



Golden Hills Community Church

July 20 - August 24, 2014

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Resources

ESV Study Bible

Commentaries

David E. Garland (New International Version Application Commentary, Zondervan)

FF Bruce (New International Commentary on the New Testament, Eerdmans)

Bible Dictionaries

Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary (ed. Longman, 2013)

IVP Dictionary of Paul and his Letters (InterVarsity Press)

Online Tools

NetBible.org

BlueLetterBible.com

BibleGateway.com

A. Author and Date

- 1. **Author:** Paul and Timothy are explicitly named as the authors of Colossians (1:1).
 - Timothy probably served as Paul's secretary since the first person singular ("I") is used throughout the letter (e.g., 1:24)
- 2. Some scholars have doubted Paul's authorship based on:
 - (1) *a style of writing* that they deem inconsistent with his uncontested letters
 - (2) *a set of theological statements* that they regard as more developed than what he wrote in previous letters.
 - The latter objection is readily answered by the unique situation reflected in the letter, leading Paul to address these particular concerns with the most relevant theological emphases.
 - There is nothing in the theology that is inconsistent with what he wrote elsewhere, and many of his statements are simply logical developments of previous thoughts.
 - The argument about style is much weaker since there is, in fact, strong continuity of style between this letter and his other letters. It is also quite precarious to make a judgment about authorship based on such a small sampling of letters. It is inappropriate to expect an author to demonstrate stylistic uniformity throughout all his works.
- 3. **Date:** The letter was probably written A.D. 61 - 62. Paul wrote it at roughly the same time that he wrote Philemon and Ephesians
 - Written from prison (Col. 4:3, 10, 18), possibly from Rome, Caesarea or Ephesus. It is probable that Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were written from the same place.
 - Early 60s if the Roman prison was the place of composition (61), since after that Colossae was devastated by an earthquake that it is inconceivable that the destruction would not have been mentioned by any informed and compassionate writer.
 - If Paul wrote from a city other than Rome, the date of composition could be backed up into the late 50s

B. Historical Background

- 1. The Colossian church was likely **established during Paul's third missionary journey** (as he ministered for three years in Ephesus)
 - It appears that Paul did not personally establish the church there, but instead a Colossian named Epaphras traveled to Ephesus, responded to Paul's gospel message, and returned to share the good news in Colossae.
- 2. **Relation to Ephesians:** Ephesians and Colossians stand in close relationship

- Both epistles, greetings are sent from Aristarchus, Mark, Epaphras, Luke, and Demas, who plainly were with Paul when he wrote (Col. 4:10–14; Philem. 23–24). Onesimus, the slave at the center of the letter to Philemon, is sent with Tychicus and referred to as “one of you” (Col. 4:9). Archippus, “our fellow soldier” (Philem. 2), is given a message to “complete the work” he has received in the Lord (Col. 4:17).
- **3. Religion in the Greco-Roman world¹**
 - Most people followed the Phrygian gods and goddesses
 - Agdistis (Gk. Cybele) was most popular
 - Large Jewish populations (maybe 11,000); Jewish piety, reverence for temple, observation of temple/Sabbath/circumcision/food laws

C. Purpose and Theme

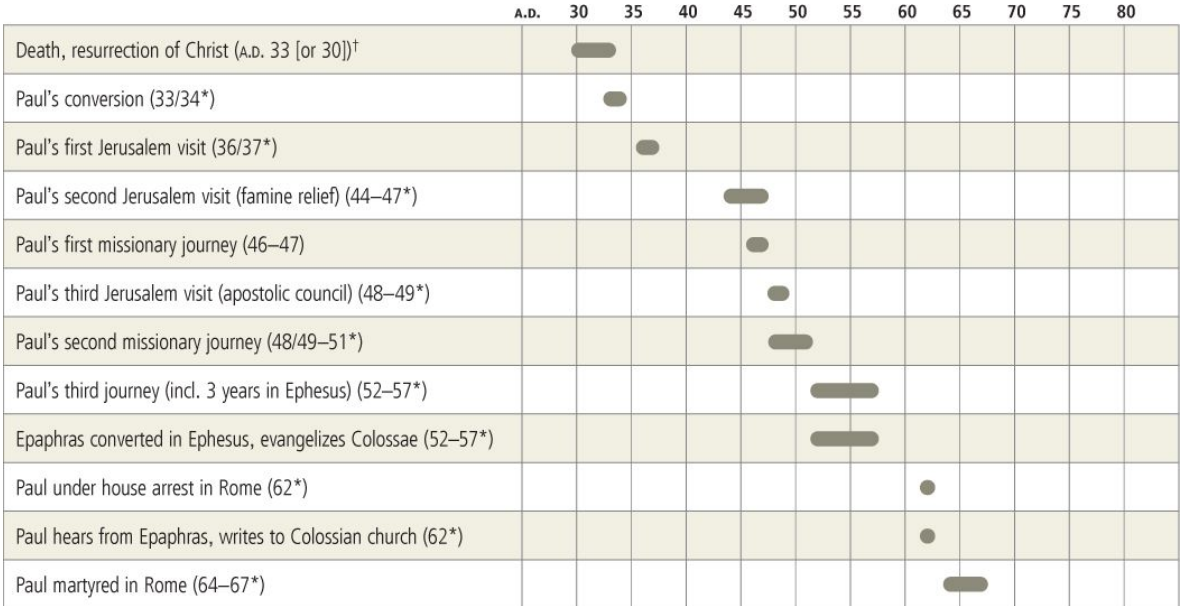
- **1. Purpose:** To encourage these believers in their growth toward Christian maturity
- **2. Background Theology: The Colossian Heresy**
 - a. A blend of Jewish and Hellenistic teachings.
 - Religious syncretism was a feature of the ancient world
 - b. Some of the forms of Gnosticism, but that does not mean that Gnosticism as such was the problem in this city.
 - c. Philosophy (2:8):
 - d. A central feature of the local folk belief was a tendency to call on angels for help and protection from evil spirits.
 - Ancient world people lived in great fear of angelic/spiritual forces²
 - (terrified of powers from underworld/ancestors)
 - Belief that daily life was
 - Mysticism, where angels and principalities played a prominent role in creation and the giving of the Law.
 - Regarded as controlling the communication between God and man, and so needed to be placated by keeping strict legal observances.
 - This characteristic is well attested in many inscriptions and ancient documents:
 - *A magical stone* amulet designed to be worn around the neck for protection from evil spirits reads:
 - “Michael, Gabriel, Ouriel, Raphael, protect the one who wears this... Flee, O hated one, Solomon pursues you.”
 - e. Jewish rituals (2:11)
 - Food regulations, Sabbath (and other prescriptions of the Jewish calendar)

