 - A. By this statement, we are drawn back to what was said in verse 20.
 - B. It was necessary for Jesus to “become flesh” (John 1:14) in order to offer himself on behalf of mankind, as such could not be done as “spirit.”
 1. Neither animal nor spirit could accomplish reconciliation -

Hebrews 10:1-5.

- C. Although Gnosticism was some years away, the reference to the “flesh” may have been done to answer those who would come denying that Jesus came in the “flesh” - 2 John 7.
2. . . . to present you holy . . .
- A. To be presented as “holy” would be indicative of their purity in contrast to the wickedness of those that were enemies of God.
3. . . . and unblameable . . .
- A. Pictured as being seen as guilt free in the sight of the Lord.
4. . . . and unproveable in his sight:
- A. The English Standard Version has this as “above reproach.”
1. They were to be presented as having no accusation of guilt brought against them due to the fact they had been reconciled by the shed blood of Jesus.
- B. What we are seeing here is the motive for those who were enemies of God to turn to become friends of God.
1. They would, before God, be seen as “holy,” “unblameable,” and “unproveable.”

Verse 23

1. If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, . . .
- A. We see being presented to God as being “holy, unblameable” and “unproveable” is contingent upon faithfulness.
1. Calvinism’s doctrine of “perseverance of the saints” falls flat on its face here.
2. There is no doubt concerning the need for perseverance when it comes to eternal life - Romans 2:7.
3. The continual washing away of sins is dependent upon the continual walk of the child of God - 1 John 1:7-10.
- B. To be “grounded and settled” is to be “established” and “firmly fixed” in regard to the faith.
1. This has been described as being likened unto a building built upon a solid foundation - Matthew 7:24-27.
- C. “Not” being “moved away” may be illustrated with the ship firmly anchored which, regardless of the storms that come, stays moored at the port.
1. Paul expressed a similar thought to the Ephesians in so far as their

need to not be “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” - Ephesians 4:14.

2. . . . and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;
 - A. The “faith” had been “preached” to them.
 1. Indicative of the message of the gospel.
 - A. They had heard “the faith” from Epaphras - Colossians 1:7.
 - B. “Every creature” would refer to the same ones previously indicated as “all the world” - Colossians 1:6.
 - C. The word “minister” comes from the Greek “diakonos,” often translated “servant.”

Verse 24

1. Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, . . .
 - A. It was not that Paul was happy to be suffering.
 1. What he rejoiced in was the benefit that the Colossian brethren were getting from his suffering.
 - A. A similar statement was made in his letter to the Philippians - Philippians 2:17.
 - B. Jesus had indicated that Paul would suffer such (Acts 9:16) and that those who followed Him would, likewise, suffer - Matthew 5:10-12.
 1. Suffering for the Cause of Christ is seen often in the New Testament - Acts 5:41; 16:25; James 1:2.
 2. Paul often suffered to the point of his experiencing despair of life - 2 Corinthians 1:8, 9; 11:23-27.
 - C. Jesus “endured the cross,” yet He did so with “joy” - Hebrews 12:2.
 - D. I am not sure why we think we should not suffer for the Cause of Christ? - 2 Timothy 3:12.
 1. It was okay for Jesus to do so.
 2. It was okay for the Apostles to do so.
 3. It was okay for the early Christians to do so.
 4. It is okay for missionaries to do so.
 5. But 21st century Christians think we are above it.
2. . . . and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church:
 - A. Paul’s point concerning filling “up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ” was not intended to suggest that Jesus did not experience sufficient “affliction.”

1. Only that he was doing his share.
- B. Not only was Paul willing to suffer so that the Colossian church might be benefitted, he was willing to do so for the church.
- C. The word “afflictions” here is the Greek word “thlipseis,” and meant “anguish of persecution.”
 1. More than the physical suffering of the cross is seen here, as if that was not enough.
 2. Jesus suffered much while on earth during His public ministry - Hebrews 12:3, 4.
 - A. Imagine the mental abuse He experienced prior to and during the trial and crucifixion.

Verse 25

1. Whereof I am made a minister, . . .
 - A. Paul referred to himself here as one who was an “attendant” of the “word of God.”
 1. When confronted by the Lord on the Damascus road, Paul was told by Jesus that he would be appointed to be a “minister” - Acts 26:15.
 - A. Two different words are used in the two passages.
 1. Acts 26:16 - “huperetes”.
 2. Colossians 1:25 - “diakonos”.
 - B. Both indicate the idea of being a servant, with “huperetes” referring to one who serves under the authority of another.
 1. Of course, he was to be a minister, or servant serving under Christ’s authority.
 2. So, here, Paul stressed that he not only was a servant of the Lord, but that he served church.
2. . . . according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, . . .
 - A. The word “dispensation” is better understood to modern English speaking people as “stewardship,” as seen in the English Standard Version.
 1. Paul’s point was, he had been commissioned by the Lord to serve both the Lord and the church and, as such, he was practicing proper stewardship.
 2. The whole of Paul’s present life was service.
 3. He felt a sense of obligation - Romans 1:14; 1 Corinthians 9:16.
 4. He stressed by both practice and teaching that a steward was to be

“faithful” - 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2.

A. This was so because he recognized that he would give account of his life - Romans 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10.

B. His having had this responsibility “given to” him is seen in the fact that he was called by the Lord for this work - Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:1, et. al.

3. . . . to fulfil the word of God;

A. Paul saw that he was to be faithful as a steward in proclaiming the whole “counsel of God” - Acts 20:20, 27.

1. Paul did not just preach, he preached “the gospel” - Romans 1:15.

2. This was because he was not “ashamed of the gospel” and he recognized that it was “the power of God unto salvation” - Romans 1:16.

3. He instructed others to “preach the word” - 2 Timothy 4:2.

Verse 26

1. Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, . .

A. The word “mystery,” here is from the Greek word “musterion,” and refers to that which had previously been concealed and was not understood.

1. In essence, Paul was simply pointing out that now man was able to understand what had been previously concealed.

2. The Lord told the disciples that they had been granted the ability to know the mysteries of the kingdom - Matthew 13:11.

A. These “mysteries” were not originally revealed to the “man on the street.”

3. Paul, on several occasions, used “musterion” to refer to the plan of salvation - Romans 11:25; 16:25; Ephesians 1:9; 3:3-11; et. al.

4. Its primary application was the provision of the acceptance of the Jews and Gentiles into the same body, the church - Ephesians 3:3, 6.

B. These teachings had been hidden or veiled through the Old Covenant era, now to be unveiled in God’s own time - Ephesians 3:3-5.

2. . . . but now is made manifest to his saints:

A. The message that “was made manifest to his saints” was the message concerning Christ - Ephesians 3:4-6; 1 Timothy 3:16.

B. The teaching procedure is seen here - the Holy Spirit, the apostles, the church, and the world - 1 Corinthians 2:9-13.

1. Calvinism's concept of the necessity of a direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of man is not seen here.
 - A. The facts are, as Paul pointed out in Romans 10:17, "faith" comes "by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Verse 27

1. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; . . .
 - A. The "riches of the glory" that Paul writes herein about would be the many spiritual blessings that God blesses Christians with - Romans 2:4; Ephesians 1:7.
 - B. The "mystery" that the Israelites did not comprehend was the acceptance of the Gentiles into the church.
 1. It was not that they could not know, except for the fact that they were blinded to the truth on this - 2 Corinthians 3:14.
 - A. God told Abram that all nations would be blessed through his seed - Genesis 12:3; 22:18.
2. . . .which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:
 - A. "Hope" is found in no other location than in Christ and having Christ in you.
 1. Having Christ in you is predicated upon you being in Christ.
 - B. It is through faith that one has Christ in them - Ephesians 3:17.

Verse 28

1. Whom we preach, . . .
 - A. Philip "preached Jesus" unto the Ethiopian nobleman - Acts 8:35.
 - B. Those who were "scattered abroad" went about "preaching the Lord Jesus" - Acts 11:19, 20.
 - C. Paul went about preaching - 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2:1, 2.
2. . . . warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; . . .
 - A. Preaching's design is to warn, reprove, rebuke, exhort - 2 Timothy 4:2.
 1. Man is admonished by preaching the word to make the necessary changes in order to become what God would have him to be.
 - B. Preaching is for "every man."
 1. The word "man" is "anthropos" in the Greek, referring to mankind.
 - C. Biblical preaching involves preaching the "wisdom of God" rather than the "wisdom of man" - 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30, 2:7, 13.

3. . . . that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:
 - A. Here is Paul's "purpose statement."
 1. Preaching is for the "purpose" of teaching man what must be done to become a Christian, and what must be done to mature as one - Romans 6:3; Ephesians 4:11-13.

Verse 29

1. Whereunto I also labour, . . .
 - A. Paul had a "purpose" behind what "drove" him in the work he did.
 - B. The word "labour" is "kopio" in the Greek, and stressed the degree of work that Paul put into his work.
 1. Literally, it meant to toil until worn out, to be exhausted.
 2. Remember, Paul instructed Timothy to do the "work of an evangelist" - 2 Timothy 4:5.
2. . . . striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.
 - A. The word "striving" suggests the idea of extreme effort.
 1. It would be as one putting forth great effort to win in a sports competition.
 - B. This was to be done according to the power that came from the Lord.
 1. The "energy" needed came from the Lord.
 - A. Recall what Paul said in Philippians 4:13.
 - B. We see examples of this "power" in Paul's work - Acts 23:11; 27:23, 24; Romans 15:18, 19.
 - C. The word "mightily" is "dunamis" in the Greek, and is seen stressing the "power of God" - Romans 1:16.

CHAPTER TWO:

Verse 1

1. For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;
 - A. Paul continues the discussion found at the end of chapter one by explaining the reason behind his "conflict" or struggle.
 1. It was due to his desire to be able to present them "perfect in Christ Jesus."
 2. Literally, Paul was saying that his was a persistent labor on their behalf to bring about this perfection.
 - A. There is no doubt that Paul felt deeply compelled to preach to as many as possible - Romans 1:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 9:16.

B. Colossians, written some thirty or more years before the Book of Revelation, where we find Jesus referring to the church at Laodicea as a lukewarm church that was in need of correction - Revelation 3:14-22.

1. At this point, Paul was trying to help them mature to the point that had they done so, we would not see Jesus' words as found in Revelation 3.

C. Three groups of people mentioned - the Colossians, the Laodiceans, and those who had no personal previous contact with Paul.

Verse 2

1. That their hearts might be comforted, . . .

A. "Comforted" is better understood as "encouraged" as seen in the English Standard Version.

B. It is important to note the place of emphasis by Paul.

1. The Greek word "kardia" used here would be in reference to their inner life.

2. Thus, Paul's concern was in that direction as opposed to their physical life.

2. . . . being knit together in love, . . .

A. To be "knit together" was to be "bound together."

1. But not just "bound together", but to be so "in love."

B. Literally, the idea of their being brought together due to their love for one another.

3. . . . and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, . . .

