

# BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

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Paul wrote this epistle sometime around 64 A.D. Colossae was a city within the Roman empire. It was what is known today as Turkey. Paul never met the people he wrote this letter to, but he came to know them through a wonderful apostle named Epaphras, the one who may have actually founded this church that submitted to God's Word and to God's will.

The people in this church were a tremendous group of overcoming saints, and an outstanding group of Christians. They would be right there as far as being in the bridal company. This church followed Paul as he followed Christ.

The word Colossae has a twofold meaning:

1) Correction

The Word of God is full of correction in love. Everything God does to correct, edify, uplift, etc. is always done in His love. Without love anything done is profitless.

2) Monstrosity

Monstrosity means 'two headed; a house divided.' Many believers in Colossae were hearing Paul's bridal message but at the same time there was a large insurgence of many different beliefs, religions, and man's philosophy being taught at the same time in that city. Within 10 years of Paul writing this letter, Colossae was destroyed by an earthquake. This fits in with 'a house divided against itself cannot stand.' This is also true in families and in households.

Outline of Colossians:

Chapter 1: The high calling of God and His indwelling.

Chapter 2: The warning against error, false teaching, and man's philosophy.

Chapter 3: The believer's union with Christ.

Chapter 4: True Christian fellowship in brotherly love.

## CHAPTER 1

### VERSE 1

**Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother,**

#### Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ

Paul states his authority and notes that all he does is in Christ Jesus. Anything done can only be profitable if it is done by Christ. Everything is in its place and held together by Christ. We need to let Christ become our lifestyle every day, not just at certain times. Paul was called to be an apostle by the will of God, and Paul was the one that God sent forth. God puts up whom He wills, and He puts down whom He wills. We need to be in God's will and not our own.

#### Timothy

Timothy was associated with Paul in writing this letter, and Paul recognizes his brother and co-worker in the Lord in this verse. Paul always encouraged Timothy and never took any glory for himself. Instead he emitted love and edification everywhere he went. What a beautiful testimony for the life he lived.

### VERSE 2

**To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace be upon you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

#### Saints

Paul doesn't exclude anyone. Anyone who is born again is a saint. By virtue of the new birth we are made holy in Christ.

#### Faithful brethren

There are many saints, but they are not all faithful brethren. The faithful brethren are the ones who live faithful lives according to Christ's gospel, lives that are well pleasing to God. We should never be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and we should let our testimony be known unto men. We stand and withstand for the gospel of Christ.

This letter exhorts us to accept the chastening and grow up in Christ in all things. We will suffer with Christ if we expect to reign with Christ. Whom He loves, He chastens. He is readying us to meet Him in the air.

#### Hebrews 12:6

For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.

#### Colossae

Our word 'coliseum' comes from this word, and it is something monstrous. These Colossians had tremendous monstrosities they had to overcome, just as we do today. Most of Christendom today has become a monstrosity. We live in the midst of it and we can't say we

are not part of it. We do, however, have to learn to overcome it. Those faithful brothers in Colossae were overcoming their monstrosity, and through Christ, we can overcome ours as well.

### Grace and peace

This is the theme of Paul's message throughout his epistles. Peace is the result of grace. There is no peace of God unless we have the grace of God. We grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus to attain God's best. Without God's beautiful grace, that can never happen. We are saved by grace through faith, and this has nothing to do with anything we can do, because it is all in Christ Jesus.

People trying to live by the law will never attain God's best because they will always be in fear of losing their salvation. This will stunt their growth in Christ Jesus, and His best will never be theirs. They are counting on the law to make them worthy, but only belief in Christ can make them worthy to rule and reign with Him. Christ died on the cross to give us His grace, and when He was nailed to the cross, the entire law was nailed to it too. When He died, the law died for all those who would believe Him. He died to take the law out of the way, and He replaced it with His beautiful and wondrous grace. This grace is a free gift He gives to us. Grace is what brings peace to our lives.

### VERSE 3

**We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.**

Paul was a prayer warrior. The greatest and most powerful tool we have in the Word of God is prayer. Prayer changes things, and the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Prayer and love put us in the unity of the Spirit even when we are far apart. The Lord loves to hear our petitions to Him, and He wants us to come boldly to the throne of grace to attain that grace, because we are a needy people. We need more of the knowledge of Him, and more of His wondrous love in our lives.

In verses 4-8, Paul commends these saints for five great things, (faith, love, hope, fruit, and love in the Spirit). Five is the number of grace. All the things Paul commends them for are all by grace.

### VERSE 4

**Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,**

1) Your faith.

Faith pleases God, and it is impossible to please Him without it. The world preaches many things to us about having faith in our relationships, our jobs, money, and all manner of material things, but especially in ourselves. The Word of God tells us that there is but one faith, and that is faith in Christ Jesus. When we can get our hearts directed in that faith, the power of God will dwell in our lives. Christ Jesus is everything to us, and He is for us, and He is sitting at the right hand of God making intercession for us.

## 2) Your love.

These Colossians had a genuine love for all of God's people. Love is the manifestation of the Gospel; God's truth working in our lives. This is the love the Word of God encourages us to have, because faith without love is profitless. Faith begat in love is divine because it is the very love of God in His Son. Faith love – which is Christ's own love – always loves all the saints. Faith love is the truth in love, and it is everything to us. The Holy Spirit will shed Christ's love abroad in our hearts. He will take the things of Christ and make them ours. He will lead us into all the truth. Faith love can love the unlovely, and this is the love that will win the throne.

## **VERSE 5**

**For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the Word of the truth of the gospel:**

## 3) Hope.

This is an advanced hope, an all-inclusive hope. It is hope that we are not just going to go to heaven when we die, but it is the hope we find in the book of Philippians concerning winning Christ as bridegroom. This is the hope of the exceeding riches of Christ's grace in heaven, the hope of winning the crown to rule and reign with King Jesus forever. This should truly be our hope, and we should be looking and longing for His return to snatch us away. This hope doesn't come by works or deeds we do. It doesn't come by a "prosper and be in health" message. It is found in the Word of truth.

## Word of truth of the gospel

The word of truth of the gospel more specifically is in Paul's gospel given to him by Christ Jesus himself. The gospel was given to Paul to fulfill, or to complete, God's plan for us, Christ in you the hope of glory.

### Romans 2:16

In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

All things will be judged by the gospel that Christ Jesus gave to Paul. Paul was given the beautiful bridal message to give to the Gentiles, and to all who are called out to hear it, and want to know it. When we step out in faith and tell the Lord we are willing to run the race to win Him, He will work His perfect work in us and make us His masterpiece. We should live to please God in our lives, and thank Him over and over for what He has made possible for us.

## **VERSE 6**

**Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and brings forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:**

#### 4) Bring forth fruit.

The truth of Paul's gospel will bring forth fruit. If a person wants to be fruitful, it can only be done through Christ by grace. This grace brings forth fruit in our lives. If we will receive the outpouring of grace, we will grow and mature into that all-pleasing fruit to God.

#### Since the day ye heard it

The Colossians heard and embraced the gospel. Some people hear the gospel and don't produce fruit because they don't fully know and understand it. Hearing the gospel with our ears is one thing, but hearing it with our spiritual ears is another.

#### Grace of God in truth

Knowing the grace of God in truth is another experience beyond just hearing the gospel. The profits and the returns from grace are immediate. Truth is not works, truth is grace. Truth in grace is given as a gift, freely.

Even when we are not faithful God remains faithful. Nothing can separate us from His love, and that is the beauty of the security we have in Him forever. This is the grace of God in truth. Everything comes by trusting in His grace, and not in the law.

#### **VERSE 7**

**As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;**

#### Epaphras

Epaphras was their minister, and he had been with them. He was a dear fellow servant to Paul, and a faithful minister to Christ. He learned of the glorious gospel from Paul's preaching and he preached the same Word of grace Paul did. We need to be like-minded just as Paul was, and stand in the same precious truth. The greatest truth is to receive the reward of the high calling, Christ Jesus as Bridegroom.

#### A faithful minister

There was nothing of Epaphras in his teaching because he always preached the truth in love as he had learned it. This is what made him a faithful minister. If we step aside and let God take control, He will make us faithful. His grace is what will get us through, and it is still sufficient every time we need it. There is never a limit to God or to the faith He grants us. We need to step out more and more and learn to put our trust in Him.

#### **VERSE 8**

**Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.**

#### Declared unto us

As God puts love in our hearts may we then bestow words of love to each other. The world needs more of God's wonderful love. May we profess words of love God puts on our hearts in order to edify each other.

