

# COLOSSIANS

Introduction:

Paul wrote Colossians while he was in prison in Rome. He also wrote Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon while he was in the prison. These four books are called the Prison Epistles.

Colosse was an important city for trading. Paul probably never visited the city, but knew all about the people from people like Epaphras who told him about it.

Paul wrote Colossians in about 62 A.D. A servant named Epaphras carried the letter from Paul to the church people in the city of Colossae.

Colossians teaches us that Christ is the head of the church. He is the center of everything we do. Christ is the fullness of God. In Christ we are made full.

The church at Colossae met in the home of Philemon. There probably never was a church building there.

**Colossians 1:1 From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus. I am an apostle because that is what God wanted. Also from Timothy, our brother.**

“**Apostle**” is from a root word that means “to send”. In the New Testament “apostle” means an approved spokesman sent as a personal representative of Christ. Paul was not one of the original 12 Apostles. They were with Christ from the beginning of His ministry. But Paul did see the risen Christ (1 Corinthians 9:1). God gave Paul miraculous powers which proved his authority as an apostle.

...**Christ Jesus**... not a first and last name. Christ means the Anointed One – anointed by God to be our King, Prophet, and High Priest. Jesus is the human name of our God. It means the Savior.

...**that is what God wanted**... God made him an apostle. Paul was in the will of God when he was an apostle.

Every believer is called to serve God. Are you serving God in the right way, doing the things He wants you to do?

...**Timothy**... often ministered with Paul. His father was a Gentile, but his mother and grandmother were godly Jews. Timothy learned the Old Testament scriptures from them.

**2 Timothy 3:15** Since you were a child you have known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise. And that wisdom leads to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

**Colossians 1:2 To the holy and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ that live in Colossae: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.**

...**holy and faithful**... chosen and set apart for God. This is not two separate groups of people. Believers are chosen and set apart!

...**in Christ...in Colossae**... the most important thing is for us to be in Christ. It is not important what city you are in as long as you are in Him.

...**Grace and peace**... combined Greek greeting (grace) and Jewish greeting (peace). God's favor and a healthy circumstance of life. Both the grace and peace come to us ...**from God our Father**. We need to know the grace of God before we can experience the peace of God.

Some of the oldest and most reliable manuscripts finish this verse with ...**from God our Father** and the Lord Jesus Christ. We don't know if it was in the original that Paul wrote, or if it was added later. Either way, it does not change anything.

**Colossians 1:3-4** In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>4</sup> because we have heard about the faith you have in Christ Jesus and the love you have for all of God's people.

Paul and Timothy's prayer is worship including thanksgiving and intercession.

Each time they prayed, they interceded for the Colossians and gave praise for God's work among them.

We can pray directly to God. We do not have to pray "through" Mary, or a priest, or anyone else. One of the benefits of being justified by faith is that we have access to God.

**Philippians 4:6** Do not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks.

**Colossians 1:5-6** You have this faith and love because of your hope, and what you hope for is kept safe for you in heaven. You learned about this hope when you heard the message about the truth, the Good News <sup>6</sup> that was told to you. Everywhere in the world that Good News is bringing blessings and is growing. This has happened with you, too, since you heard the Good News and understood the truth about the grace of God.

**Faith** in what God did in the past. We look upward to God

**Hope** in what God will do in the future. We look forward to the future.

**Love** for God and all His children in the present. We look outward to others.

**1 Corinthians 13:13** So these three things continue forever: faith, hope, and love. And the greatest of these is love.

...**the truth, the Good News**... the gospel is a simple message that God wants us to believe.

...**the Good News**... Jesus was born of a virgin. He did miracles. He is the God-man. He died on the cross, was buried, and rose again. He ascended into heaven. He sent the Holy Spirit and formed His church. He is sitting at God's right hand today. Through Jesus we are redeemed. We have rest in Him. He is interceding for us. He is going to return to earth again.

...**Everywhere in the world**... literal truth, hyperbole, or prophetic? Literal. The word "world" is from the Greek work *kosmos* which meant the Roman Empire of that day.

...**bringing blessings**... wherever the gospel is preached it brings blessings!

**Colossians 1:7-8** You learned about God's grace from Epaphras, whom we love. He works together with us and is a faithful servant of Christ for us. <sup>8</sup> He also told us about the love you have from the Holy Spirit.

...**Epaphras, whom we love**... was in prison in Rome with Paul. (Philemon 1:23) He was ...**a faithful servant of Christ**... I hope that is true for each of us, too.

...**the love you have from the Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit lives in us. So, the love (*agape*) we have is from the Holy Spirit. We can not have that kind of love without the Holy Spirit helping us.