A. The emphasis here is that true "wealth" involves that which is other than physical.

1. Recall what Jesus said about the church at Laodicea - Revelation 3:17, 18.

2. Earthly wealth and fame is just that, earthly - Matthew 6:19-21; 1 Timothy 6:19.

B. Paul's point is that real assurance comes from understanding God's Word.

1. Of course, we would recognize the necessity of doing what is understood - James 1:21.

2. Failure to know and follow God's Word leaves man in a lost condition - Romans 10:1-3; James 4:17.

4. . . . to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and

of Christ;

A. Here is the result of knowing the Scriptures.

1. One comes to the knowledge of the “mystery of God.”

A. This “mystery” pertains to Christ, as the revelation of God’s Word and will.

B. The word “mystery” here is better understood as representative of a divine secret rather than being mysterious.

1. We see in this man’s inability to comprehend the “deeper things” of God without revelation of their meaning.

2. In the end, the point is relative to the unveiling of God’s plan through Christ, which was revealed to the apostles - Romans 16:25; Ephesians 3:4, 5.

Verse 3

1. In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

A. The word “whom” would be in reference to Christ, in contrast to Gnosticism.

B. The word “hid” is from the Greek word “apokruphoi,” “which meant to hide away” (Robertson, 1931, p. 488).

1. It is from this word that the word “apocrypha” comes.

2. It seems that the Gnostics used this word when they spoke of the varied “secret doctrines” that they perceived they were the only ones capable of expressing.

C. Paul seems to be taking a “shot” at the Gnostics who thought they possessed vast wisdom and who relegated Jesus to a lower place.

1. In contrast to this, Jesus was the manifestation of the wisdom and knowledge of God - John 1:1; 14:6.

2. Paul, also, is showing that even the “secret teachings” of the Gnostics fail in contrast to the wisdom available in Christ.

Verse 4

1. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

A. It takes more than “smooth speech” to bring about salvation - Isaiah 30:10; 1 Corinthians 2:1, 4; John 8:32; Romans 1:16; 1 Timothy 1:13; Titus 1:9.

B. The serpent “beguiled” Eve with such speech - Genesis 3:13; 2 Corinthians 11:3.

Verse 5

1. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, . . .

- A. To the Thessalonians Paul penned a similar statement -
1 Thessalonians 2:17.
- B. There are mixed views here as to what Paul meant in so far as his being with them “in the spirit.”
 - 1. Perhaps it meant he was with them in spirit due to some sort of divine insight, as was seen in the case of the Corinthians -
1 Corinthians 5:3.
 - 2. Or, perhaps, he simply meant that because of his love for them he felt a sense of closeness due to what he knew of their faithfulness, etc.
 - A. I tend to think this is what he had in mind, for what that is worth.
- 2. . . . joying . . .
 - A. Paul is “rejoicing” as is seen in the English Standard Version’s translation here.
 - 1. This “joy” may well have come about due to their faithfulness, as was expressed by John - 2 John 4; 3 John 4.
- 3. . . . and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.
 - A. Here is why he is doing so.
 - 1. First, due to their “order.”
 - A. The first of two military words used by Paul.
 - B. Literally, their “orderly way” of conducting themselves.
 - 1. His expression may relate to his association with the soldiers who kept him confined and the “orderly fashion” by which they conducted their duties.
 - 2. Secondly, due to their “steadfastness” in the faith.
 - A. The Greek word “stereoma,” used only here in the New Testament.
 - B. It expressed the concept of a “solid front” or a “firmness” of faith.
 - B. It is important to note that even though Paul commended them for their “order” and “steadfastness,” he still warned them concerning the possibility of their being led astray.
 - 1. The need to “take heed lest” one falls is always present -
1 Corinthians 10:12.

Verse 6

- 1. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

- A. Literally, because they had accepted Jesus as the source of truth and as “the Lord over their lives,” Paul instructs them concerning what lay ahead.
 - 1. Their “reception” was indicative of that which had been handed down from someone else.
 - A. Not that they had an “inherited” faith, but that it had been passed down to them by the teaching of Epaphras.
- B. To continue to “walk in him” was to continue to keep the commandments of the Lord - 1 John 2:3.
 - 1. Note that their “walk” was “in him.”
 - 2. The word “walk” is the first of five metaphors used in verses 6 and 7.
 - A. “Walk”
 - B. “Rooted”
 - C. “Built up”
 - D. “Stablished”
 - E. “Taught”
 - 3. To “walk” (peripateo) was indicative of progress in a specific direction.
 - A. In this case, it was the “Christian walk.”
 - B. The New Testament mentions “walking” in a number of passages - John 8:12; 11:9, 10; 12:35; Romans 6:4; 8:4; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Galatians 5:16; Ephesians 2:1, 2; 2:10; 5:2; 2 Thessalonians 3:11; 2 John 4.

Verse 7

- 1. Rooted . . .
 - A. Literally the idea of to “cause to take root” (Vincent, 1977, p. 485).
 - 1. Used only here and in Ephesians 3:17.
 - 2. Suggests a completed action with a continued result.
- 2. . . . and built up in him, . . .
 - A. The New American Standard Version states, “Having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established . . .”
 - 1. Clearly indicative of an ongoing action.
 - B. The Apostle Paul used the same Greek word in 1 Corinthians 3:12 when writing about building upon another’s foundation.

- C. Paul's point here was that they not only were to be "rooted" but they were to continue to be so.
3. . . . and established in the faith, . . .
 - A. They were to literally be made firm or stable in their faith.
 1. This reminds us of what Paul had to say to the Ephesians concerning not being "tossed to and fro . . . with every wind of doctrine" - Ephesians 4:14.
 4. . . . as ye have been taught, . . .
 - A. Their acceptance of "the faith," as seen in Philippians 1:23, speaks to the truth that had been revealed to them.
 1. They were encouraged to continue in the specific teachings they had received.
 2. We see in this statement encouragement to continue to develop what they had previously begun by obedience to the gospel.
 3. They were building upon a "foundation" that had already been built.
 5. . . . abounding therein with thanksgiving.
 - A. With all that is in store for them should they do what Paul instructs, their hearts should be "overflowing with thanksgiving," as seen in the New International Version.
 1. Since "abounding" ("perisseuo") is a present participle, it expressed the idea that they should keep on "abounding" or "overflowing" in their gratitude.

Verse 8

1. Beware lest any man spoil you . . .
 - A. The English Standard Version states, "See to it that no one takes you captive, . . ." while the New King James Version states, "Beware lest anyone cheat you . . ."
 1. A warning was being given by Paul that they not allow another to mislead them.
 - A. Often false teaching is appealing.
 2. The word "spoil" here is "sulagoeo," and meant to be taken "captive."
 - A. Robertson indicated that it meant "to carry off as booty as captive, slave, maiden" (Robertson, 1931, p. 490).
 3. Literally, Paul was telling them to not allow themselves to be "robbed" and carried back into slavery.

2. . . . through philosophy and vain deceit, . . .
 - A. “Philosophy” (“philosophia”) would be in reference to the love of wisdom, such as was seen among the Greeks that sought to obtain truth.
 1. A similar statement is seen in 1 Timothy 6:20, where Paul wrote, “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:”
 - B. “Vain deceit” is translated “empty deceit” in the English Standard Version and “empty deception” in the New American Standard Version.
 1. A warning concerning their being “duped” by false teachers who were turning to human reasoning in opposition to “the faith” for direction in life.
 2. Contaminated truth results in harm, just as contaminated food - Galatians 1:6-9.
 - A. False doctrine mixed with the truth causes it to lose its power.
 3. The truth had been given, and accepted, much like with the Galatians - John 1:17; 8:32; 16:13.
3. . . . after the tradition of men, . . .
 - A. The word “tradition” is from the Greek word “paradosis,” and had reference to something that had been handed down from one to another.
 1. The problem here was not with that which was of “tradition,” but that it was of the “tradition of men” - Matthew 15:9.
 2. The source from which the “tradition” comes is what determines its value.
 - A. The Corinthians were commended for keeping the “traditions” - 1 Corinthians 11:2.
 - B. The Thessalonians were to withdraw themselves from those who refused to follow the “traditions” handed down to them - 2 Thessalonians 3:6.
4. . . . after the rudiments of the world, . . .
 - A. These would be the “elementary principles,” as seen in the New American Standard Version.
 - B. A “stepping down” from a higher level to the lowest level, i.e. the very basics of worldly principles.

1. Whether Paul had in mind Jewish traditions, pagan traditions or both, a departure is seen here, moving to a lower level.
5. . . . and not after Christ.
 - A. Here is from which they might depart.
 1. This would be “the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” mentioned in verse 3.
 - B. It is important to note that there is a choice seen here.
 1. They could follow after the basic principles of worldly philosophy or they could follow after Christ, but they could not follow after both.

Verse 9

1. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
 - A. Herein is the reason as to why they should follow after Christ.
 1. His teachings are of divine origin while those of the philosopher are of human origin.
 2. They could expect that what He taught would be truth - John 17:17.
 - B. It was only after Christ came to earth, lived, died and resurrected that He completely met the demands of the sacrifice for the sins of man - Hebrews 5:8, 9.
 1. This is where the “fullness” came in.
 - C. “Dwelleth” is from the Greek word “katoikeo,” which is in the present tense indicating that in Christ “dwelled” the “fullness of deity” in the past, present and future.
 1. This would contradict the Gnostic teaching that the spirit of Christ came upon Jesus at His baptism and left Him at His crucifixion.
 - D. The “fullness” seen here indicated that Christ expressed the mind of God in all that He did - John 12:49, 50.
 - E. Even though Jesus came to earth, and divested Himself of certain qualities, He continued to be Deity.
 1. The word “Godhead” or “deity” (as per the New English Standard Version), is from the Greek word “theotetos” and is found only in this verse in the New Testament.
 - A. It emphasizes the fact that in Christ is found all the characteristics of divine nature.

Verse 10

1. And ye are complete in him, . . .

- A. As a perfect passive participle, the word “complete” is from the Greek word “pepleromenoi” and refers to the idea that those who are “in him” have been and continue to be complete.
 1. This is so because of the fact that Christ embodies the “fullness” of the Godhead.
- B. The phrase “in him” speaks to that which is necessary for one to be a Christian and a recipient of the blessings that are “in Christ” - Ephesians 1:3.
 1. Seven blessings are seen in Ephesians 1:4-14.
 - A. The child of God is chosen in Christ - Ephesians 1:4.
 - B. The child of God is predestinated in Christ - Ephesians 1:5.
 - C. The child of God is redeemed in Christ - Ephesians 1:7.
 - D. The child of God is forgiven by grace in Christ - Ephesians 1:7.
 - E. The child of God is enlightened in Christ - Ephesians 1:9, 10.
 - F. The child of God obtains an inheritance in Christ - Ephesians 1:11, 12.
 - G. The child of God is sealed in Christ - Ephesians 1:13, 14.
 2. A consideration of the following passages will provide us with additional information on the “spiritual blessings” found in Christ - Romans 3:24; 8:1, 39; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 4; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 19, 21; Ephesians 1:7; 2:13; Colossians 1:14; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 John 5:11.
 - A. None of these blessings are found in those outside of Christ - Ephesians 2:13.
- C. Of course, this brings up the question as to how one gets “in Christ” - Galatians 3:27.
- D. Keep in mind that Paul is stressing faithfulness here due to the fact that if they failed to continue to be faithful, they would forfeit those blessings - John 15:2, 6.
2. . . . which is the head of all principality and power:
 - A. As the embodiment of deity, Christ has “all authority” - Matthew 28:18.
 1. This He received at His ascension - Daniel 7:13, 14; Ephesians 1:20-23; 1 Peter 3:22.
 - B. It is due to the “headship” of Christ that the Colossians were not to submit to others and, especially, to those who would oppose His

teachings.