## 5) Love in the Spirit.

Their love in the spirit is another commendation for these saints at Colossae.

### Romans 5:5

And hope makes not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

The love of God can truly be shed abroad in our hearts, and it will make us love things we never thought we could love. With this love in our hearts we can love stronger, longer, and higher than we ever imagined. This love gives us compassion.

The highest and greatest love is the love in the Spirit. This is the love that takes the things of Christ and makes them ours. This love makes us more grateful, and more aware of all the things Christ did for us, and all that He gave to us through His death on the cross. We can even grow up in Him in all things and be able to share in all His glory if we are willing to suffer with Him.

### **VERSE 9**

**For 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;**

### For this cause

This cause is seen in verses 4 through 8. This is the testimony these people already had. Paul's prayer for them was for their perfecting. We have all been made worthy and perfect in Christ if we believe Him, but this 'cause' is about mature perfection in God's full counsel, and Christ wants it for all His children.

### Colossians 4:12

Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, salutes you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

This is about the complete will of God that all men will be saved and come to a full knowledge of Jesus Christ. We are in the church age, the age where we have the opportunity to run the race to become part of the bride of Christ.

### Since the day we heard it

He commended them highly for this love they had in the spirit. This is a testimony of what they already had, and of the wonderful things they had already experienced.

### Do not cease to pray

There is nothing more powerful in our lives than prayer. In any situation in life we can pray because prayer is what will get things done. Paul's prayer for them was that they be filled with the knowledge of God's will for their lives, because he desired a more spiritual development for

them in the Lord. He desired for them not only to be children of God, but to actually walk in the spirit.

### That ye might be filled

Paul wanted them to not just be filled with the knowledge of God's will, but he wanted them to have an exact knowledge of His will. God's will for our lives will always align with scripture. Everything we try to do that is not based on the will of God defies scriptural principles. When we rest in the Lord and allow Him to have His way in our lives, it will give us joy, freedom, and boldness like we have never had. We need to be the children that God wants us to be, and trust Him to bring to our lives everything we need to become those children. He will accomplish it all if we allow Him to do it. God is always faithful in all things concerning His children.

### Wisdom and spiritual understanding

This wisdom is all around us, but is it dwelling richly in us? We need to have not only the good and the acceptable, but also the perfect will of God for our lives. The will of God is in His Word, and in the knowledge of it. This is to know Jesus Christ, and God specifically set everything up in His Son, and we please God when we want to know more and more about His precious Son. To truly know Christ is to love Him. If we will submit and yield our lives to Him, He'll bring us into everything He has for us.

In verses 10 through 12, Paul is speaking to full overcoming saints, the high calling of God saints, the faithful brethren. The things seen in these two verses are a result of being filled with the exact knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding of the scripture.

### VERSE 10

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

1) That ye might walk worthy.

Once we are filled with the exact knowledge of His will, we can walk worthy of the Lord. Every provision has been made for our walk. All we have to do is believe.

2) Unto all pleasing.

God wants complete, mature, perfect sons. He wants everything for us. This is our calling all throughout the scriptures. It so pleases our Lord when we want His best.

3) Being fruitful in every good work.

4) Increasing in the knowledge of God.

This means knowing God personally. How can anyone know God this way when He is so magnificent, bigger than the universe, and all powerful? As we walk with Him, and are filled with the scriptures, we are able to increase in the knowledge of Him. Then we are able to know Him more and more, and then step out in faith to walk worthy and all pleasing to Christ. This is serving God acceptably.

### **VERSE 11**

**Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;**

5) Strengthened with all might.

The word might is where we get our word for dynamite, and this indicates a tremendous power. God's power is in His Son. If we are saved, that power is in us and in our lives.

#### Ephesians 6:10

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.

The power of His might is the Holy Spirit, and this is the power that came on the disciples at Pentecost. This gave them power for everything they would need. Overcoming saints know that the joy of the Lord is their strength.

6) Unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.

Patience and longsuffering come through trials and adversities. Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. (James 1:4)

### **VERSE 12**

**Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;**

7) Giving thanks unto the Father.

All 7 things in verses 10 through 12 are a result of the exact knowledge of God's will found in verse 9. The little word 'that', found in verse 10, connects this whole string of things to the last one of giving thanks unto the Father. We learn to give thanks to the Father for all the things He has given us according to His will.

#### Which has made us meet

This could also be read 'which has made us fit.' In the flesh we are not worthy of God's blessings, but in the spirit we are made worthy in Christ. Only unbelief makes us draw back from God's wonderful blessings. We are made fit to partake of God's blessings because of Christ.

#### Partakers of the inheritance

God doesn't want second best for us, and Paul's gospel is all about making us share in God's glory. We have the hope of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We can be thankful for His high calling. Thankfulness will rid a life of bitterness, judgment, and jealousy, and it will make our lives content in whatever place God chooses to put us in. He wants us to be fit and worthy to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; to be joint heirs with Christ Jesus.

#### Philippians 3:14

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.



We worship the Father in spirit and in truth when we worship Christ Jesus, His Son. We can't go to the Father except through Christ Jesus.

### **VERSE 13**

**Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son;**

#### Delivered us from the power of darkness

Christ has made us the inheritance of the saints in light, thereby delivering us from the power of darkness. Darkness certainly has a power, but it is a power given to it by God. God allows this power, but He has the devil and darkness on a chain. God is always in control of every situation. When we were born we were dead in trespasses and sins, born into that dark iniquity. But if we believe on Christ, we are delivered from that darkness and we became the children of light.

#### Translated us

Salvation is always two-fold:

- 1) God brought us out of darkness.
- 2) God translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.

This means we were translated into the realm of divine love. Who could ever measure the depths of God's love for His Son? Being in the realm of divine love we can experience the same degree of that divine love that Christ enjoys. Christ prayed for this for us in John 17.

We are new creations in Christ! We stand perfectly worthy by the grace of God. We need to let our new creations grow up in us so that we walk worthy of the vocation to which we have been called.

### **VERSE 14**

**In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins;**

There are 8 points of identification of the Son of God in verses 14 and 15:

- 1) In whom we have redemption through His blood.

Our redemption came through the shed blood of Jesus at Calvary.

#### Hebrews 9:22

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

Christ shed His precious blood to save us and we are never too wicked that Christ can't save us. He died for all men, but not all men will believe Him.

#### Forgiveness of sins

When we are justified by His precious blood our sins are gone. He puts them in a sea of forgetfulness never to be remembered again. This is what happens for us when we believe Him and are cleansed by His blood. All is freely given. Forgiveness of sins is not the only benefit of

redemption, but we have to experience redemption before we can partake of all the benefits connected to the forgiveness of sins.

### **VERSE 15**

**Who in the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:**

2) He is the image of the invisible God.

Jesus said, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." Christ is the image of God.

#### Hebrews 1:3

Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, when He had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High.

Jesus is our personal and wonderful Savior. He is the image of God, and He is the only way to the God our Father. No man can know the Father except in Jesus.

3) The firstborn of every creature.

This means that all creation was dependent on Christ in view of redemption. It was God's purpose for Christ, who couldn't die as God, to become a man in order to die for mankind and then to be raised in newness of life. He was the first to be raised up, and that made it possible for all believers to be raised up in that same newness of life.

### **VERSE 16**

**For 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 create by Him, and for Him.**

4) For by Him were all things created.

This should read 'in Him' all things were created by Him and for Him, and without Him nothing was made. He not only created all things, He controls all things and He is the head of all things. All of God's purposes are centered in Christ and all of God's plans were fulfilled in Him.

### **VERSE 17**

**And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.**

5) He is before all things.

He is the Creator of all things, He is eternal, and all things consist by Him. He knows all about us - whether good or bad. We have the choice to be in the will of God or not to be. This choice is available for all. Being in the will of God becomes a reality for those who believe Him. We need to rest in His authority and His headship.

### **VERSE 18**

**And 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.**

6) He is the head of the body.

Christ is the only true Head of the church. All who take a headship over the church are usurpers of the headship that belongs to Christ alone. God wants Christ to have preeminence in not only the church, but in everything - and that includes in our homes. Christ wants to be our first love, not our second love.

### **VERSE 19**

**For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell:**

It pleased God to make Christ the fulfillment of everything and the head of everything. Paul is telling us of Christ's humanity. Christ became a man, and He is every believer's Head. We are part of His church which is His body. Jesus will be preeminent everywhere and for all time. Whether we live it or not, He is still our Head. His body is the fullness of Him. This means we complete Him. The Head needs a body, and that is us. Everything the body needs comes from the Head. God is for us and He won't withhold anything good from us.

