

EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS

Slide 1 – Title Slide

Slide 2

I. WRITER: Paul the apostle

II. AUDIENCE: Church at Colossae (Colossians 1:2). Map

III. DATE: 62 A.D.

IV. NOTES:

Map. Colossae was a small town situated on the south bank of the Lyous River in the Roman province of Asia. The nearest churches were in the city of Laodicea about 10 miles (16 km) away and Hierapolis about 13 miles (20 km) away. In this epistle, Paul implies that he did not start the church, but that Epaphras gave them the gospel. He may also have been the pastor for a time, maybe during those 2 years that Paul was in Ephesus when it is said that all of Asia heard the gospel (Acts 19:10).

This epistle was written during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome. Up to that time, Paul never visited the saints there personally (2:1). Philemon was a church member at Colossae. In Paul's epistle to Philemon, which was written at the same time as this epistle to the Colossians, he wrote to Philemon that he expects to be released from prison shortly and wanted to visit him. Many believe that Paul did end up visiting Philemon and the church in Colossae after his release from prison.

Paul's main purpose in writing this letter was to refute the heretical teaching that was influencing this church which was a strange mix of the Judaizers and Gnosticism. You will learn more about Gnosticism in the course General Epistles, but their core teachings denied the incarnation of Jesus, God becoming a man and they denied the deity of Jesus Christ. They did not seek salvation from sin through the blood of Christ but had a works-based salvation through knowledge.

Slide 4 (Slide 3 is the hidden map)

Outline of Colossians

Introduction (1:1–14)

I. The Truth About the Christ (Chapter 1)

II. The Truth About the Cult (Chapter 2)

III. The Truth About the Christian (3:1 – 4:6)

Conclusion (4:7–18)

Slide 5

Introduction (1:1-14)

1:1-4 - ¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus *our* brother, ²To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, ⁴Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints,

Just as in his other church epistles, Paul starts by giving thanks to God for the work He has done in those churches. He is thankful for two things: their faith in Christ and their love to all the saints. Verse 4 says he only heard about their conversion. I take this to mean that Paul not only did not start this church, but up to this point, he had not stepped foot in the city.

1:5-6 - ⁵For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; ⁶Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard *of it*, and knew the grace of God in truth:

Notice that the word of the truth of the gospel had not only come unto them, but, in verse 6, also to "all the world". That statement implies the gospel had reached "all the world" by that time. And wherever it goes, it brings forth fruit, so we need to be faithful to get it out to the world:

Isaiah 55:11 - So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

1:7-8 - ⁷As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; ⁸Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

Apparently, Epaphras was the one who took the gospel to Colossae. Paul prayed for them:

1:9 - ⁹For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

First, he prayed that they would know the will of God in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Wisdom is the knowledge of how to regulate one's relationship with God which was opposite to the perverted Gnostic idea of wisdom which was an earthly, devilish sense of wisdom as James wrote:

James 3:14-17 - But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. ¹⁵This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish. ¹⁶For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work. ¹⁷But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

1:10 - ¹⁰That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Second, he prayed they would walk "worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing", meaning they would seek to please Him in all they do. Third, he prayed they would be "fruitful in every good work". Fruit comes from our walk with God, abiding in the vine, Jesus Christ (John 15:4,5).

Fourth, he prayed they would increase in the knowledge of God. This type of knowledge changes a person's behavior, a person's life. This is in contrast to the Gnostic knowledge that only puffed up the person. God desires that we know Him personally:

Jeremiah 9:24 - But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

The better we know God, the more we can trust Him and love Him!

1:11 - ¹¹Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

Fifth, he prayed they would be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power. It is the strength and power that we gain from our relationship and walk with Christ, and it allows us to manifest the sixth prayer request which is they would exhibit patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.

The difference between patience and longsuffering is that patience endures difficult circumstances and longsuffering endures putting up with difficult people. Both are to be done joyfully.

1:12-13 - ¹²Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: ¹³Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Paul stresses that each time he prays for them, he gives thanks to God the Father who made us "meet" or fit to be partakers of the inheritance that awaits us and who delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into His kingdom.

1:14 - ¹⁴In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

The Scriptures repeatedly declared what paid the price for our redemption: the blood of Christ.