Verse 11

1. In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, . . .
 - A. Here is an additional blessing.
 1. God had previously indicated that those of Abraham's time that were circumcised would be recipients of the blessings He had in store for them - Genesis 17:7-13.
 - A. Notice that these blessings were not given to those who were not circumcised, regardless of whether they were Jew or Gentile, due to their being excluded from "covenants of promise" - Ephesians 2:11-13.
 2. To those who had (have) received baptism (which puts them in Christ where this blessing is found), a "spiritual circumcision" is seen, which causes them to be "heirs according to the promise" - Galatians 3:26-29.
 - B. In contrast to the circumcision of Abraham's time, this circumcision is one "made without hands."
 1. This does not set aside the essentiality of baptism as suggested by some - 1 Peter 3:21.
2. . . . in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:
 - A. Here is the point - when they submitted themselves to baptism the "body of the sins of the flesh" was put off.
 1. A contrast between the physical and the spiritual is seen here, resulting in their being a "new man" in Christ - Romans 6:3-18; 2 Corinthians 5:17.
 2. The point that Paul was making was that the "body" was removed "without hands" in the sense that God did so when man did what was commanded in order to receive such - Acts 2:40; Hebrews 5:8, 9.
 3. Robertson suggests regarding the phrase "putting off" that it can be seen "As if an old garment" (Robertson, 1931, p. 492).
 - B. What we see here is the Colossians had made a clean break from their past lives involving the passions of the flesh by the "circumcision of the heart" - Romans 2:29.
 - C. There is some question as to whether the phrase "of the sins" should

be seen here.

1. It is found in the KJV and the NKJV, but other than these, it is absent from other English translations.
2. Vincent states, “Omit *of the sins*” (Vincent, 1977, p. 488).

Verse 12

1. Buried with him in baptism, . . .
 - A. Herein is where spiritual circumcision comes about resulting in the newness of life - 2 Corinthians 5:17.
 1. It all comes from an obedient heart - Romans 6:4, 17, 18.
 - B. The phrase “buried with him” is derived from the Greek word “suntaphentes,” which is an aorist passive participle, suggesting that the action of the verb “buried” was completed prior to the next step, i.e. their being risen.
 1. It is seen in one other passage in the New Testament - Romans 6:4.
 - C. “With him” indicates the sense of their having been “co-buried” and, as such, they were “co-raised” and “co-made” alive with Him.
 - D. Since baptism is a passive act, the point we see here is as Jesus was crucified and buried by men and raised by the power of God (Acts 2:24; 2 Corinthians 13:4; Philippians 2:12), so the Colossians that had been baptized had submitted themselves to the actions of others.
2. . . . wherein also ye are risen with him . . .
 - A. It was in baptism that the Colossians were buried with Christ and raised up with Him.
 1. Here, again we see completed action in Paul’s use of the Greek word “sunegerthete,” which is aorist passive indicative.
3. . . . through the faith of the operation of God, . . .
 - A. All of this is seen as possible due to their faith.
 1. Not only did they believe in God, they believed Him and His ability to operate as He so chose - Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23.
 - B. The word “operation” is the Greek word “energeia,” and is translated “working” in the New International Version and “powerful working” in the English Standard Version, suggesting the idea of power in action.
4. . . . who hath raised him from the dead.
 - A. Remind yourself of what we have already noted concerning Jesus

having been raised by the power of God - Acts 2:24; 2 Corinthians 13:4.

Verse 13

1. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, . . .
 - A. Prior to their conversion, they had been dead in sin - Romans 6:23; 7:9, 11; James 1:15.
 1. Such is a spiritual “death” in the sense of their being spiritually separated from Christ - Ephesians 4:18.
 2. Those not in Christ are spiritually dead - 1 John 5:12.
 - B. They were “dead” in their “sins” because sin is the transgression of the law of God - 1 John 3:4.
 1. At this time, both the uncircumcised Jews and Gentiles were viewed as being separated from God, having no hope - Ephesians 2:11, 12.
2. . . . hath he quickened together with him, . . .
 - A. To “quicken” was to bring to life, to make alive together with another.
 1. One other New Testament passage uses the Greek word “sunezoopoiesen” - Ephesians 2:5.
 2. This expresses the idea of that which was a past event, i.e., they had already been made alive.
 - B. Those that were once spiritually dead are now spiritually alive with Christ by sharing in Jesus’ death - Romans 6:4, 17, 18.
 1. Note how that this condition came about by their having been baptized.
 2. Regardless of what the denominational world has said, the New Testament places an emphasis on baptism.
 - A. Coffman stated the following: “Before leaving these three verses, it is proper to note Certain widespread, persistent and stridently vocal errors regarding what the NT says concerning Christian baptism, or rather *what it does not say!* Nowhere in the NT is it declared that:
Baptism is a symbol
Baptism is a token
Baptism is a type
Baptism is a figure
Baptism is a sign
Baptism is an outward sign

Baptism is optional
Baptism is unessential
Baptism is unnecessary
Baptism is a physical action alone. .”

(Coffman, 1977, p. 356, emp. his).

3. . . . having forgiven you all trespasses;
 - A. Forgiveness of sins involves baptism, no matter what the denominational world says - Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21.
 - B. There appears to be a pronoun change not reflected in the King James Version and the New King James Version.
 1. The English Standard Version, along with most other modern translations, states something along the lines of “having forgiven us all our trespasses.”
 - A. This would result in Paul indicating that he had become a new creation in the same way the Colossians had.
 - C. It is noted that Paul indicated they had experienced forgiveness of “all” their sins.

Verse 14

1. Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, . . .
 - A. The English Standard Version states here, “by canceling the record of debt that stood against us.”
 1. The idea of rubbing something out, in this case, the Law.
 - B. The phrase “handwriting of ordinances” has reference to decrees or ordinances passed down in a handwritten form.
 1. From the overall context, it is easily seen that Paul’s reference is to the Law, although others have suggested a variety of possibilities.
 - A. A possible list of debts of sins the Colossians had committed.
 - B. Some sort of promissory note.
 - C. Some form of indebtedness that was against the Colossians.
 - D. Perhaps two separate things.
 - E. The Law of Moses.
 - C. When compared to Exodus 34:27, 28 we see reference to a handwritten document that Moses was command to write by God.
2. . . . which was contrary to us, . . .
 - A. The phrase “contrary to us” expresses the idea of hostility or

opposition.

1. It is found here and in Hebrews 10:27.

B. When speaking of the Law, it is important to understand how it was in opposition to man.

1. According to Romans 7:12, the Law was good.

A. The problem was with man and his unwillingness to follow it.

1. Because of this, it revealed the sinfulness of man - Romans 7:8-11.

B. Further, the Law demanded more than the Israelites were willing to do, since it demanded perfection - James 2:10.

1. Their failure to comply resulted in a curse upon those who transgressed it - Galatians 3:10.

2. Rather than producing blessings, as promised to Abraham and his seed (Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:16) the broken Law cursed those under it - Galatians 3:10.

3. Overall, the “weakness” of the Law is seen in what it could not accomplish - Acts 13:39; Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:20; 3:18; 3:21; 5:4; Romans 4:14; Hebrews 7:19; 10:4; 10:28.

4. This “weakness” brought about the need for another - Hebrews 8:7.

3. . . . and took it out of the way, . . .

A. The English Standard Version better states, “This he set aside, . . .”

1. Reference to deity setting aside or taking the Law away by the cross.

B. A number of passages are found in the New Testament that indicated that the Law had been taken away - Romans 6:14, 15; 7:4, 6; 2 Corinthians 3:7-13; Galatians 2:19; 3:25; 4:31; Ephesians 2:14, 15; Hebrews 7:18, 19; 8:13; 10:9.

C. Jesus had spoken concerning the abolishment of the Law - Matthew 5:17, 18.

D. The first century church was dedicated to the apostles’ doctrine, rather than the keeping of the Law - Acts 2:42.

4. . . . nailing it to his cross;

A. It was at the time of the coming of the New Covenant that the old was taken away, which was at the death of Christ on the cross - Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:16-18.

B. A parallel text to consider is Ephesians 2:14, 15.

Verse 15

1. And having spoiled principalities and powers, . . .
 - A. The word used here by Paul, translated “spoiled” in the King James Version and “disarmed” in the English Standard Version and the New King James Version, was not a commonly used Greek word.
 1. Olbricht stated, “Paul may have coined a word when he said that Jesus **disarmed** ‘rulers and authorities,’ for this is the first appearance of the term in Greek literature.” (Olbricht, 2005, p. 246, emp. his).
 2. The Greek word “apekduomai” is used here and two other places in the New Testament - Colossians 2:11; 3:9
 - B. The question that often results in conflict on this passage is exactly who or what the phrase “principalities and powers” refers to.
 1. A number of suggestions have been made over the years, ranging from the angels that gave the Law, demonic forces, and certain unnamed spiritual enemies.
 2. Contextually, at least to me, it seems more probable that Paul simply had in mind Jewish and, perhaps, Roman “powers” that were in opposition to God in association with the Law that had been “nailed” to the cross.
2. . . . he made a shew of them openly, . . .
 - A. God’s triumph over opposing forces as seen through the resurrection exposed and displayed the weakness of any and all forces against Him.
 1. No matter how “powerful” forces might have been, in comparison to His power, they were helpless.
 - A. You can imagine how powerful the Jewish leaders and the Romans felt at the death of Christ, only to have that “power” openly shown up at the empty tomb!
 2. What is seen in this statement is relative to public disgrace.
 - A. It is seen one other time in the New Testament, when used of Joseph’s desire to not publically disgrace Mary - Matthew 1:19.
3. . . . triumphing over them in it.
 - A. Although we recognize the temporary shame Jesus experienced during the trial and crucifixion, He is seen victorious by the resurrection.

- A. It was by this that the self-pronounced “power” of the rulers of His day was shown to be weak.
- B. They are pictured as a disgraced and vanquished army as the word translated “triumphing” (“thriambeuo”) was a reference to the victorious Roman generals.
- C. No “power” on earth could keep Jesus in the grave!

