

COLOSSIANS

Chapters One to Four

**Notes to use as you study through
the Book of Colossians, enabling you to receive
wonderful wisdom and revelation.**

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We present these notes to you, to enable you to study the book of Colossians more diligently, receiving “the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.”

[Eph.1:17-19]

COLOSSIANS

Chapter One

Introduction to Colossians in the Spirit Filled Life Bible

- Reveals the **deity (Godhood) of Christ**
- Reveals the **Lordship of Christ**
- Reveals the **Sufficiency of Christ**
- Teaches us that **through Christ believers find completeness**
- Reveals **Christ's uniqueness as God's eternal, only Son**
- In Christ dwells the totality of **Divine attributes, Divine Essence and Divine Power**

Who wrote the Book of Colossians?

Colossians 1:1 - Paul "*and Timothy our brother*" - the letter is from Paul & Timothy

- Timothy is a brother in the Lord – '**our brother**'

Paul introduces himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ

- Paul is clear that he has been appointed "*by the will of God*" – it is God's appointment, not man's
- We must know the calling from God

Who is the letter written to?

v.2 – note that every word of God is inspired of God and is profitable (**2 Tim.3:16**) – even these introductions to the letters

- **saints** – a holy person, a person who is set apart to God, real people
- **faithful brethren** – they can be relied upon, they are faithful
- they are ones who are '**in Christ**'

Paul ministers grace and peace

- 'grace and peace' are being ministered to us,
- in almost all the letters of Paul and Peter this greeting is given
- **Grace** - is God helping us, to enable us to be a saint and faithful brother or sister.
- Grace and peace come '**from God, Father of us, and Lord Jesus Christ**' [this is the literal]
- God is the Father of us, and He is the Lord Jesus Christ

Paul prays for the saints

Colossians 1:3 begins with Paul giving thanks to the **God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ** – the revelation of God is being expanded

- as an apostle Paul is praying for the saints in Colosse, **praying always** for them
- prayer is a way of life; when people come on your mind, pray for them
- the church in Colosse was greatly loved by Paul (he had never been there, it was a small town), and he **‘gave thanks’** for them

Faith & Love

- v.4 - Paul had heard of their **faith in Christ Jesus**,
- and he had heard of their **love for all the saints**

Hope & Truth

- v.5 there is a **‘hope’ laid up for us in heaven**; it is to be placed in our hearts on the earth
- Peter says we have been born again **“to a living hope ... to an inheritance incorruptible ... reserved in heaven for you ... ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Pet.1:3-5)**
- draw on that inheritance, that hope that is in heaven is for us to receive now, to be revealed to us now!
- the **“word of the truth of the gospel”** – the Colossians had received the **‘truth’** of the gospel, (**John 17:17 – “Your Word is truth”**)
- the word of truth is the gospel – it is to go out into all the world
- there is **faith, hope and love (1Cor.13:13)**.

The Gospel brings forth fruit

- v.6 – those in Colosse had received the Gospel, and Paul recognises that it has also gone out **“in all the world”**
- it is **bringing forth fruit** – the gospel brings forth fruit to God
- we hear the **grace** of God in **truth**

A testimony to the one who brought the gospel to them

- v.7 - Epaphras is the one they **‘learned from’**, and he is
 - **a dear fellow servant**
 - **a faithful minister of Christ**

Epaphras reported back to Paul

- **Colossians 1:8** – Paul had a great testimony about this church from Epaphras.
- they had a testimony of **love in the Spirit**
- may we have this testimony of being a loving people

Paul begins one of his deep and lofty prayers

Be filled with knowledge, wisdom and understanding

- **v.9** – Paul says that he does *“not cease to pray”* for them
- he prays specifically for them to be *“filled with the knowledge of His will”*
- you can walk in the will of God; God wants us to know His will.
- we can pray this prayer for each other
- it is with *“all wisdom and spiritual understanding”*

Increase in the knowledge of God

- **v.10** – this is how saints grow, through prayer all these things can be apprehended
- we can *“walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful ... and increasing in the knowledge of God”*