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I. The Truth About the Christ (1:15-29)

A. The deity of Christ (1:15-19)

1:15 - ¹⁵Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Christ is the image of God or visible representation of the invisible God. Christ is also the "firstborn of every creature". This does not mean that Jesus was created as the Jehovah's Witnesses teach, but it means preeminent, that He is above all creation.

1:16 - ¹⁶For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Christ created all things in heaven and in earth (even Satan and the demons). Thrones or dominions may refer to the angelic and demonic realm, while principalities and powers seems to refer to earthly governments. Three words can be easily overlooked, "and for him". That we were created for Him! We were created to have a relationship with Him, for His pleasure. Creation was all for Christ!

1:17 - ¹⁷And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Christ is also "before all things". As Creator, He obviously was there before creation. Also, "by him all things consist" means that all things continues to exist only because of Him.

1:18 - ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

Christ is the head of the church of each local church body of believers. A body is physical and has a head. You can't have a head over an invisible body. Christ is the firstborn from the dead speaking of his resurrection.

1:19 - ¹⁹For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;

While on earth, Christ had the fullness of the Godhead speaking of his deity. Paul repeats himself in 2:9 that the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ bodily. That fulness pleased God: He was not jealous or even reluctant that Christ should possess full deity. Verses 15-19 may be difficult to understand but Paul is declaring the deity of Christ which was a clear rebuttal to the Gnostic teaching creeping into the church which denied the deity of Christ.

B. The death of Christ (1:20-22)

1:20 - ²⁰And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

Peace with God comes through the blood that Christ shed on the cross. In doing so, Christ "reconciled" us unto Himself. Reconciled means the restoration of a relationship of peace which has been broken.

1:21 - ²¹And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

Prior to being reconciled to Christ, we were "alienated" from God and enemies of God by our wicked works. Alienated means foreign or estranged.

1:22 - ²²In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

All that Christ did, He did to "present us holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight". Unblameable mean "faultless" and unproveable is without reproach. Paul is making us see the immense change that Christ accomplishes in each of us through His blood. Changing us from a wicked enemy of God into a spotless, faultless, child of God without reproach!

C. The demands of Christ (1:23-29)

1:23 - ²³If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

To remain unblameable and unproveable in His sight, we must not waver on our doctrine, but instead "continue in the faith", grounded and settled. The "faith" again means the system of beliefs or doctrine that they were taught by Paul. It is not that they would lose their salvation, but they would be reproveable in the sight of Christ at the judgment seat of the saved.

The gospel is said to have been (past tense) preached to every creature under heaven at that time.

1:24 - ²⁴Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

Paul is eager to "fill up" or complete that which is lacking in himself in terms of suffering affliction for Christ for the purpose of edifying the body of Christ, the local church.

1:25 - ²⁵Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

Paul is saying that in this dispensation of time of the gospel being preached to the Gentiles, that God made Paul a minister to fully preach the word of God.

1:26 - ²⁶Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: ²⁷To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

The "mystery" spoken here seems to be the including of the Gentiles in the riches of the world to come, to share in the kingdom of God as heirs. The "riches of the glory of this mystery" is "Christ in you, the hope of glory". Paul preached Christ as the only way of salvation, that Christ indwelt us at the time of salvation, and this indwelling of Christ was the "hope (confidence) of glory". **Read vv. 28-29**

1:28-29 - ²⁸Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: ²⁹Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Paul's goal in preaching and teaching was to present every man "perfect" or mature in Christ which is what Christ called him to do and enabled him to do.

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II. The Truth About the Cult (2:1 – 23)

A. Experience the truth (2:1-7)

2:1-2 - ¹For 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; ²That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

He begins to reveal his concern over the heresy that has entered into their church and the one at Laodicea, a few miles/kms away. He desires 3 things for them:

1. That their hearts might be comforted. He uses root word for the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. All our comfort comes from Him.
2. Being knit together in love. Once again, the Holy Spirit desires unity within a church. Unity that is based on truth and understanding, not just unity for the sake of unity.
3. Full assurance of understanding in the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.

2:3 - ³In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

This profound statement is another attack on Gnosticism. In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The Gnostics believed in "angelic intermediaries" that would bring the knowledge necessary for salvation. But here, Paul said, ALL wisdom and knowledge are found in Christ!!