¹ Gary M. Burge, *The New Testament in Antiquity: A Survey of the New Testament within Its Cultural Contexts* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009). 389

² Ibid. 339

- **3. Theme:** Christ is Lord over all of creation, including the invisible realm. He has secured redemption for his people, enabling them to participate with him in his death, resurrection, and fullness.
- **4. Key Themes**
 - a. Jesus Christ is preeminent over all creation, Lord over all human rulers and cosmic powers.
 - 1:15–20; 2:9–10; 3:1
 - b. God has worked through Christ to secure redemption and reconciliation for all who put their faith in him.
 - 1:13–14, 20–22
 - c. Believers are in Christ and thus participate in a relationship of solidarity with Christ in his death on the cross, his resurrection from the dead, his new life, and his fullness.
 - 2:9–14; 3:1–4
 - d. Christ has defeated the powers of darkness on the cross, and Christians share in his power and authority over that realm.
 - 2:10, 15 (cf 2:8, 20)
 - e. Jesus is the fulfillment of Jewish expectation, and Christians now share in the heritage of the old covenant people of God through their union with him.
 - 1:12, 21–22, 27
 - f. Believers are called to grow in maturity in Christ by getting rid of sinful practices and cultivating Christian virtues.
 - 1:10–12, 28; 3:1–4:6

Timeline³



—* denotes approximate date; / signifies either/or; † see *The Date of Jesus' Crucifixion*, pp. 1809–1810

³ *The Esv Study Bible, English Standard Version* (Wheaton, IL: 2008).

D. Ancient Letter Writing

- 1. Nature of ancient epistles
 - a. *Not a sermon or treatise* (essay, philosophical writing)
 - With the exception of Romans
 - b. Most NT epistles are *occasional letters*
 - Specific questions or crises gave rise to them and shaped their content
 - c. NT Letters they are *embedded in a specific occasion* and setting
 - Note: When reading a letter (Paul) we are hearing *one end* of the phone *conversation*. This means we need to infer/piece together the issue at hand.
- 2. Interpretation challenges
 - a. When these circumstances are not known today
 - Hebrews: Assuming the Judaizers were the issue:
 - Placing Angels above Jesus, placing emphasis on the Law (and not on Jesus as the perfect priest)
- 3. Reading Letters/Standard format in the ancient world (Greek-Roman)
 - a. Modern Letter Structure (*How we write today*)
 - Letter Opening (Dear...)
 - Body (usually with well-wishes)
 - Letter Closing (Sincerely, ...)
 - b. Ancient Letter Structure
 - *Letter Opening*
 - Standard: X to Y, greetings
 - Thanksgiving period
 - *Body*
 - The purpose of the letter
 - *Letter Closing*
 - Greetings (sister, mother, etc)
 - Blessing/doxology
 - c. Making a point
 - i. Normal Structure
 - Say your point clearly
 - ii. Changing Structure
 - Skip the greeting in the closing structure (proving a point)
 - Skip the thanksgiving period in the Opening
 - iii. Expanding Structure
 - Add extra words/titles to the person you are addressing

- d. Pauline Letter Openings
 - i. Greetings: Paul to church, grace and peace
 - ii. Thanksgiving
 - iii. Body
 - Theological correction, compliment, praise, accountability for sin...
 - iv. Letter Closing
 - Greetings
 - Doxology/Blessing

E. Outline

- I. Greeting (1:1–2)
- II. Thanksgiving (1:3–8)
- III. Prayer (1:9–14)
- IV. Praise to Christ (1:15–20)
 - A. Christ is Lord of creation (1:15–17)
 - B. Christ is Lord of redemption (1:18–20)
- V. Reconciliation of the Colossians to God (1:21–23)
- VI. The Apostle Paul's Labor for the Gospel (1:24–2:3)
 - A. Paul's suffering and stewardship of the mystery (1:24–28)
 - B. Paul's labor for the Colossians (1:29–2:3)
- VII. The Dangerous Teaching at Colossae (2:4–23)
 - A. Warning about a deceptive teaching (2:4–8)
 - B. Help for the danger: resources in Christ (2:9–15)
 - C. Additional warnings about the teaching (2:16–23)
- VIII. The Proper Focus: Christ and the Life Above (3:1–4)
- IX. Instructions on Living the Christian Life (3:5–4:6)
 - A. Dealing with the sins of the past (3:5–11)
 - B. Putting on the virtues of Christ (3:12–17)
 - C. Living in the Christian household (3:18–4:1)
 - D. Persistence in prayer (4:2–4)
 - E. Good behavior toward those outside the community (4:5–6)
- X. Personal Greetings and Instructions (4:7–17)
 - A. Remarks about the messengers carrying the letter (4:7–9)
 - B. Greetings from Paul's associates (4:10–14)
 - C. Greetings to the Christians in Laodicea (4:15–17)
- XI. Letter Closing (4:18)

Colossae⁴



⁴ Ibid.

