

COLOSSIANS

Provided by Grace Assembly School of the Bible

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Introduction

1. Where and when was the Book of Colossians penned?

The Apostle Paul, the Chief Apostle to the Church, penned this epistle when he was imprisoned in Rome, in approximately AD 61-62, and sent it by Tychicus.

2. What was the main purpose for Paul's letter to the Colossians Church?

The general purpose of the letter was to correct the false teaching which had arisen at Colossae. The Apostle wrote to the church, in support of the authority of Epaphras and confirmed the Truth of his teaching so that they might have confidence in him rather than in the false teachers. Colossians sets forth the believer's state (walk) through Christ and the truth of "Christ in you" through regeneration.

3. What has been the result of the Paul's unheeded correction?

Because this correction was unheeded, the house of God has become, in its latter end, a many-headed "monstrosity." The primary correction was giving the Preeminence to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of all principality and power. His place as the one and only head of the Church and, also, that he be given preeminence in all things pertaining to His Church, that He might be all and in all. Otherwise, the house of God will give that place to other men who, on the false premise of equality with Christ, will form the strongholds of headships and organizations that have replaced the headship of Christ over a living breathing organism. Therefore, the Church has become a many-headed monstrosity in the sight of God and needs divine judgment that must begin at the house of God, as reflected in Revelation 1, 2 and 3.

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Chapter One

1. Explain the purpose of Paul stating he was “an apostle” in 1:1. (Further Insight 1:1)

Paul sets forth his apostleship, by the divine will of God, at the beginning of this letter, as it will contain correction for the house of God. Therefore, to refuse the correction, set forth in this epistle, will be paramount to rejecting the divine order of God, who set Christ as head of the Church and Paul as the chief apostle to the Church.

2. Name and briefly describe the three commendations Paul gave in his greeting to the saints at Colossae. (1:3-5)

They were recognized for their faith with love and hope. Faith is an essential asset in the Christian life. The results of true faith should be love and hope. Their special hope was being among the out-resurrection and out-translation company of believers.

3. What is the definition of a true faithful minister? (Further Insight 1:7)

The true definition of a faithful minister is one who holds the God-ordained order and does not usurp a place or authority by taking honor unto himself.

4. Why did Paul emphasis to be filled with the knowledge of God’s will? (1:9)

He was praying for them that they might be filled with a knowledge of the will of God, that they might see to what heights of glory they have been called by His Gospel of grace, and that they might lay hold of it. His will is for the saints to understand the riches of the provisions of their standing in Christ, so that Christ may be formed in them.

5. What is the seven-fold process for a believer’s state to correspond with his standing in Christ? (1:10-12)

First, that they "might walk worthy of the Lord."

Second, "unto all pleasing" – Christ is the only life that can please God, bring forth fruit and manifest good works.

Third, "being fruitful in every good work" – be filled with a knowledge of the will of God and see to what heights of glory we have been called by His Gospel of grace and lay hold of it.

Fourth, "increasing in the knowledge of God" – believers will barely tap, much less exhaust, the riches of the provisions in Christ Jesus.

Fifth, "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power" – It is not our strength, but His might.

Sixth, "unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" – This “might,” or power, will be manifested in patience, longsuffering with joyfulness during trials, sufferings, and the “all things” which must be received from the hand of the Lord.

Seventh, "giving thanks unto the Father" – victory calls for deep thanksgiving to the Father.

6. What does it mean to be translated out of darkness into the Kingdom of God? (1:13)

For the Father has translated the children of God out of one place and put them into the other. They are out of the realm of darkness, and into the realm of light, love, joy, peace, and home. This first translation, this spiritual change, fits us for the physical translation which will take place when our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, appears. The believer may fail to count with God and may walk in the kingdom of darkness but will never again be the property of Satan or member of that kingdom.