Strengthened with might

- **v.11** – when we are touched by the glory, we will be *“strengthened with all might”*
- the fruit of being touched by the glory is *“patience and longsuffering with joy”*
- this is according to His **glorious power**

Able to partake of the inheritance

- **v.12** – we are qualified [*entitled, authorised, enabled*] by the Father to partake of the inheritance of the saints in the light
- we are to continually give thanks for this

Delivered by His blood

- **v.13** – we have been *“delivered from the power of darkness”*
- and *“conveyed into the kingdom of the Son of His love”*
- Jesus is **The Son of His love** – we are now under His domain, His government; we are in a different kingdom.

Colossians 1:14 – do not have a bloodless religion! We are redeemed by the blood of Jesus

- we have forgiveness of sins
- if the blood is not there, there is no forgiveness (**Hebrews 9:22**)
- the blood is on the mercy seat (**Hebrews 9:12**)

Who is Jesus Christ?

1. The image of the invisible God

- **v.15a** – Jesus, the Son, is the **image of the invisible God**
- **Hebrews 1:3** – Jesus is the **express image of His Person**
- **image** = exact revelation or representation

2. The firstborn over all creation

- **v.15b** – Jesus is the **Firstborn over all creation**
- Firstborn – became the leader of the family when the father passed, received a double portion of the property/inheritance (**Deut.21:17**)

3. The Creator of all things

- **v.16** – *“by Him [Jesus Christ] all things were created”*
- things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible
- all things were created **by, through and for Jesus!**
- this is what the Bible actually says. Let us have a confession of Christ the Creator, not only ‘God’ but the ‘Son’ is the Creator
- Christ even created all the principalities, powers, thrones and dominions – **Ephesians 3:10-11** – the church is to make known the manifold wisdom of God to these powers in the heavenlies
- those powers are fully subject to Christ – **Ephesians 1:20-21**

4. The Sustainer of the whole universe

- **v.17** – Christ is the one who is the Sustainer of the whole universe
- the Universe only makes sense if you believe in Jesus Christ
- *“In Him all things consist”* - all things are held together by Him

5. The Firstborn from the dead

- **v.18** – Christ is the **Firstborn from the dead** – He is the First to rise from the dead; therefore there are many more to come
- many more to rise from the dead
- He has the **Pre-eminence** – the highest place of ascendancy, nothing can come close to Him, He has the First place, the highest rank and position forever!

In Christ dwells all the fullness

Colossians 1:19 – *“For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell”*, this is literally *‘For it pleased all the fullness to dwell in Him’*.

- ‘**All the fullness**’ is a reference to God
- All the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him (Christ)

Reconciled in Christ

v.20 - the reconciliation Christ brought, is for **all things**

- things in heaven and things on earth are reconciled in Christ
- **Eph.1:10** – God’s will is to *“gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, in Him”*
- This includes the dead in Christ in heaven and those in Christ on the earth - all are brought together in Him, (**1 Thess.4:16-17**).
- Christ *“made peace through the blood of the Cross”*
- the principalities and powers are not included in this, they can never be reconciled to God
- we have been brought back under an open heaven; like Jesus, we can walk under an open heaven while on the earth, just as Adam and Eve walked with God in the garden of Eden

Take captive the thoughts of the mind

v.21 - we were enemies and alienated by wickedness in our minds

- we are to pull down strongholds in the mind (**2 Cor.10:3-6**)
- the answer is to exercise the spiritual power given to us in Christ to pull down, cast down and take captive the things that come against God and His will
- when the thought comes, we need to decide what we do with it
- when our obedience is complete, we can punish the disobedience around us – we can have a good influence on those around us when our thoughts are in check

Remain in the Faith

v.22 - Christ is going to present us

- **holy, without blame and above reproach**
- He did this through the body of His flesh, by becoming a man and dying on the cross for us

v.23 – **‘if we continue in the faith’** – continue believing, do not give up on your faith

