

# baby dedication

committing our children to the Lord

May 12, 2024





A SURVEY OF THE

# BIBLE

*Context • Content • Conviction*





IF PAUL SAW THE CHURCH IN  
AMERICA TODAY, WE'D BE  
GETTING A LETTER.



JOHNNY ADAMS





# COLOSSIANS

THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST





PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS HAS  
HAD AN IMPACT ON CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY  
AND PRACTICE OUT OF PROPORTION  
TO ITS SIZE.



DOUG MOO



# COLOSSIANS

112577

2,3-13 ΠΡΟΣ ΚΟΛΟΣΣΑΕΙΣ 526

1,26s wealth/bliss confidence/wisdom understanding result knowledge  
 πλούτος<sup>1</sup> τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως, εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν  
 τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ, Χριστοῦ<sup>2</sup> 3 ἐν ᾧ εἰσὶν πάντες  
 οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ τῆς γνώσεως ἀπόκρυφοι<sup>3</sup>  
 4 Τοῦτο τ λέγω, ἵνα μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς παραλογίζηται ἐν πι-  
 θανολογίᾳ. 5 εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῆ σαρκὶ ἀπειμῖ, ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύ-  
 ματι σὺν ὕμῳ εἰμι χαίρων καὶ βλέπων ὑμῶν τὴν τάξιν  
 καὶ τὸ στερῆμα τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν.

6 Ὡς οὖν παρελάβετε τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύ-  
 ριον, ἐν αὐτῷ περιπατεῖτε, 7 ἐρριζωμένοι καὶ ἐποικοδο-  
 μούμενοι ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ βεβαιούμενοι (τῇ πίστει) καθὼς  
 ἐδιδάχθητε, περισσεύοντες ἐν εὐχαριστίᾳ 8 βλέ-  
 πετε μὴ τις ὑμᾶς ἐσταίῃ ὁ συναγωγὸν διὰ τῆς φιλοσο-  
 φίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώ-  
 πων, κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου καὶ οὐ κατὰ Χριστὸν.  
 9 ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ κατοικεῖ πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος  
 σωματικῶς, 10 καὶ ἐστὲ ἐν αὐτῷ πεπληρωμένοι, ὅς ἐστιν  
 ἡ κεφαλὴ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας, 11 Ἐν ᾧ καὶ  
 περιετιμήθητε, περιτομῇ χειροποιήτῳ ἐν τῇ ἀπεκδύσει  
 τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκός, ἐν τῇ περιτομῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ,  
 12 συνταφέντες αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βαπτισμῷ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ συνε-  
 γέρθητε διὰ τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐνεργείας τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἐγεί-  
 ραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ τ νεκρῶν 13 καὶ ὑμᾶς νεκροὺς ὄντας  
 [ἐν] τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ τ τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ τῆς σαρκός

2 f του θεου D<sup>1</sup> H P 1881. 2464 pc sa<sup>ms</sup> ; του Χριστου 81. 1241<sup>s</sup>. (1739) pc b; Fulg | τ.  
 θ. ο εσιν Χριστος D\* a vg<sup>ms</sup>; Aug | τ. θ. του εν Χριστω 33; Ambst | τ. θ. πατρος του  
 (- N\* 048) Χριστου N\* A C 048<sup>vid</sup>. 1175 pc (f m vg<sup>st</sup>, sy<sup>p</sup>) sa<sup>ms</sup> bo | τ. θ. και πατ. (S 0208  
 pc) τ. Χρ. N<sup>2</sup> L Ψ 0208. 365. 945 pc vg<sup>ms</sup> | τ. θ. και πατ. και τ. Χρ. D<sup>2</sup> M<sup>1</sup> (vg<sup>cl</sup>) sy<sup>h\*\*</sup> |  
 txt P<sup>46</sup> B vg<sup>ms</sup>; Cl Hil • 3 Ττης N<sup>2</sup> A D<sup>1</sup> H M; Cl | txt P<sup>46</sup> N\* B C D\* Ψ 0208. 33.  
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 048<sup>vid</sup> | εν αυτω εν ευχ. N<sup>2</sup> D\* b f vg<sup>cl</sup> sy<sup>hms</sup> | txt N\* A C I<sup>vid</sup> 0208. 33. 81. 1175. 1241<sup>s</sup>.  
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 G; Hil<sup>p</sup> | txt P<sup>46</sup> N\* A C Ψ 0208 M<sup>1</sup> lat; Ambst • 11 Ττων αμαρτιων N<sup>2</sup> D<sup>1</sup> Ψ M (b)  
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Prokand

2Th 2,15  
 E 5,6 · Mt 15,2p  
 20!  
 1,19! J 1,14  
 E 4,15! · 1,21!  
 R 2,29!  
 1,22!  
 R 6,4 · 3,1 E 2,6  
 E 1,19s  
 E 2,1!