7. Explain the title of "Firstborn of all creation." (Further Insight 1:15)

The Mystery of Him being called the "Firstborn of all creation," prior to His virgin birth, death burial and resurrection, as the "Firstborn from the dead," lies hidden in the eternal counsels of the God Head. The Mystery portends that the first creation both invisible and visible were created in view of Him becoming the "Firstborn from the dead." Even greater insight into the Lord Jesus Christ's title as "Firstborn of all creation," is when all the un-fallen creation, both invisible and visible, will be required to pass through His Person and Work when all things will be made new – (Rev 21).

8. Why did it please the Father that all fulness should dwell in his Son? (1:19)

It was the united good pleasure, or will, of the three Divine Persons in the eternal counsels that all the fullness of the authority and sovereignty of the Infinite God should dwell in "the Christ" the Head and the Body joined together. He is joined unto the Church which is made up of His mystical body and bride. The Church can only please the father by giving Him the preeminence in all things.

9. What does it mean for believers to be presented "holy and unblameable and unproveable?" (1:22)

God Himself will not be able to find any fault with the glorified saints, much less anyone else, when He has finished His work in them. Satan will not dare accuse them, neither any man.

10. Describe the dispensation Paul was made a minister by God. (1:25)

Paul was especially called, equipped, commissioned, and sent forth as the Apostle of the Church, with a distinct message to the Body of Christ. He received a revelation of the eternal counsel and purposes of God concerning this heavenly company secrets that had never been made known but were necessary to complete the Word of God. These mysteries of the exalted destiny of the Church were revealed to the Apostle Paul that he might fully set forth the 14 Epistles.

11. What is "the riches of the glory of this mystery." (1:27)

The Mystery of "Christ in You" among the Gentile believers begins with their regeneration or new birth. "The hope of glory" is the potential of Christ being formed in these believers with all the glory and attributes and the potential of sharing in the riches of His vast inheritance. This is a summary of the great favor now bestowed on the Gentiles but only by grace through faith. This is the only hope of glory that is fallen man, especially the Gentiles of ever being restored back into the image of God. The only hope

of restoration rests in the Person and Work of Christ resurrected as the Last Adam. The hope of glory will be further revealed as the "Mystery of Christ" which speaks of His future glory when He as the God/Man fully resumes His place in the Godhead but now with His mystical Body in subjection to him and His mystical bride at His side. (See Rev 4 and 5.)

12. What is the purpose of Paul's labour and striving? (Further Insight 1:29)

The Apostle's labor and striving to preach the Gospel was according to God's working through the Person and Work of Christ, and now, Christ's working and striving in and through Paul. The striving and labor were to make the Gospel known to the saints. Such labor and striving can only be measured in the day when the glory of "Christ in you" is manifested in believers.

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Chapter Two

1. What was Paul's great conflict for the Colossian and Laodicea churches? (Further Insight 2:1)

These two churches, having the same standing in Christ personify very different states in Christ, as manifested in the Early Church.

The Church in Colossae – Corrected Saints

The Church located at Colossae personified those in the Early Church who had faithfully received the Ephesians truths of their standing “In Christ,” “in heavenly places,” and the Philippians truths of “running to win Christ as Bridegroom.” They had likewise received the divine correction of the Apostle Paul as the Chief Apostle, as set forth in this epistle.

Church in Laodicea – Lukewarm Saints

The Church at Laodicea personified those in the Early Church, who had become lukewarm and compromising as to the high and heavenly truths set forth by Paul as the Chief Apostle. They, by contrast, were experiencing prosperity in the present evil world system of that day.

Two False Doctrines were besetting these two churches. These two Churches were respectively wrestling two false doctrines, and the Apostle knew, by the Holy Spirit, the end of the matter in the latter days. Therefore, he was in “great conflict” in his spirit.