Paul's First and Second Missionary Journey



Paul's Third Missionary Journey



Colossians: Christ Holds All Things Together

I. 1:1–2 Prescript

A. *Paul* (1:1a)

- Not known personally to the Colossian congregation (2:1)
- Apostle: one who is sent to proclaim the Gospel
- "Paul" is used in the Hellenistic-Roman world in place of the Jewish "Saul"

B. By/through the *Will of God* (1:1b)

C. *Saints and faithful brothers (and sisters) in Christ*

- Saints are marked out as God's holy people (Eph 2:19)
 - Expression for "God's holy people" (Ex 19:6 = "a you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation"), chosen by Him and appointed to his service.
 - Covenant language: God's chosen; holy; beloved (3:13)

D. *Grace to you and peace* (1:2a)

- Ancient letters had three elements:
 - name of the sender(s), addressee(s), a message of greeting
 - Paul coined the phrase "grace and peace"
 - *Grace (charis)*: God's unconditioned goodwill toward men and women which is expressed in the saving work of Christ (v 6)
 - *Peace (irene)*: is the state of life - peace with God (v 20) and peace with one another (Eph 2:14-18) - enjoyed by those who have effectively experienced the divine grace⁵

⁵ Ibid. 5

II. 1:3-8 Thanksgiving for the news of the Colossians' faith

A. *We always thank God* (1:3)

- Thanks: *eucharisteo*

B. *Faith...Love...Hope...* (1:4,5)

- Familiar Christian triad (1 Thes 1:3; Eph 1:15; 2 Thess 1:3; Phlm 5; Rom 1:8)
- *Faith* (pistis): In Christ [4] (1:2; 1:4; 1:28; 2:5)
 - "in Him" [8] (1:17; 1:19; 2:6; 2:7; 2:9; 2:10; 2:11; 2:15)
- *Love* (agape):
 - Classical Greek (4 loves):
 - *Philia* (mental love-friends/family-loyalty); *Eros* (physical/erotic); *Storge* (affection, parents/offspring); *Agape* (unconditional love)
- *Hope*:
 - The act of hoping as well as the objective content of the hope
 - salvation (1 Ths 5:8), righteousness (Gal 5:5), resurrection (1 Cor 15:52-55), eternal life (Titus 1:2; 3:7), God's glory (Rm 5:2)

C. *Bearing Fruit and growing/increasing...* (1:6)

- Significant OT imagery (Garden Language)
 - Human reproduction (Gen 1:22, 28; 8:17; 9:1, 7)
 - Israel's population (Jer 3:16; 23:3)
- In the NT it usually applies to the gospel/deeds
 - Parable of the sower, the *seed* (which is the word), bears fruit and increases in the lives of those who receive it rightly.

- Image of God
 - Adam (first man) was made in the image (eikon) of God
 - Jesus is the full image of God (reveals the invisible God, the fullness of God dwells bodily)

- Temple
 - Garden (Gen 1-3) > Solomon/Herod's Temple > Jesus (Jn 2) > People of God (1 Cor 6)

D. *our beloved fellow Servant* (1:7)

- *sundoulos* = bond-servant
 - To be a slave to one master, self-identification with that one master, being subordinate in total obedience
- The OT "servant of God" was a title of honor to refer to those chosen by God and predestined for his service
 - Abraham (Ps 105:42), Moses (Ps 105:26), David (2 Sam 7:5), Amos (3:7)
- The NT "servant of Christ Jesus" was an apostle
 - Gal 1:10, Rom 1:1

III. 1:9–14 Prayer for the Colossians' spiritual welfare

A. *And so (for this reason)...asking that* (1:9)

- Construction of purpose, [in order that] functions to be filled with a knowledge of God's will, namely to 'walk worthy of the Lord'
 - "*you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding*"
 - *Bearing Fruit* (v 10) and *increasing* (v 10)

 - *Being Strengthened* (v 11)
 - As a community (and individually)
 - Standing firm against evil forces, spiritually/politically/socially
 - Eph 3:16

 - *Giving Thanks* (v12)

B. *...who has qualified you...* (1:12, 13)

- This qualification is done by means of the Father (12a)
 - he has **already** qualified
- Contrast with v 14 (in whom WE HAVE redemption, the forgiveness of sins)

C. *"to share in the inheritance of the saints"* (1:12)

- promise given to Abram (Gen 13:14-17); renewed to Israel (Num 26:52-56) they would possess their inheritance
 - Paul here is speaking of the "inheritance of God's people"
 - Gentiles
 - This is the redemptive-historical story line of the Bible.
 - Adam was the image of God, and had the inheritance of the Garden/World
 - Gen 3, salvation will come through the offspring of the woman
 - Abraham is given the promise in Gen 12 (fruitful, land, dwelling with God; to his offspring)
 - Christ, the offspring of the woman, is the true temple/promised land

D. *"Kingdom of His beloved Son"* (1:13)

- Different interpretations:
 - 1. Kingdom of Christ: The heavenly kingdom in its present aspect; The Kingdom of God: The final consummation.⁶
 - 2. Illusion to 2 Sam 7:12-16.⁷
 - This prophecy was only partially fulfilled by Solomon (2 Samuel certainly has Solomon in mind)
 - The NT is clear that this prophecy is fulfilled in Christ
 - Heb 1:5; Acts 2:30; 2 Cor 6:18

⁶ O'Brien.

