

Colossians

Background

- The book of Colossians is one of the prison epistles, written around 60 A.D.
- Paul wrote Colossians because of association, not because of personal mission. Colosse was 90 miles from Ephesus and about 12 miles from Laodemia.
- Philemon was among those who came to hear Paul and was converted. Philemon went back to take part in the church at Colosse.
- Ephesians was a "companion" letter emphasizing "The church is the body of Christ"; Colossians emphasized "Christ is the Head of the Church."
- Colossians was written to confront false teachings that were infiltrating the church: *Gnosticism*.

Gnostic Teachings

- Salvation is obtained by wisdom (1:28)
- God did not create the universe directly, but rather He created one creature who created another until finally Christ—one of many, not monogenesis (1:15-19; 2:18)
- Asceticism: avoiding the joys of life and the practice of self-denial (2:16, 23)
- Licentiousness: unrestrained immorality (3:5-9)

Outline

- What Christ Has Done (1:1–2:23)
- How Believers Should Live (3:1–4:18)

Theme

Colossians 1:1-8—Paul's Connection at Colosse: Ephras

Colossians 1:9-14—Paul's Petition for Colosse

It is a prayer for filling,
faithfulness,
fruitfulness and focus.

Colossians 1:15-29—Paul's Intention at Colosse

The theme of Colossians is to declare and demonstrate the Supremacy of Christ in the church and His authority over all things.

Insights

The Issue for Every Church in Every Generation: Christ and Christ Alone!

- The Identity of Christ (1:15)
- The Authority of Christ (1:16-17)
- The Supremacy of Christ (1:18)
- The Sufficiency of Christ (1:19-20)
- The Mystery of Christ (1:21-29)

The Issues in Colosse and For Us Today

- Christ Fulfilled the Law for all! (2:4, 8; 2:14)
- Christ Empowered us to live for Him. (1:27; 2:13-14)
- Christ Called us to a higher life. (3:1-4, 12-17)
- Christ Placed us to be "salt" in this world. (4:5-6; Matthew 5:13)

Closing

Col. 4:7-17 = Leadership Journal

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

—Colossians 4:18 ESV