2. To whom are the treasures of spiritual wisdom hid and to whom are they revealed? (Further Insight 2:3)

The Apostle is referring to none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, the God/Man who remains an equal member of the God Head. In ages past He was the Word and therefore He was the Great Creator. Now as the “Word made flesh,” He is the Great Redeemer. Therefore, “In whom, the Lord Jesus Christ, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” of (1) creation and 2) redemption. Therefore, He is the ultimate source of all-natural wisdom, revealed, as creation knowledge. He is also the ultimate source of all spiritual wisdom, revealed, as redemptive knowledge. They were/are hidden in Him and therefore revealed through Him, by the Spirit, as (1) natural knowledge or (2) spiritual knowledge. However, spiritual knowledge or redemptive knowledge must be received by revelation of the Spirit to the new creation minds of believers. May believers perceive that absolutely all knowledge, wisdom and understanding, both natural and spiritual, were/are hid in Him as the “Word” and now as “The Word Made flesh.

3. Give a brief explanation of being rooted and built up in Christ. (2:7)

The Apostle stressed believers need of becoming rooted and grounded in Christ. They are rooted back into Christ's death, burial, and resurrection Christ through the faith of Christ forming a deep root and a sure foundation. Believers are likewise deeply

rooted back into the eternal counsels of the Godhead wherein they were chosen in Christ before the foundations of the earth. As believers grow up in Christ, as they mine out these truths and become rooted and grounded in their faith.

4. Describe the meaning of “circumcision without hands.” (Further Insight 2:11)

The believer’s death with Christ was accomplished through His circumcision, i.e., “cutting off,” on the cross, which was clearly without human hands. This is when the “body of sin,” or the old nature was cut off once and forever in God’s judicial reckoning.

5. Briefly describe the “handwriting of ordinances” mentioned by Paul. (2:14)

The true circumcision was that of the cross where all mankind was cut off, provisionally, in the cutting off Christ. But it was "the handwriting of ordinances," the whole Mosaic economy, that was against the Jew. These laws, or decrees, had to be taken away before the Jew could be free. Paul declares that these restrictions, or requirements, that were against the Jews were completely done away in Christ. Hence, the Gentile, from his uncircumcised flesh, and the Jew, from his laws and regulations, have been made free by the bringing in of a new creation.

6. Why does Paul emphasize that we should not be judged for what we eat and drink and for keeping holy days? (2:16)

We are not of this world; hence, we are under none of its fleshly restrictions. We are joined to Christ and are in possession of a life that is perfect and needs no keeping of days or seasons to make it better. It cannot be improved. Therefore, we are urged to let no man judge us in these things. We do not attain to any perfection by eating or drinking or by any fleshly attitude of mind. It is the attitude of our heart upon which Christ looks.

7. What is the meaning behind Paul’s warning to not allow any man to beguile you? (2:18)

This warning is against spiritual robbery of the reward of believers in winning Christ as their Bridegroom. This beguilement is subtle and includes a warning to believers against "voluntary humility" in allowing angels, i.e., gospel ministers, who are vainly puffed up in their mind, to usurp the headship and worship that belongs only to Christ. (Rev 3:11 KJV) “Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”

8. Explain the importance of holding Christ as head and the proper nourishment for the rest of the body. (2:19)

The full responsibility for man's salvation - which includes justification, sanctification, glorification, and exaltation - has been put upon the shoulders of Christ, the Head of the new creation. Each joint and band that is every part is nourished and strengthened by the Word of God, administered by the Spirit of God.

9. Why does Paul emphasize we are dead to this world with Christ and not under its requirements? (2:20- 22)

Our citizenship is in heaven, and we are under obligation to obey our Lord and Head. No earthly lord or authority has any power over the Church of God. These requirements, or practices of self-denial of things in this world, to become sanctified, or separated, from

the evil in the world are unnecessary. The believer is already separated from of this world through their identification with death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

10. Why will fleshly wisdom, worship, humility, and neglecting the body not have any honor within the new creation? (Further Insight 2:23).