2:4-5 - ⁴And this I say, lest any man should beguile (or deceive) you with enticing (or persuasive) words. ⁵For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

Even though he was not there, he had heard about their faith in Christ, and warned them not to be deceived.

2:6-7 - ⁶As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: ⁷Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Paul gave them one the keys to living the Christian life. How did they get saved? By faith in Jesus Christ. So now they are to walk by faith, not in the flesh, not by sight, and not being disturbed by circumstances.

“Rooted in Christ”, refers to deeply abiding in Him as Christ spoke about in John 15. “Built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught”. Don’t be turned away from the truth that you had originally been taught, but instead grow in understanding of it.

And then abound in thanksgiving. The more you are thankful to God, the more you will see His love for you, which would result in you loving God more and resulting in a close walk with Him.

B. Exposing the lie (2:8-23)

2:8 - ⁸Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

To "spoil" is to carry away, or to take away their goods as plunder. What “goods” or possessions is Paul talking about that could be taken or spoiled? Their goods would be their assurance and peace in Christ, taken away by Gnosticism (philosophy and vain deceit) or legalism (the tradition of men). Legalism causes insecurity in needing to earn salvation and possibly being able to lose it.

2:9 - ⁹For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Christ was fully God. The Deity of Christ is central to Christianity. The denial of it, as the Gnostics taught, is the spirit of antichrist.

2:10 - ¹⁰And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Our salvation is complete in Christ. We don’t need any religion, any philosophy, any special knowledge or rituals, any special commandments to obey to become complete. He emphasizes once again that Christ is the head of all principalities and power; there are no other angelic powers above Him which was in contrast to the Gnostic teaching of angels acting as intermediaries on behalf of man.

2:11-12 - ¹¹In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: ¹²Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

The saved were spiritually circumcised in their hearts at salvation by Christ. It represents what spiritually took place at salvation. In baptism the saved person identifies with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; and pictures their own death to self. He states **it** is our faith in Christ that saves us, not baptism.

2:13 - ¹³And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

The word quickened means “to be made alive spiritually”. We were dead in sins but by faith, He made us alive spiritually, forgiving all our sins.

2:14 - ¹⁴Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Every sin we ever committed was recorded in the “handwriting of ordinances” which was blotted out at salvation; they were “nailed to the cross” with Christ.

2:15 - ¹⁵And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

After His resurrection, Christ “spoiled” the demonic powers making a public show of His victory. “Spoiled” is the treatment of enemies when conquered. Christ “triumphed” over them.

A Roman Triumph was a procession where the victorious general parades down the street as the conquered enemy is humiliated.

2:16-17 - ¹⁶Let 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*: ¹⁷Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

Here is another shot at legalism. The battle is over and already won by Christ. We have that victory by faith. Therefore, the traditions of the Jews, including the distinction of meats and drinks, what was clean and unclean, the necessity of observing festivals such as new moons and particular Sabbaths were all rendered useless.

2:18 - ¹⁸Let no man beguile (deceive or defraud) you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

Paul seems to be saying, let no man steal away from you the reward you have earned by faithfully serving Christ up to this point. The deceivers would rob you by pushing a false humility that says we need a mediator of angels to help obtain salvation, which is a core teaching of Gnosticism.

2:19 - ¹⁹And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

Instead of this false teaching, we need to hold the doctrine of the Head of the body, Christ. It is through Him that the whole body or church increases or grows.

2:20 - ²⁰Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

The "rudiments of the world" refers to the ceremonial ordinances of the Mosaic Law, which the Judaizers were pushing. Paul is saying, "if you are really dead to the world, and alive in Christ, why were they still following those same dead legalistic ordinances?"

2:21-22 - ²¹(Touch not; taste not; handle not; ²²Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

These doctrines and commandments originated with men. All religions and religious systems are the doctrines and commandments of men, except true Bible Christianity.

2:23 - ²³Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

These ordinances have the appearance of wisdom in that they strengthen the will over the flesh. Some may have good logic behind them (for example the hand and utensil washing that the Jews put into their traditions is a great way to prevent the spread of contagious disease). "Will worship" seems to signify a type of worship which a man chooses for himself what to worship, instead of what God has revealed.