- we are to **be grounded (Eph.3:17** – rooted and grounded in love) **and steadfast**
- **not moved away from the hope of the gospel** – don't start believing in a rapture to take you out, or any other false doctrine.
- We have **the hope of glory, the hope of resurrection**
- This hope was preached to you and every creature under heaven (**Mark 16:15** – we are to preach the gospel to every creature, every person created by God)
- This is the message of which Paul became a minister of the gospel

The Profile of a minister – verses 24 - 29

Colossians 1:24 – Paul is suffering for the church – “**filling up in his flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ**”

- **Galatians 4:19** – Paul was in labour and travail for the saints for Christ to be formed in them, through travail, intercession, and supplication.
- these afflictions are for the sake of His Body, the church – the Body is the church
- Paul was called to ministry for the sake of the Body, the church
- we are to join Christ in this great intercession

Paul received grace to make known the mystery

v.25 - Paul received a dispensation of the grace of God to reveal who Christ is, the mystery (**Eph.3:2**)

- **Ephesians** and **Colossians** deal with the same core subjects
- a sign of apostolic ministry is to walk in, and be a steward of this grace
- **the ministry call was to fulfill the word of God**
- it is a ministry of the Word, to make known the word of God, preaching and teaching
- it includes the public reading of Scripture & exhortation (**1Tim.4:13**).
- **1 Peter 4:10-11** – steward the manifold grace of God, by speaking the Word and practically serving the Body – we can speak the oracles of God
- **Hebrews 5:12** – need to be taught the elementary principles of the oracles of God

Preaching the mystery of Christ

v.26 – what is the word of God? It is the mystery, the oracle, the deep things of God

- Paul as an apostle was called to make known the mystery of Christ
- we are called to present again to the church the knowledge of the mystery, the knowledge of His name
- the mysteries are a major part of our inheritance as the sons of God
- Paul was describing to us the unseen realm – where we are positioned in Christ
- this mystery was hidden in God *“from ages and generations but now has been revealed to His saints”* – this is our portion, to understand and see the revelation of the mystery.

Christ in you, the hope of glory!

Colossians 1:27 – *“God willed to make known”* to the saints *“what are the riches of the glory of this mystery”* among the nations

- the revelation of the mystery is *“Christ in you, the hope of glory”*
- **Romans 8:23-24** – the hope of glory, the adoption, the redemption of our bodies

We are to preach Christ

v.28 – Christ is the One we **preach**; we are to **warn** and **teach**, in all **wisdom**, for the purpose of **presenting every man perfect** in Christ Jesus.

- a) **Preach Christ** – proclaim the Word of God, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ (**Eph.3:8**), to declare the whole counsel of God (**Acts 20:27, Mark 16:15**), to preach the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ (**Acts 8:12**)
- b) **Warn** – to put in mind, to caution or reprove gently, admonish (not a heavy thing), we are to admonish one another (**Rom.15:14**), admonish the saints (**1 Thess.5:12**), bring instruction, when the word of God abides in us, we can admonish one another (**Col.3:16**), the Scriptures are for our admonition (**1 Cor.10:11**)
- c) **Teach** – **Matt.28:20** ‘teaching them to observe all things I commanded you’; **Heb.5:12** – teach the first principles of the oracles of God; **Jude 3** – teach the doctrines of the faith, the apostles’ doctrine; **Acts 2:42** – teach the apostles’ doctrine; **Acts 28:31** – teach the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ; **Acts 5:42** – teaching Jesus the Christ in every house, daily

- d) **Wisdom** – the ministry of the Word is *‘in all wisdom’*.
1 Cor.1:30 – Christ is the Wisdom of God; Wisdom is a person
Prov.4:7 – wisdom is the principal thing
James 3:17 – wisdom from above is seven-fold.
- e) To **present every man perfect** in Christ Jesus; this is the goal – to bring the saints to maturity.

Through the power of God at work

- **Colossians 1:29** – *“to this end”* – for this purpose
- Paul worked with the *“working”* (energy, action, operative power) of God which works in him mightily
- All ministry is to be conducted in the power and energy of God.