### **VERSE 20**

**And, 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.**

7) Having made peace through the blood of His cross.

If we believe Christ, we have been reconciled to God the Father, and changed thoroughly. Atonement has been made, and we are accepted in the beloved.

#### Ephesians 1:6

To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted in the beloved.

We become heirs of God when we believe His Son is our Savior. Because of this we have the right to go boldly before the throne of grace in His name. We please Him when we drink deeper and deeper from the cup of salvation and believe His promises. When we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us. He will draw as near as we want Him to.

#### Hebrews 10:22

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water:

#### Reconciled all things to Himself

This is referring to all things on earth and in heaven. Christ made peace between God and man. Satan's defilement of man had gone even to heaven. Christ's blood cleansed it all, and brought everything to a right stature.

## **VERSE 21**

**And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled.**

### Sometimes alienated and enemies

There was none righteous, no not one. No man seeks after God, because God has to draw us to Him. We are at enmity with God in our natural bodies, but when we are saved we are changed.

### Hath He reconciled

Where there was law and judgment, Christ brought grace and mercy. His blood reconciled it all, and He did this out of His deep, true love for mankind. He justified those of us who believe, and He has forgotten all things we did wrong. We stand complete and whole before God because of the shedding of Christ's precious blood.

### Romans 5:10-11

- 10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.
- 11) Not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

## **VERSE 22**

**In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight:**

- 8) In the body of His flesh through death.  
Through Christ's death He reconciled us and forgave us all our sins. He made us holy and blameless before Him. We can only become holy by the new birth in Christ.

Through His death we are made:

- 1) Holy as God purposed.
- 2) Unblameable as His Son provided.
- 3) Unproveable by the Holy Spirit working for the purpose of our deity with Him.

The entire Trinity is working for our growth and development in all things concerning Christ, and we need to surrender completely to His will. We are justified and worthy. Nothing will ever be levied against us again.

### Romans 8:33

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies.

Because we have been made worthy we need to walk worthy in the vocation for which we were called. (Ephesians 4:1)

### **VERSE 23**

**If 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;**

#### If you continue in the faith

Paul is referring to our state here, and not to our standing. Our standing in the Lord is totally secure, but our state is conditional on a few things:

##### 1) Continue in the faith.

This means in the way of the gospel. If we continue believing what is said in God's Word about us and believe all His wonderful promises, our state will be in good standing as well. His promises are yea and amen. When we have faith to really believe the Word of God, and to know how powerful it is to our lives is when we become more than conquerors. We are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

##### 2) Grounded.

The word grounded means 'to lay a basis; a foundation.' We must have this. Those saints who are not grounded waver in their faith, and their vision may fade if they are no longer looking and longing for Christ's appearing.

##### 3) Settled.

The word settled means 'immovable; to stay in a given place; remain.'

##### 4) Be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.

The hope of the gospel is not just our hope of getting into heaven, because all believers will get into heaven. But Paul is speaking of the ultimate hope of winning Christ as Bridegroom, which is God's high calling.

#### Hebrews 6:11

And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

This is the hope given to us by virtue of the scripture. The Word that God has given to us is filled with hope. Paul was made a minister to deliver us this blessed hope of the gospel, the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Most people today have moved away from the hope of the gospel, and they no longer want to hear the doctrine.

Verses 24 through 29 speak of the mysteries in Christ for those who are grounded and settled.

### **VERSE 24**

**Who 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:**

#### Rejoice in my suffering for you

Paul's sufferings were for the saints. He didn't suffer for punishment, or for getting out of the will of God. He suffered for our benefit.

### Fill up that which is behind

Paul is saying that some of the afflictions of Christ were actually left behind for us to endure. This in no way means we have to suffer for redemption or that in any way we could make atonement like Christ did.

### For His body's sake

Paul suffered for the sake of the church, Christ's body. Paul suffered, and we of Christ's body will also suffer. Paul rejoiced in his sufferings. Can we?

### John 15:20

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My sayings, they will keep yours also.

### **VERSE 25**

**Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God;**

### Dispensation of God

Paul was made a minister by the dispensation of God. The word dispensation means 'divine arrangement of the ages.' God had a plan and a purpose for the Gentiles, and also for those Jews who believe that Christ is their Messiah.

### To fulfill the Word of God

Fulfill means 'to complete.' The gospel given to Paul for the church age completes God's Word. Paul's gospel for the age we live in now was hidden until the death of Stephen.

### **VERSE 26**

**Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints:**

God revealed this hidden mystery – this glorious full counsel, the bridal message – to the apostle Paul, the one who was once responsible for the murder of Christians. Only God could take someone who was so against Christianity as Paul (Saul) was, and not only save him and make him a Christian, but fill him with the Holy Spirit, and then entrust him with the key to open the hidden mystery of Christ and the church, or more specifically, Christ and His bride. God gave to Paul the doctrine that prophets of old longed to know about, but God didn't allow it to be seen until He was ready to reveal it to us in this Church age. This mystery was in the Old Testament all along, but no one understood it. How privileged we are to be able to partake of something this beautiful and holy. Christ in us is the hope of glory.

### Romans 11:33

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out.

Paul was manifesting something to people who were already saved. The mystery is intended for faithful saints that are rooted and grounded and want to win Christ as Bridegroom. This gospel is intended for the true worshippers who worship Him in spirit and in truth, the ones God is seeking as a bride for His Son. This is the will of almighty God.

### **VERSE 27**

**To 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:**

#### To whom God would make known

What God made known was the riches of glory contained in the mystery. This was all revealed to the Gentiles, and the mystery is Christ in us the hope of glory. The Gentiles were going to receive the new birth in Christ, and be made aware of the glorious mystery that came from the very mind of God. This is not for the benefit of the Gentiles only, but also for those Jews who believe Christ for salvation and are willing to suffer together with Him.

#### Christ in you

The more Christ we have in us the more hope of glory we will have. Those who run the race and are blessed to win Him will share in all of His glory. Only Christ can make us that yielded vessel willing to endure testing, and let it bring us to the place to win the crown. We need to set our affections on the things above, and let the things of earth grow dimmer and dimmer to our spiritual sight. God is no respecter of persons and He wills this for all men.

### **VERSE 28**

**Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.**

#### Warning and teaching every man in all wisdom

God is not excluding anyone. This is what He wants for all men, and He invites every man into this. Unfortunately few men will heed His call. This is warning us of the loss of this unspeakable opportunity that God wants us to have. We will miss this if we don't yield to so great a calling. He is pleading for us to run the race to attain the prize of His high calling in Christ Jesus.

#### Present every man perfect

Presenting every man perfect in Christ is what Paul wanted to accomplish in His ministry. The word perfect means 'full grown; mature.' God wants all men to grow up in all things in Christ. Paul wanted the same thing. Paul is once again pointing to Christ Jesus. Christ is the embodiment of truth and grace. The Holy Spirit will take the things of Christ and make them ours. He will shed the love of God abroad in our hearts, because we need to love one another as Christ loves us. This is necessary if we are to win Christ as Bridegroom. Christ has made every provision for us to run, so we are without excuse to not run to attain.

## **VERSE 29**

**Whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which works in me mightily.**

### Striving according to His workings

Paul is saying he worked to the end so that we should grow up in Christ in all things. Paul was also running the race to the very end, and a crown was laid up for him, but not to him only, because we can also win a crown if we love Christ's appearing.

### Works in me mightily

God's workings did emphatically work mightily in Paul, and God wants them to work mightily in us. He wants to perfect Christ in us. All this is possible for us if we allow Him to work mightily in us to break up the fallow ground in our spiritual garden, which is to say our hearts. We need to be pliable for Him to mold us and make us after His will. We need the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ working mightily in us.



## CHAPTER 2

There are four emphatic and pointed warnings Paul gives in this chapter that the people not be taken or misled in any way:

- 1) verse 4: Lest you be beguiled with enticing words.
- 2) verse 8: Beware that any man spoil you.
- 3) verse 16: Let no man judge you in meat or drink.
- 4) verse 18: Let no man beguile you of your reward.

### VERSE 1

**For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;**

Here we find the way of the apostle Paul. In chapter 1 verse 24 he rejoiced in his suffering for them. He suffered much conflict for the Colossians and the Laodiceans. His life was poured out for these saints. When we see Laodicea in scripture in a dispensational way, it reaches right down to our day. This was the lukewarm condition, which means they were neither hot nor cold. This is a very dangerous condition only God can deliver us from, and He will do that.