Verse 16

- 1. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:
 - A. In view of what had just been said, they were being told to turn to Jesus in order to learn what they should do to please God.
 - B. The word “judge” (krino) was used in a negative sense.
 - 1. Paul was telling them not to allow themselves to be judged unfavorably due to the matters that follow.
 - C. When looking at the immediate context, we see that in verse 14 that the Law had been taken away.
 - 1. Then in verse 15, forces that were in opposition to God had been defeated.
 - A. Therefore....they was not to be judged for the following things.
 - B. They were free from the ordinances of the Law, so others should not judge them using the Law as the basis for judgment.
 - D. Paul had on other occasions taught concerning these matters - Romans 14:13; 14:3, 4; 1 Corinthians 10:29; 1 Timothy 4:3-5.

Verse 17

- 1. Which are a shadow of things to come; . . .
 - A. That which was of the Old Covenant was but the “shadow” of that which was to come through Christ.
 - 1. The word “shadow” comes from the Greek word “skia,” and was used to the representation of something else as a “shadow” is of the original.
 - B. The Law foreshadowed certain things that would be seen in Christ and the New Covenant.
 - C. As one who would judge another based on his shadow, would be those who would judge the Christian based upon the Law.
 - 1. They were representative of that which was to come - Hebrews

8:5.

A. Animal sacrifices were but a “shadow” of what was to come in the sacrifice of Christ - Hebrews 8:5; 10:1-3.

B. The Law of Moses was but a “shadow” of the truth that was to come - John 1:17; Hebrews 10:1.

2. . . . but the body is of Christ.

A. The phrase “body is of Christ” has led to some confusion.

1. Is it in reference to the literal body of Christ?

2. It is in reference to the church, as the body - Ephesians 1:22, 23?

3. Is it in reference to the substance represented by a shadow, as possibly suggested by the English Standard Version?

B. It seems most likely, contextually, that Paul was referring to the fact that the Law served as the shadow of the realities of the new covenant that was to come.

1. We have the type, antitype picture.

2. Paul was pointing out that the Colossian Christians lived with the reality, not the shadow.

A. As such, they would not be judged by the “shadow.”

C. When one looks to wrong source of judgment, the judgment will be wrong!

Verse 18

1. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, . . .

A. Here a command is being issued that they be careful to not allow themselves to continue to be beguiled (“disqualify”, English Standard Version) in such a way that they would lose their reward.

1. The word “beguile” (“katabrabeuo”) is only found here in the New Testament.

2. Recall what we saw in verse 4, where Paul had warned them concerning those who would attempt to “beguile” (delude) them.

A. Now he goes even further.

B. The “reward” (“prize”, American Standard Version) would include salvation along with the spiritual blessings found in Christ.

C. “Humility” here would be in reference to a false sense of humility brought on by worshipping angels rather than the Lord.

1. We see associated with this the sense of “asceticism” (English Standard Version) or “self-abasement” (New American Standard

Version).

A. Literally, the false teachers are seen as taking pleasure in abasing themselves before others.

2. There is a contrast between the type of humility commanded by the scriptures and that which we see here - James 4:10; 1 Peter 5, 6.

A. As such, humility is seen here in a hypocritical way.

1. The New International Version states, “false humility.”

B. We note that the Lord spoke about such - Matthew 6:1-7; 23:25-28.

- D. It is seen here that not only must worship be right in its manner (John 4:24; 1 Corinthians 14:15), but also in regard to its object.

1. Notice that the angel that John sought to worship rejected such - Revelation 19:10.

A. Only deity is to be worshiped - Deuteronomy 6:13; Matthew 4:10.

2. The word translated “worship” here is the Greek word, “threskeia” and is found in two other locations where it is translated “religion” - Acts 26:5; James 1:26, 27.

3. It seemed to have the distinction of “worship” directed at pagan objects, thus the point of James 1:27 regarding “true religion.”

2. . . . intruding into those things which he hath not seen, . . .

A. A continuation of the warning directed at false teachers.

B. The word “intruding” is “embateuo,” and has reference to the idea of “dwelling in” as seen in the American Standard Version.

1. Literally, they were dwelling in or on things seen, i.e. visions.

C. The American Standard Version better translates the changing it from a negative to a positive.

1. Rather than “things which he hath not seen” it states, “dwelling in those things he hath seen.”

2. The preponderance of evidence is for the positive rather than the negative.

D. It seems that Paul is writing of “visions,” whether real or not, that the false teachers are dwelling on rather than dwelling on the truth.

1. False visions had been seen before - Jeremiah 23:25.

A. They were pictured as “deceit of their own heart” - Jeremiah 23:26.

3. . . . vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,
 - A. Those false teachers who relied upon their “visions” were arrogant or filled with conceit.
 1. Paul had warned the Corinthians concerning arrogance brought about by “knowledge” - 1 Corinthians 8:1.
 2. Based on their claims of visions, the false teachers were elevated to the position where some were accepting their teachings above those of Christ.
 - A. Even though they portrayed a false sense of humility, they were actually “puffed up” with arrogance.
 - B. The phrase “fleshly mind” was used to contrast divine revelation.
 1. The New Revised Standard Version states, “a human way of thinking.”

Verse 19

1. And not holding the Head, . . .
 - A. Here is the problem found in those who follow after “a human way of thinking.”
 1. Being focused on false teaching, resulting in a rejection of that which comes from the head.
 - A. Like the person who knows not to do something, but does it anyway to satisfy “the lust of the flesh.”
 - B. Some question here as to of whom Paul wrote, but it would seem logical that he was writing of the false teacher and any who would be “beguiled” by their teachings.
 1. Some had already stopped “holding the Head.”
 2. This was where false humility got in the way - Proverbs 16:18.
2. . . . from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, . . .
 - A. Modern translations state, “from whom” rather than “from which.”
 1. This told them the real source of spiritual nourishment - deity, rather than “visions.”
 - B. Notice “all the body” is nourished.
 1. Spiritual growth comes from a proper relationship to the Lord.
 - C. The phrase “joints and bands” has reference to the “joints and ligaments.”
 1. Paul is not suggesting that they are the means or source of the growth only that for there to be growth, the entire body must

function in such a way to be conducive for growth.

2. We see the things necessary for growth of the church flowing through the entirety of it.

D. The English Standard version states, “nourished and knit together” where the King James states “having nourishment ministered, and knit together.”

1. We see two present participles, suggestive of continued action, in the Greek, providing them with what they needed to know in order to grow.
2. Unity is seen here as it causes growth, just as division causes the opposite - John 17:20-23; 1 Corinthians 1:10.

3. . . . increaseth with the increase of God.

A. It is God who gives the increase, but He uses parts of the body to accomplish this -1 Corinthians 3:6.

1. If the head is cut off, there will be no possibility of there being growth in the church just as with the human body.

Verse 20

1. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ . .

A. Dead to sin.

1. Notice the connection of baptism to death with Christ - Romans 6:3.

A. If there is no baptism, there is no death!

B. Paul wrote to the Galatians concerning having been “crucified with Christ” - Galatians 3:20.

1. This presented the idea of death to sin as having already happened, while the condition of having been crucified was continuous.

A. Literally, not only had they died to sin, but they were still dead to it.

1. Reminds you of Romans 6:1-7.

2. . . . from the rudiments of the world, why, . . .

A. They were dead to the “elemental spirits of the world” as suggested by the English Standard Version.

1. Prior to becoming Christians, they had been alive to the things of the world and dead to Christ.

A. Now, just the opposite.

1. They are dead to the things of the world, and alive unto

Christ.

- B. What we see here is what was controlling them.
 - 1. No longer was it the ways of the world, but the Lord.
- 3. . . . as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,
 - A. Jesus had previously taught that the disciples were “not of the world” - John 15:19.
 - 1. Although “in the world,” we must not be “of the world” - John 17:11; 14, 16.
 - 2. Conformity to the world is to be avoided - Romans 12:2.
 - B. Now, as Christians, the Colossians were no longer being led by the same worldly principles they once were led by.
 - 1. The “ordinances” here are not those of the Law, but of the world.
 - A. Remember, the child of God is to “love not the world” - 1 John 2:15-17.

Verse 21

- 1. (Touch not; taste not; handle not;
 - A. All of verse 21 and part of verse 22 is parenthetical, which helps with the explanation.
 - B. This seems to be a partial listing of worldly rules from which some thought that godliness would come if followed.
 - 1. However, a positive life is not necessarily the result of following a list of negatives.
 - 2. Such things as these could lend themselves to an ascetic life style which would not necessarily contribute to godliness.
 - C. They could have reference to what Paul addressed Timothy concerning abstinence from food and marriage - 1 Timothy 4:3.

Verse 22

- 1. Which all are to perish with the using;) . . .
 - A. Reference here is to things which were temporary in contrast to those of a spiritual nature which last forever.
 - B. Three reasons are given in verses 22 and 23 relative to why they should not follow the decrees seen in verses 20 and 21.
 - 1. First, they did not concern matters of an eternal nature.
 - A. Reminds us of Mark 8:36, 37.
 - C. Jesus had previously spoken concerning man-made commandments - Matthew 15:9; Mark 7:7, 8; 18-20.
 - D. Paul wrote to the Romans concerning the nature of the kingdom of

God - Romans 14:17.

2. . . . after the commandments and doctrines of men?
 - A. The “ordinances” mentioned above were non-binding due to their having originated with men instead of God.
 1. This is the second reason why they should not follow the decrees seen in verses 20 and 21.

Verse 23

1. Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, . . .
 - A. The ones above and any other like unto them.
 1. Reminds us of Paul’s words penned to the Galatians - Galatians 5:21.
 - B. Such things as these “appear” wise from a worldly perspective, but in the end they hold no real spiritual value.
2. . . . and humility, . . .
 - A. Better, “self-made religion” as per the English Standard Version.
 1. Perhaps reference back to angel worship seen earlier.
 - B. Clearly a reference to religious activity from a human perspective.
3. . . . and neglecting of the body; . . .
 - A. This would be self-abasement
4. . . . not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.
 - A. Here is the third reason why they should not follow the decrees seen in verses 20 and 21.
 1. They possessed no intrinsic value when it came to the control of the passions of the world.
 - A. The gratification of fleshly indulgences would not contribute anything to holiness.
 - B. Recall Paul’s words concerning “bodily exercise” - 1 Timothy 4:8.

CHAPTER THREE:

Verse 1

1. If ye then be risen with Christ, . . .
 - A. The word “if” might be viewed as “since” as seen in the New International Version (NIV, 1984, p. 1310).
 - B. Having “died” to sin, and having been “buried” with Christ, they had been raised up with him - Romans 6:1-6; Colossians 2:12, 20.
 - C. The Greek word “sunegeiro” translated here indicates a completed

action.