Book out  
 Reith of  
 Christ  
 body of Christ  
 @ church

Παραλογίζηται - parallel logic - Deceive - lead astray - Moral Overtones  
 used as state talk who wrongly used documents to deceive  
 Πιθανολογία - persuasive arguments - well constructed but false speech - Academic Overtones  
 "to talk into something": plausible arguments based on wrong basic  
 used of court case where logic is used to keep stolen property  
 Τάξιν - orderly - military term - unbroken ranks  
 στερῆμα - sold - military, eventually - steroids - making firm  
 "FIGHT ON STEROIDS"  
 Περὶ τῶν εἰς - walk, live - manner of life, lifestyle  
 • ἐρριζωμένοι - rooted, solid foundation - Pentecost / abiding results  
 • ἐπικοδομούμενοι - build up, build upon  
 • βεβαιούμενοι - strengthened & established  
 • περισσεύοντες - overflowing  
 συναγωγὸν - carry away as captive, kidnap  
 • παραδοσιν - traditions, passed on teaching  
 • στοιχεῖα - elementary? component parts of a series  
 @ teaching  
 @ principles  
 @ powers  
 v.11 εἰς ἐκείνην μεταβολὴν  
 περὶ ἐκείνου, περὶ τοῦ περιτομῆ, περὶ τοῦ  
 v.12 βαπτισμὸν ἕνεκα  
 συνταφέντες  
 συνγενεθόντες  
 v.11 D περιτομῶμενοι - pers. pass. part. abiding results  
 - like have all followed, completeness



# COLOSSIANS

112577

2,3-13 ΠΡΟΣ ΚΟΛΟΣΣΑΕΙΣ 526

1,26s  
Sir 1,24s Hen 46,3  
Is 45,3 Prv 2,3s  
R 11,33 1K 1,24.  
30 | R 16,18!  
1K 5,3  
1K 14,10  
Act 16,5!

Proclaim

R 10,9!  
E 3,17; • 2,20.22  
Jd 20  
2Th 2,15  
Look out  
E 5,6 • Mt 15,2p  
20!  
1,19! J 1,14  
17 |  
E 4,15!; • 1,21!  
R 2,29!  
1,22!  
R 6,4 • 3,1 E 2,6  
E 1,19s  
E 2,1!

city of  
church

back of church  
@ church

1,26s <sup>wealth/fulness</sup> πλούτος<sup>confidence/assurance</sup> τῆς πληροφορίας<sup>understanding</sup> τῆς συνέσεως<sup>result</sup>, εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν<sup>knowledge</sup> τοῦ μυστηρίου<sup>treasures</sup> τοῦ θεοῦ, Χριστοῦ<sup>wisdom</sup>, 3 ἐν ᾧ εἰσιν<sup>understand</sup> πάντες οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας<sup>hidden</sup> καὶ τῆς γνώσεως ἀπόκρυφοί.  
4 Τοῦτο τὸ λέγω, ἵνα<sup>no-one</sup> μηδείς ὑμᾶς παραλογίζηται<sup>will</sup> ἐν πιθανολογία. 5 εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῆ σαρκὶ ἀπειμι<sup>to see</sup>, ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι σὺν ὑμῖν εἰμι<sup>to see</sup>, χαίρων καὶ βλέπων ὑμῶν τὴν τάξιν<sup>order</sup> καὶ τὸ στερέωμα<sup>solid</sup> τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν.

6 Ὡς οὖν παρελάβετε<sup>received</sup> τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον, ἐν αὐτῷ περιπατεῖτε. 7 ἐρριζωμένοι<sup>be water</sup> καὶ ἐποικοδομούμενοι ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ βεβαιούμενοι<sup>be water</sup> τῇ πίστει<sup>be water</sup> καθὼς ἐδιδάχθητε, περισσεύοντες<sup>means</sup> ἐν εὐχαριστία. 8 Βλέπετε<sup>be water</sup> μή τις ὑμᾶς ἔσται<sup>be water</sup> ὁ συλαγωγῶν<sup>be water</sup> διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης<sup>be water</sup> κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου καὶ οὐ κατὰ Χριστὸν. 9 Ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ κατοικεῖ<sup>be water</sup> πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος σωματικῶς, 10 καὶ ἐστὲ ἐν αὐτῷ πεπληρωμένοι, ὅς ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλὴ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας. 11 Ἐν ᾧ καὶ περιετμήθητε<sup>be water</sup>, περιτομῇ χειροποιήτῳ ἐν τῇ ἀπεκόουσει τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκός, ἐν τῇ περιτομῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 12 συνταφέντες αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βαπτισμῷ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ συνεγέρθητε<sup>be water</sup> διὰ τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐνεργείας τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν. 13 καὶ ὑμᾶς νεκροὺς ὄντας ὁ[ἐν] τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ τῆς σαρκός