We follow Paul as he followed Christ and that also means following his lifestyle and his faithful walk. His lifestyle and faithful walk are characteristic of the brotherly love of Christ that the Holy Spirit instilled in him. The welfare of the saints was his desire, and his love for the saints cost him everything. In spite of all that, he was Christ-like when suffering the loss of all things. He knew the weaker he was, the more strength he got from the Lord. He also knew the more tried he was, the greater the reward.

### VERSE 2

**That 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;**

#### That

This means there is a purpose for the sufferings mentioned in verse 1. Paul's sufferings were always for a purpose: to bring the gospel to people. The direct result is that they would be comforted and encouraged to be knit together in love. This was in a day of division and there was no commitment on the part of the people.

#### Riches of assurance and understanding

In our day of such tremendous knowledge there is a gross ignorance of God's Word. Many today are filled with the Holy Spirit, yet they don't yield to the Spirit so that He can lead them into the depths of God's full counsel. Some are more caught up with the gifts of God. Paul

suffered so that men could have the riches of full assurance of understanding. This is the provision that God made through Paul. There are three results of Paul's suffering:

- 1) That they be comforted.
- 2) That they be knit together in love.
- 3) That they would come into the riches of full assurance and understanding.

The full assurance of understanding is the full expression of God's Word. Paul didn't stop at salvation. He didn't stop at being filled with the Holy Spirit. He didn't stop with growing in grace. He preached a well-rounded gospel, a full banquet table.

#### Acknowledgement of the mystery

The mysteries of God are the secret things of God. These things are not on the surface of His Word, they are things we have to dig for. God made every provision that we should have them. He who wills to know will know all the mysteries as well as the love of Christ and the bridal message that is in Him, which is Christ in us the hope of glory.

#### **VERSE 3**

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

In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This goes back to what Paul said about wanting to know Him. The wisdom, the knowledge, and the understanding of the riches of His glory and the exceeding power of grace is what he wants us to know. To marry Christ we have to become one with Him.

#### **VERSE 4**

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

#### This I say

'This' refers back to verses 2 and 3, and the provision Paul noted there. Verses 2 and 3 will counteract man's enticing words.

#### Lest any man beguile you

This is Paul's first warning to them. Men can beguile people with enticing words. Paul's gospel is the only thing that can keep us from these enticing words, and from being beguiled. We are in an age of deceiving and being deceived, and only by a thorough revelation and knowledge of Paul's gospel can we be kept from being deceived or beguiled.

Paul is throwing out a red flag. This letter to the Colossian saints is a love letter of correction and encouragement to continue on in the race to win God's best. There is a perfection that Christ is after in a group of people - the company of believers who will make up His bride. These are the ones who will rule and reign with Him in the midst of the throne. They are the ones who worship God in spirit and in truth.

### Enticing words

There was a warning about missing God's best, and now there is a warning about one of the greatest powers that can defeat us: enticing words. A case in point is when the serpent beguiled Eve to eat from the tree of knowledge. God is all wisdom to us. All we have to do is ask. He will give it to us freely.

### Acts 20:30

Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

### **VERSE 5**

**For 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.**

### Though I be absent

Paul was in prison and couldn't go to them physically, but he was with them in spirit. He wasn't concerned with his circumstances, but instead was concerned about the spiritual welfare of these Colossians. Paul being concerned about others, despite his own adverse circumstances, shows that he had the love of God in his heart.

### Joying and beholding your order

Joying means 'the very nature of Christ; in His image.' Order means 'steadiness; discipline.' This shows that their lives were not haphazard.

### Steadfastness of your faith

If ever there was a time to have steadfastness of the faith in Christ, it is now. If we don't stand for Christ, we'll fall for anything.

### 1 Peter 5: 8-9

8) Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour:

9) Whom resist steadfast in faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

It is so important to stand in faith because we can only defeat the devil and his work in faith. He is on a mission to steal, kill, and destroy. Without faith it is impossible to defeat him, and without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

### **VERSE 6**

**As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him:**

### As ye have received Christ

We receive Christ when we are born again, but Paul is speaking of more than that. We receive more and more of Christ as we yield to Him.

### Walk ye in Him

We walk by faith in God's Word. This is the only way to walk, and Paul mentioned several walks in the book of Ephesians. The more we take in of the wisdom of Paul's message, the more we are able to walk in the Lord. God has everything handled for us, and we can rest in Him knowing He will perform that good work in us. He is more than able for everything in our lives.

### **VERSE 7**

**Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.**

This verse is the tree planted by the water; the house that is built upon the rock that is grounded and established never to be moved. It is not tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, but kept from falling. These are the things Jesus does for us. This verse is also a description of our walk in Christ:

1) Rooted.

This means that it goes down to a good foundation. We have to dip down in the Word to lay a good foundation.

2) Built up.

To be built up requires a good rooting.

3) Established in the faith.

This means established in God's word. To be established in faith is to be established in all the scripture.

4) The gospel.

This means abounding in the whole gospel, to take it all in.

5) With thanksgiving.

Mankind should be thankful for what God has done for them, and in them. It is absolutely important that we learn to praise God, and thank Him for what He has done, and what he has made possible for our lives.

True rest, peace, and fulfillment come as we learn more and more to walk with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. No other way is capable of really satisfying a soul but Christ. God made a void in the souls of men that only He can fill, and He is the only one who can make our lives complete. We need to learn to rest in Him.

### Acts 20:30

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

## **VERSE 8**

**Beware 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.**

### Lest any man spoil you

This is Paul's second warning to them, and he is telling them they can be spoiled. Paul is writing to Christians, and he doesn't want them to embrace the philosophies of men. The remedy for staying away from these is given in the first 7 verses of this chapter.

### Philosophy

This means sophistry which means 'subtle deceptive reasoning; fond of wisdom.' This wisdom is against God because it is man's reasoning, and anytime we see man's reasoning in scripture it spells trouble. This is why we need to bring every thought into the obedience of Christ. Satan always works through that reasoning mind. He even tried to get Christ to reason.

We are to flee the enemy, especially our self-righteousness which is vain deceit. People can be drawn in so quickly by enticing words, but man's philosophy is poison and death. We have to believe Jesus and not pay attention to the world. God always goes for the heart, and this is where He reveals His truth.

### Vain deceit

Vain deceit means 'make believe; a fable.' Many people quote things they say are in the Bible, but they are not.

### After the tradition of men

This means 'after the thoughts of men.' Men go by what seems logical to them, but logic is not of God. There were Pharisees in that day and there are Pharisees in our day. Many times these Pharisees are Christians. These are the ones who point out the sins of other even though they themselves are just as guilty of sin. These are the religious ones keeping days, abstaining from meat, forbidding to marry, and having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

### After the rudiments of the world

'The rudiments of the world' means 'the elements of the world, or orderly arrangement.' Orderly arrangement is referring to all the deceptive religions of the world. Religious deceptions are not after Christ. Paul had told these saints what they have in Christ in verses 2 through 7, and what God has provided. He is telling them not to go after the world, but go after Christ.

## **VERSE 9**

**For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.**

This doesn't mean that there is one person in the Godhead. Jesus was – and most assuredly is – God. When He came into the world He was a holy seed born to the virgin Mary. It is still true today that in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Everything we can receive is all in

Christ, and not in the elements of the world. All power was given to Christ, and if He be for us, who can be against us? We can completely rest in Him and cease from our own works.

### **VERSE 10**

**And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power:**

#### Complete in Him

We don't need anything or anyone else but Christ because He has all we need or want that is necessary for our growth and development. We need to get the truth from Him, and we are made complete in Him. He is the fullness of God, and He fills us. We never lack in Him, we are always full. We are clothed in love, and we have peace beyond all understanding. When we realize we are complete in Him, and that He is everything, there will be a sweet rest and peace for the people of God, as we learn to turn everything concerning our lives over to Him. We need to submit, and completely surrender to Him and live for Him, because Christ in us is the hope of glory.

#### Head of all principality and power

This tells us who Christ is and that He has overcome all those things against us.

### **VERSE 11**

**In 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:**

#### In whom

Everything always comes back to Christ; it's for Him and it's with Him. Everything is in Him.

#### Galatians 2:20

I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

We still live on earth and are being judged by Jesus unto reward. The size of the reward will depend on how much we allowed Him to complete our lives, and how much we trusted Him, and how much of the love of God we let Him put into our lives. Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, so how much faith do we want? He will finish all Christians to some degree, but we should want Him to completely finish our lives, and thereby win the crown.

#### Circumcision

Paul gets into the true circumcision here. This is a direct blow to orthodox Jews, and also to many who don't know or realize what Paul is talking about. There are still people trying to cut off their own flesh. This comes with trying to keep the law.