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III. The Truth About the Christian (3:1 – 4:6)

A. The statement of what is expected (3:1-4)

3:1-3 - ¹If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. ²Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. ³For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

We should have our mind fixed on the eternal, on heaven, on the glory that lies ahead, on the judgment seat of Christ, on how everything that we do for Christ and go through for Him will be worth it one day. This world is not our home and shouldn't have our focus or affection.

3:4 - ⁴When Christ, *who is our life*, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

"When Christ shall appear" is a reference to the coming rapture. That continual focus on the return of Christ helps us to stay focused on Jesus Christ.

B. The steps to what is expected (3:5 – 4:6)

1. In our personal life (3:5-14)

3:5 - ⁵Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

We are to "mortify" (put to death) our flesh, and several areas are mentioned: fornication is any sex outside of marriage, "inordinate affection" is any unnatural and degrading passion (certainly homosexuality fits this description), "evil concupiscence" is literally a harmful longing or injurious lust. Also, notice that covetousness is idolatry. They are closely linked. Why?

We all know that anything that takes our heart away from God, or anything we allow to come between us and God becomes at that moment, our idol. To covet is to feel in our heart that God's grace isn't good enough for us that we need whatever it is we are coveting to be happy instead of being happy with Christ. To covet is saying in our hearts that He isn't meeting our needs or giving us what we want.

5:6-7 - ⁶For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: ⁷In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

The wrath of God will come one day to those who refuse to repent and surrender to Christ as Lord. Some of those in Colossae had been saved out of those sins mentioned in verse 5.

3:8 - ⁸But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Paul mentions several other sins we need to put off after we are saved.

3:9-10 - ⁹Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; ¹⁰And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

The principle of replacement is mentioned. We are to replace an ungodly habit with a godly one, or the besetting sin will be very difficult to overcome. We are to replace those sins mentioned in verses 5-9 with those virtues mentioned in verses 12-17.

3:11 - ¹¹Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.

In Christ, we are a new creature, and our background becomes insignificant. We are all equal in Christ. He is all and in all. Barbarians were anyone who wasn't Greek. Scythians were the lowest type of Barbarian or non-Greek.

They were skilled horsemen who acted like pirates on land. They excelled in barbaric attacks and plunder. They were nomads who neither plowed nor sowed. They had the most filthy habits and never washed in water; they drank the blood of the first enemy killed in battle, and made drinking bowls of the skulls of the slain.

Paul used them as an example to say that no matter how barbaric we once were, once in Christ, we are all accepted through His blood. Then we come to the things we should replace those sins in vv. 5-9 with.

Read vv. 12-14

3:12-14 - ¹²Put on therefore, as the elect (or chosen) of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. ¹⁴And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

We are to replace anger, wrath, and malice with mercies, kindness, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. Above everything else, in v. 14, Paul writes we are to put on charity, *agape* love, the ultimate in Christlikeness. It the bond of perfection: the thing which will tie together all other things.

2. In our church life (3:15-17)

3:15 - ¹⁵And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

The use of the word "let" means that it will happen naturally if unhindered. We allow the peace of God rule in our hearts by being thankful. Being unthankful causes us to forget all God has done for us and leads to a lack of peace.

Philippians 4:6-7 - Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

3:16 - ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Likewise, we prevent the word of Christ from dwelling by not exposing ourselves enough to the word of God, to "teaching and admonishing one another" and not singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord.

3:17 - ¹⁷And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Whatever role we find ourselves in, whatever office or job, be it within the church, in the home, or at the workplace: that role is a ministry we do for Christ. We are to do whatever we do as though we were doing it directly for Christ Himself.

Paul gives us a rule of faith, a simple formula, to keep us right with God. Everything we say and do must under the controlling influence of the name of the Lord Jesus

So by letting the peace of God rule in our hearts and letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly, we can then fulfill our responsibilities in the next few verses.

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3. In our domestic life (3:18-21)

3:18-19 - ¹⁸Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. ¹⁹Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.

We have already covered in Ephesians 5, wives submitting to their husbands and husbands loving their wives, but notice verse 19 says to husbands, “and be not bitter against them (wives)”. Apparently, men have a tendency to get bitter against their wives.