**Galatians 5:22** But the Spirit produces the fruit of love, joy, peace, ...

**Colossians 1:9-10** Because of this, since the day we heard about you, we have continued praying for you, asking God that you will know fully what he wants. We pray that you will also have great wisdom and understanding in spiritual things <sup>10</sup> so that you will live the kind of life that honors and pleases the Lord in every way. You will produce fruit in every good work and grow in the knowledge of God.

Because Paul had heard a good report about the believers in Colosse, he prayed for them continually. (He never forgot to pray for them).

...**asking God that you will know fully what he wants**. Paul was praying that the Colossian believers would fully know God's will for them, and that they would understand God's will deeply. We don't know God's will with our own natural mind. We can only know it through the Holy Spirit.

...**great wisdom and understanding in spiritual things**... not human wisdom – from the Spirit.

**1 Corinthians 2:13** And we speak about these things, not with words taught us by human wisdom but with words taught us by the Spirit. And so we explain spiritual truths to spiritual people.

...**so that you will live the kind of life that honors and pleases the Lord in every way**. God gives us great wisdom and understanding so that our lives will change. So that our actions will please the Lord, and we will have ...**fruit in every good work and grow in the knowledge of God**.

When our lives please the Lord like that, we produce fruit, grow in knowledge, (1:10) are strengthened, (1:11) and give thanks (1:12).

**Colossians 1:11** God will strengthen you with his own great power so that you will not give up when troubles come, but you will be patient.

God makes us stronger so we can resist the enemy and overcome.

...**his own great power**... not just the strength we need, He gives us His own power.

Strength and power come to us from the Holy Spirit.

**Ephesians 3:16** I ask the Father in his great glory to give you the power to be strong inwardly through his Spirit.

Our faith becomes stronger because we ...**will not give up**.

**James 1:3** because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience.

**Colossians 1:12** And you will joyfully give thanks to the Father who has made you able to have a share in all that he has prepared for his people in the kingdom of light.

...**you will joyfully give thanks**... God's power and patience should make us joyful and thankful.

Even though our own self fails often, God has prepared us so we will receive an inheritance in heaven.

**Colossians 1:13-14** God has freed us from the power of darkness, and he brought us into the kingdom of his dear Son. <sup>14</sup>The Son paid for our sins, and in him we have forgiveness.

Light and darkness are symbols of good and evil; God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom.

...**paid for our sins**... redeemed – bought us back from the devil.

We are free because Jesus paid the price for us on the cross. He suffered and died so we could live free. Our sins have been forgiven.

**Ephesians 1:7** In Christ we are set free by the blood of his death, and so we have forgiveness of sins. How rich is God's grace,

**Colossians 1:15** No one can see God, but Jesus Christ is exactly like him. He ranks higher than everything that has been made.

...**exactly like him**... the Greek word means "image" or "exact likeness". Today we would probably say "picture".

Jesus Christ is supreme because He is like the Father. And He is supreme because He is higher than all of creation.

**Hebrews 1:3a** The Son reflects the glory of God and shows exactly what God is like...

**John 14:9** Jesus answered, "I have been with you a long time now. Do you still not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. So why do you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

**Colossians 1:16** Through his power all things were made—things in heaven and on earth, things seen and unseen, all powers, authorities, lords, and rulers. All things were made through Christ and for Christ.

**Jesus created all things. Everything was created for Jesus' purposes.**

**John 1:3** All things were made by him, and nothing was made without him.

**Hebrews 1:2** But now in these last days God has spoken to us through his Son. God has chosen his Son to own all things, and through him he made the world.

...**things seen and unseen**... the physical world and the spiritual world.

...**all powers, authorities, lords, and rulers**... there are different levels of authority in the physical world and in the spirit world.

**Colossians 1:17** He was there before anything was made, and all things continue because of him.

Jesus existed before *all* creation. He existed before time – from eternity.

Jesus holds everything together. And He controls it all. Jesus is the “super glue” of the universe.

**Hebrews 1:3a** The Son reflects the glory of God and shows exactly what God is like. He holds everything together with his powerful word...

**Colossians 1:18** He is the head of the body, which is the church. Everything comes from him. He is the first one who was raised from the dead. So in all things Jesus has first place.

Jesus is the Lord of the universe and the head of the church.

...**the church**... the universal church of Jesus. The Holy Spirit baptized us into His church.

**1 Corinthians 12:13** Some of us are Jews, and some are Greeks. Some of us are slaves, and some are free. But we were all baptized into one body through one Spirit. And we were all made to share in the one Spirit.

...**He is the first one who was raised from the dead**... Jesus won the victory over death.

**1 Corinthians 15:20** But Christ has truly been raised from the dead—the first one and proof that those who sleep in death will also be raised.