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# Colossians

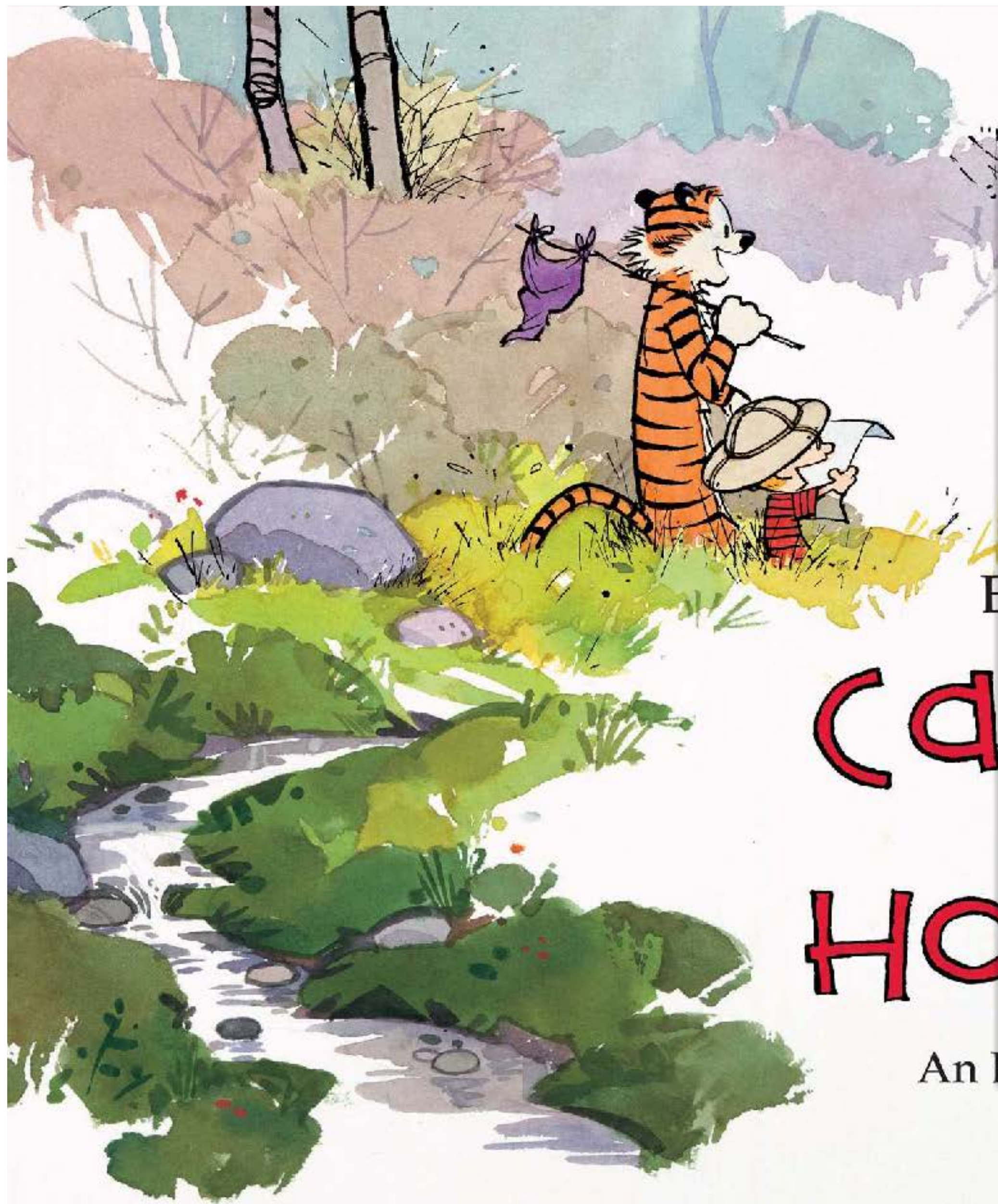
## *The Sufficiency of Christ*

*The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians*  
1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God our Father,  
1:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ that are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace  
from God our Father. 1:3 We give thanks to God our Father, Jesus Christ  
praying always for you, 1:4 Having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which you  
have toward all the saints, 1:5 Because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, where  
ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, 1:6 Which is come unto you, and is  
in all the world bearing fruit and increasing, as it doth in you also, since the day ye heard, and  
knew the grace of God in truth; 1:7 Even as ye learned of Epaphras our beloved fellow-labourer,  
who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, 1:8 Who also declared unto us your love in the  
Spirit. 1:9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard of it, cease not to pray and make  
request for you, that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and

June 16, 2002 - September 22, 2002

12 Messages





Calvin  
Hobbes

An Exhibition Catalogue  
Bill Watterson



# PHILIPPIANS RESOURCES

## COLOSSIANS: THE CITY AND THE LETTER (Robert W. Wall)

### The Congregation in Colosse

The ancient city of Colosse was located in the fertile valley forged by the river Lycus in the Asian province of Phrygia. Centuries earlier, Colosse had served as a center for the valley's prosperous wool and textile industries; its place on a major trade route only enhanced its economic advantage. But by the time of Paul its influence had waned. Neighboring Laodicea (2:1; 4:13, 15) had replaced Colosse in economic and political importance, while Hierapolis (4:13), some fifteen miles away, had grown in prominence as a tourist town, famed for its mineral baths and as a sanctuary for members of the prominent Phrygian mystery cult. (Hence the name Hierapolis means "holy city" in Greek.) In all likelihood, then, this letter first addressed a small congregation in a rather unimpressive town.