⁷ Carson. 850

IV. 1:15–20 Praise to Christ (a hymn in honor of Christ)

A. *Preexistent Christ Hymns (pre-Pauline Hymns)*

- 1 Cor 15:3-5 & Phil 2:3-11
- Col 1:15-20
 - Reference to Wisdom from Prov 8:22-30
 - Book of Wisdom 7
 - 22 "For wisdom, the fashioner of all things, taught me."
 - 26 "For she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God and an image of his goodness. "
- The hymn is in two parts:
 - Christ's supremacy over the first creation (15-17)
 - Christ's supremacy over the new creation (18-20)

B. *"Image of the invisible God" (1:15)*

- Image (eikon) (cf. 2 Cor 4:4; transformation of the people of Christ into the same image 2 Cor 3:18; Col 3:10; Eph 4:24; Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 15:49)
 - OT background of image: Gen 1:26-27
 - When you see the image, you are seeing the thing
 - We are seeing Yahweh displayed in Jesus
 - i. Ontologically (his nature/existence)
 - ii. Functionally (representatively), as the second Adam.

C. *"Firstborn of all creation" (1:15)*

- Firstborn (prototokos)
 - 1. Birth order
 - Ex 13:15
 - 2. Special status (associated w/ being the firstborn/preeminence)
- In the NT:
 - Always refers to Jesus, with the notion of supremacy or priority of rank.
 - cf. Rom 8:29; 1 Cor 15:20; Acts 26:23; Rev 1:5
- The Colossians use is derived from Ps 89:27, where God says of the Davidic king:

1:16 Creator and Lord of All Things

A. *For by him* (1:16)

- Firstborn must denote primacy OVER creation, and not just within creation, as indicated by the conjunction linking the two verses
- For (because of, since...)

B. *all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities* (1:16)

- Four classes of angelic powers:
 - thrones, dominions
 - rulers, authorities
- Dualism:
 - good or bad, all are subject to him as Creator
 - The Christian worldview doesn't support an equal view of good v evil forces
- All things are summed up in Christ, and the whole of creation and history is subject to Him

C. *For by him all things were created...all things were created through him and for him* (1:16)

- were created (aorist)... were created (perfect)
 - First time, drawing attention to historical act (aorist)
 - Second reference focuses on creation's continuing existence (perfect)
- "By him"
 - Christ is the instrument of creation, and the sphere within which the work of creation takes place
 - This has the same force as Eph 1:4
 - God's creation, like His election, takes place "in Christ" and not apart from him

1:17 Lord and Sustainer of the Universe

A. *And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together* (1:17)

- Twofold statement: His preexistence and has cosmic significance
- 1. He exists before "all things" (all the things that were created by him)
 - The universe is temporal, he is not
 - John 1:1-3; Heb 1
 - He is Lord of the universe as the preexistent one (Jn 8:58)

- 2. Holds all things together
 - To come to be in a condition of coherence, to continue to exist/endure/hold together
 - Perfect - An action in the past with results that continue on to the present (from the standpoint of the speaker)
 - Apart from the Son's *continuous sustaining* activity, all would disintegrate!

B. Deity of Christ

- For a ST Jew, this claim would be blasphemous (as only Yahweh was creator)
 - Gen 1
 - Is 44:24
- Trinity
 - 1. The Bible teaches one true God (Deut 6:4)
 - This God is identified as Yahweh (Ex 3:14)
 - 2. There are three distinct Persons identified as Yahweh
 - i. Father
 - ii. Son
 - iii. Eternal Spirit
 - 3. But the three are distinct
 - i. The Father is not the Son
 - ii. The Son is not the Spirit
 - iii. The Spirit is not the Father
 - 4. Yet there is only one God (Yahweh)

1:18a Head of the Church

A. *And he is the head of the body, the church* (1:18a)

- Paul shifts from a cosmological perspective to a soteriological one
 - vv 15-17 are about Christ as the perfect *sovereign* Lord of the universe
 - vv 18-20 are about Christ as the perfect *savior* of the universe

- "Head" language
 - meanings in NT:
 - Authority, Most Respected, Source, part of the (physical) body
 - Here: denotes Christ and his relation over the body

- The "body"
 - In ancient Greek/Roman philosophy the universe was referred to as the "body"
 - Paul uses soma/head language to refer to mutual relations and obligations from his earliest letters
 - 1 Cor 12:21
 - Col/Eph

B. *The Church*

- (ekklesia): The called out ones (assembly)

- The church belongs to Yahweh, and its members are the called-out ones who are identified as His national unit of people
 - Israel/Jerusalem are no longer ground-zero for Yahweh's people, it's Jew/Gentile/Slave/Free/Male/Female, etc

- Gen 3 (two seeds)
- Gen 12 (seed)
- Gal 3 (seed of Abraham)

1:18b–20 Christ is Lord of redemption/reconciliation

A. "...He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead" (1:18)

- beginning = *arche*
 - A. **Time period:**
 - Gen 1:1; Jn 1:1 (in the beginning)
 - B. **Beginning/Origin:**
 - Ps 110:10; Mk 10:6
 - C. **Political:**
 - Gen 40:13 (Pharaoh shall restore your *office [arches]*)
 - Luke 20:20 (so as to turn him over to the *government [arche]*)
 - Col 1:16 (thrones or lordships or *governments [archai]*)
 - The Amen is the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation

- Christ is the One who is "firstborn from the dead" and founder of a new humanity
 - Gen 49:3 "firstborn/beginning" appear to describe the firstborn as the founder of a people
 - The resurrection age has burst forth; he is the first-fruits who guarantees the future resurrection of others (1 Cor 15:20, 23)
 - 1 Cor 15:1-5
 - 1 Cor 15:12-19
 - The resurrection is the crowning point of the Gospel/Jesus' Messiahship

B. that in everything he might be preeminent.

- "THAT" (*hina*) = in order that

1:19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell

A. Fullness

- The term has an active meaning of "the state of being full"
- e.g., God (and His glory) fill the earth: Jer 23:24; Ps 72:19; Is 6:3

B. Pleased to dwell

- Deut imagery (the God of Israel choosing a place for himself to dwell)⁸
 - 14:23; 16:2; 16:6; 16:11
- Parallel with Ps 67:17-18 (LXX)⁹
 - "God was well-pleased to dwell in it (Zion)...the Lord will dwell (there) forever...in the holy place"
 - (1:19) "Because in him all the fullness of deity was well-pleased to dwell"
- Temple-language
 - Temple: Anyplace where Yahweh dwells with His people
 - Garden > Burning Bush > Arc of Covenant > Solomon's Temple > Jesus > The Church (by means of the Spirit of God) > The whole earth in the New Jerusalem
 - Christ as the true temple of Yahweh appears through the NT
 - John 2:19-21; Eph 2:20-22; Rev 21:22
- **Therefore:** Just as Yahweh would dwell in the Temple, in Jesus, all of God was pleased to dwell, making Jesus the new temple.

