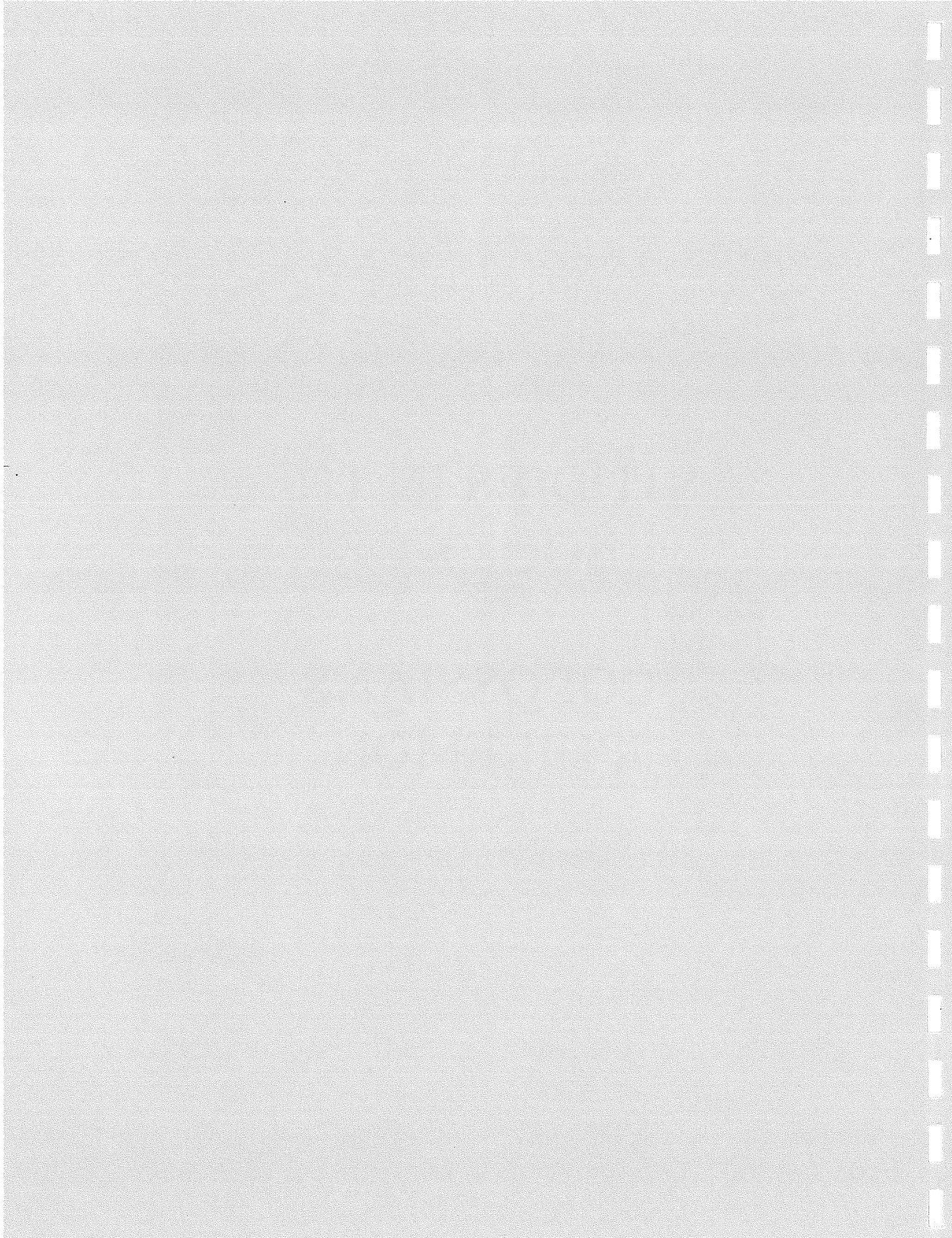


STUDIES IN THE
BOOKS OF

COLOSSIANS
PHILEMON

Prepared by:
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STUDIES IN COLOSSIANS

INTRODUCTION

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING: Written about AD62, during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. Ephesians and Philemon were written about the same time (Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 1:24; 4:7-9,18; Philemon 11,23).

THE CITY OF COLOSSAE: At one time one of the chief cities of Phrygia. It was located about 100 miles east of Ephesus. It was one of the "tri-cities:" Laodicea, 10 miles away, and Hierapolis, 13 miles away. At the time of this writing, Colossae was of little importance as a commercial center, but it was a vigorous community and played a decisive role in Christian activities. It was also noted for its flocks of sheep, and the production of garments, and the dyeing of garments.

THE CHURCH AT COLOSSAE: Colossians 2:1 intimates that Paul had never visited Colossae. The church was likely established by a fellow-worker under Paul's direction. Epaphras is named by many as the founder of the church (1:6,7; 4:12,13). However, Paul kept in touch with this church (1:3,4,9; 2:5-7; Philemon 9-23). Paul had a keen interest in their spiritual life and development. The church must have been made up largely of Gentiles (1:27; 2:13; 3:5-7).

THE LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS: The Colossean church was confronted by "gnosticism." Paul discusses four aspects of this error in the letter:

1. Philosophic (2:3,4,8)
2. Ritualistic, or Judaistic (2:11,14,16,17)
3. Visionary, or angel worship (1:16; 2:10,15,18)
4. Asceticism (2:20-23)

False teachers had disturbed the Colossian brethren by insisting on unscriptural rites of purification whereby they were to prepare themselves for the presence of God. The false teachers declared that all creation is evil, and therefore, its source must be evil. Since God is in no way evil, He could not have created matter. Man's body was essentially evil, and could not approach God directly (according to this false doctrine).

PURPOSE AND CHARACTER OF COLOSSIANS: Colossians is the most Christ-centered book in the Bible. Paul wrote to dispute a serious threat to the church. The false doctrine denied the all-sufficiency of Christ, and of His pre-eminence in all things. Paul sets out very plainly what Christ, and what Christ has done in God's plan for man's redemption. Cf. Colossians 1:15-19; 2:2,9; 3:4. Paul also deals with Jewish influence upon the church.

THEME: Against the heretical doctrine of perfection through human wisdom, asceticism and ritual, Colossians proclaims the all-sufficiency of Christ as our Savior. Our hope is not in human wisdom, ritual or self-denial. Our hope is in Christ.