In fact, there is no indication from Paul's writings or from Acts (cf. Acts 19:10) that Paul ever reached Colosse during his evangelistic campaign in the Lycus valley. Paul's strategy was to visit only the most prominent urban centers of a particular region, to recruit mature colleagues, such as Epaphras (1:7-8; 4:12-3; c.f. Philem 23) and Tychicus (4:7-8), and to advance his Gentile mission to additional places and people. Significantly, the pivotal references to Epaphras, himself a Colossian (cf. 4:12), indicate that this congregation was founded through his preaching ministry (1:7-8) rather than through Paul's. Obviously the apostle was pleased with its results. Not only does he commend the Colossians for their faithfulness to it (1:2-6; 2:5-8) and often alludes to the radical change brought about by their growing confidence in God's transforming grace (1:14; 2:13), specifically, Paul notes that because of their vital faith they now have "obtained their destiny" in heavenly Lord (1:15-20; 3:1-2) and will participate fully in God's final triumph over evil when he returns to earth (3:3-4).

### Paul's Relationship to the Colossians

Paul's letters all contain a practical theology. And his practical theology is rooted in a practical wisdom: he considers theology's results, or "fruit" (1:5-6, 9-10), important. In the letter to the Colossians, the apostle is primarily concerned to correct a Christianity whose "hollow and deceptive" sophistry has reproduced an untenable discipleship among the believers in Colosse. The influence of Phrygian Judaism upon certain Christian teachers, however peripheral, threatens to produce a faith that denies the inherent goodness of God's creation and the potential power of God's new creation, the church.

In a sense, Paul is concerned with how believers define and understand the working of divine grace. According to Paul, the theological center of "true" religion must never be shifted from our ongoing participation in the life of the Risen Lord, because it is "in Christ" that God's grace transforms people from death to life. To shift the center of faith from Christ to the intellectual domain of philosophical speculation and ascetic piety is to understand divine grace in terms of "human tradition" (2:8) and "rules" (2:20-21); a Christless version of Christianity is self-deception. Its foolishness is evident in its inability to mediate God's saving grace, which comes only through our participation with Christ (cf. 1 Cor 1:18-25).

Paul's worry in this regard is also that the Colossians have lost interest in the work of evangelism, replacing it with the legalistic observance of religious traditions (2:16) and moral codes that restrict what is handled, tasted and touched (cf. 2:21). Paul's



## COLOSSAE AND THE COLOSSIANS (Douglas Moo)

In his classic commentary on the letter, J. B. Lightfoot claimed that "Colossae was the least important church to which any epistle of St. Paul was addressed." Colossae had not always been so insignificant a city. Located in the Lycus River valley of west-central Asia Minor, Colossae was apparently the most important city in its vicinity in the fourth and third centuries before Christ. It was known as being the center of a thriving textile industry, to the point that a certain kind of high-quality dark red wool was known as "Colossian wool." Its prominence was due especially to its location at the crossroads of two well-traveled highways: one that ran east and west, connecting the coastal cities of Ephesus (120 miles to the west) and Sardis with the interior east; and another running north and south. When, however, the latter road was moved west to pass through Laodicea, Colossae began to decline. In Paul's day it was not as large or important as the neighboring cities of Laodicea (twelve miles to the west) or Hierapolis (fifteen miles northwest). Both these communities also had Christian churches (Col. 2:1), and Paul wrote a (now lost) letter to the Laodiceans (see Col. 4:16). An earthquake that devastated the area sometime in the early 60s. We know that Laodicea was quickly rebuilt, as Rev. 3:14-22, probably written in the 90s and that Colossae was also, though we do not know how quickly. The city has been excavated for centuries.

Geographically, Colossae belonged to the region of Phrygia and in the Roman province of Asia. Its location on an important highway at a time of constant the mixing of different cultures, but that type of mixing the Roman Empire meant that Colossae was a very diverse. A major portion were undoubtedly Gentile, but we know there was a sizeable substantial number of Jews. According to the Jewish historian Josephus, ruler Antiochus ("the Great") had settled two thousand Jewish families in the region in 125 B.C. (Antiquities 12.3.4). And the Roman man of letters Cicero, in the first century B.C., noted the Roman seizure of a significant amount of money contributed by Jews in the area for the Jerusalem Temple (the "temple tax"; see Cicero's letter Pro Flacco 28). The diversity of the region, exposure to the latest ideas via travelers on its major highway meant that Colossae was a place where many different religious and philosophical viewpoints that had previously been kept apart and diversity helps explain the apparently syncretistic religious environment that was affecting the Christians and that gave rise to the letter. At the same time, however, this diversity made it notoriously difficult to pin down the exact contours of the religion of the time.