1. Literally, since they had been “raised with Christ,” they were to redirect themselves.
2. ... seek those things which are above, ...
 - A. Their minds (hearts) were to be on the spiritual rather than the physical.
 - B. The Greek word “zeteite,” translated “seek,” had reference to that which they were commanded to keep on doing.
 - C. The phrase “which are above” speaks of their taking their minds off worldly things and put them on heavenly things.
3. ... where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
 - A. At the time Paul wrote to the Colossians, Christ was in heaven, ruling at the “right hand” of God, which had been prophesied by David - Psalm 110:1.

Verse 2

1. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
 - A. You will see the opportunity for choice here.
 1. They were to choose to focus on heavenly matters rather than earthly - Matthew 6:33.
 - B. To set their “affection on things above” was to set their “minds” on such as seen in the American Standard Version.
 1. In the Greek this is an imperative.
 2. It literally meant to carefully consider “things above.”
 - C. It is important to recognize that it is not enough to exclude from our thinking that which is evil.
 1. We must fill the void with that which is good - Romans 12:2; 13:14; Philippians 4:8.

Verse 3

1. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.
 - A. Here is a statement of cause.
 1. Definite action is seen here.
 - B. Recall what we saw before, how that their entire perspective had changed - Philippians 2:20.
 1. They that were once dead to Christ are now alive to Him.
 - C. The word “hid” comes from the Greek word “krupto,” and should be seen as a completed action with a continuing result.
 1. As they remained “in Christ,” they continued to be “hidden with

Christ.”

Verse 4

1. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.
 - A. Literally, Christ is seen as the very center of their lives - 1 John 5:12.
 - B. Speaking of the second coming of Christ, Paul indicated that the faithful Colossians would share in the glory that would be revealed when He came.
 1. We see the sense of this glory extending beyond this life - Philippians 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
 2. Keep in mind the “comfort” that Paul wrote of to the Thessalonians - 1 Thessalonians 4:18.

Verse 5

1. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; . . .
 - A. To “mortify,” was to “put to death,” as the American Standard Version states.
 1. The New American Standard Version states, “consider the members of your earthly body as dead to. . .”
 2. This was an imperative, literally commanding the Colossians to “kill” all sinful activities of the body.
 - B. Although, as we have noted, they had previously “died” to their former lives, they still had to confront the allurements of evil vices in their lives.
 1. Literally, Paul was challenging them to cease from any and all evil allurements.
 2. They were being told to keep these things under control.
2. . . . fornication, . . .
 - A. From the Greek word “porneia,” referring to all forms of sexual perversion.
 1. The English Standard Version translates “porneia” as “sexual immorality.”
 - A. But this is too broad in its meaning.
 2. Specifically, “porneia” has reference to improper sexual activities, inclusive of adultery, bestiality, homosexuality, lesbianism, and sexual relations between those not married.
 - B. Numerous New Testament passages speak to the matter of fornication - 1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:9, 10; 6:18; Galatians 5:19-21.

1. The New Testament does not forbid sexual intercourse within the confines of marriage - 1 Corinthians 7:1-5.
3. . . . uncleanness, . . .
 - A. This has reference to moral uncleanness or impurity.
 1. It is found in the list of things that Paul referred to as the “works of the flesh” - Galatians 5:19.
 2. It is used when speaking of things “unnatural,” as indicated by Paul - Romans 1:24.
4. . . . inordinate affection, . . .
 - A. This is in reference to uncontrolled passion, from the Greek word “pathos.”
 1. The previous words referred to the physical act while “pathos” referred to the “yearning” or “drive” that would be fulfilled in illicit sexual activity.
5. . . . evil concupiscence, . . .
 - A. “Evil desire” is seen here.
 1. “Epithumia” must be determined by an associative word, indicating either good or bad desire.
 - B. This seems to go a step further than “pathos,” which is more specific.
6. . . . and covetousness,
 - A. From the Greek word “pleonexia,” meaning “greed.”
 1. Literally, referring to the idea of desiring more than is needed.
7. . . . which is idolatry:
 - A. Paul adds this statement to clear up the fact that he has more than sexual sins in mind when speaking about greed.

Verse 6

1. For which things' sake the wrath of God . . .
 - A. The word “wrath” comes from the Greek word “orge,” and can be translated “anger.”
 - B. Although God is “love” (1 John 4:8), He possesses the ability to do things out of “anger” or “wrath” - 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.
2. . . . cometh on the children of disobedience:
 - A. Here we see the certainty of the “wrath of God” through the measure of speech called “a prophetic present tense” which presents things yet to happen as if they had already come to past - John 4:21; 14:3.
 - B. There is some question as to whether the phrase “children of disobedience” should be found here.

1. However, there appears to be sufficient manuscript verification to allow its inclusion.
2. But if it were taken away, Paul's words to the Ephesians were so similar that the truth has been presented on this - Ephesians 5:6.

Verse 7

1. In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.
 - A. Prior to their becoming Christians, the Colossians to whom Paul wrote had followed after the "ways of the world."
 1. The English Standard Version states, "In these you too once walked, when you were living in them."
 2. It stressed the past tense action seen here as represented in the fact that they had "died" to these things at their conversion.
 - B. "Walking" and "living" express doing so without specifically stating whether the action was good or bad - Romans 8:4.
 1. The context is going to reveal which is which.
 - C. They had previously been "servants" or "slaves" to sin - John 8:34; Romans 6:16.
 1. Now, they are being encouraged by Paul to be careful that they, having turned from such, do not allow themselves to be overcome and resume a similar life.
 - A. Becoming a Christian does not cause one to be sinless or above temptation -1 John 1:6-2:1; James 1:12-15.

Verse 8

1. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.
 - A. In verse 5, Paul centered on moral sins, while here he centers on character sins.
 1. It is not enough not to commit adultery, if one is filled with these types of character sins.
 - A. The change from the "old man" to the "new creation" is all inclusive.
 2. These things, like the ones earlier, must continually be "put off."
 - A. Paul is seeking a response.
 - B. As previously noted, the word "anger" is from the Greek word "orge," (same as the word translated "wrath" in verse 6) and refers to a lesser stage of agitation expressed by the word "wrath" ("thumos) that follows.

- C. The word “wrath” here is from “thumos,” and refers to intense feelings of indignation.
1. As seen above, the English words “anger” and “wrath” may come from the Greek word “orge,” thus it seems that when the more intense feeling is necessary, “thumos” is used to indicate a greater degree of “anger.”
 2. Vine’s Expository Dictionary states the following.
 - A. Notes: (1) Thumos, “wrath” (not translated “anger”), is to be distinguished from orge, in this respect, that thumos indicates a more agitated condition of the feelings, an outburst of wrath from inward indignation, while orge suggests a more settled or abiding condition of mind, frequently with a view to taking revenge. Orge is less sudden in its rise than thumos, but more lasting in its nature. Thumos expresses more the inward feeling, orge the more active emotion. Thumos may issue in revenge, though it does not necessarily include it. It is characteristic that it quickly blazes up and quickly subsides, though that is not necessarily implied in each case. (Vine, N.D., pp. 57, 58).
- D. The word “malice,” from the Greek word “kakia,” and refers to the lower desires of men.
1. You might think of depravity or wickedness here.
 2. Such people are vicious, mean-spirited people - Romans 1:29; Ephesians 4:31.
 3. A sense of desire to bring about injury or suffering to another.
- E. The word “blasphemy” is from the Greek word “blasphemia,” and is translated “railing” in the American Standard Version and “slander” in the English Standard Version.
1. There is the sense of desire to cause one to be defamed or injured, such as speaking evil of another - Matthew 12:32.
- F. The phrase “filthy communication” is from the Greek word “aischrologia,” and is found only here in the New Testament.
1. It has reference to crude, abusive or filthy speech.
 - A. Profanity and so-called “off colored” jokes would definitely come under this statement.
 2. Paul wrote of such language to the Ephesians - Ephesians 5:4.
- G. The phrase “out of your mouth” took it beyond one thinking impure

things.

1. Jesus had pointed out that from the heart came forth evil actions - Matthew 15:19.

Verse 9

1. Lie not one to another, . . .
 - A. Although addressing fellow Christians here, there is no suggestion it would be appropriate for them to lie to those who were not Christians.
 1. Liars “shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone” - Revelation 21:8.
2. . . . seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;
 - A. The phrase “put off” is one commonly used when referring to taking clothing off, much like the phrase “put on” had reference to putting clothing on.
 1. Paul’s point was, like one takes off his coat, and sets it aside, so the Colossians had put aside the “old man of sin” and put on “the new creation.”

Verse 10

1. And have put on the new man, . . .
 - A. The statement here is similar to ones made by Paul in locations such as Galatians 3:27.
 1. Although important to “put on the new man,” it is likewise just as important to develop the Christ-like character that comes afterward.
2. . . . which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:
 - A. The phrase “is renewed” is a present participle, indicating continuous action.
 1. In other words, a continued renewal is seen in their lives as they continued to become more Christ-like - Ephesians 4:13, 16; 1 Timothy 4:15.
 2. The English Standard Version states, “which is being renewed in knowledge.”
 - B. Such “renewal” results in bringing the child of God to a fuller sense of knowledge.
 1. The word “knowledge” is from the Greek word “epignosis” and here speaks of the sense of “a true knowledge” as expressed by the New American Standard Version.

2. The more knowledge one has of Christ, the more they may pattern their lives after Him.
- C. There is the sense of their being transformed into the very image of Christ - Philippians 3:10-14.
 1. This is the goal of the child of God.

Verse 11

1. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, . . .
 - A. The New American Standard Version has a rather unique translation here when it states, “*a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew. . .*”
 1. This seems to be more of a commentary than translation.
 - B. The “renewal” is seen in verse 10, and is carried over here in the sense that once one has become a Christian there is the constant need for “renewal” for all who are Christians, no matter what their race or nationality might be.
 1. Paul addressed this matter when writing to the Corinthians and the Galatians -1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:26-28.
 - C. The order of the placement of the words “Greek” and “Jew” are not as per the normal procedure.
 1. It has been suggested that Paul may have done it this way here in order to place emphasis upon the Jews not being before others in their standing before God.
 - A. Of course, this is pure conjecture.
 - D. The New Testament indicates that so far as God is concerned with matters pertaining to salvation, there is no distinction - Acts 10:34; 15:9, 11; Romans 2:11, 12; 3:22.
2. . . . circumcision nor uncircumcision, . . .
 - A. The term “circumcision” typically had reference to those of Jewish descent while “uncircumcision” had reference to all non-Jews.
3. . . . Barbarian, Scythian, . . .
 - A. These would be what we might call “culturally backward foreigners.”
 1. The word “barbarian” would be in reference to those who were uneducated.
 - B. Scythians would refer to the “meanest of the mean” of the “barbarians.”
 - C. The Jewish historian Josephus said of the Scythians that they “. . . they take a pleasure in killing men, and differ but little from brute

beasts;" (Josephus, 1960, p. 635).