QUESTIONS
INTRODUCTORY AND CHAPTER ONE

1. Where is Colossae located?
2. Who established the church there?
3. What do we know of Epaphras?
4. What can we know about the church in Colossae?
5. What is the approximate date of the writing of Colossians?
6. Who delivered this letter to the church in Colossae?
7. The theme of Colossians can be described as:
8. What were some of the problems of the Colossae church?
9. How did Paul offset these problems?
10. What is "syncretism?"
11. What are the elements of Paul's prayer in behalf of the Colossians?
12. What is Christ's relationship to God?
13. How does this relationship apply to the Colossian heresy?
14. What is Christ's relationship to Creation?
15. How does this relationship apply to the Colossian heresy?
16. What is Christ's relationship to the church?
17. How does this relationship apply to the Colossian heresy?

18. What is Christ's relationship to man?
19. How does this relationship apply to the Colossian church?
20. What is Christ's relationship to the mystery?
21. How does this relationship apply to the Colossian church?

QUESTIONS
COLOSSIANS 2

1. What part does baptism have in our salvation?
2. Why was the Old Law "contrary to us?"
3. How did Christ take it out of the way?
4. What does Colossians 2:16 mean?
5. What is "angel worship?"
6. What is wrong with "angel worship?"
7. How are we dead from the rudiments of the world?
8. What is "will worship?"
9. Why is "will worship" wrong?

QUESTIONS
COLOSSIANS 3

1. How are we "risen with Christ?"
2. Since we are risen with Christ, what is our obligation?
3. Note Verses 5,6. Why does the wrath of God come on the children of disobedience?

4. What is the difference between verse 5 and verses 8,9?
5. What is the "new man?"
6. What makes him new?
7. What is the purpose of our salvation?
8. What are we to be like now that we are Christians?
9. What is the "bond of perfectness?"
10. How many bodies are there? How do you explain so many different one today?
11. How does verse 16 teach us that we are to sing only?
12. How are we to sing? What does that mean?
13. Explain Colossians 3:17.
14. What various relationships are listed, and what is the obligation of each?
15. What is our reward if we do right?
16. What is our reward if we do wrong?

QUESTIONS
COLOSSIANS 4

1. For what did Paul pray?
2. Explain Colossians 4:5.
3. Explain Colossians 4:6.
4. Which area of life do you have the most trouble with?
5. List the 10 characters mentioned in this chapter, and place a word by their name that describes them.

THE CITY:

**One of three located inland about 100 miles
from Ephesus (Laodicea/Hierapolis)**

Important trade routes passed through

Slipped to a 2nd rate position gradually

Fertile ground for religious speculations/heresis

THE CHURCH:

Paul did not start this church

He had heard of their faith (1:4,9)

Had never seen it personally (2:1)

**Outgrowth of Ephesians ministry (Ac 19; 20:17-38)
(Acts 19:10)**

Predominately Gentile - list of sins (3:5-9; 1:25-29)

Probably about 5 years old when letter written

THE CRISIS:

**New doctrines invading the congregation and
creating problems**

**Combination doctrine of gnosticism; Jewish legalism;
Oriental philosophy; Pagan astrology; Mysticism;
Asceticism**

THE CORRESPONDENCE:

**Emphasis on Christ and His pre-eminence in message;
Redemption; Creation; the Church; the Mystery**

OUTLINE

Key theme: Jesus Christ is preeminent

Key verse: Colossians 1:18

I. DOCTRINE: CHRIST'S PREEMINENCE DECLARED— chapter 1

- A. In the Gospel message—1:1-12
- B. In redemption—1:13-14
- C. In Creation—1:15-17
- D. In the church—1:18-23
- E. In Paul's ministry—1:24-29

II. DANGER: CHRIST'S PREEMINENCE DEFENDED— chapter 2

- A. Beware of empty philosophies—
2:1-10
- B. Beware of religious legalism—
2:11-17
- C. Beware of man-made disciplines—
2:18-23

III. DUTY: CHRIST'S PREEMINENCE DEMONSTRATED— chapters 3-4

- A. In person purity—3:1-11
- B. In Christian fellowship—13:12-17
- C. In the home—3:18-21
- D. In daily work—3:22-4:1
- E. In Christian witness—4:2-6
- F. In Christian service—4:7-18

GNOSTICISM

Offered salvation through spiritual enlightenment

All flesh is evil, so giving full satisfaction to fleshly desires would not corrupt or condemn the spirit of man

Therefore, fill your cup of pleasure, full and gratifying, and you will be no worse off.

But Paul emphasizes:

Colossians 3:1-3

The flesh is to be "put to death"

Colossians 3:18-4:6 The will of Christ extends to all relationships

Colossians 3:17

Divine mysteries could be received only by those of superior intellect (they had insights totally unknown to ordinary Christians.)

Purity and salvation come through freeing oneself of dependence on the flesh

Believed in "hierarchy of deities."

THE COLOSSIAN SOCIETY

THEY BELIEVED:

1. In powerful controlling spirits (planetary systems);
2. That their destiny was controlled by the stars;
3. In reading celestial messages;
4. In astrology;
5. That they could conciliate spirits through special knowledge;
6. In mystery religions;
7. In philosophers;
8. In angel worship;
9. That they were very religious - they would search for any reality that might appear to give some meaning to life.

THEIR RELIGION:

1. Free-thinking Judaism
2. Cybele - fertility cult
3. Isis - pagan
4. Apollo - pagan
5. Dionysius - pagan
6. Asclepius - pagan
7. Other gods - pagan

8. Mithras - mystery religion based on astrology and sacrifice.

NOTE:

1. "Basic Principles of this World" - Colossians 2:8,20 - "stoicheia."
2. "Immortal lords of creation, existing in their own right, and as astrological tyrants who laid claim to control men's lives as they playthings of fate."

NOTE: Star deities were kept at bay by ascetic practices (abstinence and self-punishment).

There was a speculative, ritual oriented, ascetic faith based upon false teaching, doctrine and teachers.

GOD

Philosophy

Human Traditions

Astrology

Principalities/Powers
(2:10,15)

Jewish Ritual
(2:11-17)

Jesus

Visions

Angel Worship
(2:18)

Asceticism
(2:18A, 20-23)

Self-denying; not allowing oneself
pleasure and luxuries; severe, simple
life.

COLOSSIAN CHRISTIANS
(2:8-23)

GOD

The Only Christ
(1:18,19)

Revelator

Access
(Colossians 1:20; 3:17;
Matthew 11:27; John 14:6; Acts 4:12;
Ephesians 2:18; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25)

Authority

Mediator

Savior
(1:14,20,27)

THE CHRISTIAN
(Colossians 3:1-3)

GOD

Human Wisdom

(Humanism)
(Existentialism)
(Evolution)

A philosophical theory emphasizing that man is responsible for his own actions and free to choose his own development and destiny.