...**Jesus has first place**... no one is like Him! Today the world is rebelling against Jesus, but one day He will be on the throne of the whole world.

**Philippians 2:9** So God raised him to the highest place. God made his name greater than every other name

## **Colossians 1:19 God was pleased for all of himself to live in Christ.**

God in Christ – Jesus is God.

**Hebrews 1:3** The Son reflects the glory of God and shows exactly what God is like. He holds everything together with his powerful word. When the Son made people clean from their sins, he sat down at the right side of God, the Great One in heaven.

Jesus is 100% God. Some people think Jesus is less than God – like a vice president. But scripture is clear that He is fully God.

**John 5:18** This made them try still harder to kill him. They said, “First Jesus was breaking the law about the Sabbath day. Now he says that God is his own Father, making himself equal with God!”

**Philippians 2:6** Christ himself was like God in everything. But he did not think that being equal with God was something to be used for his own benefit.

**Colossians 1:20 And through Christ, God has brought all things back to himself again—things on earth and things in heaven. God made peace through the blood of Christ’s death on the cross.**

...**God has brought all things back to himself**... reconciled.

...**things on earth and things in heaven**... angels and humans. Demons are under the earth. (See Philippians 2:10). The demons were not brought back to God.

God brought the sinners back to himself, but the sinners have not brought God back to themselves yet. (God made a way for everyone to be saved, but not everyone has chosen to accept that way).

...**God made peace**... God made His enemies to become His friends and His children – by faith. We don’t have to do anything to make God want us – He already does! Jesus already went to prepare a place for us. (John 14:2)

**Romans 5:10** While we were God’s enemies, he made us his friends through the death of his Son. Surely, now that we are his friends, he will save us through his Son’s life.

...**through the blood of Christ’s death**... thank you, Jesus for what He did on the cross for us! It doesn’t mean everyone is saved, but now salvation is offered to everyone.

**Colossians 1:21-22 At one time you were separated from God. You were his enemies in your minds, and the evil things you did were against God. <sup>22</sup> But now God has made you his friends again. He did this through Christ’s death in the body so that he might bring you into God’s presence as people who are holy, with no wrong, and with nothing of which God can judge you guilty.**

We needed to be brought back to God because we were separated from Him. Sin separated us. Jesus washed away our sins, and we are now His friends.

**Ephesians 1:4** That is, in Christ, he chose us before the world was made so that we would be his holy people—people without blame before him.

**Colossians 1:23** This will happen if you continue strong and sure in your faith. You must not be moved away from the hope brought to you by the Good News that you heard. That same Good News has been told to everyone in the world, and I, Paul, help in preaching that Good News.

...if you continue strong and sure in your faith... we are reconciled to Christ (brought back to Him) as long as we hold on to our faith.

If we do not continue strong and sure, what will happen to us? The promise is only for those who continue strong and sure. Don't risk giving up your faith.

...everyone in the world... the world known to them at the time. Paul exaggerated to emphasize how quickly the Gospel message spread.

**Colossians 1:24** I am happy in my sufferings for you. There are things that Christ must still suffer through his body, the church. I am accepting, in my body, my part of these things that must be suffered.

...my sufferings for you... not for salvation; for service. Our salvation was bought with Christ's suffering on the cross. Now we are privileged to suffer to serve the Lord – bringing the gospel message to others.

**1 Peter 3:13-14** If you are trying hard to do good, no one can really hurt you. <sup>14</sup> But even if you suffer for doing right, you are blessed. "Don't be afraid of what they fear; do not dread those things."

**Philippians 1:29** God gave you the honor not only of believing in Christ but also of suffering for him, both of which bring glory to Christ.

A mother must suffer labor pains to give birth to a baby. Maybe one reason we don't see more people getting saved today is because not enough Christians are willing to suffer the "labor pains" (prayer, sharing, giving) of carrying out God's perfect plan of salvation.

**Colossians 1:25** I became a servant of the church because God gave me a special work to do that helps you, and that work is to tell fully the message of God.

...a special work... Paul was used by God to bring the gospel message to the Gentiles.

**Romans 15:15-16** But I have written to you very openly about some things I wanted you to remember. I did this because God gave me this special gift: <sup>16</sup> to be a minister of Christ Jesus to those who are not Jews. I served God by teaching his Good News, so that the non-Jewish people could be an offering that God would accept—an offering made holy by the Holy Spirit.

**Colossians 1:26-27** This message is the secret that was hidden from everyone since the beginning of time, but now it is made known to God's holy people. <sup>27</sup> God decided to let his people know this rich and glorious secret which he has for all people. This secret is Christ himself, who is in you. He is our only hope for glory.

...**the secret**... the knowledge what had been hidden from everyone but is now known.