4. . . . bond nor free: . . .

A. The word "bond" here is from the Greek word "doulos," and had reference to one bound in slavery while the word "free" had reference either to one who had never been a slave, or to one who had been a slave but who had obtained his freedom.

1. It was possible that one who was a slave could either be set free due to some special service or purchase his own freedom.

5. . . . but Christ is all, and in all.

A. Literally, Paul was saying, "Christ is all things, and in all things."

1. Robertson, quoting Lightfoot, wrote "Christ occupies the whole sphere of human life and permeates all its developments" (Robertson, 1931, p. 503).

A. As such, everything depends upon Him as Creator and Sustainer - Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2, 3.

B. Spiritual blessings come to those who are "in Christ" - Ephesians 1:3.

Verse 12

1. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, . . .

A. Because of the fact that Christ is all things, and in all things, the Colossians were to "put on" the following things.

1. They had already "put on the new man" - Colossians 3:10.

2. Now, they are to "put on" or clothe themselves with the following virtues.

B. Three distinct classes of virtues are found in verses 12-15.

1. Relative to others - compassion, kindness, gentleness, and love.

2. Relative to one's self - humility.

3. How one reacts when treated badly - patience, forbearance, and forgiveness.

C. The phrase "elect of God" has reference to their having been "chosen" by obedience to the gospel - 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10.

1. God's "predestination" is in respect to His have predetermined that those who obey the gospel should conform to the image of Christ - Romans 8:29.

2. . . . holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, . . .

A. The word "holy" is from "hagioi," and referred to the difference now seen in the lives of the Christians in contrast to what they previously

were.

1. It is the same word translated “saints” in Colossians 1:2, 4, 12, 26.

B. The word “beloved,” had reference to their having been, and continued to be, loved by God.

1. Paul’s point was, since they were “chosen” by God, they should be “holy and beloved.”

C. The phrase “bowels of mercies” had reference to their having a “compassionate heart” as seen in the English Standard Version.

1. The word “heart” here is from the Greek word “splagchnon,” and had reference to one’s inward parts.

A. This gets to the seat of emotion - Luke 1:78.

B. This referred to their ability to feel sympathy for others who might be suffering.

3. . . . kindness, . . .

A. The word “kindness,” spoke of goodness or tenderness toward others in need.

4. . . . humbleness of mind, . . .

A. Literally, “humility.”

1. Reference to one being of a lowly attitude in contrast to false humility - Colossians 2:18, 23.

A. This word is found in four other New Testament passages - Acts 20:19; Ephesians 4:2; Philippians 2:3; 1 Peter 5:5.

5. . . . meekness, . . .

A. The idea of “gentleness,” as per the English Standard Version.

1. Bauer stated, “a quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one’s own importance, gentleness, humility, courtesy, considerateness, meekness in the older favorable sense.” (Bauer, 2000, p. 861).

6. . . . longsuffering;

A. Possessing “patience.”

1. Having the ability to bear up in face of provocation.

A. Even when mistreated, they were to be steadfast.

Verse 13

1. Forbearing one another, . . .

A. Literally, the idea of “bearing with one another.”

1. The concept of tolerance is seen here.

- B. Even when mistreated, the Colossians were told to not act in an unbecoming way.
- 2. . . . and forgiving one another, . . .
 - A. The word “forgiving” is from the Greek word “charisomai,” which, here, referred to the forgiveness of a debt or offense - Luke 7:42, 43; 2 Corinthians 2:7,10.
 - 1. “Charisomai” is not the most commonly used word that is translated “forgiveness.”
 - A. That would be the Greek word “aphesis.”
 - 2. “Charisomai” suggests a greater sense of forgiveness that was to be constant.
 - A. Paul was telling them they needed to have the attitude of being willing to continually forgive as necessary.
 - B. Keep in mind that such forgiveness is extended to those who seek such - Luke 17:3.
 - 1. It is not possible to forgive those who do not repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30; Job 4:17; 35:2.
 - 2. Recall the procedure Jesus gave concerning the one who “trespasses” against a brother - Matthew 18:15-18.
- 3. . . . if any man have a quarrel against any: . . .
 - A. The word “quarrel” is from the Greek word “momphe,” and is translated “complaint” in the English Standard Version.
 - 1. “Momphe” is found only in the passage in the New Testament.
 - B. Regardless of the “complaint,” whether justified or not, the Christian is to forgive when asked.
 - 1. When we forgive, we “forget.”
 - A. But what does that mean?
 - 1. People say, “You must forgive and forget like the Lord does!”
 - A. And I would agree - Hebrews 8:12; 10:17.
 - 2. But what is meant when we say that God “no more remembers their iniquity?”
 - A. Not that it is removed from His memory!
 - 1. Consider the sins of so many Old and New Testament characters whose sins were forgiven, but whose sins were written about many years later by “inspiration.”
 - 3. Ezekiel 18:22 provides us the answer.

4. . . . even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.
 - A. The same Greek word here as used above, except here it is in an aorist verb indicating a completed action.
 1. In other words, as the Lord has already forgiven you, so you should forgive others.
 - B. Jesus was held up as the example of forgiveness, as He was held up as the example in so many other areas - 1 Peter 2:21-23.

Verse 14

1. And above all these things put on charity, . . .
 - A. “Charity” is better translated “love,” coming from the Greek word “agape.”
 1. Love exceeds every other characteristic - 1 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Peter 4:9.
 2. Love is not determined by whether the object of our love is worthy of it.
 - A. Consider God’s love for man - Romans 5:8, 9.
 - B. Of course what we see here is the motivating factor behind the above mentioned virtues as we consider the English Standard’s Translation, “And over all these virtues put on love, . . .”
 1. We may, also, see the sense of degrees of love.
2. . . . which is the bond of perfectness.
 - A. The English Standard Version states, “. . . which binds them all together in perfect unity.”
 - B. The word “bond” had reference to that which held things together.
 1. “Love” holds things together - 1 John 4:17, 18.
 - C. The word “perfect” here is the Greek word “teleiotes,” which meant complete or mature - Hebrews 6:1.

Verse 15

1. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, . . .
 - A. The word “peace” in the Greek is “eirene,” and had reference to a sense of inner calm or tranquility that was to “rule” their lives.
 1. This “peace,” as we have seen, is with God, others, and themselves.
 - A. When “peace” ruled their relationship with others, unity would be found.
 - B. The word “rule,” was from the Greek word “brabeuo,” and referred to the taking of control over someone’s activities.

1. Paul indicated that this “peace” was to permeate the church at Colosse.
2. . . . to the which also ye are called in one body; . . .
 - A. The “one body” would be the church - Ephesians 1:22, 23; 4:4.
 - B. The means of the “calling” would be the gospel - 2 Thessalonians 2:13.
3. . . . and be ye thankful.
 - A. Thankfulness was often alluded to by Paul in Colossians - Colossians 1:3, 12; 2:7; 3:15, 16, 17; 4:2.
 - B. This was more than a thankful disposition; they were actually to be “thankful.”

Verse 16

1. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. . . .
 - A. Literally, the gospel.
 - B. The word “dwell,” here, is from the Greek word *enoikeo*,” and meant to dwell as to be at home.
 1. So, the gospel was to take up residence in the Christian.
 - C. The word “richly,” from the Greek word “*plousios*,” meant abundantly, completely or fully.
 1. We see the sense of a full saturation in the lives of the Colossians.
2. . . . in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing . . .
 - A. The “teaching and admonishing” was to be done with “all wisdom” as seen in the English Standard Version.
 1. The “word of Christ” would be the source of “wisdom” relative to “teaching and admonishing.”
 - B. The word “wisdom,” which is “*sophia*” in the Greek, is found six times in the Colossian letter - 1:9, 28; 2:3, 23; 3:16, 4:5.
 1. The contrast would be with worldly wisdom.
 - C. The word “teaching,” from the Greek word “*didaskontes*,” had reference to education through knowledge.
 - D. The word “admonishing,” from the Greek word “*nouthetountes*,” referred to counsel given in order to properly direct one’s conduct.
3. . . . one another in psalms . . .
 - A. The singing of “psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs” is bi-directional as they are both directed to God, as worship, and to “one another” as a means of teaching.
 - B. The phrase “one another” had reference to what was done in the

assembly of the saints.

1. Some have suggested that this phrase only had reference to personal times wherein one would sing, such as seen in James 5:13.

A. Yet the sense of reciprocity is clearly indicated.

B. Vincent had this to say, “This is the more likely, as the use of these different compositions is not restricted to singing nor to public worship. They are to be used in mutual Christian teaching and admonition.” (Vincent, 1977, p. 507).

2. A number of church historians have confirmed that the early church sang during their assemblies.

A. Everett Ferguson, quoted Pliny (Pliny Letters 10.96, S 7 to Emperor Trajan) concerning the “habit” of the early Christians singing in their assemblies, “. . . they were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god. . .” (Ferguson, 1981, p. 81).

C. “Psalms” typically is understood as having reference to Jewish songs from sources such as the Book of Psalms.

1. Vincent stated, “A psalm was originally a song accompanied by a stringed instrument. See on 1 Cor. xiv. 15. The idea of accompaniment passed away in usage, and the psalm, in New Testament phraseology, is an Old-Testament psalm, or composition having that character.” (Vincent, 1977, p. 506).

4. . . . and hymns . . .

A. The word “hymns,” from the Greek word “*hymnoi*,” were songs of praise which were of Christian origin.

5. . . . and spiritual songs, . . .

A. “Spiritual songs” are often viewed as poems of a sacred nature.

6. . . . singing with grace . . .

A. “Singing” is quite clear here.

1. Modern definitions of the word “open the door” for innovations such as humming and other vocal sounds.

A. However, these definitions overlook the modification seen when “teaching” is done by “singing.”

1. Humming or other vocal sounds cannot accomplish what Paul is commanding here.

- B. The word “grace” is from the Greek word “charis,” from which we get our English word “grace,” but is translated “thankfulness” and “gratitude” in the English Standard, New American Standard, and New International Versions, while others like the American Standard, King James and New King James translates it as “grace.”
 - 1. There is no unanimity on the proper translation here.
 - 2. If the word is to be understood as “grace,” it would be in reference to attractive attitude rather than in the sense of “unmerited” favor.
- 7. . . . in your hearts to the Lord.
 - A. This is locative, in the sense it indicates where they were to express their thankfulness for what God had done via song.
 - 1. Proper adoration is seen in the “hearts” of those who worship God - John 4:24.
 - B. The “heart” plays an important role in all that the Christian does - Proverbs 4:23; Romans 6:17.
 - 1. Whether good or bad, the heart is the source from which our actions come forth - Matthew 12:34-36.