### Made without hands

We are circumcised in Christ. It isn't about doing or not doing or what we can or cannot touch. Paul is talking about something much deeper than physical circumcision. This is the putting off the body of sins of the flesh. Christ already put off the body of the sins of the flesh on Calvary for all time, and for all mankind. Christ was cut off for the removal of sin for all who would believe Him. Many people can't grasp this concept, but blessed are the ones who do comprehend it. Men have to cry out and ask for this forgiveness. When they do, their sins are forever gone. The only sin God will never forgive is the rejection of His Son. Without hands also shows that God did it himself by cutting off His Son.

### Isaiah 53:8

He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation?  
for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was  
He stricken.

### **VERSE 12**

**Buried 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.**

We are buried with Him in baptism, and we are then risen with Him into newness of life. At the exact moment we accepted Christ and became Christians, we died with Christ on the cross where He took our sins away, and we were raised with Him into that newness of life. We become a new creation in Him. His holy and incorruptible seed was planted in us and it will remain in us forever. This happens through the faith of the operation of God. We don't get the victory over flesh by acting holy. It comes by believing God for it. The only way we can experience this new life is by Jesus in faith. The moment our lives don't exist in faith they become spiritually dead. When this happens we are subject to our old creation coming in and causing fear in our lives.

We are in the world, but we don't have to live according to the world. We have the very righteousness of God. This doesn't mean we have license to do what we want, it means we have the license to freely love Him and to want to please Him. The more we learn of Him, the more the things of earth grow dimmer and dimmer.

### **VERSE 13**

**And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses;**

### Deuteronomy 10:16

Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff necked.

#### Jeremiah 4:4

Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doing,

Being stiff-necked is when we live in our own self-righteousness and selfishness. We need to align our lives with the Word of God if we are going to live the true power of Christ. We have to be yielded vessels to know that beautiful walk we can have with Him. If we drag around our stinky old creation we'll miss that beautiful walk with our precious Lord Jesus.

#### Hath He quickened

The word quickened means 'an accelerated life.' This is the life of Christ in us. That He has quickened us means that He has made us alive in Him and has forgiven all our trespasses. Christ wiped out all sin on the cross for those who believe Him. When we fail (and we will), He keeps us from falling by His outstretched, everlasting arms (Psalms 37:24). He not only forgave our sins, He also forgot them. We should follow Christ's beautiful example and forgive and forget the wrongs done to us by our brothers and sisters. We have no right to judge others in what they do. We need to be thankful God forgot all our sins and continue to love our brother.

#### **VERSE 14**

**Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross;**

#### Blotted out the ordinances

The handwriting of the ordinances against us was the law, the ten commandments. God forgave all believers of sin the moment we accepted Jesus as Savior. Then He blotted our sins out never to be charged to us again.

#### Contrary to us

Contrary means 'an opponent; an adversary.' The law against us was definitely an adversary. Some people look on the law as the greatest thing in the world, but the law was never a friend to man. How sad it is that many Christians are still trying to please God by keeping the law. No man could ever keep the law to the letter, so God sent Jesus to save us from it. Jesus met every requirement of the law that demanded payment for sin.

#### Took the law out of the way

Christ took the law out of the way by nailing it to His cross. To all who believe Christ, the law is dead, but those who don't know Christ as savior will still be judged by that unforgiving law. When Christ took the law out of the way on the cross He replaced it with His wonderful grace. The life we believers now live we live in Christ by faith, not the deeds of the law. The Mosaic law had to go because it only served to convict us of our guilt. But since we are now under grace, all that guilt is gone. We are delivered and we should serve in newness of spirit which only happens in the Holy Spirit. He is a gift to us. God help us to see that it is Christ and by His grace that we are free indeed. We should desire to serve Him because of His great love for us.



### **VERSE 15**

**And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.**

#### Spoiled principalities and powers

By Christ's resurrection He spoiled principalities and powers, because God raised Him up above all of them. Christ spoiled them by making a show of the openly. He did nothing in secret. The devil knows he has been defeated, and that all his plans were spoiled when Jesus arose from the grave.

#### Triumphing over them

The devil did everything he could to defeat Christ on the cross, but when that failed he tried to keep Jesus in the grave. Jesus overcame every obstacle thrown at Him by the devil but the devil was no match for the power of God. Jesus triumphed in dying for our sins. He was responsible for reconciling us to the Father. Because of Jesus we are accepted in the beloved. We can go boldly to the throne of grace, and we are seated with Him in the heavens. We need to let this become a reality in our lives.

### **VERSE 16**

**Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days:**

#### Therefore

Therefore points back to all the things Paul has told us are true of us in Christ. We have been cut off in Him, and raised up together with Him.

#### Let no man judge you

This is the third warning Paul gives to this Colossian church. We as Christians are not of this world. Our citizenship is in heaven and we are not under any of the world's fleshly restrictions. Nothing in meat or drink, or fleshly attitudes will ever attain perfection. Only by growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ Jesus can we ever hope to become like Him. In Him we can grow up to be mature, full-overcoming saints to become partakers of God's best.

#### In meat or drink

This is telling us not to become involved in all the show before men. Don't become involved with all that was demanded of the law, like cutting off flesh and becoming holier than thou people, so to speak. They keep the law, or holy days, they observe new moons, and etc. These things will not make us spiritual. The only way to become spiritual is to believe we went down in death in Christ, and that we have come up in newness of life with Him, and that now He is controlling our lives.

### **VERSE 17**

**Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.**

The law with all its ceremonies and rituals and washings was just a shadow of Christ's coming. After Christ came these were no longer needed because in Christ we have the real thing, and when He came all things were made new. These rituals can be wonderful when they are spiritually orchestrated, but they only represent something greater: the spiritual blessings in Christ. The body – the reality – is in Christ. We find everything in Him, not in ceremonies and rituals.

### **VERSE 18**

**Let no man beguile you of your reward in voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.**

#### Let no man beguile you

This is the fourth warning Paul had for the Colossian church. Beguile means 'to rob; to steal.' There are those men who would spread vain deceits and man's knowledge. Paul was warning the Colossians about gnostics who embraced redemption through Christ, but did not embrace all the Christian doctrine Paul preached. Many of their beliefs were based on philosophy. Sadly this is also true of many pulpits today, because many people don't want to hear sound doctrine.

#### Voluntary humility

This simply means 'the religiousness of this age.' People deem themselves pious by declaring their humility.

#### Worshipping of angels

Worshipping of angels appears to be a religion similar to praying to Mary as a co-redeemer. These things hurt a person's walk, and even more so, it is an abomination to God. God put everything in Jesus, and in Jesus alone. Bowing down to angels speaks of voluntary humility, and Paul warns them not to bow to angels, because this is bowing down to headships other than Christ. Doing this can rob people of their crown. We bow down only to Christ who is our head. We don't bow down to angels for they are just messengers. We are to respect and support them, but we are never to worship them.

#### Intruding in those things

This phrase means 'taking a stand upon.' We are to take a stand on those things not seen. This will reveal those who are only going on speculation of their mind. People such as this are not rooted in the Word, and this leaves their minds open to speculation and not God's truth. People who go by speculation are puffed up in their own minds.

### **VERSE 19**

**And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with the increase of God.**

### Not holding the head

Christ is the head, and when men bow to any other than Christ they are going against His exclusive headship. Jesus is the head of His body, the church. Paul is telling us that some were rejecting Christ's headship. Today is no different as people are not only abandoning Christ's headship, they are abandoning the true gospel as well. Today people want a "feel-good" gospel, a "prosper and be in health" gospel, a "trying to be better by my own efforts" gospel. The true gospel tells us to surrender to Jesus, not only to be better people, but to let Him mold us and make us after His will which will make us like Him. None of this could ever be accomplished by the efforts of men. Man's efforts only add up to wood, hay, and stubble.

### John 15:5

I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.

### By joints and bands

We are the branches and we receive nourishment from Jesus the Vine. Christ is the head of His body, His church, and we are to receive our sustenance, our nourishment, and everything else we need from Him. It is only as we have that personal relationship with Christ that we receive these things from Him.

### Knit together

If people hold Christ as the head, they will be nourished, increased, and knit together. To achieve the oneness of the body is a wonderful thing. This is never achieved by man's organizations, because the only way to achieve spiritual and scriptural unity that Christ provides for us is by everyone taking the same head. The church shouldn't be split up into organizations made by man, but rather we need to rely completely on Christ, and gather everything from Him. This will cause being knit together and increased by the increase of God. If we don't love one another and have our hearts knit together in the love of God with people of like precious faith, we are not entering in to the mystery of Christ and His bride. We are to love the body as Christ does if we are to have His best.

