

# *Why are we going to study Colossians?*

## Colossians 1:1 and forward

- We studied **Daniel** and Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.
- Then we studied **2 Samuel 7** in refer to God's promise to David of The Davidic Kingdom realized in Mil reign of JESUS CHRIST.
- Then we studied **Matthew 24-25** concerning the Tribulation and The Second Advent of JESUS CHRIST and entering into His Millennial Kingdom.
- This took us to a study of **1 and 2 Thessalonians** where we concentrated on our living in anticipation of *the Rapture*.
- Now we are going to study Colossians which prepares us for **the first thing to occur after the Rapture**, when we each stand before JESUS CHRIST at the Judgment Seat of Christ where our lives while here on earth will be evaluated by JESUS CHRIST as to whether or not we lived our lives **abiding in Christ**. If you have believed in JESUS CHRIST as your Savior you are ready for *the Rapture*. But are you ready for the JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST?

The reason that Colossians will prepare us for  
the Judgment Seat of Christ is that  
Colossians *glorifies* the Person of JESUS CHRIST.

The **Book of Ephesians**  
deals with the Body of Christ, the Church,  
and  
Colossians  
emphasizes the Head of the Body,  
Jesus the Christ, our Savior, our Friend.

*It is my prayer for each one of you that before we have  
completed our study of Colossians that each one of you  
will not only be ready for the Judgment Seat of Christ but  
will be anxiously waiting to stand before JESUS CHRIST.  
That each one of you will live each day abiding in Christ.  
That you know what that means, how it is accomplished,  
why you want to make that a daily goal in your life and  
that you enjoy the richness of a life abiding in Christ.*

Your hope should not be in some politician running for President, but **Christ in you, the hope of Glory.** Colossians 1:27.

## **A: Human Author:**

- (1) Paul during his first Roman Imprisonment;
- (2) For some 1800 years everyone accepted the fact that Paul wrote Colossians, but in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the rise of Satan's counter attack—with such things as Higher Criticism who approach the Bible with 'skepticism' challenge the authorship of Paul, not only in Colossians But several other epistles he wrote.
- (3) Along with challenging a great deal of the bible.
- (4) They also challenged that the writers of the Gospels were men who did not even know JESUS CHRIST personally.
- (5) In fact we will see in chapter 2 that Paul writes warning these believers of the very things we saw and are seeing in our time. Colossians 2:8

verse 25

**See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.**

- (6) But it is clear that Paul wrote this epistle. 1:1, 1:23 and 25 and finally in 4:18.

So Paul is the human author of Colossians.

## **B: Divine Author:**

- (1) God the Holy Spirit is the Divine author under the doctrine of **Divine Inspiration of Scripture**. I do not know of any doctrine more important than your view of the Holy Bible in opening the Bible.
- (2) Many people protest – they do not believe the bible because it is written by man. And therein lies the miracle of Divine Inspiration. Here is one book, made up of 66 books and the writing covers 1600 years. (Moses to writers of the New Testament in the first century AD.) And yet it is absolutely **consistent**—about God, about Salvation, about history. That is a miracle, until you realize that God the Holy Spirit is the Divine author of all 66 books.
- (3) Therefore this book is inerrant, and infallible and is the Word of God. And this book is not to be set aside from all disciplines in life but is the truthful guide to science, history, morality, and of course God’s plan of Salvation, Spirituality and reveals the truth on how to live a life free of SAD (*Stress, Anxiety, Depression*).
- (4) 2 Timothy 3:16

verse 16 **All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;**

verse 17 **so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**

- 4.1 Plenary inspiration: **ALL**
- 4.2 Complete plenary: **ALL SCRIPTURE** Old Testament and New Testament.
- 4.3 Divine authorship **INSPIRED BY GOD—GOD-BREATHED**
- 4.4 Complete and full value of all Scripture, to the spiritual life of those who believe it: **PROFITABLE FOR TEACHING (THE DOCTRINE), FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS**
- 4.5 Given by God that every believer may be **ADEQUATE, THE COMPLETE; EQUIPPED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK**. A Pastor-Teacher that does not believe that this book is completely God breathed - inerrant, infalliable Word of God is not worth listening to. Now the fact that he does believe this does not guarantee that he will be accurate or in line with truth in the Word of God but it is the place to start.