Verse 17

- 1. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, . . .
 - A. This has to do with the totality of life, as what we do will fit one or the other.
 - 1. Judgment will be based on what we have done, whether good or bad - 2 Corinthians 5:10.
 - B. Thus the speech and actions of the Christian should be consistent with the claim of being a Christian.
- 2. . . . do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, . . .
 - A. The phrase “in the name” had to do with the source of authority - Acts 4:7.
 - 1. Man’s actions, whether “word or deed,” are not to be based on human authority.
 - A. The reason for that is quite clear - Proverbs 14:12; 23:7; Jeremiah 23:7.
 - B. The term “Lord” is indicative of His authoritative role due to His “name” being above every name, and that at Judgment, every knee will bow to Him - Ephesians 1:21; Philippians 2:9, 10.
- 3. . . . giving thanks to God and the Father by him.
 - A. Thanksgiving was to be given “to God and the Father” through Jesus.

1. He is the “medium” or “mediator” by which we go to the Father - 1 Timothy 2:5.
- B. Prayer is addressed to “the Father” - Matthew 6:6, 8, 15; Luke 11:1, 2; John 16:23, 26, 27.

Verse 18

1. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.
 - A. The word “wives” here in the Greek is “gunaikes,” and can be translated either “wives” or “women.”
 - B. The word “submit,” is “hupotassethe,” and is a present imperative which indicated the sense of a continued submission.
 1. Whether the “libbers” like it or not, the word was used in military contexts, and referred to a subordinate’s relationship to another superior in rank.
 2. Consider Paul’s words to Titus concerning wives being “obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” - Titus 2:5.
 - C. The phrase “as it is fit in the Lord” indicates a sense of discernment on behalf of the wife.
 1. Of course, the statement command to be submissive is modified by what is said here.
 2. The wife, to be submissive to her husband, is not obligated to do what is asked of her if it is in contradiction to the will of God.
 3. “Chaste behavior” is demanded by God of the wife - 1 Peter 3:1, 2.

Verse 19

1. Husbands, love your wives, . . .
 - A. The action that controls the husband’s action toward his wife is love.
 1. “Love” is from the Greek word “agapao,” and is a present imperative, indicative of ongoing action.
 - B. The word “husbands,” from the Greek word “andres,” and may mean either “husband” or “men,” determined by the context.
 - C. It is interesting that wives are never commanded to “love” their husbands in the New Testament.
 1. They are to be taught “to love their husbands” - Titus 2:4.
 - D. We see in this, and similar passages, wives are to be loved rather than treated as property - Ephesians 5:25.
 - E. The word love, here, is not “erao,” thus helping us to see that Paul

was not thinking only of the wife as a sex object.

2. . . . and be not bitter against them.
 - A. The continued “love” that he has for her will cause him to “be not bitter” against his wife.
 1. The Greek word used here, “pirkraino,” appears only here and in Revelation 8:11; 10:9, 10.
 - B. Husbands are instructed to understand their wives as being the “weaker vessel” - 1 Peter 3:7.
 1. Husband’s prayers may be “hindered” due to the failure to properly treat their wives - 1 Peter 3:7.

Verse 20

1. Children, . . .
 - A. The Greek word “tekna” is used here and specifically refers to ones descendants.
 1. This raises the question concerning duration.
 - A. What of “children” who are no longer in the home?
2. . . . obey your parents in all things: . . .
 - A. A similar statements is seen in Ephesians 6:1, where Paul wrote, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.”
 - B. This command is stronger than the one just considered concerning the wife.
 1. The wife is under a voluntary submission, while the children are under absolute submission or obedience.
 2. Recall how under the Law of Moses children were required to “honor their father and mother,” and as such would have “long life” - Exodus 20:12; Leviticus 19:3.
 - A. The brevity of life came about when one was put to death for “cursing” their parents - Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9; Deuteronomy 21:18-21.
 - C. Of course the phrase “all things” would speak to those things approved of by God.
 - D. Robertson’s comments are interesting here given the fact that his Word Pictures In The New Testament was copy written in 1931, “Nowhere does modern civilization show more weakness than just here. Waves of lawlessness sweep over the world because the child was not taught to obey.” (Robertson, 1931, p. 506).
3. . . . for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.

- A. It can truthfully be said that anyone, any time, who obeys God is well pleasing to Him.
 - 1. Of course, the opposite would be true of those who refuse to obey.
- B. The phrase “unto the Lord” is “en kurio” in the Greek and literally meant “in the Lord,” referring to the idea of complying with the Lord’s commands.
 - 1. Obeying the Lord would both please godly parents and God.

Verse 21

- 1. Fathers, . . .
 - A. Staying with the context, Paul singles out the “fathers” here although not suggesting that it would be right for mothers to “provoke” their children “to anger.”
- 2. . . . provoke not your children to anger, . . .
 - A. Fathers need to be cautioned to not take their role as head of the home to levels beyond what would be appropriate.
 - 1. Christian fathers should have high expectations of their children, but those expectations should not be such that under normal situations the children are frustrated in their efforts to comply.
 - 3. . . . lest they be discouraged.
 - A. We see a sense of exasperation or resentment brought on by unfair demands.
 - 1. If fathers only demand what God demands, then such feelings should not be found in mature children who understand their need to obey God.

Verse 22

- 1. Servants, . . .
 - A. Literally, “slaves.”
 - 1. At this time in history, slavery was practiced on a wide scale measure.
 - 2. Teachings provided by God relative to slavery had to do with the regulation of it rather than the abolition.
 - A. Recall how Paul wrote concern Onesimus being treated by Philemon as a brother - Philemon 16.
 - 2. . . . obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; . . .
 - A. It made no difference how they were treated, they were to “obey” even if treated unreasonably - 1 Peter 2:18-20.
 - 1. The need for obedience had nothing to do with the character of the

slave owner.

- B. As per above, the phrase “in all things” had to do with things consistent with what God approved.
- C. The phrase “masters according to the flesh” was in contrast to Jesus as spiritual “master.”
- 3. . . . not with eyeservice, . . .
 - A. The Greek word used here, “ophthalmoudoulia,” was used in Ephesians 6:6.
 - B. The point Paul was making was that the slave was not to obey only when under the watchful eye of his “master.”
- 4. . . . as menpleasers; . . .
 - A. The Christian slave was not to obey because he felt compelled to do so out of, perhaps, fear of retribution.
- 5. . . . but in singleness of heart, fearing God:
 - A. The phrase “in singleness of heart” referred to the idea of sincerity.
 - 1. In other words, their service was without deceit.
 - 2. It could be said that his purpose in life was to serve his “master.”
 - B. The word “fearing,” from the Greek word “phoboumenoi,” meant they were to serve out of respect for God - 1 Peter 2:18.

Verse 23

- 1. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;
 - A. Whatever the slave was told to do, within the limits of being permissible by God, he was to do it because he respected God and had the desire to please his “master.”
 - 1. This would result in God being glorified.

Verse 24

- 1. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: .
 - A. Two basic reasons were given by Paul concerning slaves obeying their “masters.”
 - 1. Because they respected God.
 - 2. Because of the reward they would receive.
 - B. “Inheritances” usually were reserved for the children of the “master,” such as in the case of Abram’s concern for having “no seed” to be his heir - Genesis 15:2, 3.
- 2. . . . for ye serve the Lord Christ.
 - A. Recall what Jesus taught concerning the greatness that came from serving others - Matthew 20:25-28.

Verse 25

1. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: .
 - A. Notice the universality of this statement - “he that doeth . . .”
 1. Again, we are reminded of passages like Romans 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10.
2. . . . and there is no respect of persons.
 - A. When it comes to salvation, God is impartial - Acts 10:34; Romans 2:6, 11; 1 Peter 1:17.
 1. Of course there are those specific “spiritual blessings” that are only for those in Christ - Ephesians 1:3.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Verse 1

1. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; . . .
 - A. Since most early Christians were not wealthy and, as such, were more than likely slaves instead of slave owners, Paul spent little time addressing the later.
 1. When he did, he gave specific instruction concerning their being “just and equal.”
 - B. It has been suggested that Paul may have been encouraging the slave owners to treat their slaves as humans rather than property.
 1. If so, that would have been a revolutionary concept.
2. . . . knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.
 - A. The Christian slave owners were reminded by Paul that they, too, had a Master.
 1. Basic fundamental principles were at work at this time helping those who were Christians to recognize how they were responsible to God for how they treated their brethren in Christ who might have been slaves.

Verse 2

1. Continue in prayer, . . .
 - A. Paul often encouraged his readers to pray - Romans 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.
 1. Also, he encouraged them to pray specifically for him - Romans 15:30-32; 2 Corinthians 1:11; Ephesians 6:19.
 - B. The Greek word “proskartereo,” translated “continue” in the King James Version is translated “devote” in the New American Standard

Version.

1. Both English words stress the idea of consistency.
- C. The word “prayer” more so than not had in mind prayer of supplication - Romans 1:10; 15:30; James 5:17.
 1. Here the prayer of supplication was for Paul and his companions.
2. . . . and watch in the same with thanksgiving;
 - A. The Colossians was being encouraged to stay alert, which implied impending danger.
 1. This could be from temptation or false teachers.
 - B. Paul often connected thanksgiving to prayer - 2 Corinthians 1:11; Ephesians 1:16; Philippians 1:3; 4:6.

Verse 3

1. Withal praying also for us, . . .
 - A. “Praying” here is in the present tense, indicating the desire for continued prayers to be offered on the behalf of Paul and his companions.
2. . . . that God would open unto us a door of utterance, . . .
 - A. Although in prison while writing this, Paul does not ask for prayer to be offered for his release.
 1. Rather, he asked for prayer to be offered relative to opportunities to preach.
 2. Paul often mentioned “open doors” - 1 Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12.
3. . . . to speak the mystery of Christ, . . .
 - A. He not only desired prayer for “open doors,” but such that would allow him the opportunity to preach.
 - B. The “mystery of Christ” would be the previously unrevealed message of salvation through Christ - Romans 16:25, 26; Ephesians 3:3-5.
 1. Paul sought to “make known the mystery of the gospel” - Ephesians 6:19.
4. . . . for which I am also in bonds:
 - A. Paul was imprisoned due to following after his desire to preach the gospel.

Verse 4

1. That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.
 - A. Paul sought the prayers of the Colossian brethren for two specific things.

1. "Open doors" for the opportunity to preach.
2. Clarity of message.
 - A. Paul wished to proclaim the message in such a way that men would understand rather than to impress them - 1 Corinthians 2:1.
 1. A valuable lesson for preachers today!
 - A. The "power" is in the gospel, not the gospel preacher - Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12.
 - B. Paul felt a sense of obligation.
 1. This reminds us of Romans 1:14.
 2. The messenger must be careful to not hinder the message by his life.
 - A. This why the preacher must "speak the truth in love" - Ephesians 4:15.