### VERSE 20

**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,**

If you be dead with Christ from the rudiments and all the orderly arrangements of the world, why, as though living in the world, are we subject to ordinances? Ordinances simply means 'law keeping.' If we are dead with Christ, we do not need to be cutting ourselves off with all these law keeping measures.

### **VERSES 21-22**

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

Those ordinances put the emphasis on man, and him being responsible instead of Christ. They are the doctrines of the commandments of men who have taken the law and made their own commandments and doctrine. They fashioned them after their own thinking, and they want people to measure up to them. Everything is in Christ, and we should be listening to His instruction.

### **VERSE 23**

**Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh.**

#### A show of wisdom

All these man-made doctrines and ordinances may look very holy and very pious to people, but Paul says they are just a show of wisdom in will worship and humility. All the dos and don'ts the world tries to put on us are just foolishness. No one can keep or be justified by the law.

#### Galatians 3: 10-11

10) For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: For it is written, Cursed is everyone that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11) But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for the just shall live by faith.

We live by faith, not by the law. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, and self righteous works are an abomination to God. In His sight those self-righteous works are as filthy rags. Only things done for Christ will last.

#### Neglecting of the body

Some people are very hard on their bodies just to say they are living holy. Doing this doesn't have any honor. It is of no value other than to make a show in the flesh and only serves to pamper the flesh.

## CHAPTER 3

### VERSE 1

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

#### Risen with Christ

Acknowledging Christ's death is only half of it, because the victory is in being risen with Christ. We have come up in newness of life in Him. If we really believe this, we need to seek those things which are above. Seek is the key word because it shows we cannot be passive. We need to seek the power of the Holy Spirit as well as all the blessings of God. Paul always puts emphasis on things above, and not on things of the earth. At some point the beautiful truths of Christ have to become real to us if we are to really enter in to an intimate relationship with Him. This happens when we fall in love with Him and we put our life totally in His hands.

All Christians are sons of God from the moment they accept Christ as Savior, but not all Christians will enter in to a deep knowledge of Him, and take part in His full glory, but taking part of His full glory is not automatic. Deep, true love and joy can only be found in Him more and more as we develop and mature in God's full counsel, which is the gospel given to Paul.

#### Where Christ sits on the right hand of God

Christ is risen and sits on the right hand of God. This is where we seek Him. He is no longer in the grave, but seated on high next to the Father. The grave couldn't hold Him, and because of Him the grave can't hold those of us who believe Him.

### VERSE 2

**Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.**

The word set means 'to exercise the mind; to concentrate.' We need to actively set our minds on the things that are above. The more we exercise setting our minds on things above, the more the things of earth will fall away from us. Studying God's word is vitally important, because this is the surest way in the world to announce to us all the heavenly blessings, and all these things which are above. We should live the life of our heavenly world.

There are two realms that we can live in; the realm of the rudiments of the world, or the spiritual realm. We will either serve flesh, or we will serve God. It will either be God, or it will be mammon; the choice is ours. When we live for God, He will bring down glory into our daily lives, and this lets heaven reign in our lives. This is living in power and living heavenly as well. All of this takes faith that is found in God's word, and we need the power of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all the truth.

### **VERSE 3**

**For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.**

#### You are dead

'You are dead' is pertaining to the flesh, the old man. This is what we were in Adam. All who believe on Christ died with Him when He died on the cross, and because He was raised out of the grave into newness of life, likewise we are raised up in newness of life. We then become new creations in Christ. This new creation is also referred to as the new man.

#### Hid with Christ in God

Hid means 'to conceal by covering; to keep secret.'

#### John 17:12

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

First our lives are hid with Christ, and then in God. This is like a double security lock, so to speak. This is the life written about in this verse, the eternal life which is in Christ himself. When we get saved we are just as safe as Jesus Christ. Our new creations are seated with Him in the heavens now. When we realize we are already there, then we begin to realize the perfect love that casts out all fear. When we put our faith in the love of Christ and His promises, our fear will fade away. We need to have faith like a child and rely on Him totally for everything in our lives.

### **VERSE 4**

**When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.**

Christ is our life; He is not just an appendage. His life is flowing within us. When He literally appears, we shall also appear with Him in glory. This is a promise.

### **VERSE 5**

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

#### Mortify your members

Mortify means 'to make die; to suppress; to restrain.' We are to mortify our members while we are on earth. In Romans we find out how to do this.

#### Romans 8:13

For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Paul lists the things that need to be suppressed or mortified in the life of Christians:

1) Fornication.

This is illicit sexual intercourse between people not married to each other.

2) Uncleaness.

This is speaking of things that defile; moral pollution.

3) Inordinate affection.

This means lust for someone that should not receive our affections. It can also be unquestioning support for one who teaches error.

4) Evil concupiscence.

This speaks of the tendency to do evil by violating the will of God.

5) Covetousness.

This is wanting to possess something God doesn't want us to have. This is substituting our own will in place of God's will.

Idolatry comes in when the flesh is completely in control, and a person is completely yielded to the power of the flesh. There are things we have to make to die, and we need to have the power of the Holy Spirit for this. When we realize we have died with Christ, and that we are raised with Christ, then we are controlled by Christ's life and the power of the Holy Spirit. When this is done we then have the power to separate from these fleshly deeds. God will test the weakest things in parts of our lives and He will weed them out one by one if we let Him exercise His will in our lives. He does this to make us full overcoming saints. He is trying to give us His best if we'll just submit to His great power and wisdom.

#### **VERSE 6**

**For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:**

If people don't repent of these things, the wrath of God will come upon them. God will put up with them for a time, but He does have limits.

#### **Romans 1:24**

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves.

God's day of judgment will come upon disobedience. When His wrath comes it will be poured out among the children of disobedience in due time. This is also true of Christians who yield to the flesh. They won't go to hell, but God's wrath will be upon them here on earth.

#### **VERSE 7**

**In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.**

If we live in these types of environments and put ourselves into these types of situations, we will walk in them. God doesn't want us living in disobedience. Paul is telling the Colossian saints that this is what they were at some time in their lives, walking after the things of the flesh like all the others.

### **VERSE 8**

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

The word 'but' here indicates a change. They must put off all the things listed in this verse, and this is meant for Christians today as well. This has to become a reality in their lives, and in ours. We can put off these things of the flesh through the power of the Holy Spirit. God wants complete control in our lives, because He wants us to be fully mature and overcoming saints who finish with a full joy.

### **VERSE 9**

**Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;**

We have a choice whether we tell a lie or tell the truth. When we realize we have died in Christ, and we take our place as a new creation in Him, our old man will die. All the things that proceed from the flesh are part of the old man. When we begin to believe that the old flesh is dead, God will give us such victory, and this victory is when we know our new man is living in God's will, and all the desires of the old man are gone. God brings us to this place. He literally changes our desires, and our attitudes to become set on Him. Our fight is to believe who we are in Him and His power that rests in us.

### **VERSE 10**

**And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him:**

#### Put on the new man

That new man in us is Christ Jesus, and these are the new desires we should be controlled by. In this new man we can finally live who we are in Christ. We can live a fulfilled life. Anything put before God in this life is an idol, and if we are children of God this will all turn to spoil. These things won't satisfy us, and we will end up in despair when we realize what a waste it was. We should live a life of gold, silver, and precious stone, not a life of wood, hay, and stubble. The kind of life we live will determine whether we have a chance to win Christ as Bridegroom or not.

#### Renewed in knowledge

Before we were born again we didn't have any trouble doing evil things. In fact, it was no problem at all. We just fed that old man continually, and out came the horrible fruits of him. The opposite happens in the spiritual, because the new man is renewed in the knowledge of our creator Christ Jesus, as we take in the knowledge of God's Word.

#### Romans 12:1

I beseech ye therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.



This is accomplished by the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God. Our new man is renewed in the image of Christ who created us. As we receive the new knowledge we begin to be controlled by that. We are being molded afresh into the personal knowledge of God. We will have an anointed glory life in the knowledge of Christ. By this knowledge we can be the very image of God, because this is the knowledge of truth in love by which we grow and mature.

### **VERSE 11**

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

Christ makes us all one, and because of Him there is no difference. God didn't leave anyone out. Paul was encouraged to speak to everyone about how God sent His beloved Son to die for every soul. In that day the nomadic Scythians were considered lower than Barbarians, so this is really scraping the bottom of the barrel. But all that matters is what we are in Him.