The Apostle acknowledges that asceticism, or self-denial, practiced by unbelievers, or even believers who do a subtle effort to suppress evil desires of the fallen nature of man and basically defines all religion. Religion is predicated on self-effort in the rehabilitation of the fallen nature of man. While religion “indeed” has a show of wisdom, it is mere “will worship,” or self-effort using the will of man in a “forced” worship of God by adhering to certain standards of a religion. This only produces “a form of godliness” while denying the power of the Gospel as well as the necessity of a new birth. While religion often appears as humility even in neglecting the body it will only satisfy one’s flesh and has nothing to do with the “truth” of the Gospel and will never be accepted by God.

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Chapter Three

1. What does "seek those things which are above" truly mean? (3:1)

It means, "abide in these heavenly places, stay there where Christ is sitting." He is staying there, abiding in the place of power, at the right hand of God, and we are to do likewise.

2. How is a believer's life hidden twice with God? (3:3)

The believer's eternal life was first hidden in Christ and now Christ is hidden in God. Therefore, the eternal life of the believer is doubly secure and out of the reach of our adversary. God would never trust the keeping of eternal life of the believer in our frailty of human hands. (Mark 3:27 KJV) No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

3. What does it mean to mortify your members? (Further Insight 3:5)

The term "mortify" doctrinally means to give over to the death of Christ on the cross. Correct doctrine will omit any kind of works or sacrifice on the part of the believer, rather they are yielding to the power that is in the Gospel and not touching the glory that belongs to the Godhead.

4. Explain the difference between wrath of God and chastisement. (Further Insight 3:6)

The wrath of God fell on Christ when He took our place, and bore our sins, in His own body, on the tree. Therefore, the wrath of God will never fall upon a believer because they are counted as dead, buried, and risen with Christ, through operation of God and through the gospel. However, the believer is admonished to obey the Gospel by reckoning and yielding to God daily, according to Romans 6, otherwise, believers will receive the chastening of the Lord for their walk in the flesh.

5. How do we put off behaviors of the flesh? (Further Insight 3:8-9)

Paul calls believers to remember when we were dead in trespasses and sins and how God, in His great mercy and love, has quickened them through the Gospel of grace. This should provide the impetus for all believers to put off the former conversation or lifestyle through the formula provided in Romans 6. (Rom 6:11) "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

6. List and briefly describe the divine garments outlined by Paul only worn by the new man. (3:12-14)

"BOWELS OF MERCIES" is the first garment held up to view. Inward beauties and, graces that are wrought deep in the heart, begin to be manifested. As we yield to the Spirit, we are filled with mercy.

"KINDNESS" Being filled with mercy, there will surely be the evidence of kindness - kindness to others, not to ourselves.

“HUMBLENESS OF MIND” How beautiful is humility! It is never worn by the natural man. He cannot wear it, though he often has a counterfeit, which is easily detected.

“MEEKNESS” Can be an attitude toward men or, toward God, and both are of divine workmanship.

“LONGSUFFERING” It just suits the new man. It is a part of his very nature but, as the new life is hidden, the beauty of his raiment is sometimes obscured. However, if longsuffering is worn continuously for a while, then forbearance of the new man's attire will be in evidence.

“FORBEARING ONE ANOTHER” It is quite similar to longsuffering and truly gives the ability to forgive others.

“FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER” It is divine indeed. "Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." The natural man says he forgives, but he cannot forget. But divine forgiveness forgives even the one that has sought his downfall if he comes and asks his pardon.

"ABOVE ALL THESE THINGS PUT ON CHARITY" – or – "love" - is the outer garment, the overcoat that covers all the others and is constantly manifested if the others are beneath. He is born of God, and God is love. LOVE is the bond of perfection, or the binding power of the union of these garments and completes them all.

7. How is the Peace of God linked to thankfulness? (Further Insight 3:15)

The peace of God rules in our heart when we receive all our circumstances from the hand of God, believing that nothing can touch us without His divine permission. God is reigning on His throne in the third heavens. Christ is provisionally seated and reigning in heavenly places with all things under His feet. Therefore, the peace of God should rule in the throne room or heart of every believer. This peace is maintained as believers hold to the sevenfold unity of Christ according to (Ephesians 4:4-6). Therefore, the believer's peace and thankfulness must rest in the perfect finished work of Christ on their behalf.