⁸ O'Brien. 53

⁹ Carson. 855

1:20

A. *and through him to reconcile to himself all things*

- All things:
 - various heavenly bodies, thrones, lordships, principalities, powers, so on

- Reconciled
 - Reconciliation as a past event
 - A Pauline theme: Rom 5:10, 11; 2 Cor 5:18-20; Eph 2:16

 - The death/resurrection of Jesus causes "all things" to finally unite and bow in the name of Jesus, and to acknowledge him as Lord (Phil 2:10-11)

V. 1:21–23 Reconciliation of sinners (the Colossians) to God

A. *And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds*

- "You"
- *Once were alienated*
 - were - past tense
 - Contrast between the hearers' pre-Christian past and present
 - Pauline theme: Rom 5:6-11; 1 Cor 6:9-11

 - *were alienated* (were estranged) (estranged from God)
 - The Colossians (and all people) were once continuously out of harmony with God
 - Eph 4:18

- *Hostile in Mind*
 - Enemies/Hatred; a conscious antagonism to the only true God
 - 1 Cor 15:25; Mt 13:39

B. Paul and the human condition

- The theological problem/anecdote: **Romans 1 & 12 contrast**

1:22 Now Reconciled and Holy Before God

A. he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death (1:22)

Paul is presenting three ideas:

- i. The Colossians have been reconciled to the One whom they had previously been at enmity
- ii. This could only be achieved through divine intervention
- iii. That attention is focused upon that which marks the turning point for them: Namely, the Christ Event

Paul's **Two Age** theology/eschatology¹⁰

- Mt 12:32; Lk 20:34; 1 Cor 1:20; 1 Cor 2:6, 8; 1 Cor 3:18; Eph 1:21
- The *present age/age to come*
 - *Present Age*:
 - The time from Gen 3-Messiah
 - The prophets knew that they lived in the "Present Age" (aka: this world)
 - "my kingdom is not of this world" (Jn 18:36)
 - *Age to Come*:
 - Messianic Age of Lordship, predicted by the prophets (OT)
 - Mark 1:1-15
 - Kingdom is at hand/near

¹⁰ Kim Riddlebarger, *A Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003). 65

- The NT presents two ages that overlap
 - The Kingdom of God/Messiah have arrived
 - i. Jesus is the temple (Jn 2:18-22)
 - ii. The church is the temple (1 Cor 6:19-20)
 - iii. The church will never be destroyed or come to an end (Mt 16:18)
 - iv. Yet the Evil One still exists, and is allowed to function in the world (2 Cor 4:4)

- The first coming of Christ (and his resurrection) ensured that in the present age, Christians are already raised with him.
 - (1 Cor 15:42-44)

- *In his body of flesh by his death*
 - "in" is instrumental, indicating that Christ's physical body was the means by which reconciliation was effected

B. in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him (1:22)

- Holy (*hagios*)
 - Consecrated to God, holy, pure, reverent
 - Saints = "the holy ones"
- Eph 1:4
- Holy and Blameless
 - OT language to describe the unblemished animals set apart for God
 - Ex 29:37
- Paul uses this concept of OT shadow
 - Rm 12:1

1:23 Perseverance in the gospel

A. *If indeed you continue in the faith* (1:23)

- If it is true that the saints WILL persevere to the end, then it is equally true that the saints MUST persevere to the end

- Paul is exhorting/warning the Colossians to not fall into a state of false sense of security
 - Rom 6:1-12; Rom 11:22; John 6:35-51

Conclusion:

- The gospel of hope is not merely to save individuals, but be a means of reconciliation between all of creation and God.

VI. 1:24–2:3 The Apostle Paul's Labor for the Gospel

1:24–28 Revealing God's Mystery, who is Christ

A. *I rejoice in my sufferings* (1:24a)

- Probably means the afflictions that all Christians participate as part of the sufferings of Christ
- Suffering is part of the Christian life/ministry (Acts 9:15-16)
- OT history of the righteous suffering for Yahweh
 - Ex 4:31 (etc)
- Paul had "two age" eschatology (*present age/age to come*)
 - Theme of Revelation
 - Overcome/conquers (victorious)
 - *Nikao* Rev 2:7; Rev 21:7
- All Christians participate in these sufferings; through them they enter the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:21-22)

- With the death and resurrection of the Messiah, the "*age to come*" has been inaugurated.
 - The Present Age continues, so Christians live in the overlap of the two ages
 - When the Age to Come is fully consummated the Present Age will pass away
- (Rom 8:16-17)

- "HOW LONG O LORD?!?!"
 - Hab 1:2
 - This is referred to as the "Messianic woes"
 - The Messiah/disciples/apostles/saints will face and conquer afflictions/tribulations until The *Present Age* has been completed

B. *for the sake of his body, that is, the church* (1:24b)

- Christ is in heaven, yet he continues to suffer in his members/Church
 - Acts 8:1; Acts 9:1-5; Mt 25:31-46