Bitterness is caused by expectations not being met. A person is offended when they are not treated in a way they expect to be treated. And they don't deal with their expectations not being met in a proper way, by forgiving the trespass.

We need to let go of our expectations entering into marriage. We need to get all of our needs met from our relationship with Christ. We need to focus on serving Christ by loving and serving our spouse and not be concerned with what that spouse can do for us. For a Christian, “marriage is a ministry”.

3:20-21 - ²⁰Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. ²¹Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

How might a father provoke his child to anger? By treating them unjustly in any of these 3 ways: by being overly critical (causing them to feel they can never satisfy you) or becoming angry with them (almost all anger in a parent towards a child is unjust) or being overly severe in punishment.

4. In our business life (3:22 – 4:1)

3:22-4:1 - ²²Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: ²³And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; ²⁴Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. ¹Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

Christian Employees are to be submissive to their employers. They are to be the hardest working employees at all times, and not just when the boss is around (not with eyeservice). God is also concerned with Christian employers paying their employees a fair wage.

5. In our secular life (4:2-6)

4:2 - ²Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

Pray without ceasing (I Thess. 5:17), but also to “watch in the same with thanksgiving”, meaning to always be on guard for things to pray about, and always giving thanks to God in our prayers.

4:3-4 - ³Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: ⁴That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

Once again, Paul is asking for prayer. God's men need God's people praying for them. And Paul is asking for God to open for him a "door of utterance", or an occasion, opportunity, or entrance for the gospel to be preached to the lost and that he would make the most of the opportunity, preaching the gospel in a manner that reveals the truth to its hearers.

4:5 - ⁵Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

Our actions in this world are constantly being watched and weighed by the lost around us: for that reason we are exhorted to "walk in wisdom toward them that are without".

Redeem means to "buy back". We cannot literally "buy back" time. Once time is gone, it is gone. It can never be recalled. What Paul is saying is to make the best possible use of our time; don't waste it away. We will be accountable to Jesus Christ for how we spent our time at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

4:6 - ⁶Let your speech *be* always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Our speech needs to be chosen carefully. We need to add sweetness to our speech (with grace) seasoned with salt. Our words should draw people in instead of pushing people away.

Also, we need to be studied up and ready "that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man". Or as Peter put it "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear".

Conclusion (4:7-18)

4:7-8 - ⁷All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, *who is* a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord: ⁸Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;

Tychicus is mentioned 5 times in the New Testament. He was faithful to Paul and the work of Christ. Tychicus is recorded as being 3 things, "a beloved brother", "a faithful minister", and to Paul, "fellobservant in the Lord". A faithful minister is what we all need to aspire to be, faithful in serving Christ wherever He puts us.

4:9 - ⁹With Onesimus (remember him?), a faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you (he's from Colossae). They shall make known unto you all things which *are done* here.

Onesimus is also mentioned as a faithful and beloved brother. He was the runaway slave of Philemon, about whom the epistle of Philemon is written. Apparently Onesimus was from Colossae and had gone to Rome as a runaway. While in Rome he met Paul, had gotten saved and was serving alongside Paul.

Read vv. 10-11

4:10-11 - ¹⁰Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;) ¹¹And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only *are my* fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.

Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas is mentioned. He left Paul and the work on the first missionary journey. But God and Paul gave him a second chance. We might not be faithful, but God is willing to give us another chance: and another.... Paul now includes Mark in verse 11 as "my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me."

4:12 - ¹²Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. ¹³For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them *that are* in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

Epaphras had a ministry of prayer. This ministry is needed more today than ever, yet so few of us seem to take it seriously

4:14 - ¹⁴Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

Luke and Demas are mentioned as serving God, faithful to Paul and to Christ. Later, however, Demas would forsake Paul out of love for this present world. Luke would remain faithful to Paul until the end. Paul would write "only Luke is with me" in Rome during his second imprisonment.

4:15-16 - ¹⁵Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. ¹⁶And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea.

He wanted this church to exchange letters with the church at Laodicea.

4:17 - ¹⁷And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.

Finally, an admonition that Paul gives to Archippus that we all need to take to heart: "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."

4:18 - ¹⁸The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

Remember those in prison.... Prison ministries, but also to law enforcement.

Slide 10

And so ends the book of Colossians....