COLOSSIANS

Chapter Two

A Giant of an Epistle!

- The word ‘Colosse’ means ‘a giant’
- It is a giant of an epistle – it is a colossal epistle
- Every word has an impact

Colosse and Laodicea

Colossians 2:1 – Colosse and Laodicea seem to be sister churches, flowing out of the church in Ephesus

- Paul is writing to them both, and wants to make sure the letter gets to the Laodicean church

Paul had an inner conflict

- he knows these brethren do not have the full revelation of Christ yet
- they had not seen Paul’s face, he knew they had not heard the deeper things, the hidden wisdom, the mystery of Christ
- Paul travailed and laboured in intercessory birth pangs for the Galatians (**Gal.4:19**)

Paul wanted them to know ‘the mystery of God’

v.2 – Paul was exhorting them that their **hearts may be encouraged, knit together in love**, attaining to **all the riches of full assurance of understanding**

- So that they would come to the *“knowledge of the mystery of God”*
- There are many ‘mysteries’ in the New Testament – this is the *“mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ”*
- **1Tim.3:16** speaks of the mystery of Godliness – ‘God was manifest in the flesh’
- many translations just say, ‘*the mystery of God, of Christ*’, leaving out ‘*both of the Father and*’. But Paul is clear it is *“the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ”*
- this is the mystery - God is ‘both of the Father and of Christ’
- **1 Corinthians 2:6-7** – wisdom in a mystery, hidden wisdom, eternal wisdom, designed to bring forth His eternal glory

v.3 – *“in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”*

- these treasures are in Christ, they were hidden in Him

Beware of deception

Colossians 2:4 – watch out for persuaders, using persuasive words, even of the Bible

- they deceive and take you away from the mystery of God
- the mystery of God is for all

v.5 – Paul was absent in the flesh, but he was with them in the Spirit

- more than a euphemism, more than a platitude, there is something deeper that Paul experienced as the apostle responsible for the building of the church
- he could tell they were in good order, and they were **‘steadfast in their faith in Christ’**

Be established in the faith

v.6 – to receive Christ Jesus the Lord, is to be born again

- once we are born again, we have to learn to walk in Him

v.7 – **we need good foundations laid**

- having a foundation and being rooted and grounded in Him
- established – in the faith, in the doctrine, in the gospel truths
- we are to be taught – this is discipleship
- abound in the faith and in the teaching **“with thanksgiving”** – we are to spend more time giving thanks
- we are walking more and more into the glory, having the glory unveiled to us as we learn to walk in Him

Don't get caught in worldly thinking

v.8 – empty deceit – devoid of anything profitable

- philosophy – the love of wisdom in the Greek tradition, [**Zech.9:14** – the Greek mind, secular humanism, against the sons of Zion, those with the knowledge of God]
- *‘cheat’* means *to be taken captive* – do not be cheated, taken captive to worldly philosophies, which are not according to Christ.
- **“basic principles of the world”** also translated as ‘elements’ – SC#4747 – *‘stoicheion’* – all these philosophies are elements of the worldly way, the Greek way
- [See **Hebrews 5:12** – these elements are also translated as the ‘first principles of the oracles of God’]

The Fullness of the Godhead is in Christ

Colossians 2:9 – Godhead – SC#2320 *'theotes'* – stresses deity, divinity, the state of being God

- **Romans 1:20** – His eternal power and **Godhead** – SC#2305 – divinity
- **Acts 17:29** – the **'Divine Nature'** – SC#2304 Godhead (**2Pet.1:3** – we have become partakers of the divine nature)
- all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Christ Jesus
- this is a 'Colossal' statement in the book of Colossians!
- In **Christ is all the fullness of the Godhead in a body** – all that is referred to as divinity; the very full state of being God was in Christ.