Astrology
Spiritualism
Occultism

Jesus

Oriental Religions

(Hinduism)
(Islam)

Liberalism
Cultic Religions
Legalism
Scientism

MODERN CHRISTIAN

Paul - a great encourager - gives thanks for what God has done in the lives of the Colossians.

Thanksgiving is used 5X in other passages - 1:12; 2:7; 3:15,17; 4:2.

We are members of one body - 1 Corinthians 12:12,13.

If one member is strengthened, then the body is strengthened.

PAUL TRACES THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OF THE COLOSSIANS:

1. They heard the gospel. (1:5b-7)

- (1) Sharing the gospel - Epaphras
- (2) The thrill of it today!
- (3) The gospel--

- A. Centers in a Person - Christ
- B. Is the "word of truth" - John 17:17 - verse 5
- C. Is the message of God's grace (6b)
- D. Is for the whole world (6)

2. They believed in Jesus Christ. (4)

- (1) Cf. Romans 10:17
- (2) Mind - understand; Emotion - heart/conviction; Will - Commitment.
- (3) The gospel grounds us (1:23); Gives us Assurance; Causes steadfastness (2:7); Our faith is established (2:7)

3. They were disciplined. (7).

- (1) Teach/Establish
- (2) "Learned" - disciple - Matthew 11:29 ("Learn of Me") - 260 X
- (3) "Before" - the false teachers appeared - we should be aware of any religious leader who does not seek to win lost souls, but who devotes himself to "stealing sheep" from other flocks."
- (4) Cf. Matthew 28:18-20

4. They became faithful in Christ. (6,8).

- (1) The seed has life in it (Luke 8:11) (Hebrews 4:12)
- (2) Evidences of life--
 - A. Faith - walk by faith (2 Cor 5:7); work by faith (1 Thess 1:3.
 - B. Love - Col 2:2; 3:14
 - C. Hope - Col 1:27, 23,5.
- (3) These are motivations for holy living - 1 John 3:3
- (4) Divisions and dissensions are tragic - could be more love and understanding.

INTRODUCTORY - THE TRUTH DECLARED
(1:1-14)

DOCTRINAL - THE TRUTH DEFINED
(1:15- 2:9)

POLEMICAL - THE TRUTH DEFENDED
(2:9- 3:4)

HORTATORY - THE TRUTH DESIRED
(3:5- 4:1)

PERSONAL - THE TRUTH DISPLAYED
(4:2-8)

"CHRIST, THE PRE-EMINENT ONE
(The Only and All Sufficient Saviour)

FIVE-FOLD RELATIONSHIP
chapter One
God - creation - church
Man - MYSTERY

Col 1:1

Providence

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

Christianity is a religion
of truth - Jo 8:31, 32

Col 1:2

To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father. Position in life

Today - emotionalism
must be filled with
Knowledge - verse 9

Col 1:3

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, - prayer beginning
(see notes at bottom of page)

Col 1:4

because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints--

Col 1:5

the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel

Col 1:6

that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.

Col 1:7

You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf,

Col 1:8

and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

Col 1:9

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. "A ship ready for a voyage" (complete; controlled by)

↳ not worldly wisdom or knowledge.
cannot be filled with knowledge without knowing the Word.

Col 1:10

And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

Paul's Prayer - He prayed for:
(1:9-12)

1. Spiritual Intelligence (9)
(1) know (2) understand
2. Practical Obedience (10)
(1) walk/work (2) wisdom
3. Moral Excellence (11, 12)
Evidences of God's Power:

Patience
Longsuffering
Joy
Thankfulness

- Knowledge produces:
1. A WORTHY WALK - way that reflects God - 1 Th 2:12
(Pure life, fellowship, worship, home, business
speech, example)
 2. A fruitful faith - verse 10 (Ga 5:6)

3. Good works - verse 10 - which God instructs His people to do
4. A stabilizing strength - God of Power - verse 11

CHAPTER 1:13-20

No paragraph in the New Testament contains more concentrated doctrine about Christ than this one.

There are four unanswerable arguments presented about Christ's pre-eminence:

I. HE IS THE SAVIOR (13,14)

1. He delivered us (13a) - "rescue from danger"
2. He translated us (13b) - "deportation"
3. He redeemed us (14a) - "to release by payment of ransom"
4. He forgave us (14b) - "to cancel a debt"

II. HE IS THE CREATOR (15-17)

1. He existed before creation (15)
2. He created all things (16a)
3. All things exist for Him (16b)
4. He holds all things together (17)

III. HE IS HEAD OF THE CHURCH (18)

IV. HE IS THE BELOVED OF THE FATHER (19,20)

CONCLUSION:

1. Christ has taken care of all things.
2. All we need is Christ.
3. God is pleased when Christ is honored and given pre-eminence (John 5:23,24).

CHAPTER 1:21-2:3

Paul explains his work in three ways:

I. SHARING THE GOSPEL (1:21-23) - Paul, the Preacher. He considered their:

1. Past Alienation (21a) - Romans 8:7
2. Present Reconciliation (21b,22) - Romans 5:8,10
3. Future Glorification (23)

II. SUFFERING FOR THE GENTILES (24-27) - Paul, the Prisoner

1. His Rejoicing (24)
2. His Responsibility (25-27)

III. STRIVING FOR THE SAINTS (28B; 2:2,3) - Paul, the Prayer

1. His Instruction (28a)
2. His Intent (28b; 2:2,3)

EVIDENCES OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY:

1. Encouragement (2:2)
2. Endearment (2:2) - knit together in love; not selfish/causing division
3. Enrichment (2:2) - "all the riches"
4. Enlightenment (2:2) - "full assurance"

Col 1:11 ^{δυναμις - inherent power}
being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully ^{κράτος - manifested power} → To forbear under Load
self-restraint - Colossians 3:13

Col 1:12
giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

Col 1:13
For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,

Col 1:14
in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Col 1:15 ^{Representation + Manifestation}
"Εἰκόν" - image - The substance of deity }
He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Man cannot see God - 1Ti 6:16 } nature attributes
BUT CHRIST Declared Him - Jo 1:18 }
of Jo 14:9 The Creator is superior to the Created

"Πρωτοτοκος" = primacy; prominence; pre-eminence
(Does not refer to time)

Ex 4:22 - place of priority
Ps 89:27 - highest rank
1Ti 1:15 - chief; foremost

Col 1:16 ^{Jo 1:3 Hb 1:2}
For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

Col 1:17 <sup>→ WOULD HAVE TO EXIST PRIOR Hb 1:3
To creation to create</sup>
He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
(Jo 8:58; 17:5, 14)

