

Colossians – The Supremacy of Christ

[1] – Introduction, Thanksgiving, and Prayer (1:1-14)

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1. Reading: **Colossians 1:3-8**
2. A study of the book of Colossians
3. Colosse: ~100 miles from Ephesus, close to Hierapolis and Laodicea (c.f. Col. 4:13,16); [map]
4. Purpose: Conveys the preeminence of Christ in ALL things – He is the first and foremost in everything – and our life should be ordered around that fact
5. Parallel in many ways to Ephesians
 - A. Ephesians – the church of Christ
 - B. Colossians – the Christ of the church
 - C. List of parallel passages
6. Outline
 - A. Introduction (1:1-14)
 - i. Greeting (1:1-2)
 - ii. Thanksgiving (1:3-8)
 - iii. Prayer (1:9-14)
 - B. Christ: Supremacy and Work (1:15-23)
 - C. Christ: the Goal of Paul's Ministry (1:34-2:5)
 - D. Christ: the Antidote for Error (2:6-23)
 - E. Christ: the Basis of a New Life (3:1-4:6)
 - F. Conclusion (4:7-18)
7. Introduction: Paul's Thanksgiving and Prayer (Col. 1:1-14)

Discussion:

I. GREETING (**COL. 1:1-2**)

- A. Written by: Paul, apostle of Jesus by God's will, & Timothy our bro.
- B. Written to: Saints and faithful brethren in Christ
 1. Two ways of referring to the same group of people
 2. They were Christians striving to serve God faithfully
- C. Grace and peace from: God (Father) and Christ (Lord)
 1. Grace – the favor of God
 2. Peace – inward calm that comes from being right with the Lord

II. THANKSGIVING (**COL. 1:3-8**)

- A. Paul and Timothy – giving thanks and praying always for them. To the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
 1. Their faith in Christ Jesus (**Col. 1:4a**)
 - a. It was known by others – Paul/Timothy heard of it
 - b. It was a steadfast faith (**Col. 2:5-7**)
 2. Their love of all saints (**Col. 1:4b**)
 - a. Again it was know by others
 - b. Love should be characteristic of our life in Christ (**1 Jn. 3:14, 4:7-8, 11**)
 3. Their hope in heaven (**Col. 1:5-8**)
 - our hope isn't here but in heaven
 - (**1 Pt. 1:3-5, 13; Heb. 6:18-20**) – Hope as an anchor
- A. Which they heard in the gospel (**Col. 1:5**)

- The source of this hope – the gospel (**Eph. 1:13; 1 Thess. 2:13**)
- B. Which came to them all the world (**Col. 1:6a**)
 - The gospel appeared to every creature (**Mk. 16:15; Col. 1:23**)
- C. Which is bringing forth fruit (**Col. 1:6b**)
 - God is glorified when we are fruitful (**Jn. 15:2,8**)
 - Occurred right away – since the day you heard and knew
- D. Which was learned from Epaphras (**Col. 1:7-8**)
 - thanks for those who share gospel (**Rom. 10:14-15; “Is. 52:7”**)
 - and he reported back their love. A sharing in the gospel.
- B. Are brethren thankful for us? Do they think of our faith, love, and hope?

III. PRAYER (**Col. 1:9-14**)

- A. Paul and Timothy – give thanks, praying always. – They are doing well but their earnest prayer is for them to grow and do more!
 1. Be filled with the knowledge of His will (**Col. 1:9b**)
 - Epignosis – true knowledge, full discernment
 - In all wisdom and spiritual understanding (prayer – **Js. 1:5**)
 - His will is made known to us in word (c.f. **Eph. 1:9; 3:3-5**)
 2. Walk worthy of the Lord (**Col. 1:10-14**)
 - The goal of knowledge of His will! (“*How sad to see a master of theology and a failure in living*”)
 - A repeated plea to saints (**Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thess. 2:11-12**)
- A. Fully pleasing Him (**Col. 1:10**)
 - Not about pleasing men but God (c.f. **Gal. 1:10**)
- B. Fruitful in every good work (**Col. 1:10**)
 - they need to continue bearing fruit (c.f. **Col. 1:6b**)
 - Paul: fruitful as long as I live! (**Phil. 1:19-22**)
 - if we are diligent, we will not be unfruitful (**2 Pt. 1:5-8**)
 - This is what we have been created for in Christ (**Eph. 2:10**)
 - Zealous of good works (**Titus 2:14; 3:1,8**)
- C. Increasing in the knowledge of God (**Col. 1:10**)
 - repeated from (**Col. 1:9**), this is important, foundational!
 - a lifelong pursuit of growing in knowledge of God’s word!
 - that we might be those who are worthy of the Lord
 - a safeguard from error (**2 Pt. 3:17-18**)
 - diligent effort, let word dwell richly (**2 Tim. 2:15; Col. 3:16**)
- D. Strengthened with all might (**Col. 1:11**)
 - strengthened by the power of God, NOT our own power
 - Can do things through Christ not possible alone (**Phil. 4:13**)
 - his prayer for the Ephesians (**Eph. 3:14-21**)
 - The whole armor of God (**Eph. 6:10-17**)
 - The result of strength: Patience, longsuffering, Joy (c.f. Fruit of the Spirit – **Gal. 5:22-23**)
- E. Giving thanks to the Father (**Col. 1:12-14**)
 - giving thanks always for all things (**Eph. 5:20**)
 - should be part of constant prayers to God (**1 Thess. 5:16-18**)
 - give thanks for:
 - Qualified us for our inheritance (**Col. 1:12b; 1 Pt. 1:3-5**)

- Delivered us from the power of darkness (**Col. 1:13a; Eph. 2:1-5**)
- Conveyed (translated) us into the kingdom of His Son (**Col. 1:13b-14**)

Conclusion:

1. What a great example for us in our relationship to Christ and to fellow Christians!
2. Are others thankful for our faith, love, and hope?
3. Are we filled with the knowledge of God's will?
4. Are we walking worthy of the Lord?
5. Are we in the kingdom of God's Son?
6. Do we need to make changes to our life to serve Christ or better serve Him?