### **VERSE 12**

**Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;**

#### Put on therefore

These are the garments God wants to clothe us in, because this is the clothing of the new man. These garments make up the full wardrobe of God.

#### Romans 13:14

But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

#### Elect of God

Every child of God is His elect. We are holy and beloved in God's eyes, and we loved Him because He first loved us. We are holy and beloved, but there is a choice we make to remain as children, or to grow up in Him in all things, be like Him, and ultimately win Him as Bridegroom. We can make the choice to be that goodly pearl our heavenly Father is seeking so that He can present it to His Son, Christ Jesus, as His bride.

Being the elect of God means we have a new esteem, a new image of ourselves as being holy and beloved of God. Being holy and beloved are very necessary to the things Paul lists in verses 12 through 14. They are absolute facts as far as God is concerned. It is so important for us to see ourselves in Christ so we can put on these garments. We must see that we are new creations in Christ before we can act like it. These are the things we are able to do in Christ as we take our place as a new creation in Him:

#### 1) Bowels of mercies.

This is speaking of a heart of compassion. This is Christ's love.

2) Kindness.

Being tender-hearted and gentle toward one another.

3) Humbleness of mind.

This is lowliness of mind. Christ made himself of no reputation, and we should do the same.

4) Meekness.

This is grace of the soul. This is accepting God's dealing with us without resisting, and to say all is well with our soul whether we are on top of the mountain or down in the valley. There is much fruit in the valley.

5) Longsuffering.

This is patient restraint when we are provoked and tried. This is completely opposite of self pity. Self pity in the midst of a trial is not practicing longsuffering. We need to realize the trials profit our growth, and without them we won't win Christ. We need to have perseverance in faith.

**VERSE 13**

**Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.**

6) Forbearing one another.

This means to lift up one another in prayer and then have faith in what God will do in them.

Forbearing means 'to cover.' We are to cover one another's sin, not expose it.

7) Forgiving one another.

This means there is no harboring or remembrance of our brother's sin in the same way Christ forgave us for our sins.

Even as Christ forgave us

How did Christ forgive us? He did not wait until we asked for it, or until He thought we were good enough. Christ forgave us strictly on the basis of His beautiful grace. It is important that we forgive whether those who have offended us ask for forgiveness or not as this is what God did purely by His grace.

**VERSE 14**

**And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.**

8) Charity.

Charity is love, and we are to put on love. This is the love that will make all the other garments glorious. Without love, forgiving others is profitless because it becomes self righteousness, and that is as filthy rags in the sight of God. If Jesus isn't glorified in the forgiveness it is absolutely useless. We need to be arrayed in love, and in it we are perfectly united with Him, and with one another. The body is fitly joined together and compacted, and by God's grace may we be clothed with the very righteousness of Christ.

### **VERSE 15**

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

#### Let

Let simply means 'let it happen.' Open the door to that peace and let it come in. That doesn't take any of our effort.

#### Let the peace of God rule

Rule means 'act as an umpire; make decisions; arbitrate.' When we allow the peace of God to make decisions in our hearts it makes all the difference in the world. When we let God's peace rule it will make us not to be anxious or fearful anymore. If we don't have the love of God in our lives, we will never have peace. Everyone wants peace, but it can only be found in the love of God. The world rejects love, peace, kindness and compassion, because the world rejects Jesus.

#### Called in one body

Paul is once again expressing the importance of the unity of the body, and this goes hand in hand with verses 12 through 14.

#### Matthew 18:15

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

The object of this is unity between one another.

#### Be thankful

Having that wonderful peace in our lives makes us thankful. This is because of the love of God that passes understanding. We have peace with God when we accept Jesus as our Savior, and we can have the peace of God when we accept His will. We need the Lord to reign over our lives in all things.

### **VERSE 16**

**Let 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.**

#### Let the Word of Christ dwell in you

The word dwell means 'inhabit.' This is telling us to let God's word inhabit us and to let Christ dwell richly in us in all wisdom.

#### Teaching and admonishing one another

All the things in the latter part of this verse are actually a result of letting the Word of Christ dwell in us richly. As we take in God's Word the songs begin to pour forth. Songs are an

indication of victory. David was a singer, and he was very much in victory. Moses had a song of victory after they crossed the Red sea, and Deborah had songs, as well as many others. We can teach and admonish one another by our life of victory. Having a victorious spirit and knowing grace will make us sing the victory in our hearts to the Lord.

### **VERSE 17**

**And 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.**

It is all Jesus, and nothing of us. All praise, and glory, and honor go to Him. Everything we do, and every prayer we pray should be in His name; if not, it is not a prayer. We only have access to God our Father through Jesus, and we give thanks to our Father in Jesus' name.

In verses 18 through chapter 4 verse 1, Paul addresses doing in word or deed. These verses follow one central theme: submission. God singles out the family unit, and He gives each participant instructions of faith for success. God never leaves us wondering, because all the answers are in His word.

### **VERSE 18**

**Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.**

Ephesians 5:21 tells us when we finally submit to God is when His Word can work effectually in us. 'Submit' in the Greek translation means 'to arrange yourself as one under another.' This means the wife submits herself under her husband as she would unto the Lord. This doesn't mean under the husband as much as it means under God. This is our choice.

### **VERSE 19**

**Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.**

The love of Christ, the covering of God, continues to forgive. This is how men are to behave with respect to their wives.

#### Ephesians 5:25

Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.

Men are responsible for the needs of their wives, and should treat them with respect. The husband and wife should live a testimony that will be a good example for the future relationships of the children and how they should live under God.

### **VERSE 20**

**Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.**

Ephesians 6:2 says that children are to obey their parents in all things, because it is pleasing to the Lord. A child is not born knowing how to live, so it is up to the parents to teach them how

to honor and obey them, and how to honor and obey God. They need to be raised according to the Word of God. This will chasten them and drive out the foolishness that is bound in the heart of a child. Parents need to be the heads of the home, not the children.

#### **VERSE 21**

**Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.**

Fathers are not to provoke their children to anger, but to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Even though a father is in the place of authority, he still has to retain the submission to the children's needs, because he is responsible for them. Showing anger to them may make them discouraged, but fathers need to correct them. The bible says, 'to spare the rod is to spoil the child,' but this does not mean to beat them. Children need boundaries. They need to know their limits. Parents are the ones who have to set the boundaries and limits. Giving children the Word of God provokes them to love, not to anger or discouragement.

#### **VERSE 22**

**Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as man pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:**

'Not with eye service, as man pleasers' means we don't do things just to get by, but we do them from the heart. This can be hard, but Christians should always remember that they are actually working with Christ. This will help overcome all the problems that go hand in hand with our jobs. Living this in a life should be a testimony for others to see. Christians need to submit themselves to Christ in all things. This shouldn't ever be to please men, but always to please our blessed Lord Jesus in every area of our lives.

#### **VERSE 23**

**And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;**

We should never have a problem being subject to the Lord. We need to make sure He is the one we are subject to, and not to man.

#### **VERSE 24**

**Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.**

Knowing the Lord gives us the reward of the inheritance, which is a reward for believing and trusting in the Lord. All Christians will go to heaven, but there are different degrees of rewards. The more of the Lord we take into our lives the greater our reward.

#### **Hebrews 6:12**

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promise.

**VERSE 25**

**But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.**

He that doeth wrong

He that doeth wrong will receive for the wrong he has done. If our work is not of grace through faith, it is always wood, hay, and stubble, and it will burn. There is a consequence for our actions on this earth.

No respect of persons

If we are going to live a thorny ground life, and not tend our gardens, we shall reap sorrow and regret. What we do comes back on us. If we sow corruption we will reap corruption; if we sow to the flesh we will reap the flesh and it will be destruction.

## CHAPTER 4

### VERSE 1

**Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing the ye also have a Master in heaven.**

These masters, or bosses, are to remember that they too have a Master that is in heaven. God is not a hard master; He is just, and equal, and treats everyone fairly. When everyone is treated equally, kindly, and fairly, they will respond by wanting to do a better job.

### VERSE 2

**Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;**

#### Continue in prayer

Continue means 'to adhere closely; persevere.' Praying is to be done continually, and not haphazardly or inconsistently. God cares about everything concerning His children, and He wants us to communicate with Him in all things because this helps to keep the devil at bay. Prayer comes from the heart. It can't be taught. Whatsoever we pray we must always pray in the name of Jesus. The line to speak with God is always open.

#### Watch in the same

Watch means 'to keep awake.' A good commentary on this can be found in Luke 22:44-46.

#### With thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is an attitude of faith that God is going to answer the cry of our heart, and then expecting the answer. God will do things in His time and not ours because He wants to work patience in our lives. He answers our prayers, but He doesn't always reveal the answer to us right away. This builds faith.