- Saul/Paul went from persecuting Jesus, to being persecuted for Jesus
 - Saul (Paul) had been persecuting the church/Way/Christians, but when you act against the Church, you are acting against Jesus, himself

- Quote:
 - "The People of God are to be the image of God to the world. We are the light of the world. We are the means by which the Prince of Peace brings peace into the world. Sure, true lasting peace may not come until Christ comes and with him the fullness of His Kingdom. But until that day arrives, we are not given the liberty to sit back and watch the world go to destruction. If the world goes to pot, so be it. But all of God's people are commanded to cry out, "not on my watch!"
 - -Rob Dalrymple

C. Paul makes known the word of God - the mystery hidden for ages (1:25-26)

- The word of God is "fulfilled" not simply when it's preached in the world, but when it's dynamically and effectively proclaimed in the power of the Spirit
 - 1 Thes 1:4-5

- *Mystery* (continued in 2:2; 4:3)
 - Paul also writes to Eph 3:3-10

- The mystery (Christ in you, the hope of glory, Col 1:27)

Mentioned in OT/ST writings (wisdom and apocalyptic writings), often in prophetic/eschatological sense

- Daniel 2:27-30; 2:47

- Mysteries often have to do with God's purposes at the end-time
 - In the NT mystery appears 28 times, usually indicating:
 - i. Jesus making something known to disciples
 - Matt 13:11
 - To you it has been given to know the *secrets* (*μυστηρια*) of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.
 - ii. OT prophecy is being fulfilled
 - iii. Eschatological realities being fulfilled:
 - The Daniel 2 *mystery* was understood as an end-times messianic king

D. *To them* (God's saints)...

- Jesus made himself known to the world (John 1:1-18), but it is the saints who are the agents who make known the mystery of God (Christ in you, the hope of glory).

- Jews and Gentiles now have equal position as members of Christ's body
 - "Christ in you" =
 - i. Christ is the center of God's mystery
 - ii. The mystery has been made known among Gentiles/the World
 - Just as the glory of Yahweh would fill the temple, the glory of Christ fills His People.

E. *that we may present everyone mature in Christ*

- *THAT* (in order that)

- *Mature* (ESV/NIV11); Complete (NASB); Perfect (NIV84)
 - *Teleios*: Meeting the highest standard, complete, expert, mature
 - Phil 3:15; Mt 5:48; Mt 19:21

 - Literal perfection cannot be obtained by humans (only perfection by
 - Paul wants to be able to present every man "perfect" (or fully grown) in Christ, with the "coming of Christ" (*Parousia*) in mind.

VII. 1:29–2:3 Paul's labor for the Colossians

A. "For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face" (2:1)

- Personal address
- The "struggle" is not clear
 - 1. potential martyrdom?
 - 2. Paul's conflict/struggle for the gospel of faith

B. "that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love" (2:2a)

- *that*: IN ORDER THAT
- *Hearts*: the inner life of a person, the center of his personality
- *Encouraged* = Form of the word *parakaleo*
 - Kaleo: (ek + kaleo = *ekklesia*)
 - To call someone to oneself
- *Knit together in love*

C. "to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ." (2:2b)

- There is *assurance* in the gospel
 - Assurance is important for a church whose been exposed to false teachers
- Christ is *God's mystery*, making Him a very unique object
 - "knowledge" (*epignosko*)
 - the ultimate source of knowledge is not from the Gnostics, but is the *epignosko* found in God's Divine Mystery, Jesus!

D. "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (2:3)

- Wisdom (*sophia*) and knowledge (*gnosis*) are regarded as a single entity
 - Is. 11:2
- Hidden doesn't necessarily mean "concealed," but "stored up"
 - The Jews were confident that in the Law/Torah they possessed all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge
 - Prov 1:2, 7
 - For Paul it's knowing the Mystery of God, who is Christ!

VIII. 2:4–23 The Dangerous Teaching at Colossae

2:4–8 Warning about a deceptive teaching

A. *I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.* (2:4)

- *In order that*
- *delude (ESV)/deceive (NIV) with plausible arguments*
 - Paul is warning the Colossian community to not give in to the speech of false teachers

B. *"For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ."* (2:5)

- Paul's ways of being present spiritually
 - 1 Cor 5:3-5
 - live together "in Christ" -since the Spirit of God has united them - and are therefore together in the Spirit

C. *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.* (2:6-7)

- (you already received Christ, so walk in that)
- "Just as you were taught"
- Primitive Christian tradition was not concerned with the authority of famous teachers, The source was "from the Lord" 1 Cor 11:23
 - Early creedal confession:
 - "Christ is Lord" Rm 10:9; 1 Cor 12:3; Phil 2:11
- "*walk in him*"
 - Christology/theology and ethics are intimately conjoined
 - Paul's theology is always ethical, and his ethics are always theological!
 - If you believe that Christ is Lord, then you have submitted yourself to Christ's lordship, which will produce fruit in your life
- "*abounding in thanksgiving*"
 - Thanksgiving has seven references in Colossians (1:3; 1:12; 2:7; 3:15, 16, 17; 4:2)
 - Giving thanks is not simply "being grateful" it's giving thanks is active

D. *See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. (2:8)*

- "See to it" BEWARE! BE ON YOUR GUARD! WATCH OUT!
- "Takes you captive"
 - to "carry off as booty" (to rob)
- "*Philosophy and empty deceit*"
 - The false teachers in Colossae probably referred to their beliefs as "philosophies"
 - Paul isn't making a general comment about the study of philosophy, but warning against anything that would stand against the truth of the gospel

2:9–15 Help for the danger: resources in Christ

A. *"For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily...¹⁰and you have been filled in him," (2:9-10)*

- dwells: present tense (*is dwelling*)
 - different than 1:19 (aorist)
 - For in him all the fullness of God *was pleased to dwell*,
 - 1:19 is claiming that the fullness of God was dwelling in the Son's preincarnate state
 - 2:9 tells of the whole fullness of God residing in Christ's resurrected and exalted state
- Temple language from 1:19
 - Christ is the temple