**A Pastor-Teacher that does not believe that this book is the completely God breathed -inerrant, infalliable WORD OF GOD is not worth listening to . Now the fact that he does believe this does not guarantee that he will be accurate or in line with truth in the WORD OF GOD but it is the place to start.**

### **C: Place of writing:**

Rome Colossians 4:18 Paul is in prison in Rome

### **D: Recipients:**

While it is addressed to the saints in Colossae, we know from 4:16 to all the surrounding churches in Laodicea. or all the churches in the Lycus valley: Colossae, Hierapolis and Laodicea, This valley was populated by natural born Greeks and Jews transported by Antiochus Epiphanes in 187 bc. (We Studied this is our study of Daniel) It is located about 100 miles east of Ephesus, about 11 miles from Laodicea; it was located on a major cross road—East—West; North—South

## **E: Approximate Date:**

Approximate date *of writing*: AD 60-61

## **F: More on the History of Colossae**

- 1- Colossae located about 100 miles east of Ephesus about 11 miles from Laodicea—the 7<sup>th</sup> church mentioned in Revelation 2-3. and located in the Roman province of Asia
- 2- In about 400 bc it was a thriving metropolis but with the growth of Laodicea and Heirapolis. Earlier it was located on a major Roman cross roads—east and west and north and south, but by the time of Paul it moved north a few miles to Laodicea.
- 3- The Bible does not record when or how this city was originally founded.
- 4- The first time it is mentioned is during the wars between Persia and Greece which you are familiar with from our study in Daniel. Around 475 bc Persia first invaded Greece. The Greek historian Herodotus—known as the Father of History (484?-425?) wrote concerning Colossae that it was a large city. (You can read further about this in Google)
- 5- Around 401 Xenophon (if you are interested in reading about some unusual people in history, read the story of this brilliant historian, general and philosopher. He was elevated to lead the famous 10,000 Greeks who marched to Persia to join Cyrus the brother of Artaxerxes II. Cyrus was going to depose his brother, but Cyrus was killed at the battle of Cunaxa (401 bc) It was after this that Xenophon was chosen as one of the leaders of the 10,000 who were trying to escape, they camped near Colossae at which time Zenophon said that Colossae was a large and prosperous metropolis.
- 6- But as time moved on to the time of Paul Colossae did not continue to grow. While two of the other cities mentioned in this epistle, Laodicea and Hierapolis grew extremely fast.
- 7- Then about a year or two before Paul wrote this epistle there was a major earthquake that severely damaged all three of these cities but Laodicea and Hierapolis quickly rebuilt. So even more people moved out of Colossae.

-8- Question: Why do I mention all this rather superfluous information?

Because I want you to see how Satan does not care about how insignificant a group may be to others, if that group is abiding in Christ, Satan will do all he can to destroy it.

To demonstrate how Satan lays the groundwork for his religions.

-9- Colossae was located in the center of the area of the worship of **Cybele—mother goddess—goddess of the earth**, where they worshipped the earth. And all we are doing today is going back to ancient paganism in the worship of the earth. Where the earth—nature is more important than man. We learned as we listened to Charles Clough how it is a major crime to kill the egg of an eagle but you can destroy the fetus of a human being and be supported by the government. Under the correct understanding of the Bible, the earth was created by God and man was put to rule the earth, and the earth was here for the benefit of mankind. But as we move away from the Bible we naturally move back into paganism where man worships the earth and places mankind subordinate to the earth.

In the development of the Roman Catholic Church the worship of mother – son from many of the cults including the Cybele cult was highly praised in order to attract many of these people.

-10- Another important point about Colossae was the Jewish influence. Many Jews from the time of Antiochus the Great in ca 200 bc had migrated to the area of Colossae as well as Laodicea. And they brought with them their industry and enterprise as well as many of their Jewish customs and traditions. Jews were in a large way responsible for the prosperity of this entire region in Asia.