#### Philippians 4:6

Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Supplication is expecting God to answer and to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think.

### VERSE 3

**Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mysteries of Christ; for which I am also in bonds;**

#### Praying also for us

Paul was constantly praying. He prayed that God would open a door of utterance, and this was a prayer for the opportunity to speak the Word of God to people. Paul was always concerned

about the furtherance of the gospel. It wasn't about his wants, but rather what God wanted. Paul was in prison at that time and he probably suffered great need, but he didn't ask for food or any comforts. Paul did ask for prayer. He wanted was for them to pray for him. Prayer was the most powerful thing he could ask for, and in turn he prayed for them. If we pray simply like Paul did, and then left the details to God, we would be much better off.

### The mystery of Christ

Paul wasn't preaching the message of salvation here. He was speaking about the mystery of Christ in the depths and blessings of the Word of God. The mystery of Christ is beyond salvation, and it takes the Holy Spirit to grow us up in the deeper things of God's full counsel. Saints who are already saved and Spirit-filled can be enlightened to this mystery.

### Colossians 1:26-27

- 26) Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints.
- 27) To 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.

Paul's gospel heralded the bridal truth, the mystery that was hidden in ages past. God made known unto the Gentiles the riches of the glory of this mystery. We can only come into this intimate relationship with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul's message is the message of the bride adorned.

### Also in bonds

This is suffering with Christ for the sake of the gospel. Paul was in the bonds of Christ's wonderful love, and that is a beautiful place to be.

### **VERSE 4**

**That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.**

Paul is praying that he preach the gospel the way it should be preached. He wanted to give it out in a way it would be most effective, and as understandable as he could make it. Paul was aged at that time, and in prison separated from everyone. His incarceration didn't matter to God as far as the message. God made sure the message went forth regardless of Paul's circumstances.

### **VERSE 5**

**Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.**

### Walk in wisdom

This is speaking of spiritual wisdom, and not the foolishness of men. Our walk as Christians can be a strong testimony to others. Christians can be an epistle known and read of all men. This may be the only testimony they will understand. Our lives should magnify the grace of God. We are to display Christ in our lives for all to see.



### Redeeming the time

This is about seizing the opportunities God puts before us. We shouldn't try to make our own opportunities, but seize the ones that God puts there. These opportunities are to be used in advancing God's will. God will actually do the advancing, but we need to want to be a part of His will.

### VERSE 6

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

#### Let your speech be with grace

This phrase is actually saying don't be harsh. We should have an attitude of graciousness, meekness, and kindness. Our speech should always be with grace, because out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. If we trust God He will be our mouthpiece. Moses is a good example of this. God gave Moses a job to do, and God saw to it that the job was done.

#### Seasoned with salt

This means to season with the Word of God, because the Word is the salt. Our speech should carry the love of God and it will be a blessing to others as well as to ourselves. Salt is something that cleanses and preserves, and a tongue that is controlled by God can cleanse and encourage. God never uses too much salt, but just enough to be seasoned perfectly.

#### How to answer every man

God can give us the wisdom of how we should answer every man. Some may only need a short and concise answer, while others may need more. If we have the right attitude we can know this and be able speak in a way that pleases God.

### VERSE 7

**All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord:**

#### All my state

Paul's state wasn't about his imprisonment or the dire circumstances he was in. Paul brought to the people the state of His heart filled with Christ's love. He brought to them that cup of salvation that they could drink deeper and deeper from. We have the same opportunity today.

#### Tychicus

This name means 'fortunate.' Tychicus is very highly commended by Paul because:

- 1) He was a beloved brother.
- 2) He was a faithful minister.
- 3) He was a fellow servant in the Lord.

Fellow servant means 'two saints moving as one in unity.' We follow Paul as he followed Christ, and we can run together for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

### **VERSE 8**

**Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;**

Paul was telling them that Tychicus was going to see them and tell them of Paul's state and comfort their hearts with the news of his wellbeing. The state of these Colossian saints was more important to Paul than their standing. He already knew their standing was secure because they had been saved by the blood of Christ.

### **VERSE 9**

**With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here.**

The name Onesimus means 'profitable.' Onesimus can be found in the book of Philemon. He was a slave of Philemon, but he ran away and ended up in the same jail cell Paul was in. Paul apparently led him to the Lord because he ended up being a faithful and beloved brother.

### **VERSE 10**

**Aristarchus my fellow prisoner salutes you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he comes unto you, receive him;)**

#### Aristarchus

His name appears five times in the New Testament. He was a prisoner on the ship with Paul when it went down off the coast of Malta. Both he and Paul made it to Rome where they were both imprisoned.

#### Marcus

This is John Mark. He is the one who 'went not into the work' in the book of Acts, so Paul deemed it not a good idea to take him on his second missionary journey. This decision caused Paul and Barnabas to part ways. Apparently Mark learned some things along the way because he ended up writing the book of Mark and becoming part of Paul's ministry.

### **VERSE 11**

**And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellow workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.**

This brother named Jesus so loved the Word that He changed his name to Justus which means 'just.' He was a Jewish convert which shows that all who love Jesus are welcomed to run the race to attain God's best and win the right to rule and reign with Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **VERSE 12**

**Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, salutes you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.**

### Epaphras is one of you

Epaphras means 'lovely.' He was likely the head pastor at Colossae, and he was fervent in the things of the Lord, and especially prayer. We should never become complacent where prayer is concerned, because it is the greatest power that has been given to us. When we enter into prayer in the name of Jesus, we have entered into the throne room, right into the very presence of the Godhead.

### Perfect and complete

Epaphras prayed for them so they could stand complete in all the will of God. It is a great prayer that not only can a pastor pray this for the sheep God has given him, but we should also pray this for one another so that we can stand perfect in Him. This is speaking of Christian believers being fully mature in all the will of God. This is to be brought into full measure of Christ. The bride makes herself ready by drawing near to Him and having full assurance of faith that His work will be done completely in her. The hope of glory is for us to become like Christ.

### **VERSE 13**

**For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.**

### Laodicea

Laodicea literally means 'the people's rights,' and this fits right into the mindset of many people in our day as we live in a day of rights: women's rights, civil rights, animal rights, and on and on. In Laodicea this is horrible, because all men are insisting on their rights with no credence to God's Word. Apostasy had set in to the church of Laodicea making them neither hot nor cold.

### Hierapolis

Hierapolis means 'temple city' or 'sacred city.' This speaks of religiousness. Hierapolis, Colossae, and Laodicea were in close proximity to one another and formed a triangle. All three of these were destroyed in a big earthquake a few years after Paul was beheaded. Only Laodicea was rebuilt.

### **VERSE 14**

**Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.**

### Luke

Luke's name means 'light.' Luke was a beloved physician and a light to Paul's life and to the wonderful things Paul brought out in the ministry. We should want to be a light of the love of God.

### Demas

The name Demas means 'popular.' Demas was with Paul, but he ended up forsaking him. Demas had been a witness to the preaching and power of the Word of God through Paul. He had been around those who witnessed what happened to Paul on the road to Damascus. He

had been enlightened by Christ himself, and yet he still turned away and went back to the things in the world that were so popular, but no more than a mess of pottage.

### **VERSES 15-16**

**Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. And 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.**

### **Nymphas**

Nymphas means 'bridal' and speaks of that small bridal rib-portion company. Nymphas had church services in his home. Many assemblies in that day were small gatherings in people's homes. Often this small rib-portion of people had to go outside the city to meet and to worship God. This little church was persecuted for having church services.

If Paul wrote a letter to Laodicea it is not included in the scripture.

### **VERSE 17**

**And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.**

Archippus means 'governor of the house.' Archippus was second in command under Epaphras. He was encouraged by Paul to continue to feed those who run the race with God's Word. This is the same encouragement found in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

### **1 Corinthians 9:26-27**

26) I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air;

27) But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

### **VERSE 18**

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

Paul wanted these faithful ministers to carry on and fulfill the ministry God had given to them. Paul's bonds should encourage us to run the same race he ran, and to finish with a full joy just as he did. Paul was all in for winning the Lord. Even the brutal circumstances he had to face couldn't deter him because he kept his eyes on the Lord, and not himself. He used God's strength and not his own, because he had learned any strength he had naturally was in no way adequate to attain the crown he sought so diligently. He knew the ultimate reward would be worth all the trials and tests he had to endure. He knew grace was absolutely essential to everything pertaining to winning the crown. Every provision needed for winning the race with a full joy is already in place. All we have to do is tell the Lord, "I will go."