B. *"In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ...buried in baptism, raised in faith..." (2:11-12)*

- made with hands
 - OT (LXX) language for false things made by humans:
 - idols/gods (Lev 26:1)
 - images (Lev 26:30)
- made without hands (things made by God) Dan 2:34, 35, 44-45; Mk 14:58
- The People of God are not identified with a physical circumcision, but a spiritual one
 - Jer 31:31-34

2:16–23 Additional warnings about the teaching

A. *Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. (2:16)*

- food and drink, festival, new moon, Sabbath

- *These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ (2:17)*
 - **Plato:** Believed in the "world of forms"
 - an idea which exists apart from the mind
 - Reality lies in the idea, not the physical thing itself

 - **Plato's Cave**
 - People are chained to the floor of a cave, watching shadows
 - One man is released and sees where the shadows are coming from
 - He wants to remain in the real world, but feels bad for his friends in the cave
 - He tells his friends the good news that the shadow are fake
 - Friends mock him

 - the Law served as a shadow of the Messiah²¹
 - The Messiah was the substance, the thing itself, Jesus fulfilled the Law
 - Mt 5:17-18
 - to trust in the shadowy dietary laws of the OT more than Christ is idol worship
 - Heb 8:5, 10:1

Therefore: (2:20) Since you have died with Christ, don't continue to live like the shadows matter!

- You've experienced life outside the cave, why do you want to live in the darkness?

²¹ Ibid. 862

IX. 3:1–4 The Proper Focus: Christ and the Life Above

A. ¹If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (3:1-3)

- English translations should have an emphatic **THEREFORE**
 - ESV: if then; NIV: Since, then
 - coordinating conjunction
 - What I've just said is going to be brought to life
 - Because you have been raised with Christ, your lives are to be different

- *Seek the things above*
 - present tense, continuous-ongoing action (continue on seeking the things above)
 - the two ages (the present age, and the age to come) is paralleled with the notion of lower and upper worlds
 - The Colossians had lived in the *present age* = the age of sinful nature
 - Participating in Christ's death and resurrection they have now participated in the "*age to come*" (the eternal kingdom of Yahweh; being reconciled to Yahweh)
 - Right now, *the present age*, and the *age to come*, exist simultaneously

X. 3:5–4:6 Instructions on Living the Christian Life

3:5–17 Dealing with the sins of the past, putting on Christ

A. ⁵Put to death therefore what is earthly in you:

- sexual immorality
- impurity
- passion
- evil desire
- and covetousness
 - which is idolatry
 - ⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming
 - ⁷In these you too once walked, when you were living in them

⁸But now you must put them all away:

- anger
- wrath
- malice
- slander
- and obscene talk from your mouth

⁹Do not

- lie to one another
 - seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices
 - ¹⁰and have put on the new self
 - which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator

B. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved (3:12-17)

- compassion
- kindness
- humility
- meekness
- patience,

bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another

- forgiving each other
 - as the Lord has forgiven you
 - so you also must forgive
- And above all these put on love
 - which binds everything together in perfect harmony

Paul and the human condition

- The theological problem/anecdote: **Romans 1:18-32 & 12 contras**

Passage	Romans 1	Romans 12	Passage
1:18	For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven	never avenge yourself, but leave it to the wrath of God	12:19
1:21	But they became futile in their thinking	but be transformed by the renewal of your mind	12:2
1:24	To the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves	For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and	12:4-5
1:25	Worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator	present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God , which is your spiritual worship	12:1
1:28	God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done	Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind	12:2
1:29	Covetousness	if your enemy is hungry/thirsty feed them/ give them drink	12:20
1:30	Slanderers	the one who exhorts , in his exhortation; love one another with brotherly affection	12:8, 10
1:30	Haughty	Do not be haughty , but associate with the lowly	12:16
1:30	Boastful	the one who exhorts, in his exhortation	12:8
1:30	Inventors of evil	do not be overcome by evil , but overcome evil with good.	12:21
1:31	Foolish	Do not be conformed to this world , but be transformed by the renewal of your mind	12:2
1:32	Though they know God's decree	by testing you may discern what is the will of God , what is good and acceptable and perfect	12:2
1:32	But give approval to those who practice them	Abhor what is evil , hold fast to what is good	12:9

3:18–4:1 Living in the Christian household

A. Household codes: general principles of Christian behavior applied to the Roman-Christian home²²

- The *household* was recognized as a stabilizing element in ancient society
 - included ALL who were under the authority of its head
- When the head of household was converted to Christianity, the whole household would normally joined in the new faith and received baptism
- Codes of "domestic behavior"
 - There were mutual duties of the husband, wife, parents and children, masters and slaves, etc
 - The codes weren't to abolish or reshape existing culture (esp in light of slavery), but to CHRISTIANIZE them
 - How does the church function in the home, in a 1st cent Roman culture?
- See also Eph 5:22-6:9

B. *Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. (3:18-19)*

- mutual duties of wives and husbands
 - The Church was God's "new creation" = practice living in the kingdom of God
 - Women, men, slaves, free, Jews, Gentiles had equal status
 - Col 3:11 (cf Gal 3:28)
- The subordinate one (wife) is addressed first
 - In the ancient world, the more important party is always addressed first
 - This is showing an equality of the one who is to be in submission

²² F.F. Bruce, *New International Commentary on the New Testament: Colossians* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984). 161