As far as we know, Paul had never visited Colossae, and he certainly was not the founder of the Christian community there (see Col. 2:1). This honor goes to Epaphras, whom Paul warmly commends in the letter (1:7-8; 4:12-3). It is likely that Epaphras was a convert of Paul's from his almost three-year ministry in Ephesus on the third missionary journey (Acts 19). As a major center of the province of Asia, Ephesus was a place that people from all over the province would visit, and it was in this way that, through Paul's ministry in Ephesus, "all the Jews and Greeks in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Acts 19:10). Epaphras, we may surmise, was one of those who heard the word of the Lord from Paul and brought it to Colossae.





# PHILIPPIANS RESOURCES

## COLOSSIANS: PAUL'S MESSAGE FOR TODAY

(Robert W. Wall)

As a religious Jew, Paul thinks of his faith as an ongoing story of God's covenant-saving acts. His core convictions retain the essential shape of the Old Testament story of God's salvation of Israel. God's story begins with the creation of all things and the call of a chosen people to come out of the evil world for the promised salvation. God's story will conclude with a final triumph over the evil powers that were responsible for creation's fall, and with God's full blessing of the covenant community that has remained faithful to the Lord. For Paul, the church must always find its present compass in the foundational truths of the biblical story, which has been retold and confirmed in the death and resurrection of the Lord Christ.

The purpose of Paul's letters is to chart the present orientation of the faith community: what are the present results of being a congregation of believers called out of Colosse (or Seattle!) by God for salvation? As a Christian, Paul is convinced that the promise contained in the biblical story was fulfilled by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (2:9-15). Given the emerging threats of facile intellectualism and legalistic asceticism in Colossian Christianity, Paul draws upon traditions that stress Christ's lordship over everything material, spiritual, external and internal (1:15-20). God's Risen Son is custodian of the created world as well as the world of ideas. As disciples of Christ, we must never see our life of faith in private or sectarian terms. We must not be so arrogant as to suppose that God's salvation is based on the elegance of our theological formulations. Christ Jesus is Lord over both the natural and the spiritual orders of human life. We must not allow ourselves to engage ourselves in the world as agents of reconciliation.

Paul's understanding of Christ's ultimate importance in the present dispensation of God's salvation has two integral parts. First, Christ is Lord over God's old and new creation; he is Lord over the entire history of God's salvation. His "cosmic" lordship is an expression of God's triumph over evil and death; through Christ's lordship, God's good intentions for the new fallen creation are finally being worked out in the history of the new creation, the church. And the transforming grace of God, which believers are already experiencing, will bear its full fruit at Christ's return. Christ's resurrection promises the experience of conversion, of human transformation. Every change that bears witness to good news that takes place in human relationships—from the forgiveness of sin (1:13-14) to reconciliation with God (1:21-22) to the empowering of a "new self" (3:10) that reconciles us with each other (3:14)—marks a fulfillment of God's promise to restore all things and return them to the Garden.

Paul justifies his claim that Christ is Lord over all things by appealing to the actual experience of God's transforming and empowering grace, which has practical effect in our daily relationships with God and each other. Paul repeats two phrases, "in Christ" and "with Christ," to underscore the vital importance of the church's ongoing relationship with Christ as the location of God's gracious action within human history. Given their tendency toward intellectualizing their Christian faith, this more practical emphasis is central to Paul's letter for the Colossians. It seems ironic to me that many commentators on this book fail to emphasize Paul's participatory Christology, preferring to discuss his cosmic Christology. While Paul is certainly concerned to establish the spatial boundaries of Christ's lordship (that is, over the entire cosmos), he is more concerned to press the status of the believer, who in partnership with Christ already experiences (that is, participates in) the various fruits of God's salvation. Thus the faith community is the "body" of Christ, who is its "Head" (1:18; 2:19); the church has been raised with Christ by God from sin and death (2:11-15) and made to live "with Christ in God" (3:3). That is, believers share in the totality of God's triumph in Christ!

There is nothing mystical or abstract in Paul's Christology; he does not overemphasize Christ's transcendent lordship. Rather, Paul draws on the traditions of Christ's status as Lord over all things to express and impress the larger truth that the community of faith participates with its triumphant Lord in God's continuing triumph over sin and death.

Paul's stress on the present fulfillment of God's promised salvation ("realized eschatology") and his softening of the importance of Christ's return ("futuristic eschatology") only add to this emphasis. Because God has already fulfilled the promise of salvation through Christ's death, the



## WHAT COLOSSIANS MEANS FOR US TODAY

(David Garland)

COLOSSIANS was written to a negligible Phrygian Christian community almost two thousand years ago, and yet it still speaks relevantly today. It gives witness "to the finality, adequacy and all-sufficiency of the cosmic Christ by whom and for whom all things were made, in whom they cohere, and with whom in God the life of the Christian and of the Church is hidden," so that truth will never go out of date.