We are complete in Him

v.10 – and we are complete in Him, not lacking anything

- He is *“the head of all principality and power”*
- because He is the fullness of God, we lack nothing when we are in Him,
- we do not need any human philosophies, or any other thing added

Buried and raised through Baptism

v.11 – we are *“circumcised with the circumcision made without hands”*

- this happens by *“putting off the body of the sins of the flesh”*
- allow Christ to work in you

v.12 – this circumcision is realised through our baptism

- being *“buried with Him in baptism”* and raised *“through faith in the working of God”*
- faith is the key in the baptism
- there is an experience of the resurrection power of Christ
- **Romans 6:3-4** – we are baptised into the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

Made alive together with Christ

v.13 – the contrast is between being **'dead in trespasses and sins'**, to then being **'alive in God through Christ'**.

- when we are born again, we enter a different realm and do things we never would have imagined before
- we are **totally forgiven all trespasses** – all false religion and idol worship is forgiven, and we remove false objects from our lives.
- To trespass is to cross over a line where we should not have gone.

Sins have been ‘wiped out’

Colossians 2:14 – *wiped out = obliteration*

- *‘handwriting’* = an acknowledgement of debt, certificate of debt
- this **certificate of debt was nailed to the cross**, totally taken away
- we are to have the knowledge of our sins being taken away
- all that was written against us as a debt of sin, was taken out of the way
- there is no more hindrance to fellowship with God

Principalities and Powers have been disarmed

v.15 – *“Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them”*

- *‘public spectacle’* - this was a victory procession through cities and villages after a great military victory, parading the military leaders they defeated through the streets to be ridiculed and shamed.
- This is the picture given of what Jesus accomplished over the powers of darkness through the Cross
- Satan is unemployed through the Cross – (**Heb.2:14-15**)

Let no one judge you

v.16 – let no one judge you regarding religious activities

- the things mentioned were part of the Judaistic religion
- food laws, feast days (three times a year), new moons (monthly) and sabbaths (weekly)
- many of these are being raised up again today as leaders make these requirements for believers – this is totally wrong

v.17 – the things listed in **verse 16** are ‘shadows’,

- the things of the law are ‘shadows’ that are meant to be pointing to the reality of Christ
- *“The ‘substance’ [that is the ‘body’] is of Christ”*

v.18 – *“Let no one cheat you of your reward”* – do not be cheated!

- *“worship of angels”* - delving into ‘angelology’ is a problem
- giving too much sway to angels, commanding angels to do things
- false teaching and false experiences, false visions
- deception, looking religious, false humility
- it causes arrogance; it causes people to be *“vainly puffed up”*; to become ones who think they know it all.

Remain attached to the Head

v.19 – we need to ‘**hold fast to the Head – Christ**’

- there is **only One Head** of the body – we all need Headship
- then the whole body can be “*nourished and knit together*” – with every part doing its share, (**Ephesians 4:16**)
- the increase comes from God

Don't follow the ways of the world

v.20 – “*Therefore*” – because of the whole body holding fast to the head, growing “*with the increase that is from God*” – don't follow the ways of the world.

- you have died with Christ [through baptism, **Rom.6:3-4**]
- the death is to the basic principles [elements] of the world, that is, the foundations of the world system; it is a death to allegiance to the world.
- do not follow the example of the world, or its regulations or rules, nor its religious practices, cultural ways etc.

v.21 – the regulations or rules include “*do not touch, do not taste, do not handle*”

- **1 John 1:1-3** – we are to handle, touch and experience the Word of life; this is the reality
- true Christians have a living testimony and experience of the Word

Such things will perish

v.22 – the principles and regulations of the world are “*things that perish*”

- they are “*commandments and doctrines of men*”
- formalities, declarations and announcements made by the world
- do not be intimidated by such things.

v.23 - they look wise, they look religious, they look like humility but finally they do not help you have victory over the flesh

- “*self-imposed religion*” has no spiritual value, it is fleshly.

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Chapter Three

Keep your focus on Christ - Colossians 3:1-4

We have been raised with Christ

- v.1 – you were raised with Christ when you were baptised
- therefore, we are to “*seek those things which are above*” – we are born from above and we are to seek the things from above.
- **above is where Christ is** – the place of the throne, seated far above, at the right hand of God, the position of all power and authority.