Col 1:18 ^{AUTHORITY}
And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning - ^{ἀρχή - ruler; source} "originator" and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ^{Pre-eminent; no reference to time - This relates to the church - He has conquered death by His resurrection, the supreme sign of His deity}

GOD'S PURPOSE:
"He may have the pre-eminence"

Col 1:19
For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ^{→ "Pleroma" - the sum total of all divine power and attributes}

→ "to be at home permanently" } Pre-eminence not to be shared by another

Col 1:20 ^{Ro 5:10, 11 2 Co 5:18}
and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Reconciliation pre-supposes peace
(Ep 2:15, 16; Col 1:20)

→ result of reconciliation
(Ro 5: Ep 2:14-17)

Col 1:21 ^{"estranged"}
Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ^{hostile toward}

The Past - Alienated / enemies
(Ep 2:11, 12)

The Present - Reconciled

The Future - Presented to God

- THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST (21-29)
- I. The Majesty of life in Christ (15)
 - creative life - 16, 17
 - Redemptive life - 18, 20
 - II. The Mystery of life in Christ - 27
 - Miracle of His incoming - 27
 - Measures of His indwelling - 27
 - III. The Ministry of life in Christ - 28
 - World must be reached through us - 27, 28
 - Word must be preached through us - 27, 28

Col 1:22 → v21

But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation--

→ "sanctified; devoted to"

Col 1:23

if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

→ "earthquake stricken"

WHAT IS THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL? (Titus 2:13)

Col 1:24

1 Pe 4:15, 16 A special blessing!

Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.

→ "pressures"

THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS
Ro 3:25 1 Pe 1:19, 19
15 53 5-11 2 Co 5:21
Hb 9:26 10:14 1 Jo 2:1, 2

Col 1:25

I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness--

Col 1:26

the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints.

Col 1:27

To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

"mystery" - 27



"ministry" - 28

IT IS FOR ALL!

Col 1:28 TO ANNOUNCE WITH THE AUTHORITY OF A HERALD

We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.

→ "FULLY INSTRUCTED"

Col 1:29

ATHLETIC TERM

To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

→ "TO THE POINT OF EXHAUSTION"

QUESTIONS

INTRODUCTORY AND CHAPTER ONE

1. WHERE IS COLOSSAE LOCATED?

About 100 miles of Ephesus in the valley of the river Lycus. It is 12 miles upstream from Hierapolis and Laodicea in the province of Asia. It considered unimportant and not very large in Paul's time.

2. WHO ESTABLISHED THE CHURCH THERE?

Apparently not Paul (1:1; 2:1). Probably Epaphras (1:7).

3. WHAT DO WE KNOW OF EPAPHRAS?

He was a faithful minister (1:7); Responsible for planting the gospel (1:7); Prayed fervently for the saints (4:12); Labored hard in the ministry (4:13); Stayed with Paul during his imprisonment (Philemon 23).

4. WHAT CAN WE KNOW ABOUT THE CHURCH OF COLOSSAE?

It was mostly Gentile (1:27; 2:13); Located in a wealthy area (sheep/wool dying); Note the list of sins in 3:5-7; Cf. Revelation 3:17.

5. WHAT IS THE APPROXIMATE DATE OF THE WRITING OF COLOSSIANS?

On Paul's third missionary journey, he spent quite a while in Ephesus. On the return from the trip he was arrested in Jerusalem (Acts 21:30-36). He was taken to Caesarea, then to Rome. While in prison in Rome, Epaphras came to see him from Colossae, and reported the condition of the church there (Acts 28:30,31; Colossians 1:8; 2:4ff). The date of Paul's imprisonment is about A.D. 60-62. The letter was sent sometime during that period. It was probably sent to Colossae with the letter to Philemon by Tychicus and Onesimus (4:7-9).

6. WHO DELIVERED THIS LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN COLOSSAE?

Probably Tychicus and Onesimus (4:7-9). Epaphras was unable to do so. See question #5.

7. THE THEME OF COLOSSIANS CAN BE DESCRIBED AS: The All-Sufficiency and Pre-eminence of Jesus the Christ (1:14-2:7). His universal Sovereignty.

8. WHAT WERE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE COLOSSAE CHURCH?

Judaistic influence; philosophical elements; gnosticism.

9. HOW DID PAUL OFFSET THESE PROBLEMS?

By setting forth what and who Christ is, and what Christ has done in God's plan for mankind.

10. WHAT IS "SYNCRETISM?"

Syncretism is a combination of conflicting doctrines. It brings Christ into a hierarchy and a system ethically conditioned (discipline/asceticism/visionary reward). It is a combination of various doctrines made into one doctrine.

11. WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF PAUL'S PRAYER IN BEHALF OF THE COLOSSIANS?

See the text in chapter one.

12. WHAT IS CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO GOD? (1:15a)

"Eikon" - substance of deity; manifestation ("image of the invisible God"). In Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (2:9). "Invisible God" - we cannot see God (1 Timothy 6:16); but Cf. John 1:18; 14:9. Christ is also the "pleroma" (fulness) - without any lack. A member of the "Godhead" - all the essence, quality, character and being of God - therefore, what God is. Cf. John 1:1,14; Matthew 1:23; Philippians 2:6; Note Hebrews 1:8-12.

13. HOW DOES THIS RELATIONSHIP APPLY TO THE COLOSSIAN HERESY?

This would expose the futility of attempting to attain to God through another access. Otherwise it would reduce Jesus to merely one access among many. Cf. John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:18; Colossians 3:17; 1 Timothy 2:5.

14. WHAT IS CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO CREATION? (1:15-17)

He is the "firstborn" (prototokos) - primacy; prominence; pre-eminence, i.e., does not refer to time. He is the Creator of all creation - "for" (hoti) - because. Cf. John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:2; Revelation 3:14.

"Before all things" - John 8:58; 17:5,14.

"All things consist" - Hebrews 1:3.

"The Firstborn of all creation; for in Him were all things created."

15. HOW DOES THIS RELATIONSHIP APPLY TO THE COLOSSIAN HERESY?

In whom would they trust? The stars, or Him Who made the stars? Christ is totally sufficient. Not angel worship, nor spiritualism, nor mediatorial (attempting to reach God through some creation would be futile and unnecessary.

16. WHAT IS CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH? (1:18)

He is the Head - has all authority (1:24; 2:19; Matthew 28; Ephesians 5:22,23.

He is the Beginning - "arche" - ruler; source.

He is the FirstBorn from the dead - "prototokos" - pre-eminent.

He has conquered death in His resurrection - the supreme sign.

