



# COLOSSIANS

THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

Word of Faith International Christian Center – St. Thomas  
*Teaching the Word, Doing the Work, Touching the World*

## INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS

by Pastor Ronald D. Walker Jr. | ZOOM Bible Study Notes | Ministered Thursday, 5/20/2021

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### The Epistle of Paul to the Colossians

**Author:** The self-witness of the letter indicates that Paul the Apostle is the author (Colossians 1:1).

**Purpose:** Many at the church in Colossae had fallen prey to false teaching that incorporated aspects of both Judaism and Paganism. It's difficult to reconstruct this false teaching in its entirety, but we can identify aspects from Paul's response to it. These teachings were drawing people away from Jesus towards seeking wisdom outside of Christ and seeking spirituality in keeping man-made ordinances. Paul writes this letter to firmly establish the supremacy of Christ over all things as the Creator God and Head over the church (**1:15-20**), in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (**2:3**), and the sufficiency of the gospel to make us holy before God (**2:9-15**). But to prevent them from turning the grace of the gospel into an occasion for lawless living, Paul presents to them the righteousness that a life "risen with Christ" characterizes (**3:1-4:6**).

**Date:** In Colossians 4:18<sup>L</sup>, Paul tells the church "Remember my bonds." This indicates that he wrote the epistle from his captivity in Rome. It is one of Paul's Prison Epistles, written around the same time as Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon. There is a close relationship between this letter and Philemon, as Philemon was a prominent member of the church at Colossae. There is also similarities in the teaching and structure between Colossians and Ephesians, leading some to call them the "Twin Epistles." Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were very likely sent out at the same time around 60-61.



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## Background: The Epistle to the Colossians

Colossians and Ephesians are twin epistles. Paul has not visited Colosse or its neighboring cities, since he says that they had “not seen (his) face in the flesh” (**Col. 2:1**). It must have been evangelized during his stay in Asia, perhaps by Timothy and Epaphras (**1:7**) who went from place to place while Paul preached in Ephesus.

The heresy of Colosse that evoked this epistle was a local development that arose because of the peculiar situation of the city. Colosse was on the trade route from the East, along which oriental religions as well as oriental merchandise were transported to Rome. The Colossians were Phrygian Gentiles (**1:27**) whose religious antecedents were highly emotional and mystical. When they got saved they were seeking to attain the fullness of God and when teachers came among them with philosophy that promised a mystic knowledge of God, they were entranced by it. Among these beliefs they were spreading were voluntary humiliation, probably by ascetic practices (**2:18, 20, 21**), the worship of angels, who served as mediators between God and man (**2:18**), they believed in abstinence from certain foods and drinks and the observance of feasts and ceremonial days (**2:16**).

Content:

Redemption is prominent in the teaching of Colossians. Why? In Christ we have redemption. Through the blood of the cross we are reconciled to God (**1:20-22**). The subjective application of death and resurrection is also taught in Colossians:

*“Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?” (KJV)*

*For you were included in the death of Christ and have died with him to the religious system and powers of this world. Don't retreat back to being bullied by the standards and opinions of religion—for example, their strict requirements, “You can't associate with that person!” or, “Don't eat that!” or, “You can't touch that!” These are the doctrines of men and corrupt customs that are worthless to help you spiritually. For though they may appear to possess the promise of wisdom in their submission to God*



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*through the deprivation of their physical bodies, it is actually nothing more than empty rules rooted in religious rituals!*

## ***Colossians 3:1***

*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (KJV)*

*Christ's resurrection is your resurrection too. This is why we are to yearn for all that is above, for that's where Christ sits enthroned at the place of all power, honor, and authority! (TPT)*

The practical section of the book of Colossians is connected by “therefore” which establishes the relation of conscious effort between knowledge and behavior. Paul had nothing to do with idle theories. Or him the gospel had clear ethical consequences.

## **OUTLINE: THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS—CHRIST PREEMINENT**

<b>I.</b>	<b>Salutations</b>	<b>1:1-2</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Christ Preeminent in Personal Relationships</b>	<b>1:3-2:7</b>
	A. In Personal Contacts	1:3-8
	B. In Personal Presentation	1:9-23
	C. In Personal Purpose	1:24-2:7
<b>III.</b>	<b>Christ Preeminent in Doctrine</b>	<b>2:8-3:4</b>
	A. False Philosophy versus Christ	2:8-15
	B. False Worship Versus Christ	2:16-19
	C. False Asceticism versus Christ	2:20-3:4
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Christ Preeminent in Ethics</b>	<b>3:5-4:6</b>
	A. Negatively: “Put off...”	3:5-11
	B. Positively: “Put on...”	3:12-17
	C. In Family Relationships	3:18-4:1
	D. General	4:2-6
<b>V.</b>	<b>Concluding Personal Greetings</b>	<b>4:7-18</b>



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## OUR FAVORITE VERSES FROM COLOSSIANS

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**Colossians 1:3** *“We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you.”*

**Colossians 1:10** *“so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.”*

**Colossians 1:13-14** *“For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”*

**Colossians 1:15-16** *“The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.”*

**Colossians 1:21-22** *“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 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.”*

**Colossians 2:8** *“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.”*

**Colossians 2:12** *“having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.”*

**Colossians 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.”*

**Colossians 3:1** *“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.”*



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**Colossians 3:5-6** *“Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.”*

**Colossians 3:13-14** *“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”*

**Colossians 3:16** *“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.”*

**Colossians 3:18-21** *“Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.”*

**Colossians 4:2-4** *“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 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. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.”*

**Colossians 4:6** *“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”*