Set your mind on things above

- v.2 – we are to have a reset of our thoughts – “*set our mind on things above*”
- Sometimes we have to re-align our thoughts and decisions with the things which are above – where Christ is seated.
- don't be focused on earthly things

Remember what happened in baptism

- v.3 – “*For you died ...*” at baptism we died with Christ
- now we are **in Christ**, “*your life is hidden with Christ in God*”
- we are now covered by Christ.

We have this confidence

- v.4 – “*When Christ our life appears ...*” we will appear with Him in glory! Christ is our life.
- Christ is in us “*the hope of glory*” (Col.1:27)
- when He appears, we will appear with Him in glory
- **2 Cor.13:5** – we are to pass the test, knowing that He is in us!
- This is not going to heaven when you die but knowing that His life is manifesting in us now.

Let the Word of God do its work in you

- read the Word together, learn the Word, let it abide in you and the word will deliver you (**Hebrews 4:12** – it is quick and powerful).
- keep the soul life devoted to Christ in your mind, will and emotions

Be prepared to put to death the ‘old man of sin’

Colossians 3:5 – Paul commands us to do something

→ put to death all these terrible sins of the flesh

- this is not only referring to the act of doing these things but can refer to what we meditate on in our hearts and minds
- *covetousness* is wanting what others have, and is equal to *idolatry*
- In the western nations many get caught up in ‘what do I wear’, ‘what kind of house do I have’, ‘how much money do I have’, etc. This is carnal thinking, and we need to change our focus.

v.6 – this is a ‘judgement’ Scripture for the end times

- because of this terrible behaviour, the wrath of God is coming
- **“sons of disobedience”** – to be a ‘son’ is to manifest the character of that one or that thing you are a son of.
- a ‘son of disobedience’ is showing the character of disobedience, having a spirit of disobedience, and getting inspiration from other disobedient people.

No longer walk in the way of the sins of the flesh

v.7 – **“in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them”**

- we have all lived in this way, but now we are to ‘put these things off’.

v.8-9 – the good news is that we do not need to live in the old way anymore: (1 Cor.6:9-11 – we have been **washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus**)

- negative behaviours constitute the old man; but we have **“put off the old man with his deeds”**
- do not lie to one another – our conversation in Christ is speaking the truth to one another.

Put on the ‘new man’

v.10 – we do not just **put off**, but we **“put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”**

- Who made us? God did, we were created in His image. God is vast, He is awesome, unlimited and infinite.
- We are made in the **‘image of Him’** – Christ is the image of God (Col.1:15, 2Cor.4:4); note – ‘God’ is a ‘Him’ [singular]!
- In Christ we are renewed in the image – to be like Jesus

➤ **it is a choice to put off and a choice to put on**

- the earth will be filled with the *“knowledge of the glory”* (Hab.2:14)
- we are *“renewed in knowledge”*, now knowing the eternal God.

Christ is ‘all in all’

Colossians 3:11 – there is neither:

- ‘**Greek**’ = philosophy, knowledge;
nor ‘**Jew**’ = religious practices, exclusivity of others
 - ‘**Circumcised or uncircumcised**’ – that is marking in the flesh to show whom you belong to.
 - ‘**Barbarian**’ = those who did not speak Greek nor embrace Greek culture; ‘**Scythian**’ = a lower caste among the Barbarians
 - ‘**Slave nor free**’
- the summation is *“Christ is all and in all”* – it is all about Christ, of Him, to Him and through Him
 - **Gal.3:27-28** – put on Christ – we are *“all one in Christ Jesus”*

The character of the New Man

v.12 – as the *“elect of God”*, we are *“holy and beloved”*

- As such we are to *“put on”* ...
- ✓ **tender mercies** – compassion
- ✓ **kindness** – goodness in action, a fruit of the Spirit
- ✓ **humility, meekness and longsuffering**
- this is what Christ looks like: **the image of God**

v.13 – we are to:

- ✓ **bear with one another** – [Word Wealth at **2 Thess1:4** SFLB – *‘endure, carries the idea of persevering, tolerating, bearing with, putting up with, standing firm, and not losing courage under pressure’*]
- ✓ **forgive** as Christ forgave us; don’t hold on to things against others.

v.14 – *“above all these things ...”*

- ✓ **put on love** – this is the bond of perfection
- never tire of loving the brethren, being kind to one another
- you will be energized; love according to **1 Cor.13:4-8**

v.15 – *“let the peace of God rule in your heart”*

- ‘*rule*’ = what is governing you, to be the umpire.
- the peace of God is to govern us – we are to be led by His peace

- ***“be thankful”*** – thank Him and others for everything
- we are in the body – thank the other members of the body
- do not have a grumbling attitude.

Colossians 3:16 – the Word (Logos) is to dwell in us richly

- meditate on the word day and night (**Joshua 1:8-9**)
- **the word teaches and admonishes** [warns, instructs, gives counsel, correction] **us with all wisdom**
- we do this with:
 - ❖ Psalms
 - ❖ hymns
 - ❖ spiritual songs
- and it is all to be done ***“with grace in your hearts to the Lord”***

v.17 – *“whatever you do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God the Father through Him”*

- each member of the body is to take this to heart – do it all for Jesus

Godly character should reflect in relationships

v.18-22 – Paul gives basic instructions for **wives; husbands; children; fathers; bondservants**

- in all the relationships there are many categories
- our relationships should reflect the new nature we have *‘put on’*
- we should do all things ***“in sincerity of heart, fearing God”*** (v.22)

v.23 – *“Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men”*

- don’t be a ‘man-pleaser’, do all things in relationships ‘as to the Lord’. He sees all our relationships.

The reward comes from the Lord

v.24-25 – the reward is the inheritance we can receive from the Lord

- there is **no partiality**, we are **all accountable to the Lord**, we will be repaid
- admit your faults, failures, sins and regrets so that forgiveness can come.

COLOSSIANS

Chapter Four

Instructions to ‘masters’

Colossians 4:1 – give your bondservants (Greek ‘*doulos*’ = slaves) what is just and fair

- Paul is stepping into the public arena; according to the gospel, slaves are just as valuable as the slave master.

The importance of Prayer

v.2 – “*Continue earnestly*” – ‘*earnest*’ = sincere, genuine, real, pushing into something, deposit, be an adherent, devoted, constant.

- “*being vigilant*” – on watch, looking for what God is doing and being on guard against the enemy (**1 Peter 5:8**).
- “*with thanksgiving*” – giving thanks for what God has done and thanking Him for what He will do, this is faith (**Philippians 4:6-7**).
- do not be demanding in your prayers, but be grateful in your prayers, talking things over with your Father in heaven

Pray for the apostolic team

v.3 – “*praying also for us*” – the apostolic team – Timothy and Paul

- Pray for **God to open the door for the word** – an opportunity to speak the Word
- pray for the door to open to “*speak the mystery of Christ*” – He is God in the flesh, out of this mystery flows all the other mysteries
- Paul is equating the gospel with the mystery – the mystery is the gospel
- Preaching this could cause you to be put in chains.

v.4 – **the mystery of the gospel is to be spoken boldly – Eph.6:19**

- this is the voice from the dungeon – Paul is in prison, and he is not complaining as he is able to get the gospel out in written form.
- We are to speak this mystery in order to make it manifest – the Word is to manifest, to become flesh (**John 1:14**)

Walk in Wisdom

v.5 – “*Walk in wisdom ... redeeming the time*” (**Ephesians 5:15-16**)

- **Acts 6:3** – the place of wisdom – we are to walk in wisdom, we need wisdom, deacons and elders need wisdom, it is of the Holy Spirit

- the early apostles knew the primary importance of wisdom in appointing leadership in the church; those chosen to serve had to be ***“of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit, and wisdom”*** (Acts 6:3)
- we need wisdom in dealing with those in the world