But the situation facing the Colossians is also similar to ours today. They faced opponents who challenged and belittled the sufficiency of Christ and their hope. Christians today live in a secular society, which regularly scoffs at Christian faith. Many Christians in the West have become increasingly uncertain of their faith and consequently hold it uncertainly. The acids of criticism can eat away at the foundations of a weak and vacillating faith. There are also fewer cultural forces to keep people in the church. When confronted with the laughter and scorn of the modern-day scoffers, many church members may be tempted to capitulate. They will abandon their faith or at least their public faith. In Paul's language, they return to the darkness where the rulers of this world have their home.

When Christians do not understand their faith, they are likely to either deny the gospel and accommodate it to cultural expectations. They will put out their traditional articles of faith or append specious ones more in accord with the fashion of the age. Paul wrote to the Colossians to help them grasp ever more firmly who Christ is and how he has done for all that God has done in him.

When Christians do not live with a deep sense of gratitude for what God has done for them in Christ, they will become engulfed in anxieties and will be tempted to look for security in something other than Christ. Paul repeatedly urged the Colossians to be thankful for the victory already won for them by Christ's cross and resurrection. Salvation can be found only in Christ, and Christians do not need something else or something more. The cross brings redemption, the forgiveness of sin, and triumph over all the powers that would oppress human life. Every believer is made complete when placed under the complete claim of Christ, and all the spiritual ills of our world find their only cure in him.

When Christians live no differently from those around them who do not know God or who defy God's commands, they bring discredit to their faith and cause others to think that their claims are false. The letter to the Colossians argues that Christians must not only be solidly grounded in their faith. They must also be ethically above reproach. Discerning, confident, grateful, and ethical Christians lead lives worthy of the Lord, are pleasing to God, and will bear spiritual fruit in a spiritually blighted world. Paul intends in this letter to help form this kind of believer.





THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT CHRIST AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH WILL ULTIMATELY AFFECT HOW WE LIVE. IN OTHER WORDS, THEOLOGY AFFECTS PRACTICE IN MONUMENTAL WAYS. THE BELIEVERS IN COLOSSAE WERE CONFRONTED WITH A NEW TEACHING THAT PROMISED A DEEPER EXPERIENCE WITH GOD, A NEW AND MYSTERIOUS FREEDOM, A PROTECTION FROM EVIL POWERS, AND A MORE INTENSE FORM OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION.



SCOTT DUVALL





THIS NEW TEACHING, HOWEVER, DEMOTED JESUS CHRIST AND EVENTUALLY PRODUCED SPIRITUAL ARROGANCE AND DIVISION IN THE BODY. PAUL'S ANSWER IS SIMPLE: JESUS CHRIST IS THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD, AND HE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THE DEEPEST EXPERIENCE OF LIFE WITH GOD.



SCOTT DUVALL





# WHO COMPOSED COLOSSIANS?

---

AT THE END OF THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY, PAUL IS ARRESTED IN JERUSALEM AND TAKEN TO ROME WHERE HE IS IMPRISONED AND WRITES BACK TO CHURCHES IN EPHESUS, PHILIPPI, AND COLOSSAE.





# WHO WAS THE ORIGINAL AUDIENCE?

PAUL ADDRESSED THIS EPISTLE TO THE CHURCH AT COLOSSAE, A CHURCH WHICH WAS ONE HUNDRED MILES INLAND FROM EPHESUS, IN THE HEART OF THE LYCUS VALLEY. THE APOSTLE HAD NEVER VISITED THE CHURCH (1:4; 2:1). MOST LIKELY, THE CHURCH WAS FOUNDED BY EPAPHRAS (CF. 1:7; 4:12-13).





# COLOSSAE

- Several hundred years before Paul's day, Colossae had been a leading city in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey).
- It was located on the Lycus River and on the east-west trade route.
- By the first century AD Colossae was a second-rate market town, which had been surpassed in power and importance by the neighboring towns of Laodicea and Hierapolis.
- During Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus, Epaphras carried the gospel to Colossae (cf. 1:7 – 8; Ac 19:10).
- Christian churches had also been established in Laodicea and Hierapolis. (see 4:15; Phm 2).