Verse 5

1. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, . . .
 - A. "Walk" is an imperative, thus they were being commanded to "walk in wisdom."
 - B. As to specifically how this was to be done "toward them that are without," i.e., non-members, Paul did not say.
 1. To the Corinthians, Paul gave instruction, "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:" - 1 Corinthians 10:32.
 2. To the Philippians he wrote, "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;" - Philippians 2:15.
2. . . . redeeming the time.
 - A. A similar statement is seen in Ephesians 5:15, 16.
 1. Literally, the idea was they were to make the most of every opportunity.
 - A. The Galatians were encouraged to "not be weary in well doing" - Galatians 6:9.
 - B. For those who might not be stepping up and doing what was expected of them, Paul was encouraging them to seize the opportunity - Galatians 6:10.
 - C. In consideration of the life and work of Christ, we note that He was

time-conscious - John 9:4.

1. As those who follow in His steps, we should be the same.

Verse 6

1. Let your speech be always with grace, . . .
 - A. To properly communicate the gospel proper speech must be used.
 - B. We see the need for both proper content and manner of speech are essential.
 1. Crude language should not be a part of the speech of the Christ-like person!
 2. The presentation of the truth must be associated with the proper pattern of speech.
 - C. God's Word may offend those who care nothing for it, but my speech should never purposely be offensive - Galatians 4:16.
2. . . . seasoned with salt, . . .
 - A. Their speech was to appear as food "seasoned with salt."
 1. Acceptable "flavor" is seen here.
 - A. To the Ephesians, Paul had this to say, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." - Ephesians 4:29.
3. . . . that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.
 - A. Christians should carefully choose their words so that we might have the right words, at the right time, for the right people, with the right teaching - 1 Peter 3:15.

Verse 7

1. All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord:
 - A. Tychicus and Onesimus were to reveal the details of Paul's condition while imprisoned in Rome.
 - B. Tychicus was a native of Asia Minor, and was mentioned by Luke in Acts 20:4.
 1. Paul described him as a "faithful minister and fellowservant."
 - A. This probably had more to say about his labor than his title, as the Greek word "diakonos" implies.
 1. I.e. he faithfully carried out the work given him.

Verse 8

1. Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know

your estate, and comfort your hearts;

A. Paul wished for the Colossians to know of his condition to eliminate unnecessary anxiety.

1. They would be encouraged by what they heard.

Verse 9

1. With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you.

A. The name “Onesimus” meant “profitable.”

1. He who once used to be “unprofitable,” now is “profitable” - Philemon 11, 20.

B. Onesimus was converted by Paul while in prison - Philemon 10.

2. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here.

A. Paul sought to accomplish two things by sending Tychicus and Onesimus to the Colossians.

1. They would be told of his status.

A. This was to be done verbally.

B. Paul’s condition at Rome was not one of ill treatment - Acts 28:16, 30, 31.

1. To the Ephesians, Paul wrote that Tychicus would “make known to” them “all things.”- Ephesians 6:21.

2. They would be brought Paul’s message.

Verse 10

1. Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, . . .

A. A native of Thessalonica who traveled with Paul on his third missionary journey.

B. The word “fellowprisoner” may suggest that he was in prison with Paul due to his preaching the gospel.

1. It may also mean that he was a “fellow prisoner in war” against evil.

2. I tend to think the literal meaning better expresses what Paul had in mind.

2. . . . and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, . . .

A. Mark, who began Paul’s first missionary journey with him, but who soon found himself at odds with Paul and returned to Jerusalem - Acts 13:5-13.

1. As to what caused the separation we are unable to say.

3. . . .(touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

- A. They were to show hospitality to Mark as a visitor.
 - 1. The sending of letter of commendation was a common practice at this time - 2 Corinthians 3:1.
- B. By the time Paul wrote the Colossian letter, the rift between he and Mark had been resolved - Philemon 24.

Verse 11

- 1. And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision.
 - A. The name “Jesus” was a common name at this time in history, although by the second century it lost this common usage.
 - 1. The name “Justus,” was the Latin translation.
 - 2. It seems that he was probably better known by this name than by the Greek form, Jesus or the Hebrew form, Joshua.
- 2. These only are my fellowworkers . . .
 - A. A specific term used of those who labored together in the spread of the gospel - 3 John 8.
 - B. It was also used in a variety of cases when speaking of those who “labored together” with specific individuals, including Deity and Paul - Romans 16:3, 9, 21; 1 Corinthians 3:9; Philippians 2:25.
- 3. . . . unto the kingdom of God, . . .
 - A. Notice how Paul wrote of the “kingdom” as presently existing, of course when doing so he wrote of the church as the kingdom - Romans 14:17; Colossians 1:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:5.
 - 1. On those occasions where he wrote of the “kingdom” as that which was yet to come, he wrote of heaven - 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; 15:50; Galatians 5:21.
- 4. . . . which have been a comfort unto me.
 - A. Three individuals are listed below that provided Paul “comfort.”
 - 1. They are Aristarchus, Mark and Justus.
 - 2. The word translated “comfort,” is the Greek word “paregoria,” and is only found in this specific passage in the New Testament.
 - A. Robertson has this to say about the word, “A comfort unto me (moi parhgoria). Ethical dative of personal interest. Parhgoria is an old word (here only in N.T.) from parhgorew, to make an address) and means solace, relief. A medical term.” (Robertson, 1931, p. 512, emp. his).
 - B. These three are of “the circumcision” while Epaphras, Luke and Demas are Gentiles.

Verse 12

1. Epaphras, . . .
 - A. Epaphras was an abbreviation of Epaphroditus.
 1. He was a fellow prisoner with Paul - Philemon 23.
 - B. We see him mentioned earlier in Colossians - Colossians 1:7.
2. . . . who is one of you, . . .
 - A. Epaphras appears to have been from Colossae or the region round about Colossae.
3. . . . a servant of Christ, . . .
 - A. Literally, “bond-servant.”
 1. This termed used by Paul of only three people - Epaphras, Timothy and himself - Romans 1:1; Galatians 1:10; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:1.
4. . . . saluteth you, . . .
 - A. Literally, as per the English Standard Version, “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you. . .”
5. . . . always labouring fervently for you in prayers, . . .
 - A. The phrase “laboring fervently” here is from the Greek word “agonizomenos,” from which we get the English word, “agonized.”
 1. Thus Paul was literally saying that Epaphras always “agonized” on behalf of Paul in prayer.
 - A. We see a sense of sincerity in this.
6. . . . that ye may stand . . .
 - A. Epaphras prayed for the church at Colossae for it to stand firm on the truth so they will be found doing the “will of God.”
 1. The sense of the word “stand” here is in the passive voice, which indicated Epaphras’ prayer was for them to be caused to stand perfect.
 - A. This does not necessitate an overwhelming of the Spirit in some way that would eliminate effort on the part of the Colossians.
7. . . . perfect and complete in all the will of God.
 - A. The word “perfect” here is from the Greek word “teleioi,” and had reference to maturity rather than sinlessness.
 1. We might think of it in the sense of their being “full grown.”
 - B. The phrase “complete in all the will of God” is translated “fully assured in all the will of God” in the English Standard Version.

1. It is in the perfect tense which expresses past action with continued result.
2. His prayer was that they be completely convinced of the truth of the gospel, leaving nothing out.

Verse 13

1. For I bear him record, . . .
 - A. Paul “vouched” for Epaphras as seen in the New International Version.
2. . . . that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.
 - A. Laodicea and Hierapolis were situated on opposite sides of the river along the Lycus Valley, located about six miles apart.
 - B. We see in what Paul wrote here that Epaphras was greatly concerned over their spiritual condition.
 1. Because of this concern, he prayed frequently and earnestly on their behalf.

Verse 14

1. Luke, the beloved physician, . . .
 - A. The nickname for the Latin “Lucias.”
 - B. He traveled with Paul by ship to Rome, and remained with Paul while he was incarcerated - Acts 27:28.
 1. This places Luke, Mark and Paul together during the time Paul was incarcerated during his second imprisonment.
2. . . . and Demas, greet you.
 - A. The name “Demas,” was an abbreviation of “Demetrius.”
 1. This has caused some to identify him with the Demetrius of 2 John 12.
 2. We are reminded that while Paul was in prison, Demas departed for Thessalonica - 2 Timothy 4:10, 11.
 - A. As seen here, his departure from Paul was not for commendable reasons.

Verse 15

1. Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, . . .
 - A. Colosse and Laodicea were located approximately ten miles from each other.
 1. This would make it easy to share what was being written.
 - B. This greeting from the Colossians to the Laodiceans is the only such

congregation greeting seen in the New Testament.

2. . . . and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.

A. It is difficult to determine whether this is in reference to a female or male.

1. Robertson has this to say, "Nymphas (Numpan). That is masculine, if autou (his) is genuine (D E K L) after kat oikon, but Numpā (feminine) if auth (her) is read (B 67). Aleph A C P read autwn (their), perhaps including adelpou (brethren) and so locating this church (ekklhsia) in Laodicea. It was not till the third century that separate buildings were used for church worship. See Romans 16:5 for Prisca and Aquila. It is not possible to tell whether it is "her" or "his" house here." (Robertson, 1931, p. 512, emp. his).

B. Whoever this person was, Paul probably knew them.

Verse 16

1. And when this epistle is read among you, . . .

A. The reading here would be a public reading.

1. The idea of a public reading is found but three times in the New Testament - Acts 13:15; 2 Corinthians 3:14; 1 Timothy 4:13.

B. It was to be "read" in such a way that everyone would benefit from it, as seen in the phrase "among you."

2. . . . cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; . . .

A. The broader the "audience," the greater the spread of the truth.

3. . . . and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.

A. Nothing is known about this "epistle from Laodicea."

1. A number of ideas have been put forth to explain this "epistle," but it seems best to simply leave it as it is.

A. We can be assured that whatever it was, and whoever wrote it, it had nothing to do with that which was necessary to "things that pertain unto life and godliness," or it would be in the New Testament - 2 Peter 1:3.

Verse 17

1. And say to Archippus, . . .

A. It is believed that Archippus was the one Paul referred to in Philemon 2 as a "fellow soldier."

1. Other than the association seen there between him and Apphia and Philemon, nothing else is known for sure.

A. Some commentators think he may have been “the angel of the church of the Laodiceans” - Revelation 3:14.

1. This is due to the word “angel” in the Greek (“angelos”) also being translated “messenger.”

2. . . . Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

A. The phrase “take heed” might be used here in the sense of a warning, such as seen in Galatians 5:15; Ephesians 5:15; Philippians 3:2; Colossians 2:8.

B. The “ministry” that Paul alludes to is not specified.

1. But whatever it was, he was being encouraged to give it careful attention.

Verse 18

1. The salutation by the hand of me Paul. . .

A. This phrase has caused a number of commentators to suggest that Paul may have dictated the letter and then penned only the salutation.

1. We know that Tertius penned Romans because it tells us so - Romans 16:22.

B. In the end, it makes no difference.

1. It still bears the apostolic authority of Paul.

2. . . . Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.

A. His request that they “remember” his “bonds” went further than the normal meaning of to “remember.”

1. Similar to Galatians 2:10, it involved assistance to be provided.