...**God decided to let his people know**... He was pleased to let us know. No human "discovered" this secret – so no one can glory in themselves; only glory in God.

The ...**secret**... was not that Gentiles would be saved. The secret was that the Gentiles would be equal heirs with the Jews.

**Ephesians 3:6** This is that secret: that through the Good News those who are not Jews will share with the Jews in God's blessing. They belong to the same body, and they share together in the promise that God made in Christ Jesus.

**Galatians 3:28** In Christ, there is no difference between Jew and Greek, slave and free person, male and female. You are all the same in Christ Jesus.

...**He is our only hope for glory**... you and I have been brought into His church. The church has a glorious future!

**Colossians 1:28-29** So we continue to preach Christ to each person, using all wisdom to warn and to teach everyone, in order to bring each one into God's presence as a mature person in Christ. <sup>29</sup> To do this, I work and struggle, using Christ's great strength that works so powerfully in me.

...**we continue to preach**... to announce, to proclaim or to celebrate.

...**to warn and to teach everyone**... we preach the gospel to save sinners from hell. And we teach everyone so they will grow in grace and become faithful members of the body of Christ.

...**as a mature person in Christ**... spiritually mature. Not as babies anymore.

**1 Corinthians 3:1-2** Brothers and sisters, in the past I could not talk to you as I talk to spiritual people. I had to talk to you as I would to people without the Spirit—babies in Christ. <sup>2</sup> The teaching I gave you was like milk, not solid food, because you were not able to take solid food. And even now you are not ready.

...**I work and struggle**... Paul used all his strength, plus the strength of the Lord. He struggled (fought hard) like an athlete struggles in competition.

**Philippians 4:13** I can do all things through Christ, because he gives me strength.



**Colossians 2:1 I want you to know how hard I work for you, those in Laodicea, and others who have never seen me.**

Paul was working hard (struggling in prayer) for people he had never met. (Remember Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter.) Clearly Paul did not start the church in Colosse.

Laodicea was about 11 miles away. It is the church that was described in Revelation 3 as lukewarm. This letter from Paul would be shared with the believers in Colosse and in Laodicea.

**Colossians 2:2-3 I want them to be strengthened and joined together with love so that they may be rich in their understanding. This leads to their knowing fully God's secret, that is, Christ himself. <sup>3</sup>In him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are safely kept.**

Paul wanted to encourage them. Paul wanted them to be in unity.

...**joined together with love**... love is the Elmer's glue of the church.

**Colossians 3:14** Even more than all this, clothe yourself in love. Love is what holds you all together in perfect unity.

...**rich in their understanding**... happens when we completely yield to Christ.

...**God's secret**... God's plan was always to send Christ. God always planned to welcome the Gentiles into His church, but that truth was hidden from the Jews until Jesus.

...**in him all the treasures**... Christ is all we need. Do you want wisdom and knowledge? You need to know where to find it. It is all in Christ!

...**wisdom and knowledge**... wisdom is how we use the truth. Knowledge is learning the truth.

**Colossians 2:4 I say this so that no one can fool you by arguments that seem good, but are false.**

Know the truth. Then when people try to persuade you with false teachings, you will not be deceived.

False teachers will try to trick you with fancy words and ideas. They make you a victim.

**Colossians 2:5 Though I am absent from you in my body, my heart is with you, and I am happy to see your good lives and your strong faith in Christ.**

... **your good lives**... a military term. It means standing shoulder to shoulder. Working together with each other. In harmony, cooperating with one another. A well-organized body of believers.

**Ephesians 4:16** The whole body depends on Christ, and all the parts of the body are joined and held together. Each part does its own work to make the whole body grow and be strong with love.

...**your strong faith in Christ**... firm, steadfast, solid, immovable.

**Colossians 2:6-7** As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so continue to live in him. <sup>7</sup> Keep your roots deep in him and have your lives built on him. Be strong in the faith, just as you were taught, and always be thankful.

...**continue to live in him**... because everything you need is in Christ.

...**keep your roots deep in him**... rooted like a tree. Our roots draw up all the strength and nourishment from Jesus and feed our whole body.

...**and have your lives built on him**... like a house built on a strong foundation. Jesus Christ is our foundation. We are built on Him.

*Rooted* because we are alive in Christ. *Built* because we are firmly established on Christ.

...**always be thankful**... overflowing with thanks.

**Colossians 2:8** Be sure that no one leads you away with false and empty teaching that is only human, which comes from the ruling spirits of this world, and not from Christ.

...**Be sure**... beware; caution; look carefully.

Don't let the "wisdom" of man take you away from the truth of God. Be careful! It is easy to get deceived.