-11- We now move to the time of Paul, after JESUS CHRIST that this local church was founded in Colossae and like those believers in Thessalonica these believers grew quickly in the WORD OF GOD, both Old and New Testament. We are not told who started this assembly, but we know it was not Paul. We know this from Paul's own words in 1:4 and 7-8.

verse 4

**since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints;**

verse 7 **just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,**

verse 8 **and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.**

## **G: Occasion for the Writing of this Letter.**

- (1) Paul is in prison in Rome (1<sup>st</sup> Roman imprisonment) and even though he is in Rome, he does not just sit and waste time, Paul writes the four prison Epistles: ***Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians*** and ***Philemon***. Paul was constantly going and teaching so God just sat him down in a jail in Rome so Paul would write these letters of the Bible.
- (2) As we will see this believers of the local assembly of were growing in the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST.
- (3) Satan is not going to leave this alone. Please learn this important PRINCIPLE: ***Satan always will muster up a counter attack with believers are growing in the Word of God.*** I have personally witnessed this in all three of the churches I have been associated with since becoming a believer in JESUS CHRIST. Satan will attack your marriage, your home and family, he will attack you, ***if you are abiding in Christ***
- (4) The pastor of the church in Colossian church, was a convert of Pauls named **Epaphras** Paul identifies him with wonderful title; **dear fellow servant and “a faithful minister of Christ”** Colossians 1:7 and 4:12. He is listed as a martyr for Christ in the first century.



- (5) Epaphras traveled over 1,300 miles from Colossae to Rome to visit with Paul about a growing problem in the assembly at Colossae. The assembly was being infiltrated by Gnosticism.

The problem was so critical he came to consult with Paul, who by the way had never been to Colossae. Interesting how on Paul's second missionary journey the Holy Spirit actually prevented Paul from going in this province -Acts 16:6- and directed him northward into Europe. Then on his third missionary journey, while Paul traveled through this area, he was on his way to Ephesus where he set up a school to train young men to go out and teach the word. I give thanks to God that we have 4 men ready to go out and teach the Word.

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- (6) ***There were 4 serious problems in the assembly.*** Satan could not stand it that these believers were abiding in Christ, growing in the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST. Colossae by this time was in a small, non-important area, but this does not matter to Satan, he must attack where Christ is glorified.
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- (7) **These 4 areas of attack by Satan:**

- (A) LEGALISM 2:16
- (B) PHILOSOPHY - GNOSTICISM 2:8
- (C) RELIGION 2:16
- (D) ASCETICISM 2:20-23

## **H: Satanic Counter-Attack: Gnosticism**

This is the **Devils world** and he counter attacks Christianity wherever he finds it. He is one of our three enemies: ***World, Flesh*** and the ***Devil***.

He has a multitude of systems used to counter any movement to glorify JESUS CHRIST

- 1 His evangelist 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
- 2 He preaches another gospel Galatians 1:6-9, 2 Corinthians 11:3-4
- 3 He has his own Satanic doctrine to counter the doctrine of the WORD OF GOD 1 Timothy 4:1ff
- 4 His communion Table 1 Corinthians 10:17-22
- 5 His system of morality or self-righteousness or religion Matthew 23:1-36
- 6 He obscures the truth 2 Corinthians 4:3-4
- 7 He has an unseen, unbelievable demonic organization Ephesians 6:12

## **I: Brief Description of the Attacks going on in this Assembly**

- <sup>(1)</sup> The first thing we have to understand is that there is not that much difference between what was going on in Colossae and what is going on today. It is a **mixture** of a lot of Satanic and human viewpoint.

**A little here and a little there** that was going on in Isaiah 28.

In Colossae and today, *man mixes a little here and a little there* and comes up with a **new religion** (like Mormonism) People do not like to accept the fact that they are inherently evil. So they try to come up with all kinds of religions and philosophies to explain away the bad.

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(2) Judaism –The area had a multitude of Jews who brought with them observation of Old Testament Laws, rituals, and Old Testament ceremonies. Even many who believed that Jesus is the Promised Messiah, still wanted to carry on these traditions from Old Testament. Remember if you are under any part of the Law you are subject to the whole law. We saw this in our study of Galatians.