17. HOW DOES THIS RELATIONSHIP APPLY TO THE COLOSSIAN HERESY?

The church was to appeal to no other authority - Acts 4:12; Colossians 3:17

Nor to the realm of the dead - Luke 24:5.

The two items above show that all things are in "Christ alone."

18. WHAT IS CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO MAN? (1:19-23)

In Him should all the fulness dwell

Through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself - Romans 5:10,11; 2 Corinthians 5:18.

Reconcile - Ephesians 2:15,16

Through the blood - Romans 3:25; 1 Peter 1:18,19

Peace - Ephesians 5:1

19. HOW DOES THIS RELATIONSHIP APPLY TO THE COLOSSIAN CHURCH?

Christ has provided reconciliation for all men.

Since Christ is the only One, there is no other way for our reconciliation.

20. WHAT IS CHRIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE MYSTERY?

21. HOW DOES THIS RELATIONSHIP APPLY TO THE COLOSSIAN CHURCH?

CHAPTER 2
(The Danger of Error)

Chapter 1 - Christ is Supreme
Chapter 2 - Christ is Sufficient

CONCERN THAT IS EVIDENT (1-5). We see Paul's genuine care and concern by his--

Anxiety about them (1)
Aspirations for them (2,3)

United Brethren (2a)
Understanding Believers (2b,3)

Answers he gives them (4)
Assurance that he supports them (5)

CONSISTENCY ENCOURAGED (6,7) They need to be:

Guided properly (6)
Grounded positively (7a)
Grateful profoundly (7b)

CAUTION IS ENJOINED (8)

That would DESTROY their faith

Perverted speculation
Pretended knowledge
Pious deception

That would DENY the Christ

CERTAINTY IS EXPRESSED (9,10)

Actually divine (9)
Adequacy definite (10)

COMPLETENESS IS EXPLAINED (11-13)

These verses show how full and completely every need is taken of.

Its origin is not Judaistic (11)
The obedience necessary is not Judaistic (12)
The outcome is not Judaistic (13)

COUNTER CLAIMS ARE EXPOSED (14,15)

Paul shows that by the cross--

The law is canceled (14)
The leaders are conquered (15)

CONDITION IS EVALUATED (16-19)

They ought not to be--

Ruled by the rites of the law (16,17)
Robbed of their reward (18)
Rebellious as those who have no respect for Christ (19)

CONCLUSIONS EXHIBITED (20-23)

Their sphere is defined (20a)
Their subjection should be different (20b)
Their sayings of error are destructive (21,22)
Their self chosen worship is deceptive (23)

'WHY ACCEPT A SUBSTITUTE?'

CHAPTER 2

LET NO ONE *DECEIVE* YOU - 4 - Various systems seem inviting; leaders are persuasive; substitute man's ideas for God's.

LET NO ONE *CHEAT* YOU - 8 - manmade philosophies and traditions; pleasing to the world, but rejected by God.

LET NO ONE *JUDGE* YOU - 16 - legalism, 21; stealing your liberty in Christ.

LET NO ONE *DEFRAUD* YOU - 18 - religious mysticism that replaces spiritual nourishment with empty, exciting experiences.

YOU HAVE IN CHRIST ALL THAT YOU NEED - BEWARE OF SUBSTITUTES!

THAT WHICH SUPPLANTS CHRIST'S SUPREMACY

(CHAPTER 2)

1. ALLEGIANCE TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SYSTEM - 16,17. "Why do we have the Old Testament today?" (Galatians 3:19-29)
2. FALSE HUMILITY - "pretense" - 18a, 23 - habits carefully cultivated, instead of faith and love
3. ANGEL WORSHIP - 18b - (1) being familiar with some spirit being - (2) placing trust in same kind of spirit being
4. VISIONS - 18c - claimed special instructions directly from God through visions - mystical and emotional type religion (worthless)

ALL ARE WRONG BECAUSE--

1. Based upon men and not on God - Matthew 15:7-9
2. They are not the substance - Galatians 3:24
3. Fail to give proper connection to the Head - 1a

MARKS OF A FAITHFUL CHURCH

(2:2-7)

A living and faithful church:

1. Cf. "courageous hearts" - 2 - "encouraged" - to cope with any situation
2. Knit together in love - 2
3. Equipped with every kind of wisdom - 2,3
4. Power to resist seductive teachings - 4
5. A soldier's discipline - 5
6. Life must be in Christ - 6,7
7. Holds fast to the faith which it has received - 7
8. An abounding, overflowing gratitude

Col 2:1

I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. } athletic term - αγών
a personal glimpse into Paul's heart

Col 2:2

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, } "to give a new heart"
"Ability to Assess" "ability to grasp truth"
"To place together"

Col 2:3

in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. } "thesaurus": treasure box; treasure storehouse
→ objective knowledge of the revealed truth
↳ His wise plan to save man - Ep 3:10, 11; 1 Co 2:6, 7

Col 2:4

I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. } "power of a lawyer's argument"

Col 2:5

For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is. } solid; immovable wall
"To rank"

Col 2:6

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him,

Col 2:7

rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. } tree with deep roots
house on a strong foundation

Col 2:8

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

VERSES 8-23 are some of the most difficult passages Paul ever wrote

Col 2:9

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, } "plenitudo" - w/o any lack
→ deity; Godhead = "theotetos" - all the essence, quality, character and being of God

Col 2:10

and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

Christ is what God is - Jo 1:14 Mt 1:23
Pl 2:6 - morphe - not a bodily configuration, but "nature."

Christ as God - Hebrews 1:8-12

Col 2:11

In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ,

1. Secret imparted only to the initiate, what is unknown until revealed. (antiquity's use)
 2. Secret rites and celebrations known only to those initiated (ancient religious use)
 3. Paul's meaning - 27x in NT; 20x by Paul. Always used in relation to the gospel -
"A revealed secret - not that which cannot be fathomed - 'once hidden from eternity, but now revealed'."
- cf. Ep 1:9-11, 3:10-11, 3:3-5
1 Pt 1:12 1 Co 2:6-13
Ro 16:25, 26
Ro 8:28-30

Colossians 2:18 - "Angel Worship"

God is unapproachable except through the mediation of celestial beings.

Being familiar with some spirit beings; gave the "believers" of such a special edge to their prayers; they would receive the answers from God "faster."

Cf. Revelation 19:10; 22:8,9

Placing trust in some kind of spirit being.

KEEP MAKING SPIRITUAL PROGRESS - We never stand still - if we are not making progress, we are open to attack.