**Matthew 24:24** False Christs and false prophets will come and perform great wonders and miracles. They will try to fool even the people God has chosen, if that is possible.

**Colossians 2:9-10** All of God lives fully in Christ (even when Christ was on earth), <sup>10</sup> and you have a full and true life in Christ, who is ruler over all rulers and powers.

Christ was 100% God and 100% human.

**John 1:14** The Word became a human and lived among us. We saw his glory—the glory that belongs to the only Son of the Father—and he was full of grace and truth.

**John 14:10** Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I say to you don't come from me, but the Father lives in me and does his own work.

Believers have fullness in Christ. (We are filled full). We share in His nature. In Christ, we do not lack anything. We are complete in Him. We can get everything we need in Christ.

**2 Peter 1:4** Through these he gave us the very great and precious promises. With these gifts you can share in God's nature, and the world will not ruin you with its evil desires.

**Colossians 2:11** Also in Christ you had a different kind of circumcision, a circumcision not done by hands. It was through Christ's circumcision, that is, his death, that you were made free from the power of your sinful self.

Old Testament law required all males must be circumcised – cutting away flesh.

In Christ we have a spiritual circumcision – remove sin from our hearts. Being born again.

**Galatians 6:15** It is not important if a man is circumcised or uncircumcised. The important thing is being the new people God has made.

A spiritual circumcision is only through Christ's crucifixion.

**Romans 2:29** A person is a Jew only if he is a Jew inside; true circumcision is done in the heart by the Spirit, not by the written law. Such a person gets praise from God rather than from people.

...**made free from the power of your sinful self**... totally separated from your old sinful self. We have taken off the "clothes" of our old sinful self, and put on Christ.

**Colossians 2:12** When you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and you were raised up with him through your faith in God's power that was shown when he raised Christ from the dead.

Baptism is the outward symbol of what has been changed on the inside. Baptism does not wash away our sins. Only Jesus can do that. Baptism demonstrates that we have been forgiven.

**Colossians 2:13** When you were spiritually dead because of your sins and because you were not free from the power of your sinful self, God made you alive with Christ, and he forgave all our sins.

We were spiritually dead because of our sins. God made us alive in Christ.

...**he forgave all our sins**... and he took away all our guilt.

**Colossians 2:14-15** He canceled the debt, which listed all the rules we failed to follow. He took away that record with its rules and nailed it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> God stripped the spiritual rulers and powers of their authority. With the cross, he won the victory and showed the world that they were powerless.

The "list" of every sin you have ever done has been destroyed forever!

...**God stripped the spiritual rulers and powers of their authority**... Satan and all his demons do not have any authority over us. We are kept safe in Christ.

...**With the cross, he won the victory**... Jesus paid the price for our sins and we are free.

**Colossians 2:16-17** So do not let anyone make rules for you about eating and drinking or about a religious feast, a New Moon Festival, or a Sabbath day. <sup>17</sup> These things were like a shadow of what was to come. But what is true and real has come and is found in Christ.

We are free from the legal requirements of the Old Testament law, including festivals and the Sabbath day.

The Sabbath law is the only one of the 10 Commandments not repeated in the New Testament.

The Old Testament law was **like a shadow**. The reality is **found in Christ**. When you know Christ, you don't need to follow the shadow anymore.

**Hebrews 10:1** The law is only an unclear picture of the good things coming in the future; it is not the real thing. The people under the law offer the same sacrifices every year, but these sacrifices can never make perfect those who come near to worship God.

**Colossians 2:18-19** Do not let anyone disqualify you by making you humiliate yourself and worship angels. Such people enter into visions, which fill them with foolish pride because of their human way of thinking. <sup>19</sup> They do not hold tightly to Christ, the head. It is from him that all the parts of the body are cared for and held together. So it grows in the way God wants it to grow.

...**disqualify you**... rob you of your spiritual rewards. Someone running in a race would be disqualified for running the wrong way or trying to take a shortcut. Believers need to follow Christ faithfully.

...**They do not hold tightly to Christ**... there are many way that believers can get off track and start going the wrong way. Worshipping angels – expecting angels to give you favor with God – shows that you do not think God is able to do it Himself.

... **It is from him that all the parts of the body are cared for and held together**...

**John 15:5** "I am the vine, and you are the branches. If any remain in me and I remain in them, they produce much fruit. But without me they can do nothing."

... **it grows in the way God wants it to grow**...

**Ephesians 4:16** The whole body depends on Christ, and all the parts of the body are joined and held together. Each part does its own work to make the whole body grow and be strong with love.

**Colossians 2:20-21** Since you died with Christ and were made free from the ruling spirits of the world, why do you act as if you still belong to this world by following rules like these: <sup>21</sup> "Don't handle this," "Don't taste that," "Don't even touch that thing"?