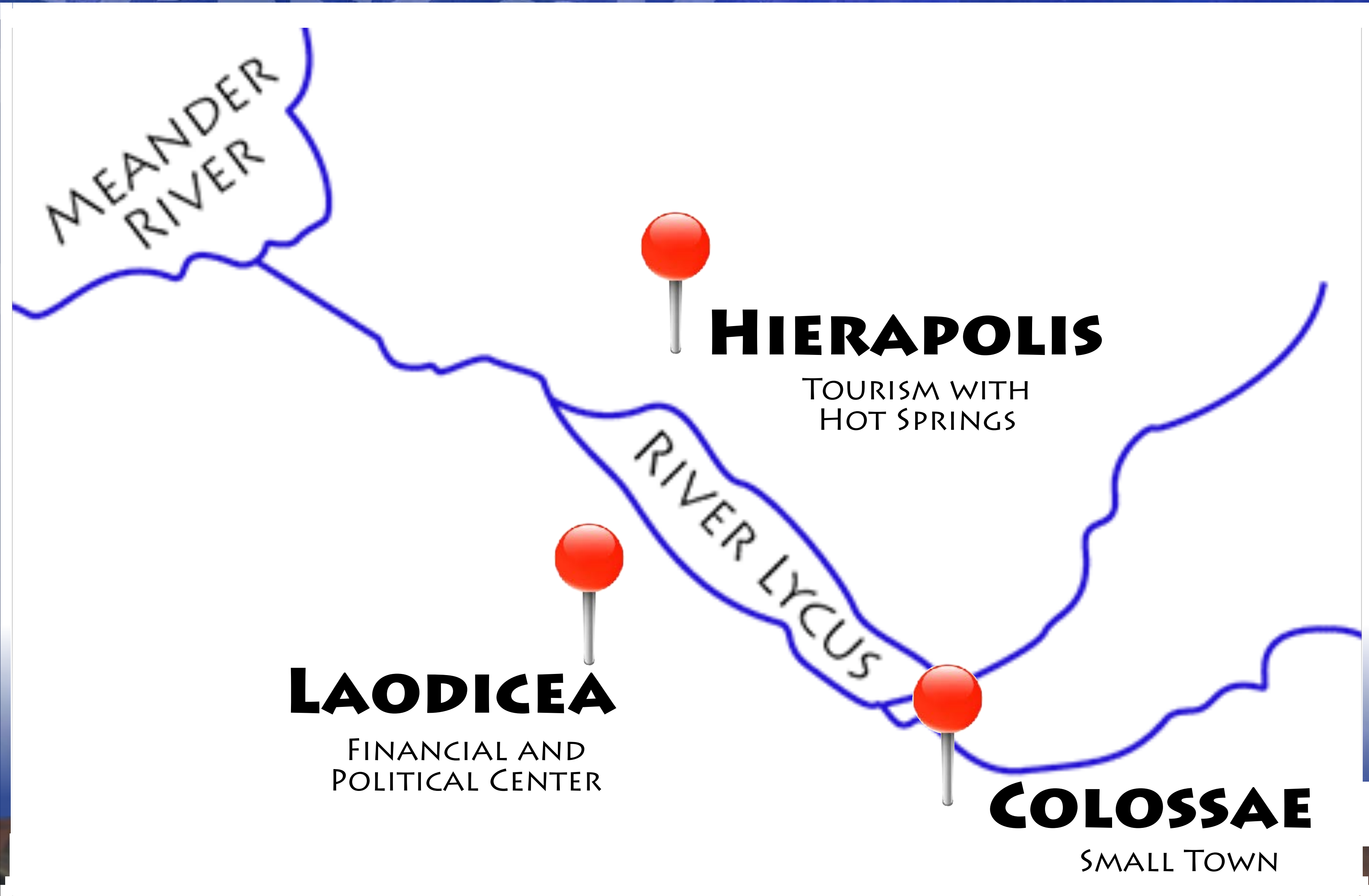






# LYCHUS RIVER VALLEY





MEANDER  
RIVER

RIVER LYCUS

**HIERAPOLIS**

TOURISM WITH  
HOT SPRINGS

**LAODICEA**

FINANCIAL AND  
POLITICAL CENTER

**COLOSSAE**

SMALL TOWN

# LYCHUS RIVER VALLEY





HIERAPOLIS





LAODACEA

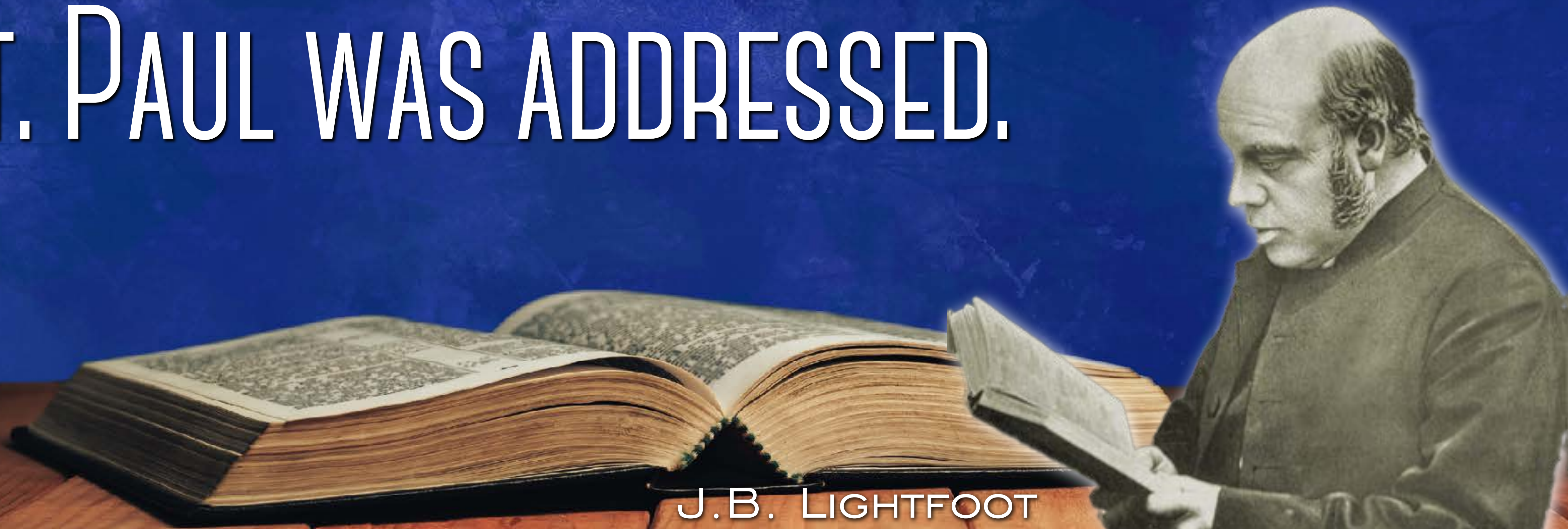




COLOSSAE



COLOSSAE WAS THE LEAST IMPORTANT  
CHURCH TO WHICH ANY EPISTLE OF  
ST. PAUL WAS ADDRESSED.



J. B. LIGHTFOOT



# EPAPHRAS STARTED THE CHURCH

---

“ALL THE JEWS AND GREEKS WHO LIVED  
IN THE PROVINCE OF ASIA HEARD THE  
WORD OF THE LORD”



Acts 19:10



# LIFE OF PAUL

## FIRST JOURNEY

(ACTS 13-14)

APRIL 48  
SEPTEMBER 49

**GALATIANS**

JERUSALEM  
COUNCIL

## SECOND JOURNEY

(ACTS 15:36-18:22)

APRIL 50  
SEPTEMBER 52

**1 THESSALONIANS**  
**2 THESSALONIANS**

## THIRD JOURNEY

(ACTS 18:23-21:16)

SPRING 53  
MAY 57

**1 CORINTHIANS**  
**2 CORINTHIANS**  
**ROMANS**

## PRISON EPISTLES

(ACTS 28:30)

WINTER 60  
SPRING 62

**EPHESIANS**  
**PHILIPPIANS**  
**COLOSSIANS**  
**PHILEMON**

## FINAL DAYS

(ACTS 13-14)

AUTUMN 67  
SPRING 68

**1 TIMOTHY**  
**TITUS**  
**2 TIMOTHY**



# WHEN AND WHERE



# WHY WAS COLOSSIANS WRITTEN?

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AFTER WRITING EPHESIANS TO BE CIRCULATED TO CHURCHES IN ASIA, A REPORT IS BROUGHT FROM EPAPHRAS (1:7) ABOUT PROBLEMS IN COLOSSAE. USING EPHESIANS AS A TEMPLATE, PAUL QUICKLY ADDRESSES THE ISSUES AT COLOSSAE AND SENDS THE LETTERS TO EPHESUS AND COLOSSAE BY TYCHICUS.