Redeeming the time

- we are to ‘redeem’ (buy back) ‘the time’ (Greek ‘*kairos*’)
- the ‘time’ is not speaking of chronological time but the ‘*kairos*’ time which is referring to what is happening in the chronological time we are in – use the time to get people talking about real things
- talk about things that matter, influence your conversations with reality

Speech seasoned with salt

Colossians 4:6 – speech is to be ***“with grace and seasoned with salt”***,

- knowing how to answer each one
- salt = not ‘fighting words’ but ‘with grace’
- we are to speak with grace, answering people in a way that will settle them.
- not condemning, but empowering and causing a change of mind

Final Greetings

➔ **Paul mentions a number of the brethren by name** – he has a personal knowledge of each one.

v.7 – **Tychicus** – is ‘**a beloved brother, a faithful minister**’

- he is mentioned in **v.9** ***“with Onesimus”*** – Onesimus is on team with Tychicus, going out in the gospel - both are ‘**beloved and faithful**’
- Tychicus is loved, he is in a good relationship with Paul, and he is a ***“faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord”*** – working together in the gospel, teams are being sent out.
- Tychicus will tell you the news about Paul – **he is accountable and faithful to report** to the church
- we are to report how things are going, how ministry is going, what is happening

v.8 – Feedback – the reporting back will ***“comfort your heart”***

v.9 – **Onesimus** – on team with Tychicus, can be trusted to give an accurate report of what is happening.

Colossians 4:10 – **Aristarchus** – is mentioned as a ‘fellow prisoner’ with Paul, who also greets the brethren.

- **Mark** was a controversial figure – it seems that some of Paul’s friends had a judgement on Mark and Paul was giving instructions to them now to receive and welcome him.
- **Acts 15:36-41** – Mark had been on the first trip and had run away – Paul did not like that, but later he and Paul reconciled (**2Tim.4:11**)
- Mark was the cousin of Barnabas – he is from good stock

v.11 – there was another person named **Jesus**, who is called “**Justus**” – a name change

- Aristarchus, Mark and Justus are the only fellow workers from the Jews/circumcision; they are ‘*a comfort*’ to Paul

v.12 – **Epaphras** – had a great reputation – possibly founded the church in Colosse

- his prayer life is particularly mentioned
- his prayers are for them to “*stand perfect and complete in all the will of God*”

v.13 – Paul is bearing witness to Epaphras that he “*has a great zeal*” for the brethren in Colosse and also for all the brethren in Laodicea and in Hierapolis

- Paul had a company of brethren
- like Jesus, Paul had a company of disciples, fellow workers, fellow servants
- it is great to know people who have a ‘zeal for the Lord’

v.14 – **Luke** is a “*beloved Physician*” – it seems like he was a man who was much loved,

- he was Paul’s constant companion on mission, Timothy grew up under Paul with Luke
- **Demas** – Paul speaks of Demas again in **2 Tim.4:10** – unfortunately he ‘forsook Paul’ at a later stage “*having loved this present world*”
- But at this stage he seemed to be going well
- Be aware that sometimes even those who seem to be with you and are doing well, can still be drawn away by other things.

Colossians 4:15 – There is a church in Laodicea which meets in the house of **Nymphas** (or possibly ‘Nympha’ – a woman)

- The church was meeting in ‘the house’

v.16 – Make sure the Laodiceans get the letter

- Paul wanted his letters to the local churches to be passed on – the churches were to share the letters received; they were not for private consumption only.
- His letters were relevant to all the brethren and are relevant to us today.
- Paul is making known the mystery of God – this is the gospel for the end times – to make known the mystery of Christ

v.17 – Archippus – also mentioned in **Philemon 2** – had a church in his house, and is called a *“fellow soldier”*

- Paul sends a personal note for him to fulfill his ministry, encouraging him that he has received his ministry *“in the Lord”*
- All ministry comes from the Lord.

Signing off

v.18 – this is a personal letter; Paul loves these people

- they are all beloved; he personally knows the work that these individuals were doing
- he has personal relationships with all these brethren and with the churches
- he asks them to remember him in his situation.
- Finally releasing grace to them: *“Grace be with you”* AMEN!