Following rules of self-denial can lead to legalism or false spirituality. True spirituality means living by the power of the Spirit, being united with Christ, and being dead to sin.

**Colossians 2:22-23** These rules refer to earthly things that are gone as soon as they are used. They are only human commands and teachings. <sup>23</sup> They seem to be wise, but they are only part of a human religion. They make people pretend not to be proud and make them punish their bodies, but they do not really control the evil desires of the sinful self.

Following man-made religious rules might look like wisdom, but they have absolutely no value for salvation.

**Colossians 3:1** Since you were raised from the dead with Christ, aim at what is in heaven, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.

Believers should follow the pattern of heaven, not the pattern of the world.

**Ephesians 1:19-20** And you will know that God's power is very great for us who believe. That power is the same as the great strength <sup>20</sup> God used to raise Christ from the dead and put him at his right side in the heavenly world.

The Gospel is not just a set of rules. It gives us all the reasons to want to live a holy life.

**Colossians 3:2-3** Think only about the things in heaven, not the things on earth. <sup>3</sup> Your old sinful self has died, and your new life is kept with Christ in God.

Concentrate on things that are eternal. Things on the earth are only temporary.

We died with Christ and live in Him. We are like seeds planted in Christ. We grow in Him.

**Colossians 3:4** Christ is your life, and when he comes again, you will share in his glory.

**1 John 3:2** Dear friends, now we are children of God, and we have not yet been shown what we will be in the future. But we know that when Christ comes again, we will be like him, because we will see him as he really is.

Jesus is not still a baby in a manger. He is on the throne in heaven. ...**Christ is your life**... so other people should see Him in your life.

**Colossians 3:5** So put all evil things out of your life: sexual sinning, doing evil, letting evil thoughts control you, wanting things that are evil, and greed. This is really serving a false god.

... **So put all evil things out of your life**... put to death everything in you that is earthly.

...**sexual sinning**... from the Greek *porneia* = fornication (sexual intercourse between two people who are not married to each other. Also includes sex before marriage).

...**doing evil**... impure thoughts, words, looks, gestures, and the jokes we tell.

...**letting evil thoughts control you**... lust. Always wanting more than you already have.

**1 Timothy 6:10** The love of money causes all kinds of evil. Some people have left the faith, because they wanted to get more money, but they have caused themselves much sorrow.

...**serving a false god**... idolatry.

**Colossians 3:6-7** These things make God angry. <sup>7</sup> In your past, evil life you also did these things.

God is angry with the people who disobey Him. His anger will lead to eternal punishment.

We can escape God's anger by simply obeying Him.

**Ephesians 5:6** Ephesians 5:6 Do not let anyone fool you by telling you things that are not true, because these things will bring God's anger on those who do not obey him.

...**your past, evil life**... the way we lived before we met Jesus.

**Romans 6:17** In the past you were slaves to sin—sin controlled you. But thank God, you fully obeyed the things that you were taught.

**Colossians 3:8-9** But now also put these things out of your life: anger, bad temper, doing or saying things to hurt others, and using evil words when you talk. <sup>9</sup> Do not lie to each other. You have left your old sinful life and the things you did before.

...**put these things out of your life**... like taking off dirty clothes.

Our old habits must go away. We have a new life.

All these evils involve the way we treat other people.

There is good anger. Jesus was angry with the Pharisees because their hearts were hard. He was angry with the money changers in the Temple. God is angry with His disobedient children (3:6). The problem is that we get angry about the wrong things.

...**You have left your old sinful life**... we have been born again. We have a new life in Christ. The old ways don't fit in our new life.

**Colossians 3:10** You have begun to live the new life, in which you are being made new and are becoming like the One who made you. This new life brings you the true knowledge of God.

...**begun to live the new life**... it is not enough to stop doing the evil things (take off the dirty clothes). We must live differently than before (put on Christ).

**Romans 13:14** But clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and forget about satisfying your sinful self.

...**are becoming like the One**... it is a continuing process. It will continue until we are perfect.

**Colossians 3:11** In the new life there is no difference between Greeks and Jews, those who are circumcised and those who are not circumcised, or people who are foreigners, or Scythians. There is no difference between slaves and free people. But Christ is in all believers, and Christ is all that is important.

It doesn't matter what country you were from when you met Jesus. It doesn't matter what religion you used to be. It doesn't matter what culture you were raised in. It doesn't matter if you were rich or poor when you met Jesus. The only thing that matters is believing in Jesus.

Scythians were nomads – people who wandered from place to place with no real home. They were the most savage and warlike culture in that time.

In Jesus we are truly created equal!