- 3:19, while the wife is to be in subjection, the husband has a counterpart obligation to LOVE his wife
 - Not mere "affectionate love" - active and unceasing care for her well-being
 - 1:4, 6 (love for the saints; it's bearing fruit and growing)
 - 1:10 walking in a manner worthy of the Lord
 - 1:13 transferred into the kingdom of His son
 - 3:1-3 If you've been raised with Christ, set your minds on things above
 - 3:5-11 Put away evil desires
 - sexual immorality, impurity, covetousness, anger, malice, wrath, slander, lying,
 - 3:12-17 Put on good desires
 - compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forgiving, love, let the peace of Christ rule your hearts

C. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. (3:20-21)

- Children obey, assuming that the law of Christ is taking precedence
- Torah (5th Command) Ex 20:12
 - ancient world "everlasting life" - offspring, and living in the land

E. ²²Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. ²⁵For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality. ¹Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. (3:22-4:1)

- Slaves who are believers are brothers with their masters
 - Slaves recognized as a leader in the church he would receive respect from masters
- Masters are to treat their slaves fairly and justly
 - They are masters on earth, but themselves have a master in heaven

4:2–4 Persistence in prayer

A. ²*Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.* ³*At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison—* ⁴*that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.*

- Prayer and thanksgiving are placed together (should be normative of the Christian life)
- Men and Women who are in constant care are constantly on "alert" and alive to the will of God
- General (4:2) and specific prayer (4:3-4)

- The "Mystery of Christ (4:3) is identical with the gospel
 - 1 Cor 2:1-2, 7

XI. 4:5–6 Good behavior toward those outside the community

A. ⁵*Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the best use of the time.* ⁶*Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.* (4:5-6)

- Behave wisely when you engage with non-Christians!

- Redeeming the time: Dan 2:8²³

XII. 4:7–17 Personal Greetings and Instructions

A. ⁷*Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord...* (4:7)

- Tychius was commissioned to carry the contributions

²³ Greg Beale. 868

B.¹⁰*Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him), ¹¹and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God...*

¹⁴*Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas. (4:10-14)*

- Paul's disciples: Jew (Aristarchus, Mark, Jesus Justus) and Gentile (Epaphras, Luke, Demas) (4:10)

- *Workers FOR the Kingdom of God* (4:11) the future kingdom, AND present kingdom

4:15–17 Greetings to the Christians in Laodicea

¹⁵*Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. ¹⁶And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. (4:15-16)*

- The local congregations knew of (and had fellowship) with other congregations

XIII. 4:18 Letter Closing

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

- the sender confirms the authenticity by signing his name

Appendix

Terms

Autographs: original documents (there are 1 of these)

Manuscripts: Any copy of the original

Exegesis: To explain and interpret: pulling the meaning from a text

Eisegesis: To insert one's own interpretation/meaning into the text

Genre: A category of composition

Biblical Studies: The study of a biblical text/book in its original context

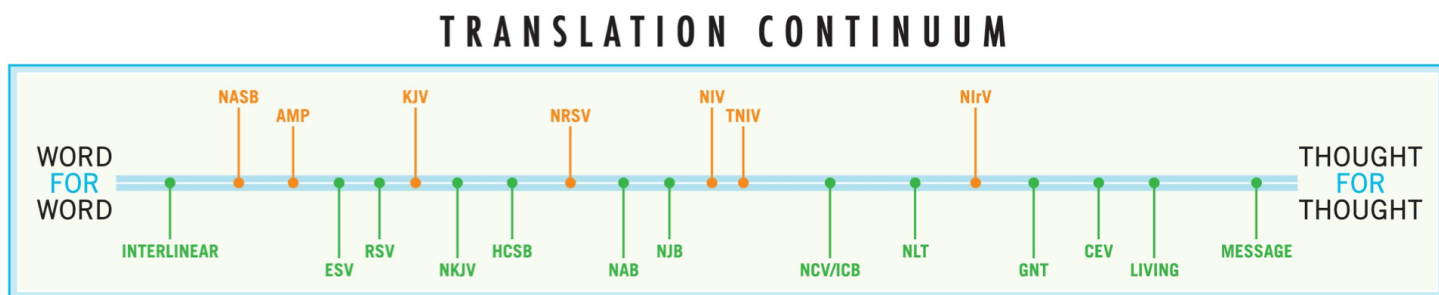
Theology: Systematic study/harmonization of the biblical revelation of God

Bible Translations

Formal Equivalent: (word for word) (Interlinear-NASB-ESV-NRSV-KJV-NKJV)

Dynamic Equivalent: (thought for thought) (TNIV-NIV)

Free Translation: (Phrase for Phrase in modern/simple thought) (NLT-The Message)



This continuum shows how different Bible translations fit into the word-for-word and thought-for-thought translation philosophies.

Goal of Bible Study

1. Understanding the Senders Intended Meaning (SIM)

- Literary context (micro and macro)
- Geographical context (gives the setting and audience)
- Historical context

2. Recontextualize for today's audience

The Esv Study Bible, English Standard Version Wheaton, IL, 2008.

Arnold, Clinton E. *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background Commentary: Volume 3, Romans to Philemon*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002.

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Greg Beale, Don Carson. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

O'Brien, Peter T. *Word Biblical Commentary: Colossians*. Waco: Word Books, 1982.

^{2:1}For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, ²that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. ⁵For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

⁶Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. ¹¹In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

^{2:16}Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

¹⁸Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, ¹⁹and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

²⁰If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations — ²¹“Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” ²²(referring to things that all perish as they are used) — according to human precepts and teachings? ²³These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

^{3:1}If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

⁶On account of these the wrath of God is coming. ⁷In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

¹¹Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

^{3:12}Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

¹⁸Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. ²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. ²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. ²²Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. ²³Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. ²⁵For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

^{4:1}Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

²Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— ⁴that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

⁵Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

⁷Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. ⁸I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, ⁹and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

^{4:10}Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him), ¹¹and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. ¹²Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. ¹⁴Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas. ¹⁵Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. ¹⁶And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. ¹⁷And say to Archippus, “See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.”

¹⁸I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

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