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(3) This was mixed with Greek philosophy. You will like this! There is a **special knowledge** that was only available to the elite. That is to a select few of intellectuals or philosophers This **special knowledge** came to be known as **Gnosticism**. And was not available to the average Christian. Gnosticism will not be fully developed until the Second century, but the foundation of it began before the first century.

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(4) Now, mixed with these came what is known as **dualism**. (*Google it*) Basically '**dualism**' is made up of the theory that matter is evil and the soul of man was considered good and these were always at battle with each other. The old **good** **verse evil** came from dualism.

Of course to Bible oriented Christians.

Evil is of Satan

and

Good is of God

and

Matter, (the earth) is not evil.

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(5) now here is one you may not have heard of: the ladder of emanation (Google) Simply stated, everything is on this ladder with man on the bottom going up to God, where man becomes god,. (*Joseph Smith did not start this heresy*) The bible makes it clear that God is totally separated from all His creation.

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(6) Then you mix in some theories or philosophies about angels or higher creatures. Multitude of religions and parts of religions can be seen from a mixture of all these and much more.

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(7) The Satanic attack known as Gnosticism was well organized and most effective.

<sup>a</sup> “**Gnosticism**” comes from the Greek word ‘*gnosis*’ or knowledge. Gnosticism took a little out of Judaism and a great deal out of Hellenism.

While it ‘contained’—truth it was not truth.

<sup>b</sup> It also mixed in some Oriental (*Persian*) **dualism** which used the word “*pleroma*” meaning fullness. The **dualism** theory was that “*pleroma*”

## **J: Why Study the Book of Colossians?**

<sup>1</sup> Colossians is the most Christ centered, Christ informative books of all the New Testament.

(\*) **Christ**\_\_19 times

(\*) **Christ Jesus**\_\_3 times

(\*) **Lord**\_\_8 times

(\*) **Lord Jesus Christ**\_\_2 times

(\*) **He, Him, or His**\_\_30 times

- (\*) **Whom**\_\_\_4 times
- (\*) **Firstborn**\_\_\_2 times
- (\*) **The Head**\_\_\_2 times
- (\*) **The Son**\_\_\_1 time
- (\*) **Master**\_\_\_1 time

This list reveals that JESUS CHRIST is spoken of some 72 times. By the time we complete this study if you persevere, we will cover so much about our Savior and friend that you will desire to abide in Him.

- 2 JESUS CHRIST is pre-eminent through this epistle. He is the Creator of the universe and He Sustains the universe. He is the only Redeemer of mankind.

This short book is filled with

**who JESUS CHRIST is**

and

**what He has done.**

- 3 Paul strongly warns against believers not to turn to philosophies of man. In fact, not turn to any thinking that is not biblical. 2:8-9
- 4 Another interesting aspect of this book is that there are no Old Testament citations in Colossians. We will discuss this later.
- 5 Sufficiency of JESUS CHRIST In fact, there are **three sufficiencies** every believer must be aware of and believe.

- (1) Sufficiency of JESUS CHRIST
- (2) Sufficiency of The Word of God
- (3) Sufficiency of Grace

Their sufficiency means that we do not need to go anywhere for answers. Not to philosophies of man or psychology and all the other man-centered psychoheresies permeating the church today.

<sup>6</sup> It is well presented in this book that the believers *“union with Christ, in His death, resurrection and exaltation is the foundation upon which his earthly life must be built.”*

(Wilkinson) Our relationship with JESUS CHRIST and His Spirit should be readily seen by the world.

<sup>7</sup> The book of Colossians is easily divided in two parts. Chapters 1-2 are more doctrinal while chapters 3-4 are concerned primarily with application of our relationship with JESUS CHRIST to our lives.

verse 1 **Paul, an apostle of JESUS CHRIST by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,**

verse 2 **To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.**

verse 3 **We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, praying always for you,**

verse 4 **since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; 1 John 3:21-24**

verse 5 **because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel**

verse 6 **which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *of it* and understood the grace of God in truth;**

verse 7 **just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,**

verse 8 **and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.**