**Galatians 3:28** In Christ, there is no difference between Jew and Greek, slave and free person, male and female. You are all the same in Christ Jesus.

...**Christ is all that is important**... Christ is everything we need to be in a right relationship with God.

**Galatians 2:20** I was put to death on the cross with Christ, and I do not live anymore—it is Christ who lives in me. I still live in my body, but I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself to save me.

**Colossians 3:12** God has chosen you and made you his holy people. He loves you. So you should always clothe yourselves with mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

What will the best dressed Christian wear? ...**mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.**

In Colossians 3:8-9 Paul told the believers what they had to put off. Now he tells us what we have to put on.

**Colossians 3:13** Bear with each other, and forgive each other. If someone does wrong to you, forgive that person because the Lord forgave you.

Christ has forgiven so much! We need to copy Him and forgive each other.

**Colossians 3:14** Even more than all this, clothe yourself in love. Love is what holds you all together in perfect unity.

**1 Corinthians 13:13** So these three things continue forever: faith, hope, and love. And the greatest of these is love.

**1 Peter 4:8** Most importantly, love each other deeply, because love will cause people to forgive each other for many sins.

**Colossians 3:15 Let the peace that Christ gives control your thinking, because you were all called together in one body to have peace. Always be thankful.**

The closer we are to Christ, the more we think like Him and act like Him, the closer we will be to each other.

...**Let the peace**... you decide. Your choice to allow His peace to ...**control your thinking**. Let peace be like the umpire in your life.

...**peace**... unity; agreement; wholeness; harmony.

**Philippians 4:7** And God's peace, which is so great we cannot understand it, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

**Colossians 3:16 Let the teaching of Christ live in you richly. Use all wisdom to teach and instruct each other by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.**

The Word of God will ...**live in you richly**... when you study, meditate, and apply the Word to your life. Let it become a permanent part of your life.

...**psalms**... songs from the Book of Psalms.

...**hymns**... other songs of praise.

...**spiritual songs**... not worldly songs.

...**thankfulness in your hearts**... we teach each other by singing because we are thankful for all that God has done for us and all that He has given to us.

**Colossians 3:17 Everything you do or say should be done to obey Jesus your Lord. And in all you do, give thanks to God the Father through Jesus.**

...**Everything you do or say**... there is no difference between your "spiritual" life and your "regular" life. It is all for Jesus.

**1 Corinthians 10:31** The answer is, if you eat or drink, or if you do anything, do it all for the glory of God.

Verses 15, 16, and 17 Paul mentioned thankfulness. Repetition shows how important it is.

...through Jesus... we receive grace from Jesus. We give our thanks to Jesus.

**John 14:6** Jesus answered, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. The only way to the Father is through me.

**Colossians 3:18 Wives, yield to the authority of your husbands, because this is the right thing to do in the Lord.**

Yielding does not mean wives are "less than." To bring order into the home.



The husband is the head of the household – he makes the final decisions. But both the husband and the wife yield to each other.

**Ephesians 5:21** Yield to obey each other as you would to Christ.

Wives are not required to yield to their husband when it is against other scriptural commands.

**Colossians 3:19** Husbands, love your wives and be gentle with them.

In a Christ-like marriage the husband has compassionate care, and the wife willingly yields to his loving leadership.

**Ephesians 5:25** Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it

**Colossians 3:20** Children, obey your parents in all things, because this pleases the Lord.

Obeying your parents is God's design for order in the home. Honor your parents all your life. Obey your parents while you are a child.

**Colossians 3:21** Fathers, do not nag your children. If you are too hard to please, they may want to stop trying.

Nagging your children will make them discouraged. Give them praise for doing the right thing. Give them loving discipline. Teach them how to follow the Lord.

**Colossians 3:22** Slaves, obey your masters in all things. Do not obey just when they are watching you, to gain their favor, but serve them honestly, because you respect the Lord.

Today slavery is illegal in the USA. But this principle applies to bosses and employees. Don't work with your eyes on the clock. Work with your eyes on the Lord.

**Colossians 3:23** In all the work you are doing, work the best you can. Work as if you were doing it for the Lord, not for people.

Whatever you do should be done for the Lord.

**Colossians 3:24** Remember that you will receive your reward from the Lord, which he promised to his people. You are serving the Lord Christ.

A strong reason to work the best you can – **you will receive your reward from the Lord.**

**Colossians 3:25** But remember that anyone who does wrong will be punished for that wrong, and the Lord treats everyone the same.

The Lord is watching the boss and the employee.

It is a privilege to serve the Lord.

**Colossians 4:1 Masters, give what is good and fair to your slaves. Remember that you have a Master in heaven.**

Paul didn't try to change the culture of the day (to get rid of slavery). He taught us how we are to act toward each other.