(MORE ON PHILEMON LATER).





# Colossians: The All-Sufficiency of Christ

Jesus is God and Nothing Less. In Him You Have All You Need. Cancel the Quest for Something More.



## Paul's Connection with the Colossian Church

1. The Colossian church was not started by Paul (1:4; 2:1).
2. The church was likely started during Paul's extended stay in Ephesus recorded in Acts 19 during his 3rd missionary journey.
3. It was likely started by Paul's co-worker Epaphras (1:7; 4:12-13) who was a local convert.
4. Epaphras also worked at the church in the nearby cities of Hierapolis and Laodicea (4:13).
5. Colossians and Philemon are written during Paul's Roman "house arrest" along with Ephesians & Philippians.



## The Colossian "Heresy"

1. Philosophical Character (1:19; 2:3)
2. Human traditions (2:8)
3. Religious laws and festivals (2:16)
4. Following a dietary code (2:16,21)
5. Veneration of angels (2:8, 18)
6. Asceticism (2:20)
7. Attacks on the centrality of Christ (1:15-19; 2:9-10)
8. A tendency toward exclusivism (1:20,28, 3:11)

		Personal Christ is Sufficient for Ministry	Doctrinal Christ is Sufficient for Salvation	Practical Christ is Sufficient for Sanctification
Epistolary Prescript: Salutation and Greeting	Thanksgiving and Prayer Thankful for Faith, Hope, and Love (1:3-8) Praying for Pleasing Fruit (1:9-14)	Biographical Prologue: The Supremacy of Christ The supremacy of Christ in Creation, the Church & