

Bible Study



Philippians & Colossians

Material:

I have elected to use Mark Copeland's bible class material as our outline as we study the letters of Paul to the Philippians and Colossians this quarter. These are two separate workbooks as you will see consisting of 5 lessons each. You can find this material in the public domain at <http://www.executableoutlines.com> under "Bible Study Guides" if you would like to print the material yourself. At the end of each of the class workbooks assembled here I have also included brother Copeland's "Textual Study Guide" material if you would like to study a little deeper each section of scripture.

Preparation for Class:

Each class period will cover the material identified in the schedule below. Since this will be condensed to a 1 quarter study, we will not be able to have a verse by verse detail discussion of both letters. Each section listed below will have a series of questions over the material that all should take the time to study, answer and be ready to discuss in class.

Class Format:

Each week prior to the next class period I may also send additional thought material or a specific question that was not brought out by the class material we are using via an email. The objective will be to gain a proper understanding of the overall message and importance of these two letters written by Paul while he was imprisoned in Rome. At the same time, we want to deepen our understanding of certain sections of the text as we have time and to make clear application of how these letters should influence our lives.

Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM, Q4 2022 Proposed Class Schedule

Date	Scripture	Lesson Outline
Philippians Workbook		
October 5 th	Introduction; Phil 1:1-11	Pages 3-7; 8-10
October 12 th	Phil 1: 12-30	Pages 9-10
October 19 th	Phil 2:1-11	Page 11-13
October 26 th	Phil 2:12-30	Pages 12-14
November 2 nd	Phil 3:1-4:1	Pages 15-17
November 9 th	Phil 4:2-23	Pages 18-20
Colossians Workbook		
November 16 th	Introduction; Col 1:1-14	Pages 3-8; 9-12
November 23 rd	Col 1:15-29	Pages 10-12
November 30 th	Col 2:1-10	Page 13-16
December 7 th	Col 2:11-23	Page 14-16
December 14 th	Col 3:1-17	Pages 17-20
December 21 st	Col 3:18-4:1	Pages 18-20
December 28 th	Col 4:2-18	Pages 21-21



The Epistle To The Philippians



**A Study Guide With Introductory Comments,
Summaries, Outlines, And Review Questions**

(Student Edition)

MARK A. COPELAND

The Epistle To The Philippians

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This material is from **ExecutableOutlines.com**, a web site containing sermon outlines and Bible studies by Mark A. Copeland. Visit the web site to browse or download additional material for church or personal use.

The outlines were developed in the course of my ministry as a preacher of the gospel. Feel free to use them as they are, or adapt them to suit your own personal style. To God be the glory!

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The Epistle To The Philippians

Introduction

AUTHOR

The apostle **Paul (1:1)**, joined in his salutation by **Timothy**. Personal references by the author (**1:12-14; 2:19-24; 3:4-7; 4:15-16**) are certainly consistent with what we know of Paul from other New Testament sources. Paul's authorship of this letter is also supported by the testimony of early "church fathers" such as Polycarp and Irenaeus.

THE CITY OF PHILIPPI

Named after Philip of Macedonia, the father of Alexander the Great, it was a major city of Macedonia on the road from Rome to Asia known as the Egnatian Way. It was the site of a famous battle in 42 B.C. in which Antony and Octavius defeated Brutus and Cassius. In 30 B.C., Octavian made the town a Roman colony where retired soldiers could live and enjoy the full privileges of Roman citizenship (to which Paul may have alluded in **3:20**).

THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI

During his second missionary journey (49-52 A.D.), Paul and his traveling companions (Timothy and Silas) were making their way across Asia Minor (Turkey) when Paul received a vision at Troas. In the vision, a man of Macedonia pleaded, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." Perceiving that the Lord was calling them to go to Macedonia, they sailed from Troas (Luke having joined them) and eventually arrived at Philippi (**Ac 16:6-12**).

With the conversion of Lydia (**Ac 16:13-15**) and the Philippian jailor (**Ac 16:25-34**), the church was established at Philippi. The lack of a synagogue seems to indicate that Jews were not prevalent and so the church may have consisted primarily of Gentiles. From the conversion of Lydia and references in the epistle itself (**4:2-3**), it is evident that a number of women played a role in the growth of the church.

When it became necessary for Paul to leave, Luke seems to have stayed at Philippi (based upon careful observations of personal pronouns; e.g., "we, they", cf. **Ac 16:12; 17:1**). As Paul left Macedonia, the church at Philippi became a significant source of support (**4:15-16; 2 Co 11:9**).

Paul visited the church at Philippi again on his third missionary journey (**Ac 20:3,6**).

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Philippians is one of Paul's four "prison epistles" (**1:7,13,17**; cf. Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon). The general consensus is that these epistles were written during Paul's imprisonment at Rome (cf. **Ac 28:16,30-31**). If such is truly the case, then Paul wrote Philippians around **61-63 A.D.** from **Rome**.

PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE

The church at Philippi had sent a gift to Paul in Rome by the hand of Epaphroditus (4:10,18). Paul uses this occasion not only to thank them, but to comfort them concerning his situation as a prisoner for Jesus Christ (1:12-14). He also writes of his plans to send Timothy soon (2:19-24), and why he considered it necessary to send Epaphroditus back to them (2:25-30). There may have also been a problem at Philippi involving two women, for Paul has a few words to say concerning them (4:2-3).

THEME OF THE EPISTLE

Throughout this short and rather personal epistle, one keynote resounds again and again. That keynote is joy. Five times the word "joy" (Grk., chara) is found (1:4,25; 2:2,29; 4:1), and the verb "to rejoice" (Grk., chairein) occurs eleven times (twice in 1:18; 2:17,18; 4:4; once in 2:28; 3:1; 4:10). For this reason, the epistle to the Philippians has often been called Paul's "hymn of joy" in which the theme is:

"REJOICE IN THE LORD!"

KEY VERSE: Philippians 4:4

"Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!"

OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION (1:1-11)

1. Salutation (1-2)
2. Thanksgiving and prayer (3-11)

I. THE SITUATION IN ROME (1:12-26)

A. PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AND OPPOSITION (1:12-18)

1. Imprisonment has actually created opportunities to spread the gospel (1:12-14)
2. Even opposition has provided opportunity for Christ to be preached (1:15-18)

B. PAUL'S EXPECTATION OF DELIVERANCE (1:19-26)

1. By their prayers and the provision of the Holy Spirit, he knows all will turn out well for his salvation (1:19-20)
2. Whether he lives or dies, it will be a blessing (1:21-23)
3. Knowing their need of him at the present, he is confident of coming to them once again (1:24-26)

II. EXHORTATION TO BEHAVIOR WORTHY OF THE GOSPEL (1:27-2:18)

A. STAND FAST IN ONE SPIRIT (1:27-30)

1. Strive together for the faith of the gospel (1:27)

2. Do not be terrified by your adversaries (1:28-30)

B. BE OF ONE MIND BY FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST (2:1-11)

1. Make Paul's joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love (2:1-2)
2. In humility, look out for the interests of others (2:3-4)
3. Follow the example of Christ's humility (2:5-11)

C. SHINE AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD (2:12-18)

1. By working out their own salvation, for it is God who is at work in them (2:12-13)
2. As children of God, blameless and harmless (2:14-16)
3. Consider Paul's imprisonment as a reason to rejoice (2:17-18)

III. PLANS INVOLVING TIMOTHY AND EPAPHRODITUS (2:19-30)

A. TO SEND TIMOTHY SOON (2:19-24)

1. Paul plans to send him shortly (2:19)
2. Commendation of Timothy (2:20-22)
3. Timothy to come soon, hopefully followed by Paul himself (2:23-24)

B. TO SEND EPAPHRODITUS AT ONCE (2:25-30)

1. Why Paul felt it necessary to send Epaphroditus (2:25-28)
2. Receive him in the Lord with all gladness (2:29-30)

IV. WARNINGS AGAINST JUDAISM AND ANTINOMIANISM (3:1-21)

A. AGAINST JUDAISM (3:1-11)

1. Rejoice in the Lord, beware of those who place confidence in the flesh (3:1-3)
2. If anyone had reason to boast in the flesh, it would have been Paul (3:4-6)
3. But he gave it all up, that he might know Christ and the power of His resurrection (3:7-11)

B. AGAINST ANTINOMIANISM (3:12-21)

1. Paul's attitude of pressing on to perfection (3:12-14)
2. An exhortation for them to have the same mind (3:15-17)
3. A warning against those who serve their own desires (3:18-19)
4. A reminder of our true citizenship, and the hope it entails (3:20-21)

V. EXHORTATIONS TO UNITY, JOY, AND PEACE (4:1-9)

A. AN APPEAL TO EUODIA AND SYNTYCHE (4:1-3)

1. Prefaced with an exhortation to stand fast in the Lord (4:1)
2. A plea for them to be of one mind, assisted by others (4:2-3)

B. EXHORTATION CONCERNING JOY AND PEACE (4:4-9)

1. Rejoice in the Lord always, and be gentle to all (4:4-5)
2. Through prayer, let the peace of God guard your hearts from anxiety (4:6-7)
3. Meditate upon things worthy of virtue and praise, and follow Paul's example (4:8-9)

VI. THANKSGIVING FOR THEIR GENEROSITY (4:10-19)

A. THEIR GIFT A SOURCE OF JOY TO PAUL (10-14)

1. Paul rejoiced when they were able to care for him again (4:10)
2. Not that he really had need, for he had learned contentment (4:11-13)
3. But they have done well to share in his distress (4:14)

B. THEIR GIFT A SOURCE OF BLESSING FOR THEMSELVES (15-19)

1. A brief history of their giving to Paul (4:15-16)
2. Their giving abounds to their own account, viewed as an acceptable sacrifice to God, who will supply all their need (4:17-19)

CONCLUSION (4:20-23)

1. Praise to God (4:20)
2. Greetings from those with Paul, even those of Caesar's household (4:21-22)
3. Final benediction (4:23)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION

- 1) **On which missionary journey was the church at Philippi established?**
- 2) **Where can we read about the beginning of the church at Philippi?**
- 3) **Who seems to have stayed at Philippi after Paul left? (cf. "we, they", Ac 16:12; 17:1)**
- 4) **From where and when did Paul write Philippians?**
- 5) **What three other epistles were written about this time? What are the four epistles sometimes called?**
- 6) **What prompted the writing of Philippians? (cf. Ph 4:10,18)**
- 7) **From Acts 16 and Philippians 4, who were some of the members of the church at Philippi?**

8) What is the theme running throughout this epistle? Which verse stands out as the key verse?

9) List the six main sections of this epistle as given in the above outline

The Epistle To The Philippians

Chapter One

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To appreciate why the Philippians were a source of great joy to Paul
- 2) To learn from Paul's attitude concerning persecution, death, and the purpose of life

SUMMARY

Paul begins his epistle with his customary salutation followed by an expression of thanksgiving and prayer. The church at Philippi had been a source of great joy to Paul by virtue of their fellowship with him in the proclamation of the gospel. Confident that God will complete the work He began in them, Paul prays that their spiritual growth will continue (**1-11**).

His circumstances at Rome have actually been for the furtherance of the gospel, despite imprisonment and opposition by false brethren. He is confident that everything will turn out all right, and that he will even come to them again. It is not without mixed feelings, however, for he is torn between a desire to be with Christ and a realization that to remain in the flesh is more needful for them (**12-26**).

At the moment, his desire is that whether absent or present he may hear they are conducting themselves worthy of the gospel, by standing fast in one spirit and one mind for the gospel and not disturbed by any adversaries. They should take comfort in knowing that, like Paul, they have been granted the honor not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for His sake (**27-30**).

OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION (1-11)

A. SALUTATION (1-2)

1. From Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ (**1a**)
2. To the saints in Christ Jesus who in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons (**1b**)
3. Grace and peace from God and Jesus Christ (**2**)

B. PAUL'S THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER (3-11)

1. His thanksgiving for them (**3-8**)
 - a. That every thought, every request in their behalf, is one of joy (**3-4**)
 - b. For their fellowship in the gospel from the very first day (**5**)
 - c. He is confident that God will complete the work begun in them, for they have shared with him in his chains and the proclamation of the gospel (**6-7**)
 - d. God is his witness to how much he longs for them with the love of Jesus (**8**)
2. His prayer for them (**9-11**)

- a. That their love abound in knowledge and all discernment (9)
- b. That they approve the things that are excellent (10a)
- c. That they be sincere and without offense till Christ returns (10b)
- d. That they be filled with the fruits of righteousness (11)
 - 1) Made possible by Jesus Christ (11a)
 - 2) To the glory and praise of God (11b)

II. THE SITUATION IN ROME (11-26)

A. PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AND OPPOSITION (12-18)

1. Imprisonment has actually created opportunities to spread the gospel (12-14)
 - a. Things have turned out to the furtherance of the gospel, for even among the palace guard it is evident his chains are in Christ (12-13)
 - b. His example has emboldened others to speak without fear (14)
2. Even opposition has provided opportunity for Christ to be preached (15-18)
 - a. While some preach Christ out of love and good will, others do so with envy and strife, hoping to make things harder for Paul (15-17)
 - b. Yet Paul rejoices that in every way Christ is preached (18)

B. PAUL'S EXPECTATION OF DELIVERANCE (19-26)

1. He knows all will turn out well for his salvation (19-20)
 - a. Through their prayers and the help of the Holy Spirit (19)
 - b. He is confident that no matter what happens, Christ will be magnified (20)
2. Whether he lives or dies, it will be a blessing (21-23)
 - a. To live is Christ, to die is gain (21)
 - b. To live will mean fruitful labor, but to depart and be with Christ will be far better for him personally (22-23)
3. Knowing their need of him at the present, he is confident of coming to them once again (24-26)

III. EXHORTATION TO STAND FAST (27-30)

A. STRIVE TOGETHER FOR THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL (27)

1. He pleads that their conduct be worthy of the gospel (27a)
2. So that whether present or absent, he may hear that they are standing fast in one spirit, united in their efforts for the faith of the gospel (27b)

B. DO NOT BE TERRIFIED BY YOUR ADVERSARIES (28-30)

1. For such confidence is not a sign of perdition, but of salvation from God (28)
2. They have been granted not only to believe in Jesus, but also to suffer for Him even as he does (29-30)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

- 1) **What are the main points of this chapter?**

- 2) **Who joins Paul in addressing this epistle? To whom is it sent? (1)**

- 3) **For what is Paul thankful concerning the Philippians? (5)**

- 4) **What is Paul confident of concerning the Philippians? (6)**

- 5) **Upon what basis did Paul have this confidence concerning the Philippians? (7)**

- 6) **What four things did Paul pray for in behalf of the Philippians? (9-11)**

- 7) **What was the effect of Paul's imprisonment? (12)**

- 8) **What was Paul's attitude about those preaching Christ out of envy and strife, trying to do him harm? (15-18)**

- 9) **What was Paul's earnest desire and expectation that he could do with all boldness? (20)**

- 10) **What was Paul's attitude toward life and death? (21)**

- 11) **Between what two things was Paul hard pressed? (23-24)**

- 12) **What sort of conduct did Paul consider worthy of the gospel of Christ? (27)**

- 13) **What had been granted to the Philippians on behalf of Christ? (29)**

The Epistle To The Philippians

Chapter Two

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To appreciate the importance of unity, and how it can be maintained by following Jesus' example of humility
- 2) To understand what is involved in "shining as lights in the world"

SUMMARY

The first chapter included an exhortation to stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel (1:27). Paul continues with the call for unity, providing reasons why we should desire unity, the nature of our unity, and attitudes necessary to maintain unity (1-4). Stressing the need for humility and sacrificial service towards others, Paul appeals to the example of Christ and expounds upon how far Christ was willing to go to save us (5-11).

He continues with another exhortation to "shine as lights in the world" as they work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. Doing all things without complaining and arguing, while holding fast the word of life, they will prove themselves to be children of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. This will also prove to Paul that his labors have not been in vain, and any persecution he endures is viewed as a sacrifice in the service of their faith and a cause for mutual rejoicing (12-18).

He then writes of his plans pertaining to Timothy and Epaphroditus. He will send Timothy shortly, that he might know of their condition. But Epaphroditus is coming at once in order to set their hearts at ease about Epaphroditus' brush with death due to a recent illness (19-30).

OUTLINE

I. EXHORTATION TO UNITY (1-11)

A. THE MOTIVATION FOR UNITY (1)

1. The consolation we have in Christ
2. The comfort found in love
3. The fellowship we have in the Spirit
4. The affection and mercy we can enjoy

B. THE NATURE OF UNITY (2)

1. Being of like mind, having the same love
2. Of one accord, of one mind

C. ATTITUDES FOR MAINTAINING UNITY (3-5)

1. Do nothing through selfish ambition or conceit (3a)
2. With lowliness of mind let each one esteem others better than himself (3b)
3. Be concerned for the interest of others (4)
4. Let the mind that was in Christ be in you (5)

D. JESUS AS AN EXAMPLE OF UNSELFISH HUMILITY (6-11)

1. Though He was Deity, He was willing to come in the likeness of man (6-7)
2. As a man He humbled Himself in obedience to the point of dying on the cross (8)
3. Therefore God highly exalted Him so that at His name all should bow and confess Him to be Lord (9-11)

II. EXHORTATION TO SHINE AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD (12-18)

A. BY WORKING OUT THEIR OWN SALVATION (12-13)

1. Doing so with fear and trembling (12)
2. Remembering that God is at work in them (13)

B. AS CHILDREN OF GOD WITHOUT FAULT (14-16)

1. Doing all things without murmuring and complaining (14)
2. Blameless and harmless in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (15)
3. Holding fast the word of life, so that Paul may rejoice in the day of Christ (16)

C. VIEWING PAUL'S PERSECUTION AS A REASON TO REJOICE (17-18)

1. He views it as a "sacrifice", offered in the service of their faith (17a)
2. For this he is glad, and calls upon them to rejoice with him (17b-18)

III. PLANS INVOLVING TIMOTHY AND EPAPHRODITUS (19-30)

A. TO SEND TIMOTHY SOON (19-24)

1. That Paul might be encouraged when he learns of their condition (19)
2. His commendation of Timothy, as one who seeks the things of Christ, and who serves with Paul in the gospel as a son with his father (20-22)
3. He will be sent at once, as soon as Paul knows how things will go with him, and he himself hopes to come shortly (23-24)

B. TO SEND EPAPHRODITUS AT ONCE (25-30)

1. Because of his longing for them and his distress when they heard he was sick (25-27)
2. So he is coming that they might rejoice, and Paul himself will be less sorrowful (28)
3. Therefore receive him in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in high esteem for their sacrificial service to Christ and others (29-30)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

- 1) **What are the main points of this chapter?**

- 2) **What four things should serve as a motivation for unity? (1)**

- 3) **What should be the nature of our unity? (2)**

- 4) **What four things are necessary to maintain unity? (3-5)**

- 5) **What is said about Christ that proves Him to be a prime example of humility? (5-8)**

- 6) **Having been highly exalted, what should every person do at the name of Jesus? (9-11)**

- 7) **What did Paul want his beloved brethren to do in his absence? (12)**

- 8) **What is said about God working in the Christian? (13)**

- 9) **What two things are necessary if we are to be children of God without fault, harmless and blameless, shining as lights in the world? (14-16)**

- 10) **How did Paul view his imprisonment? (17)**

11) What two things are said about Timothy? (20, 22)

12) How does Paul describe Epaphroditus? (23)

The Epistle To The Philippians

Chapter Three

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see the error of placing confidence in fleshly accomplishments
- 2) To understand the need to strive toward perfection in our desire to know and serve Christ
- 3) To be reminded of our true citizenship in heaven

SUMMARY

In this chapter we find a warning against those who place great confidence in the flesh (1-3). If anyone had reason to boast about fleshly accomplishments, it was Paul with his Jewish heritage (4-6). But all such things were considered rubbish in relation to the excellence of knowing Christ Jesus (7-8).

Therefore Paul had as his goal to be found in Christ, having that righteousness which is by faith in Jesus, knowing Him and the power of His resurrection, and even sharing in His sufferings, that he might by any means attain to the resurrection from the dead (9-11).

Paul then describes his attitude of pressing on, and encourages all to follow his example and that of others who walk likewise (12-17). Such an exhortation is necessary in view of the reality that there are many people who are enemies of the cross of Christ, who have made their fleshly appetites the focus of their minds, and indeed their god (18-19). Christians, however, should remember that their true citizenship is in heaven, from which we eagerly wait for Jesus Christ who will transform our lowly bodies to be conformed to His glorious body (20-21).

OUTLINE

I. WARNINGS AGAINST JUDAISM (1-11)

A. BEWARE OF THE JUDAIZERS (1-3)

1. Rejoice in the Lord! (1)
2. Beware of "dogs", evil workers, the false circumcision (2)
3. For the true circumcision are those who...
 - a. Worship God in the Spirit
 - b. Rejoice in Christ
 - c. Have no confidence in the flesh (3)

B. PAUL'S EARLIER CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH (4-6)

1. Paul had many grounds for boasting in the flesh (4)
2. A list of things pertaining to the flesh in which he could have boasted (5-6)

C. PAUL'S DESIRE TO KNOW CHRIST (7-11)

1. He counted all as loss for the surpassing value of knowing Christ (7-8)
2. He supreme goal:
 - a. To have that righteousness which comes through faith in Christ (9)
 - b. To know Christ and the power of His resurrection (10a)
 - c. To share in His sufferings, even in His death, that by any means he might attain to the resurrection from the dead (10b-11)

II. WARNINGS AGAINST ANTINOMIANISM (12-21)

A. PAUL'S ATTITUDE OF PRESSING ON (12-14)

1. He does not consider himself perfect, so he presses on (12)
2. He forgets those things which are behind, and reaches forward to what lies ahead (13)
3. His goal is the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (14)

B. AN EXHORTATION FOR THEM TO HAVE THE SAME MIND (15-17)

1. Let those who are mature have the same mind (15)
2. To the degree you have already attained, so live (16)
3. Follow the example set by Paul and others, who live this way (17)

C. A WARNING AGAINST THE ENEMIES OF THE CROSS (18-19)

1. With tears, Paul warns them of those who do not walk properly (18)
2. Such people set their minds on earthly things, making their belly their god (19)

D. A REMINDER OF OUR TRUE CITIZENSHIP (20-21)

1. Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we eagerly wait for Jesus (20)
2. Who when He comes will transform our lowly body to conform to His glorious body (21)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

- 1) **What are the main points of this chapter?**

- 2) **Who does Paul warn against? (2)**

- 3) **What characterizes those who are the true circumcision? (3)**

- 4) **What sort of things could Paul have boasted pertaining to the flesh? (4-6)**

- 5) **How did Paul view these fleshly things? (7-8)**

- 6) **What was Paul's earnest desire? (9-11)**

- 7) **Did Paul view himself as having already attained, or having been perfected? (12)**

- 8) **According to Paul, what was the "one thing" he did? (13-14)**

- 9) **What is the attitude, or mind, of those who are "mature"? (15)**

- 10) **How should the Christian walk? (16)**

- 11) **Whose example were the Philippians to follow? (17)**

- 12) **What description is given of those who are "enemies of the cross of Christ"? (18-19)**

- 13) **Where is our citizenship? (20)**

- 14) **What will Christ do when He comes again? (21)**

The Epistle To The Philippians

Chapter Four

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To notice Paul's tactfulness in dealing with Euodia and Syntyche
- 2) To glean Paul's secrets for joy, peace, contentment, and strength
- 3) To consider how Paul viewed the Philippians' generosity towards him

SUMMARY

This final chapter begins with a series of exhortations to unity, joy, and peace. With great affection, Paul pleads with his beloved Philippians to stand fast in the Lord (1). With great diplomacy and a call for assistance from others, he implores Euodia and Syntyche to be of one mind in the Lord (3-4). He then follows with a call for them to rejoice always in the Lord, letting their gentleness be known to all, and through prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to allow the peace of God remove any anxiety (5-7). His final exhortations include a call to meditate on things of virtue and worthy of praise, and to imitate his example in order to ensure that God will be with them (8-9).

At last he comes to the matter which occasioned this letter, expressing joy and gratitude for the gift they had sent to him by way of Epaphroditus. As they had done before on several occasions, so now they had provided for his necessities. He is thankful, even though he was quite content, for he knows that this gift really abounds to their account, serving as a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is well pleasing to God (10-19).

His closing remarks include praise to God, and greetings from those with him, especially members of Caesar's household. As was his custom, he closes with a final prayer that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with them all (20-23).

OUTLINE

I. EXHORTATIONS TO UNITY, JOY, AND PEACE (1-9)

A. AN APPEAL TO EUODIA AND SYNTYCHE (1-3)

1. Prefaced with an exhortation to stand fast in the Lord (1)
2. A plea for Euodia and Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord (2)
3. A request for assistance in helping these women (3)

B. EXHORTATIONS TO REJOICE AND TO BE AT PEACE (4-9)

1. Rejoice in the Lord always, letting your gentleness be known to all (4-5)
2. Through prayer, allow the peace of God to guard your hearts from anxiety (6-7)

3. Meditate upon things worthy of virtue and praise, and follow Paul's example (8-9)

II. THANKSGIVING FOR THEIR GENEROSITY (10-23)

A. THEIR GIFT A SOURCE OF JOY TO PAUL (10-14)

1. Paul rejoiced when they were able to care for him again (10)
2. Not that he really had need (11-13)
 - a. For he had learned contentment (11-12)
 - b. For he had the strength of Christ (13)
3. But they have done well to share in his distress (14)

B. THEIR GIFT A SOURCE OF BLESSING FOR THEMSELVES (15-19)

1. A brief history of their giving to Paul (15-16)
2. Their giving abounds to their own account, viewed as an acceptable sacrifice to God (17-18)
3. God will supply all their needs according to His riches (19)

C. CONCLUDING REMARKS (20-23)

1. Praise to God (20)
2. Greetings from those with Paul, especially those of Caesar's household (21-22)
3. Final benediction of grace from the Lord Jesus Christ (23)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

- 1) **What are the main points of this chapter?**
- 2) **How does Paul describe his brethren as he exhorts them to stand fast in the Lord? (1)**
- 3) **What two women does Paul implore to be of the same mind in the Lord? (2)**
- 4) **What is said about these two women? (3)**
- 5) **In what are we to rejoice always? (4)**
- 6) **Why are we to let our gentleness (or moderation) be known to all men? (5)**

- 7) **What is the antidote for anxiety? (6)**

- 8) **What will the peace of God do in response to such thankful prayer? (7)**

- 9) **Upon what should one meditate? (8)**

- 10) **How can one ensure that the God of peace will be them? (9)**

- 11) **What had served as a source of great joy for Paul? (10)**

- 12) **What had Paul learned? (11-12)**

- 13) **How was Paul able to do all things? (13)**

- 14) **When had the church at Philippi helped Paul before? (15-16)**

- 15) **Why was Paul really pleased with their gift? (17)**

- 16) **How did Paul view the gift they had sent by way of Epaphroditus? (18)**

- 17) **Who would provide help for the Philippians? (19)**

- 18) **Who in particular sent greetings to the Philippians by way of Paul? (22)**

- 19) **What was Paul's final prayer for his beloved Philippians? (23)**



The Epistle To The Colossians



**A Study Guide With Introductory Comments,
Summaries, Outlines, And Review Questions**

(Student Edition)

MARK A. COPELAND

The Epistle To The Colossians

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The Epistle To The Colossians

Introduction

AUTHOR

The apostle **Paul**, joined in his salutation by **Timothy (1:1)**, and signed by Paul himself at the end of the letter (**4:18**). Early sources in church history that attribute this letter to Paul include: Eusebius (300 A.D.), Origen (250 A.D.), Clement of Alexandria (200 A.D.), Tertullian (200 A.D.), Irenaeus (200 A.D.), and the Muratorian Fragment (180 A.D.).

THE CITY OF COLOSSE

The city was located about 100 miles east of Ephesus in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). Together with Hieropolis (**4:13**) and Laodicea (**2:1; 4:13-16; Re 3:14-22**), Colosse made up a tri-city area. Each city had its own distinction:

- ◆ **Hierapolis**, a place for health, pleasure, and relaxation
- ◆ **Laodicea**, known for its commercial trade and politics
- ◆ **Colosse**, known simply as a small town

Colosse was mostly a pagan city, with a strong intermingling of Jews (in 62 B.C., there were 11,000 Jewish freemen in the tri-city area). This may explain the nature of some of the problems that arose among the church in Colosse (problems with both pagan and Jewish origin).

THE CHURCH AT COLOSSE

The establishment of the church is uncertain. At issue is whether Paul himself had ever been there. Some suggest that Paul may have done some work there during his third journey, on the way to Ephesus (cf. **Ac 18:23; 19:1**). Others point out that Paul's comments imply that he had not personally been in Colosse (cf. **2:1**). One possibility is that the church was established during Paul's extended stay at Ephesus, where the effect of his work spread throughout Asia Minor (cf. **Ac 19:8-10**). It may not have been Paul himself, but one of his coworkers who went out to Colosse. Paul's remarks in the epistle indicate that Epaphras was the one who preached the gospel there (**1:5-8**) and in Hierapolis and Laodicea (**4:12-13**). Though he was with Paul at the time the epistle was written, Epaphras is identified as "one of you" (**4:12**), suggesting that he may have originally been from Colosse.

Other members of the church at Colosse included Philemon, Apphia, and Archippus, who may have been father, mother, and son. By comparing the epistle to the Colossians with that written to Philemon, it is reasonable to suppose that the church at Colosse met in their home (cf. **4:17** with **Phile 1-2**, and the references to Archippus). If Philemon and his family were hosts of the church at Colosse, then

Onesimus (Philemon's slave) would have also been a member there upon his return (cf. **4:7-9** with **Phile 8-16**).

TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING

Colossians is one of Paul's four "prison epistles" (**4:18**; cf. Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon). The general consensus is that these epistles were written during Paul's imprisonment at Rome (cf. **Ac 28:16, 30-31**). If such is truly the case, then Paul wrote Colossians around **61-63 A.D.** from **Rome**. The indication is that the epistles to the Colossians, Philemon and the Ephesians were carried to their destination by Tychicus and Onesimus (cf. **4:7-9; Phile 10-12; Ep 6:21-22**).

PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE

Paul had received a report of the situation at Colosse by way of Epaphras (**1:7-8**). This report was for the most part favorable (**2:5**). But the subject matter in the epistle strongly suggests that the church was facing a twofold danger:

- ◆ The danger of relapse into paganism with its gross immorality (cf. **1:21-23; 2:6; 3:5-11**)
- ◆ The danger of accepting what has been come to known as "**The Colossian heresy**". This heresy was a syncretism involving four elements of both pagan and Jewish origin:
 - ✓ **Philosophies of men** - which denied the all sufficiency and preeminence of Christ (**2:8**)
 - ✓ **Judaistic ceremonialism** - which attached special significance to the rite of circumcision, food regulations, and observance of special days (**2:11,16-17**)
 - ✓ **Angel worship** - which detracted from the uniqueness of Christ (**2:18**)
 - ✓ **Asceticism** - which called for harsh treatment of the body as the means to control its lusts (**2:20-23**)

To guard against these dangers, Paul writes to:

- ◆ Warn the Colossians against relapse (**1:21-23**)
- ◆ Warn them against the "solution" being urged upon them by those denying the all-sufficiency of Christ (**2:8-23**)
- ◆ Direct their attention to the "Beloved Son", the "All-Sufficient and Preeminent Savior" (**1:13-18; 2:8-10**)

THEME OF THE EPISTLE

With the focus on Jesus Christ as the answer to "The Colossian heresy", the theme of this letter is clearly:

**CHRIST - THE FULNESS OF GOD,
AND THE PREEMINENT, ALL-SUFFICIENT SAVIOR**

KEY VERSES: Colossians 2:9-10

"For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power."

OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION (1:1-14)

1. Salutation (1-2)
2. Thanksgiving and prayer (3-14)

I. THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST (1:15-23)

A. IN CREATION (1:15-17)

1. The image of the invisible God (1:15a)
2. The first-born over all creation (1:15b-17)

B. IN REDEMPTION (1:18-23)

1. The head of the body, the church (1:18a)
2. The beginning, the first-born from the dead (1:18b)
3. That He might have preeminence in all things (1:18c)
 - a. In Whom all the fullness dwells (1:19)
 - b. In Whom all things are to be reconciled to God (1:20)
 - c. The Colossians as a case in point (1:21-23)

II. THE APOSTLE OF CHRIST (1:24-2:7)

A. PAUL'S SERVICE (1:24-29)

1. His joy in suffering for them (1:24)
2. His ministry (1:25-29)
 - a. A stewardship to proclaim the mystery of God now revealed (1:25-27)
 - b. A labor to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus (1:28-29)

B. PAUL'S SOLICITUDE (2:1-7)

1. His great concern for them (2:1-3)
2. Reasons for this concern (2:4-5)
3. Exhortations to be firmly established in Christ (2:6-7)

III. WARNINGS AGAINST "THE COLOSSIAN HERESY" (2:8-23)

A. WARNING AGAINST PHILOSOPHY (2:8-10)

1. Beware of being cheated by philosophy and empty deceit (2:8)
2. In Christ dwells the fullness of God, and you are complete in Him (2:9-10)

B. WARNING AGAINST JUDAISTIC CEREMONIALISM (2:11-17)

1. In Christ you have a circumcision made without hands (2:11-12)
2. You are made alive in Christ, and the handwriting of requirements that was against us has been taken away at the cross (2:13-15)
3. Therefore don't let anyone judge you in regards to food, festivals, or Sabbath days (2:16-17)

C. WARNING AGAINST ANGEL WORSHIP (2:18-19)

1. Don't let anyone defraud you of your reward by appealing to angel worship and imagined visions of a fleshly mind (2:18)
2. Such people do not hold fast to Christ as the Head, and from whom true divine nourishment comes (2:19)

D. WARNING AGAINST ASCETICISM (2:20-23)

1. Having died with Christ to the world, there is no need to submit to human ordinances (2:20-22)
2. While having appearances of wisdom, such practices have no value in controlling the indulgences of the flesh (2:23)

IV. THE CHRISTIAN SOLUTION (3:1-4:6)

A. SET YOUR MIND ON THINGS ABOVE (3:1-4)

1. Since you were raised with Christ, seek those things above (3:1-2)
2. For you have died and your life is now hidden in Christ, to be revealed when He appears (3:3-4)

B. PUT OFF THE OLD MAN (3:5-9)

1. Put to death your members here on the earth, for the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience (3:5-7)
2. Put off the old man with his deeds (3:8-9)

C. PUT ON THE NEW MAN (3:10-17)

1. Put on the new man, renewed in the image of our Creator (3:10-11)
2. As God's elect, put on Christ-like qualities (3:12-14)
3. Let God's peace rule in your hearts, and be thankful (3:15)
4. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another with song and singing with grace in your hearts (3:16)
5. Do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, with thanksgiving (3:17)

D. FAMILIAL RESPONSIBILITIES (3:18-4:1)

1. Wives toward their husbands (**3:18**)
2. Husbands toward their wives (**3:19**)
3. Children toward their parents (**3:20**)
4. Fathers toward their children (**3:21**)
5. Servants toward their masters (**3:22-25**)
6. Masters toward their servants (**4:1**)

E. EXHORTATIONS TO PRAYER AND PROPER CONDUCT (4:2-6)

1. Devote yourselves to prayer (**4:2-4**)
2. Walk in wisdom and let your speech be with grace (**4:5-6**)

V. PAUL'S COMPANIONS (4:7-14)

A. COMMENDATIONS OF HIS MESSENGERS (4:7-9)

1. Tychicus, a faithful servant who will inform them of Paul's circumstances (**4:7-8**)
2. Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother (**4:9**)

B. GREETINGS FROM HIS FRIENDS (4:10-14)

1. Aristarchus, Mark, and Justus, fellow workers for the kingdom of God (**4:10-11**)
2. Epaphras, one of them, and a servant of Christ (**4:12-13**)
3. Luke the beloved physician, and Demas (**4:14**)

CONCLUSION (4:15-18)

1. Greetings to those in Laodicea, and to Nymphas and the church in his house (**4:15**)
2. A command to read and exchange the epistles from Paul (**4:16**)
3. A personal exhortation to Archippus (**4:17**)
4. A personal signoff from the hand of Paul, with a request for remembrance and a prayer in their behalf (**4:18**)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION

- 1) **Who had taught the Colossians the truth concerning God's grace? (Co 1:6-7)**

- 2) **From where and when did Paul write Colossians?**

- 3) **What three other epistles were written about this time? What are the four epistles sometimes called?**

- 3) **What two potential dangers prompted the writing of this epistle?**

- 4) What four elements make up the "Colossian Heresy"?**

- 5) What is the "theme" of this epistle?**

- 6) What serves as the "key verses" of this epistle?**

- 7) According to the outline above, what are the five main subject divisions in this epistle?**

The Epistle To The Colossians

Chapter One

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see the relationship between understanding the grace of God and bearing fruit
- 2) To examine Paul's prayer for the Colossians for the keys to successful Christian living
- 3) To appreciate the preeminence of Christ in creation and our redemption

SUMMARY

Paul begins with his customary salutation followed by an expression of thanksgiving and prayer. Hearing of their condition from Epaphras, he is thankful for their faith, love, and hope (**1-8**). His prayer is that they be filled with the knowledge of God's will, walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, strengthened by God's glorious power, and ever thankful that the Father has qualified them to be partakers of the saints' inheritance. Especially since they were delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, where there is redemption and forgiveness of sins (**9-14**).

He then broaches the theme of this epistle, which is the preeminence and all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ our Savior. Paul first proclaims the preeminence of Christ in creation, and then His preeminence in redemption (**15-20**). The Colossians' own conversion is offered as a case in point in reference to the latter, and with a warning for them to remain steadfast (**21-23**).

The chapter ends with Paul's description of his ministry, in which he gladly suffered on behalf of Christ and His church. He views himself as a steward entrusted with a wonderful "mystery", which is being made known after having been hidden for ages. This "mystery" pertains to the Gentiles, and how Christ would be in them (**24-27**). Paul therefore worked diligently to preach Christ, with the goal of presenting every man perfect in Him (**28-29**).

OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION (1-14)

A. SALUTATION (1-2)

1. From Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God (**1a**)
2. And Timothy, "our brother" (**1b**)
3. To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, who are in Colosse (**2a**)
4. Grace and peace from God and Jesus Christ (**2b**)

B. PAUL'S THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER (3-14)

1. His thanksgiving for them (**3-8**)

- a. Given to God, with unceasing prayers in their behalf **(3)**
 - b. Given since he heard of:
 - 1) Their faith in Christ Jesus **(4a)**
 - 2) Their love for all the saints **(4b)**
 - c. Given because the hope laid up for them in heaven **(5)**
 - 1) Which they had heard by way of the gospel
 - a) Which had come to them as to all the world, bringing forth fruit **(6a)**
 - b) Even in them, since the day they heard and knew the grace of God **(6b)**
 - 2) Which they had heard by way of Epaphras
 - a) A dear fellow servant and faithful minister of Christ on their behalf **(7)**
 - b) Who declared to Paul their love in the Spirit **(8)**
2. His prayer for them **(9-14)**
- a. Offered unceasingly since he heard of their progress **(9a)**
 - b. Asking that they might...
 - 1) Be filled with the knowledge of God's will in wisdom and spiritual understanding **(9b)**
 - 2) Walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him **(10a)**
 - a) Being fruitful in every good work **(10b)**
 - b) Increasing in the knowledge of God **(10c)**
 - 3) Be strengthened with all might **(11a)**
 - a) According to His glorious power **(11b)**
 - b) For all patience and longsuffering with joy **(11c)**
 - 4) Give thanks to the Father **(12a)**
 - a) Who qualified us to be partakers of the saints' inheritance **(12b)**
 - b) Who has delivered us from the power of darkness **(13a)**
 - c) Who has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son **(13b)**
 - 1/ In whom we have redemption through His blood **(14a)**
 - 2/ In whom we have forgiveness of sins **(14b)**

II. THE PREMINENCE OF CHRIST (15-23)

A. IN CREATION (15-17)

- 1. He is the image of the invisible God **(15a)**
- 2. He is the firstborn over all creation **(15b)**
- 3. All things were created by Him **(16)**
- 4. He is before all things **(17a)**
- 5. In Him all things consist **(17b)**

B. IN REDEMPTION (18-23)

- 1. He is the head of the body, the church **(18a)**
- 2. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead **(18b)**
- 3. That He might have the preeminence in all things **(18c)**
- 4. It pleased the Father...
 - a. That in Him all the fullness should dwell **(19)**
 - b. That by Him all things were to be reconciled to Himself, making peace through the blood of the cross **(20)**

5. The Colossians as a case in point **(21-23)**
 - a. They were once alienated and enemies in mind, through wicked works **(21a)**
 - b. Yet now reconciled...
 - 1) In the body of His flesh through death **(21b-22a)**
 - 2) To be presented holy, blameless, and irreproachable in His sight **(22b)**
 - 3) If they continue in the faith...
 - a) Grounded and steadfast **(23a)**
 - b) Not moved away from the gospel
 - 1/ Which they heard **(23b)**
 - 2/ Which was preached to every creature under heaven **(23c)**
 - 3/ Of which Paul became a minister **(23d)**

III. THE APOSTLE OF CHRIST (24-29)

A. HIS JOY (24)

1. In suffering for their sake **(24a)**
2. For in his flesh he fills up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ **(24b)**
3. All is done for the sake of His body, the church **(24c)**

B. HIS MINISTRY (25-29)

1. Made a minister according to the stewardship from God **(25a)**
 - a. Given to him for them **(25b)**
 - b. To fulfill the word of God **(25c)**
 - 1) The mystery which has been hidden for ages and generations **(26a)**
 - 2) But now has been revealed to His saints **(26b)**
 - a) To whom God willed to make known the riches of the glorious mystery among the Gentiles **(27a)**
 - b) Which is Christ in them, the hope of glory **(27b)**
2. Proclaiming Christ **(28-29)**
 - a. By warning and teaching every man in all wisdom **(28a)**
 - b. That he might present every man perfect in Christ **(28b)**
 - 1) Laboring toward this end **(29a)**
 - 2) Striving according to His working which works in him mightily **(29b)**

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

1) What are the main points of this chapter?

2) Who joins Paul in the salutation of this epistle? (1)

- 3) **What three things had Paul heard about the Colossians, for which he gave thanks? (3-5)**
- 4) **How long had the gospel been bringing forth fruit in their lives? (6)**
- 5) **Who had informed Paul of their condition? (8)**
- 6) **List four things for which Paul prayed concerning the Colossians (9-11)**
- 7) **Into what have we been translated? (13)**
- 8) **What does one enjoy in Christ? (14)**
- 9) **List five things which illustrate Christ's preeminence in creation (15-17)**
- 10) **List four things which illustrate Christ's preeminence in redemption (18-20)**
- 11) **What was the former condition of the Colossians? How were they changed? (21-22)**
- 12) **Upon what condition would they be presented holy, blameless and irreproachable? (22-23)**
- 13) **What is said about the "mystery" which has been hidden? (26)**
- 14) **What is the glorious nature of this "mystery"? (27)**
- 15) **What was Paul's goal in preaching Christ? (28)**

The Epistle To The Colossians

Chapter Two

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see the relation between understanding the "mystery of God" and having a strong assurance of our salvation
- 2) To appreciate how baptism serves as our spiritual circumcision, and that it is a work of God which is performed, not a work of man
- 3) To understand how Christ brought an end to the Old Law by His death on the cross

SUMMARY

Paul reveals his great concern for those at Colosse and others he has not seen, expressing his desire that their hearts be knit together in love, and that they may have the assurance that comes from an understanding of the mystery of God as revealed through Christ. He rejoices in their good order and steadfastness, and encourages them to be firmly established in Christ, abounding in thanksgiving (1-7).

The word "Beware" in verse eight summarizes the rest of the chapter, in which Paul warns them of the dangers of "The Colossian Heresy". These dangers include being cheated through philosophy and vain deceit, and defrauded of their reward by those who appeal to false humility, the worship of angels, false visions, and strict regulations according to the commandments and doctrines of men which really have no value against the indulgence of the flesh. In Christ they are made complete, having undergone a circumcision not made with hands, in which God made them alive together with Christ. Since Christ has also nailed to the cross the "handwriting of requirements" that was against them and taken it out of the way, none can judge them regarding religious observances that were only a shadow pointing to the true substance of Christ (8-23).

OUTLINE

I. PAUL'S SOLICITUDE (1-7)

A. HIS GREAT CONCERN FOR THEM (1-3)

1. He has a great conflict for those...
 - a. In Colosse and Laodicea (1a)
 - b. Who have not seen his face in the flesh (1b)
2. His desire is that...
 - a. Their hearts be encouraged, knit together in love (2a)
 - b. They attain to all the riches of:
 - 1) The full assurance of understanding (2b)
 - 2) The knowledge of the mystery of God (2c)

- a) Both of the Father and of Christ (**2d**)
- b) In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (**3**)

B. REASONS FOR THIS CONCERN (4-5)

- 1. Lest anyone deceive them with persuasive words (**4**)
- 2. Though absent in the flesh, he is present with them in spirit (**5a**)
- 3. He rejoices to see...
 - a. Their good order (**5b**)
 - b. The steadfastness of their faith (**5c**)

C. EXHORTATIONS TO BE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED IN CHRIST (6-7)

- 1. As they have received Christ, so they should walk in Him (**6**)
 - a. Rooted and built up in Him (**7a**)
 - b. Established in the faith (**7b**)
 - As they were taught (**7c**)
- 2. Abounding with thanksgiving (**7d**)

II. WARNINGS AGAINST "THE COLOSSIAN HERESY" (8-23)

A. WARNING AGAINST PHILOSOPHY (8-10)

- 1. Beware of being cheated by philosophy and empty deceit (**8a**)
 - a. According to the traditions of men (**8b**)
 - b. According to the basic principles of the world (**8c**)
 - And not according to Christ (**8d**)
- 2. In Christ dwells the fullness of God, and you are complete in Him (**9-10**)
 - a. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Christ (**9**)
 - b. You are complete in Him, who is head over all principality and power (**10**)

B. WARNING AGAINST JUDAISTIC CEREMONIALISM (11-17)

- 1. In Christ you have a circumcision made without hands (**11-12**)
 - a. A putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh (**11**)
 - b. Having been buried with Christ in baptism (**12**)
 - 1) In which you were also raised with Him (**12a**)
 - 2) Through faith in the working of God, who raised Jesus from the dead (**12b**)
- 2. You are made alive in Christ, and the handwriting of requirements that was against us has been taken away at the cross (**13-15**)
 - a. Dead in sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God has made you alive (**13a**)
 - b. He has forgiven you all trespasses (**13b**)
 - c. He has wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us (**14**)
 - 1) That which was contrary to us (**14a**)
 - 2) He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross (**14b**)
 - d. He has disarmed principalities and powers (**15**)
 - 1) Having made a public spectacle of them (**15a**)
 - 2) Triumphant over them in it (**15b**)
- 3. Therefore don't let anyone judge you in regards to food, festivals, or Sabbath days (**16**)
 - a. They are only a shadow of things to come (**17a**)

- b. The substance is of Christ (17b)

C. WARNING AGAINST ANGEL WORSHIP (18-19)

1. Don't let anyone defraud you of your reward (18a)
 - a. By taking delight in false humility and worship of angels (18b)
 - b. By intruding into things not seen, vainly puffed by fleshly minds (18c)
2. Such people do not hold fast to Christ as the Head (19a)
 - a. From whom all the body grows (19b)
 - b. Nourished and knit together by various elements, with increase from God (19c)

D. WARNING AGAINST ASCETICISM (2:20-23)

1. There is no need to submit to human ordinances (2:20-22)
 - a. For you have died with Christ from basic principles of the world (20a)
 - b. Therefore do not subject yourselves to ascetic regulations (20b)
 - 1) Such as "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle" (21)
 - 2) They only concern things which perish with the using (22a)
 - 3) Which are according to commandments and doctrines of men (23)
2. Such practices are of no value (23)
 - a. They may have an appearance of wisdom in their...
 - 1) Self-imposed religion (23a)
 - 2) False humility (23b)
 - 3) Neglect of the body (23c)
 - b. But they are no value against the indulgence of the flesh (23d)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

- 1) What are the main points of this chapter?

- 2) What was Paul's strong desire for those he had not seen? (1-2)

- 3) What is "hidden" in Christ? (3)

- 4) What had Paul seen in the Colossians that caused him to rejoice? (5)

- 5) How were the Colossians to walk in Christ? (6-7)

- 6) What three things might be used to "cheat" us? (8)**

- 7) What is said about Jesus in relation to the Godhead? (9)**

- 8) What is our condition in Christ? (10)**

- 9) What sort of "circumcision" have we had in Christ? (11)**

- 10) What takes place in baptism? Who is the one at work in baptism? (12-13)**

- 11) What did Christ take out of the way, having nailed it to the cross? (14)**

- 12) In what things should we not let others judge us? (16-17)**

- 13) In what ways might people seek to defraud us? (18)**

- 14) What sort of "basic principles of the world" might others try to regulate upon us? (21)**

- 15) What is the truth about such traditions of men? (22-23)**

The Epistle To The Colossians

Chapter Three

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To see what Paul offers as the Christian solution in dealing with the problem of sin
- 2) To understand what our responsibilities are as "the elect of God, holy and beloved"

SUMMARY

Having warned the brethren of "the Colossian Heresy", and the need to be established in the faith of Jesus Christ, Paul now offers a detailed description of "the Christian Solution" to the problem of sin in their lives. Rather than being deceived or swayed by false alternatives, they need to seek those things above, where Christ is, to set their minds on things above and not on the earth. This is because they have been raised with Christ (cf. **Co 2:12**) and their life is now hidden in Christ, awaiting the day of His coming in which they will appear with Him in glory (**1-4**).

With minds set on Christ, they need to "put to death" those sins in which their earthly members engaged, and upon which the wrath of God is coming. This is done by "putting off" the old man with his deeds, and "putting on" the new man who is being renewed in knowledge after the image of Christ. The deeds of the old man and the characteristics of the new man are defined by Paul, followed with exhortations to allow the "peace of God" to rule in their hearts and to let the "word of Christ" dwell in them richly. He also charges them to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father (**5-17**).

As so much of their daily lives revolve around the home, Paul also addresses the responsibilities of various family members as they serve the Lord (**18-4:1**).

OUTLINE

I. THE CHRISTIAN SOLUTION (1-17)

A. SET YOUR MIND ON THINGS ABOVE (1-4)

1. Since you were raised with Christ, seek those things above (**1-2**)
 - a. Where Christ is, seated at God's right hand (**1**)
 - b. Not on the things on the earth (**2**)
2. For you have died, one day to appear with Christ in glory (**3-4**)
 - a. Your life is now hidden with Christ in God (**3**)
 - b. When Christ appears, you will also appear with Him in glory (**4**)

B. PUT OFF THE OLD MAN (5-9)

1. Put to death the members of your body (**5**)
 - a. Fornication

- b. Uncleaness
- c. Passion
- d. Evil desire
- e. Covetousness, which is idolatry
- For the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, and you also once walked in such things **(6-7)**
- 2. Put off the old man with his deeds **(8-9)**
 - a. Anger
 - b. Wrath
 - c. Malice
 - d. Blasphemy
 - e. Filthy language
 - f. Lying to one another

C. PUT ON THE NEW MAN (10-17)

- 1. In which you are renewed in the image of our Creator, where there is neither:
 - a. Greek nor Jew
 - b. Circumcised nor uncircumcised
 - c. Barbarian, Scythian
 - d. Slave nor free
 - But Christ, who is all and in all **(10-11)**
- 2. As God's elect, put on Christ-like qualities **(12-14)**
 - a. Tender mercies
 - b. Kindness
 - c. Humbleness of mind
 - d. Meekness
 - e. Longsuffering
 - f. Bearing with one another
 - g. Forgiving one another, even as Christ forgave you
 - h. Above all these things, put on love, the perfect tie that binds
- 3. In addition...
 - a. Let God's peace rule in your heart, and be thankful **(15)**
 - b. Let Christ's word dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another with song, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord **(16)**
 - c. Do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, with thanksgiving to God **(17)**

II. FAMILIAL RESPONSIBILITIES (18-4:1)

A. WIVES TOWARD THEIR HUSBANDS (18)

- 1. Submit to your own husbands
- 2. As is fitting in the Lord

B. HUSBANDS TOWARDS THEIR WIVES (19)

- 1. Love your wives
- 2. Do not be bitter toward them

C. CHILDREN TOWARD THEIR PARENTS (20)

1. Obey your parents in all things
2. This is well pleasing to the Lord

D. FATHERS TOWARD THEIR CHILDREN (21)

1. Do not provoke your children
2. Or they may become discouraged

E. SERVANTS TOWARD THEIR MASTERS (22-25)

1. Obey your earthly masters in all things (22)
 - a. Not with eye-service, seeking only to please men
 - b. But with sincerity of heart, fearing God
2. Do your work heartily (23-24)
 - a. As to the Lord and not to men (23)
 - b. Knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance (24)
3. He who does wrong... (25)
 - a. Will be repaid for the wrong he does
 - b. There will be no partiality

F. MASTERS TOWARD THEIR SERVANTS (4:1)

1. Give your servants what is just and fair
2. Knowing that you also have a Master in heaven

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

- 1) **What are the main points of this chapter?**

- 2) **What twofold charge is given to those who have been raised with Christ? (1-2)**

- 3) **Where is our "life" at the present? When shall it appear? (3-4)**

- 4) **What sins are we to "put to death"? (5)**

- 5) **Why must we put them to death? (6)**

- 6) **What other sins must we "put off"? (8,9)**

- 7) What have we "put off", and what have we "put on"? (9-10)

- 8) As God's elect (chosen), holy and beloved, what are we to "put on"? (12-14)

- 9) What must we allow the "peace of God" do? (15)

- 10) What must we allow the "word of Christ" do? (16)

- 11) How are we to teach and admonish one another? (16)

- 12) How are we to do all things, whether in word or deed? (17)

- 13) What is the duty of wives? (18)

- 14) What is the duty of husbands? (19)

- 15) What is the duty of children? (20)

- 16) What is the duty of fathers? (21)

- 17) What is the duty of servants? (22-23)

- 18) What positive motivation is there for a servant to so act? What negative motivation?
(24-25)

- 19) What is the duty of masters? What motivation is offered to do this? (4:1)

The Epistle To The Colossians

Chapter Four

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To consider the importance of prayer, and proper conduct toward those who are not Christians
- 2) To appreciate the value of God's "second string", those workers in the kingdom who assisted key players like Paul and contributed so much to the spread of the gospel

SUMMARY

Paul concludes his section on "the Christian Solution" as an alternative to the heresies being proposed at Colosse with exhortations to prayer and proper conduct. His desire is that they devote themselves to prayer with vigilance and thanksgiving. A special request for prayer in his behalf is made, that God might give him an open door for the word of God, and that he might make the mystery of Christ known. Their own conduct is to be with wisdom toward outsiders, making good use of their time. This includes speaking with grace, knowing how one ought to answer others (1-6).

Paul then mentions several companions, starting with Tychicus and Onesimus who were evidently the bearers of this epistle, and who would inform them of Paul's circumstances. Special greetings are also sent from brethren with Paul. These included three Jewish brethren (Aristarchus, Mark, Jesus called Justus), a brother who was from Colosse (Epaphras), a beloved physician (Luke), and one we know from another epistle (Demas, cf. 2 Ti 4:9) who later forsook Paul (7-14).

Finally, greetings are sent to those in Laodicea and the church meeting in the home of Nymphas, along with a charge to exchange epistles with the church in Laodicea. With a final exhortation for Archippus to fulfill his ministry, Paul signs off using his personal signature, asking that they remember his chains, and praying for grace on their behalf (15-18).

OUTLINE

I. EXHORTATIONS TO PRAYER AND PROPER CONDUCT (2-6)

A. DEVOTE YOURSELVES TO PRAYER (2-4)

1. Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant with thanksgiving (2)
2. Pray for ministers of God, like Paul (3-4)
 - a. That God would open a door for the Word (3a)
 - b. That Paul would make the mystery of Christ manifest (3b-4)

B. CONDUCT YOURSELVES PROPERLY (5-6)

1. Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of your time (5)
2. Speak with grace, properly answering each one (6)

II. PAUL'S COMPANIONS (7-14)

A. COMMENDATION OF HIS MESSENGERS (7-9)

1. Tychicus (7-8)
 - a. A beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord (8a)
 - b. Sent by Paul to inform them of his circumstances, and to comfort their hearts (8b-9)
2. Onesimus (9)
 - a. A faithful and beloved brother, from Colosse (9a)
 - b. He also will inform them of Paul's circumstances (9b)

B. GREETINGS FROM HIS FRIENDS (10-14)

1. From Aristarchus, a fellow prisoner (10a)
2. From Mark, a cousin of Barnabas, whom they are to welcome if he comes (10b)
3. From Jesus, called Justus, who together with Aristarchus and Mark are Paul's only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision (11)
4. From Epaphras (12-13)
 - a. One of their number at Colosse (12a)
 - b. A servant of Christ in their behalf (12b)
 - 1) Laboring fervently for them in prayers
 - 2) Praying that they may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God
 - c. Paul bears witness of his great zeal (13)
 - 1) For those at Colosse (13a)
 - 2) For those in Laodicea and Hierapolis (13b)
5. From Luke, the beloved physician (14a)
6. From Demas (14b)

III. CONCLUDING REMARKS (15-18)

A. PERSONAL MESSAGES (15-17)

1. Greet the brethren (15)
 - a. Those who are in Laodicea (15a)
 - b. Nymphas and the church in his house (15b)
2. Exchange epistles (16)
 - a. Once this epistle is read, see that it is read in the church of the Laodiceans (16a)
 - b. You also read the epistle from the church in Laodicea (16b)
3. A charge to Archippus, that he take heed to his ministry received from the Lord, and to fulfill it (17)

B. A PERSONAL SIGNOFF (18)

1. Salutation written by his own hands (18a)
2. A plea to remember his chains (18b)
3. A prayer that grace be with them (18c)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

- 1) What are the main points of this chapter?**

- 2) In calling them to earnest prayer, what four things does Paul ask of them? (2-4)**

- 3) How were they to walk? (5)**

- 4) How were they to speak? (6)**

- 5) How is Tychicus described? Why was Paul sending him? (7-8)**

- 6) How is Onesimus describe? What was Paul sending him? (9)**

- 7) What three men were Paul's only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who were of the circumcision, i.e. Jews? (10-11)**

- 8) What is said about Epaphras in relation to the churches in Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis? (12-13)**

- 9) Who else sends greetings? (14)**

- 10) To what two groups does Paul send greetings? (15)**

- 11) What was to be done with the epistle after it had been read to the church? (16)**

12) What was to be done with an epistle coming from Laodicea? (16)

13) What special charge does Paul tell them to give to Archippus? (17)

14) How does Paul confirm that this epistle was from him? (18)

15) What final request does Paul ask of the Colossians? (18)

16) What final prayer does Paul offer in behalf of the brethren? (18)