Christian bosses should treat their employees fairly.

...**you have a Master in heaven**... we will all stand before Christ someday.

**2 Corinthians 5:10** because we must all stand before Christ to be judged. Each of us will receive what we should get—good or bad—for the things we did in the earthly body.

**Colossians 4:2 Continue praying, keeping alert, and always thanking God.**

Prayer is not a spiritual luxury; it is essential for growth in Christ.

Breathing is essential for physical life. Prayer is essential for spiritual life.

Keep alert – don't become spiritually sleepy.

...**always thanking God**... in all things.

**1 Thessalonians 5:18** and give thanks whatever happens. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus.

**Colossians 4:3-4 Also pray for us that God will give us an opportunity to tell people his message. Pray that we can preach the secret that God has made known about Christ. This is why I am in prison. <sup>4</sup>Pray that I can speak in a way that will make it clear, as I should.**

...**pray for us**... not selfish; it is prayer so that the gospel will spread.

When a farmer prays for a good crop, God expects the farmer to work hard in the fields to grow that crop. When we pray for an opportunity to preach the gospel, we should be preaching the gospel everywhere we have an opportunity.

...**God will give us an opportunity**... we have an open door to preach the gospel.

**Revelation 3:8** I know what you do. I have put an open door before you, which no one can close. I know you have little strength, but you have obeyed my teaching and were not afraid to speak my name.

**Colossians 4:5-6 Be wise in the way you act with people who are not believers, making the most of every opportunity. <sup>6</sup>When you talk, you should always be kind and pleasant so you will be able to answer everyone in the way you should.**

Becoming mature in Christ involves everything you do in your private life and in your public life.

Use every opportunity to show Christ to others. Pray that the Lord will lead you.

**1 Peter 3:15** But respect Christ as the holy Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to answer everyone who asks you to explain about the hope you have,

**Colossians 4:7-9** Tychicus is my dear brother in Christ and a faithful minister and servant with me in the Lord. He will tell you all the things that are happening to me. <sup>8</sup> This is why I am sending him: so you may know how we are and he may encourage you. <sup>9</sup> I send him with Onesimus, a faithful and dear brother in Christ, and one of your group. They will tell you all that has happened here.

Tychicus was the pastor of the church in Ephesus.

Onesimus was a runaway slave. His master was Philemon. Now he was ... **a faithful and dear brother in Christ.**

What words will people use to introduce you? ...**dear... in Christ ...faithful ...minister ...servant?**

...**one of your group**... he was from the city of Colossae.

**Colossians 4:10** Aristarchus, a prisoner with me, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, greet you. (I have already told you what to do about Mark. If he comes, welcome him.)

Aristarchus was probably also a prisoner because he was preaching the gospel.

Mark had been with Paul on several missionary journeys. Paul called him his son (1 Peter 5:13).

**Colossians 4:11** Jesus, who is called Justus, also greets you. These are the only Jewish believers who work with me for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

Jesus was a common Jewish name. Aristarchus, Mark and Jesus were all three Jews. There were not many Jews in Colossae. Most of the believers were Gentiles.

**Colossians 4:12-13** Epaphras, a servant of Jesus Christ, from your group, also greets you. He always prays for you that you will grow to be spiritually mature and have everything God wants for you. <sup>13</sup> I know he has worked hard for you and the people in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis were cities in the same valley.

**Colossians 4:14** Demas and our dear friend Luke, the doctor, greet you.

A few years later, Demas abandoned Paul (2 Timothy 4:10)

Luke wrote the gospel of Luke and Acts. He was a Gentile and a medical doctor.

**Colossians 4:15** Greet the brothers and sisters in Laodicea. And greet Nympha and the church that meets in her house.

God uses women in ministry!

Churches used to meet in homes. Church buildings did not become common until about 200 years later.

**Colossians 4:16-17** After this letter is read to you, be sure it is also read to the church in Laodicea. And you read the letter that I wrote to Laodicea. <sup>17</sup> Tell Archippus, “Be sure to finish the work the Lord gave you.”

The letters (the books of the New Testament) were commonly passed along from one church to another so everyone could learn.

We don't know what letter Paul wrote to Laodicea. Some scholars believe it was Ephesians.

...**Be sure to finish**... we all need encouragement sometimes.

**Colossians 4:18** I, Paul, greet you and write this with my own hand. Remember me in prison. Grace be with you.

Paul usually closed his letters ...**with my own hand**... meaning he wrote it himself. He dictated his letters, and someone else wrote them down. But he wrote something himself at the end of his letters. People could recognize Paul's handwriting, and they would know the letter was genuine.

...**Remember me**... pray for me.

Every believer knows God's grace.