8. Explain the meaning of “let” in the phrase “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all Wisdom.” (3:16)

The word **"Let"** is one of permission and expressive of believers yielding to becoming the workmanship of God in Christ Jesus. The fallen earth under the "six days" of divine reconstruction is an example of becoming God's workmanship.

9. What is the spiritual meaning behind Paul emphasizing the husband's command to love? (3:19)

The man is a type of Christ. To really represent Him, the husband must be more manifest in his love to the wife than she to him. The man is instructed to love his wife, because Christ loves His Wife deeply, tenderly, and continuously. It caused Him to stoop from ivory palaces above to depths of humiliation below; hence, it is vehement, eager, earnest, and divine. There is no love like the love of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Bride.

10. What is the spiritual type of the servant and master relationship mentioned in 3:22? (Further Insight 3:22)

Remember, the greater spiritual relationships are in view. Christ Himself willingly became the greatest servant rendering the greatest obedience to God as His master. Christ is now the Master of all believers and they have become His servants. As sinners, believers were redeemed with a great price, off from the slave-market, having been sold by Adam in captivity to the god of this World (Satan). As a result, believers owe a great debt of gratitude and obedience to Christ, as their Savior, and now their Master. Soon, these natural relationships will fade, but the spiritual lessons will endure forever and reap eternal rewards.

11. Describe the warning given to all in 3:25. (Further Insight 3:25)

The Apostle concludes his exhortation by a sobering warning that all wrongdoing, whether by believers (fallen asleep or alive at His coming) or unbelievers (as the dead or the living) will come into divine judgment.

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Chapter Four

1. Why does Paul admonish the believer to not only pray but also watch? (Further Insight 4:2)

Believers are urged to continue to watch and pray. Why? Because they are in hostile enemy territory along with a great “fight of faith” in an environment of unbelief that engulfs Satan’s kingdom made up of the flesh and the world. These evil foes tirelessly seek to undermine the gospel and the faith of believers through causing complacency and a lack of vigilance in prayer and the Word. This state leaves believers vulnerable in their walk to the “wiles of the Devil, especially when he deceives as an “Angel of light. Thanksgiving by a believer is an acknowledgement that only the Lord can keep them from falling.

2. Describe “a door of utterance.” (Further Insight 4:3)

The Apostle asks for believers to Pray! Pray! Pray! For a “door of utterance,” i.e., hearts opened by the Holy Spirit, among the ignoble, unlearned, Gentiles, enabling them to receive the light of revelation into the “Mystery of Christ.” Remember, the Apostle was in bonds for this utterance. Why? The Adversary constantly withstood the Apostle, knowing that such an “utterance” or the preaching of His Gospel would further “The Mystery of Christ,” by filling up the heavenly kingdom. The Church will consist of Christ’s Mystical Bride and Body. This is by far the greatest threat to Satan’s invisible kingdom of darkness. Very few believers discern the hostility of the adversary against the Pauline Gospel.

3. What does it mean to redeem your time? (Further Insight 4:5)

Redeeming the time is a shew of wisdom, not only to them within, but even those without observe how we use our time in the things of God. Believers communicate wisdom in sowing into the eternal Kingdom of God, even as it becomes a sign of the shortness of time before judgment.

4. Why should our speech have grace and be seasoned with salt? (Further Insight 4:6)

God was gracious to us; our words should also be full of grace. Yet words of grace must be seasoned with salt, if need be, by admonishing right and wrong in the believer’s conduct. While grace covers the believer’s eternal relationship, it does not condone sin and failure. Grace encourages them to confess sins and unrighteousness so that they might be cleansed and restored in their walk or fellowship.

5. Why should all ministers receive Paul’s warning to “take heed?” (4:17)

These words, “take heed,” are a wise caution for our day, as well as Paul’s. The keeper of the horses, or racers, needs to be running for the Prize. As the Apostle states in another epistle, lest, when he has preached to others, he may miss the goal.

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