- I. THE NEED FOR PROGRESS (4) - We must exercise spiritual discernment, so we continue to grow in our knowledge.
- II. THE NATURE OF PROGRESS (5-7) - vivid pictures to illustrate spiritual progress.
 1. The army - order/steadfastness (5)
 2. The pilgrim - you started with Christ (faith) and you must continue with Christ (faith).
 3. The tree - "rooted" - (once and for all having been rooted - no tumbleweeds) - 7a
 4. The building - "being built up" - edify
 5. The school - the word of God (7c)
 6. The river - "abounding" - overflowing its banks

NOTE: We can see how Satan can be easily defeated, and we will not be led astray.

III. WATCH OUT FOR SPIRITUAL DANGERS (8-10)

IV. DRAW ON YOUR SPIRITUAL PROVISIONS (11-15). NOTE:

Our identification with Christ:

1. Circumcised in Him - 11
2. Alive in Him - 12,13
3. Free from the Law in Him - 14
4. Victorious in Him - 15. Three great victories on the cross:
 - (1) Disarmed the powers and authorities
 - (2) Made a public spectacle of the enemy
 - (3) Was victorious - triumphed

Col 2:12

having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

Col 2:13

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,

Col 2:14

having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.

Col 2:15

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

intellectual knowledge
astrology
↓
gnosticism
asceticism
Rules + regulations
↓
Judaism

Col 2:16

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.

} ascetic rules and regulations cf vs 20-23

Col 2:17

These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Col 2:18

Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person → "to declare unworthy of a prize"
goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

Col 2:19

He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

Col 2:20

Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: } spiritual position

COLOSSIANS 2:16-23 Warnings are a part of daily life - the spiritual life also has warnings.

In this section, three warnings are given if we are to enjoy fullness in Christ:

I. LET NO ONE JUDGE YOU - 16,17 - legalism

1. The basis for our freedom - 16a - the person and work of Christ
2. The bondage of legalism - 16
3. The blessing of grace - 17 - Hebrews 10:1

II. LET NO MAN BEGUILDE YOUR OF YOUR REWARD - 18,19

III. LET NO ONE ENSLAVE YOU" - 20-23

Colossians 2:23 - "Will Worship"

Invented and elaborated by human choice. Lit., "a self-made" religion.

Has an appearance of wisdom (bogus; puffed up)

"Faked" religion

Implies, "God has not given us the complete system; WE know what is best!"

Cf. Romans 12:1,2

Col 2:21

"Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? → what a poor religion that cries, "Don't"
feels trapped, and unable to breathe!

Col 2:22

These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. → futility of
ascetic rules

Col 2:23

Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. → deception of
asceticism

CHRIST AND GOD

Jesus as Deity would expose the futility of attempting to attain to God through another process.

Cf. John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:18; Colossians 3:17; 1 Timothy 2:5

CHRIST AND CREATION

The appeal seems to be directed toward astrology - Colossians 2:8 - as an access to God.

Whom would we trust? The Stars - or He who made the stars?

Angel worship and spiritualism were part of the mediatorial access which false teachers held out to the Colossians.

But Christ is the Creator of all things - thus, making attempts to reach God through mere creation would be futile and unnecessary.

Christ is seen to be totally sufficient to attain to God and salvation.

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

The church was to appeal to no other authority - Acts 4:12.

They were not to appeal to the realm of the dead (Luke 24:5; Deut 18:9-19).

Against necromancy - appealing to the dead for guidance.

In Christ alone our faith is to rest.

The church is not to recognize any other authority.

CHRIST AND MAN

Since Jesus is the One - the only One - provided for our reconciliation, there can be no other - God has supplied no other - Hebrews 10:14,26.

Therefore, any attempt to be reconciled to God through another would be futile.

Neither angels, nor spiritual powers, nor any other creature in creation can gain for us access to God.

CHRIST AND THE MYSTERY

Christ is for all - not just a selected few.

No exclusivism of the mystery cults - Colossians 2:4.

Modern man - no mysteries (cultic or non-cultic) can add to the knowledge of the gospel - our purpose and destiny.

No need for modern visions, or revelations, no more prophets, no special guidance from the Holy Spirit in addition to what has been revealed.

The gospel of Christ is sufficient to "present every man perfect in Christ." (Colossians 1:28).

CHAPTER 3

"HEAVEN ON EARTH" - (1-11)

1. Seek The Heavenly (1-4)
 1. We died with Christ (3a)
 2. We live in Christ (4a)
 3. We are raised with Christ (1a)
 4. We are hidden in Christ (3b)
 5. We are glorified in Christ (4b)
2. Slay the Earthly (5-9)
3. Strengthen the Christly (10,11)

"ALL DRESSED UP AND SOMEPLACE TO GO!" (12-17)

1. The Grace of Christ (12-14)
2. The Peace of Christ (15)
3. The Word of Christ (16)
4. The Name of Christ (17)

"A FAMILY AFFAIR" (18-4:1)

1. Husbands and Wives (18,19) - Love and Submission
2. Parents and Children (20,21) - Encouragement and Obedience
3. Masters and Servants (22-4:1) - Honesty and Devotion

Things New to the Colossian
Christian with a Pagan background
(3:1-4:1) - Pagan religions said
very little about public
morality

A WHOLE NEW CONCEPT
A NEW SET OF VALUES (1-4)

The life of the Christian is now viewed
against the background of eternity

The standard now is :

1. Giving above getting
2. Serving above ruling
3. Forgiving above revenge

In light of the cross, the world's
wealth, ambitions and activities
are seen at their true value.

Col 3:1 not hypothetical a great responsibility
Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on
things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Col 3:2 "feet on earth - minds in heaven"
Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Col 3:3 no longer belongs to the world
For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. → security and satisfaction

Col 3:4
When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will
appear with him in glory.

Col 3:5
Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. → "to have more; insatiable desire"

These belong to the old life

must be pure Lustful impurity driven by wrong motives

Col 3:6
Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. Judgment

Col 3:7
You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. → forgiveness is possible
1 Co 6:9-11

Col 3:8 "to strip down"
But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these:
anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

"The Sins in
Good Standing"
(no longer upset
over them)

verse 8 - Bad attitudes Toward Others

anger = sudden blaze of anger
rage = long lasting; slow burning
malice = viciousness of mind; ill-will
slander = insulting; blasphemy
filthy language = foul talk; obscene

Col 3:9 when we lie we cooperate with Satan
Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self
with its practices

Col 3:10
and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Progressive

2 co 3:18

complete change in
personality

Three laws for Christian Speech

1. Kind - no slander; maliciousness
2. Pure - no filthy talk
3. True - no distortion

Col 3:11
Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised,
barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Barriers Destroyed in Christ:

1. Birth / Nationality
2. Ceremonial / ritual
3. Cultured / uncultured
4. class / class

Col 3:12
(Therefore) as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved,
clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility,
gentleness and patience.

belonged originally to the Jews - now
applied to all.

"The Garments of Christian Grace"

compassion - heart of pity; tender feelings
kindness - goodness; that which is kind
humility - no room for arrogance
gentleness - self control
patience - long suffering; never loses patience

Col 3:13

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. → The New Nature
→ The Example for us

Col 3:14

^{"The Crown of the Christian"}
And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

"Love" - binding power
- holds the body together
- not to "fly apart"

Col 3:15

^{"be the Umpire in your heart"}
Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. → The way to "right" action - accept His decisions

Paul now turns from "character" to "conduct"

Col 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

Col 3:17

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Authority; identification; responsibility

Col 3:18 ^{not slavery - "to arrange under rank"}

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

evidence of submission

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF THE CHRISTIAN (18-25)

Col 3:19 ^{acts of sacrificial concern} Partnership
Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. (Headship; leadership)

Jews - no legal rights at all

The everyday relationships of the Christian - Amazing statements!

Col 3:20

Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

↳ "not to harbor ill-will because of something they did, or did not do."

Greeks - entire seclusion never appeared in the streets alone; lived in women's apartment; not even for meals; husband could do whatever he wanted

Col 3:21 ^{listen carefully and evaluate}

Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. → duty not only discipline, but encouragement
↳ easy prey for Satan!

"Patria Potestas" (Father Power)

sell into slavery
work like a laborer
right to condemn to death
carry out the execution

Col 3:22

Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.

} no code of working conditions or rights - thrown out to die when useless - no right to marry

Col 3:23

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,

Col 3:24

since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

slave receives an inheritance!

Col 3:25

Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.

They were an --
elected,
exemplary,
enthusiastic,
expectant,
People!

TYCHICUS, THE FAITHFUL (7,8)
ONESIMUS, THE FUGITIVE (9)
ARISTARCHUS, THE FEARLESS (10)
MARK, THE FORGIVEN (10)
JUSTUS, THE FRIENDLY (11)
EPAPHRAS, THE FERVENT (12,13)
LUKE, THE FAMOUS (14)
DEMAS, THE FAULTY (14)
NYMPHAS, THE FRUITFUL (15,16)
ARCHIPPUS, THE FALTERING (17)
PAUL, THE FETTERED (18)

1. TYCHICUS, THE FAITHFUL (7,8) - Cf. Acts 20:4, Paul's companion of 3rd journey;
Cf. Titus 3:12; II TIMOTHY 4:4
2. ONESIMUS, THE FUGITIVE (9) - was a runaway slave - became a Christian -
Philemon
3. ARISTARCHUS, THE FEARLESS (10) - possibly a Hellenized Jew - remained with
Paul at Ephesus during the citywide riot. He voyaged with Paul to Jerusalem
and later to Rome when Paul was a prisoner. Was still with Paul as Paul
wrote Colossians - now a fellow prisoner
4. MARK, THE FORGIVEN (10) - earlier Mark had disappointed Paul - Barnabas
and Paul had a most unhappy quarrel over him. - Mark accompanied Barna-
bas to Cyprus. - Cf. II Timothy 4:11 - wrote the gospel of Mark.
5. JUSTUS, THE FRIENDLY (11) - Jesus, a very common name - surname Justus -
name indicates this man belonged to a rigorous form of Judaism prior to
his conversion. "comfort" - paregoria - soothing drug.
6. EPAPHRAS, THE FERVENT (12) - self-sacrificing service
7. LUKE, THE FAMOUS (14) - "My very dear friend" - II Timothy 4:11
wrote two of the most important history books
8. DEMAS, THE FAULTY (14) - Cf. Philemon; II Timothy 4:10
9. NYMPHAS, THE FRUITFUL (15) - uncertain whether male or female - making a
valuable contribution by opening the home for Christians.
10. ARCHIPPUS, THE FALTERING (17) - could be the son of Philemon - three things
are instructed of him
11. PAUL, THE FETTERED (18) -

I. DUTY & PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER
(2-4)

II. THREE BRIEF INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN LIFE (5,6)

1. Behave with wisdom and tact
(when, + when not, to speak)
2. On the outlook for opportunities
(not avoid, but embrace)
3. Graceful speech to give the right answer
(no sanctimonious dullness)

III. THE "HEROES" OF FAITH
(7-19)

Col 4:1

Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

Col 4:2 *persevere faithfully - 1 Th 5¹⁷*

"wakeful"

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

Characteristics
of satisfying
prayer

Col 4:3 *Purposeful*

And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.

*not for Paul perse, but for the work
strength to complete the job.*

Col 4:4

Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

Col 4:5 *no sanctimonious, superiority complex*

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.

*"WALK THE
TALK!"*

Col 4:6

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with

salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. → *not rude, or coarse*

↳ *preservative; seasoner*

no attitude of "Know-it-all"

Col 4:7

→ *WILLING TO STAY when situation was difficult*

Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord.

Love revealed in action

working together

} *Didn't take the easy way,
but took the right way*

Col 4:8

I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts.

Col 4:9

He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

Col 4:10

My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

Col 4:11

Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me.

THREE GROUPS OF MEN:

(More than 100 different people associated with Paul in his letters, and in the book of Acts)
(26 in Romans chapter 16 alone!)

I. The Men who stayed (faithful)

Aristarchus - 10a

John Mark - 10b

Jesus Justus - 11

Luke (Gentile) - 14a

II. The Man who prayed - Epaphroditus (1?)

Prayed constantly - 12 - "always"

Fervently - 12 - "laboring fervently"

Personally - 12 - "for you"

Definitely - 12b

Sacrificially - 13 - "great zeal"
(much distress)

III. The Man who strayed - Demas

Col 4:12

Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.

only one commended of the people for his prayer ministry!

Col 4:13

I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis.

no commendation, or comment made
Philemon 24; Colossians 4:18; 2 Timothy 4:10
Degeneration - loss of enthusiasm - failure in the faith

Col 4:14

Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings.

Col 4:15

Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS
(verses 15-18)

Col 4:16

"to read aloud"

After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

Col 4:17

→ "a definite purpose to accomplish"

Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord."

Col 4:18

I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

many references to his chains:

1. A reminder of his love for lost souls, esp. the Gentiles
2. Evidence of his obedience to the Lord
3. His willingness to pay any price so that the Gentiles might hear the gospel
4. cf. Hebrews 13:3 - "Remember them that be in chains, as bound with them."

THOUGHTS IN CONCLUSION:

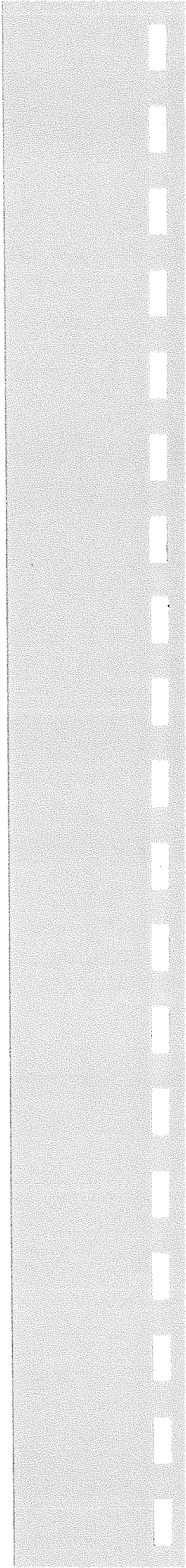
We have in Christ all that we can ever want, or need.

We have been made complete in Him.

We should be aware of any teaching that claims to give us more than we already have in Christ.

STUDIES IN THE
BOOKS OF
PHILEMON

Prepared by:
Joel D. Hestand
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STUDIES IN PHILEMON

Philemon was evidently a person of considerable material means, and was using the means for the cause of Christ. Philemon, as well as Lydia, provided a meeting place for the church.

CHARACTERISTICS: Often called the “choice miniature.” It is full of courtesy, tact and wit. Philemon exposes the personality of Paul, i.e., the heart of the apostle. It is the only private letter of Paul preserved. There are eleven individuals named, and gives an insight into the early domestic and social life of the times. Paul identifies himself three times in this short letter (1,9,19).

KEY VERSES: Verses 15,16

KEY THEME: “Forgiveness”

DATE OF WRITING: AD 60,61

CHARACTERS OF THE LETTER:

PHILEMON: Probably one of Paul’s converts; home of Colossae (4:9); a freeman and slave owner; belonged to the higher class of society. Was a local church leader.

ONESIMUS: Name means “Profitable;” slave of Philemon; accompanied Tychicus (Colossians 4:7-9); possibly a thief; a convert of Paul.

BRIEF OUTLINES OF THE BOOK:

Appreciation (1-7) - “I Thank My God”
Appeal (8-16) - “I Beseech You”
Assurance (17-25) - I Will Repay”

Paul, The Beloved Friend (1-7)
Paul, The Beseeching Intercessor (8-16)
Paul, The Burdened Partner (17-25)

PURPOSE:

1. To inform Philemon that his slave was not only safe, but also saved
2. To ask Philemon to forgive Onesimus
3. To request of Philemon that he prepare a room for Paul

LESSONS OF THE EPISTLE

1. **ABOUT PAUL** - shows the private life of the man - not severe, forbidding or unemotional, but tender, gentle and a gentleman.

PAUL'S TACTFULNESS - in his introduction; in his approach (recognizes the good); in his mention of Onesimus (10); makes himself responsible for debt (a wrong is done and must be made right); very courteous (not artificial - Philippians 2:3)

2. **DUTY TO RIGHTNESS**: Onesimus knows the sinfulness of his deed, and was not true to his name; has wronged Philemon; The new life does not cancel the old wrongs (they must be righted); he must go back exposing himself to punishment. Christianity is intensely practical and ethical.
3. **APPLICATION OF HIGH PRINCIPLES TO COMMON AFFAIRS OF LIFE**:
"Mercy wins the highest praise just when there is the most righteous cause for anger" (Pliny)
4. **EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES**: Encouragement to seek and save the lost, even the lowest station of life; must not underestimate the power of God; must see the elevating power of the gospel; use of the sympathetic contact with those whom we would win. The wrong approach is often used.
5. **SOCIAL PRINCIPLES**: The relationship of Christianity to unchristian institutions:
 - (1) Christianity is not a political movement - does not attack them from without
 - (2) Christianity does not merely recognize social order, but defines it and establishes it
 - (3) Christianity is not revolutionary but transformative in its method - not to destroy, or overturn, or annihilate, or sweep away. It lays down the principles which affect.
 - (4) Social evils are changed by transformed lives.

Praise of Philemon, 4-7
Plea for Onesimus, 8-17
Pledge of Paul, 18-22

Phile 1:1 → Not "Apostle" → not of Rome!

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To → Col 1:1
Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker,
↳ "affectionate;" "one who is kind"

Phile 1:2 ^{could be Philemon's wife} ^{could be their son} } Col 4:17
to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home:

{ a church met in the house of Philemon
Onesimus belonged to Philemon
Onesimus was of Colossae, Col 4:9
Therefore, it was the church of Colossae which met in the house of Philemon

Phile 1:3

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord → Salutation
Jesus Christ.

Phile 1:4

I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers,

Phile 1:5

because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints.

not empty
flattery!

Christians must be characterized
by genuine brotherly love

Phile 1:6

"be effectual"

I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

The request element of Paul's prayer } our faith must be shared in order for a fuller understanding

Phile 1:7

Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because → fruits of love
you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

Phile 1:8

Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do,

Phile 1:9 → denotes love & humility

(probably about 60 yrs of age)

yet I appeal to you on the basis of love. I then, as Paul--an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus--

→ The "course" of love

Phile 1:10

→ "helpful; profitable"

I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains.

The fruit of Paul's labor regardless of his circumstances

Phile 1:11

Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

The change wrought by Christianity

Phile 1:12

I am sending him--who is my very heart--back to you.

Phile 1:13

I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

Phile 1:14

But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do will be spontaneous and not forced.

Phile 1:15

Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good--

The fact of God's providence, and Paul's belief in God's providence (How God can, and does, work through men and their affairs) cf Esther 4:14

Phile 1:16

no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord.

Phile 1:17

→ "koinonia" = to have in common

So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. → "to receive into one's family circle"

Phile 1:18 → *The reality of the situation*

If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me.

fellowship would depend upon Onesimus' repentance, and Philemon's forgiveness

Phile 1:19

I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back--not to mention that you owe me your very self.

- Philemon was probably a convert of Paul

Phile 1:20

I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ.

Phile 1:21

Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.

Paul's confidence in Philemon

Phile 1:22

And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

cf. Pl 2^{19, 23, 24}

The Power of Prayer!

Phile 1:23

Co 1⁷ 4¹²

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings.

Phile 1:24

And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers.

Co 4¹⁰ 1¹⁶

Phile 1:25

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

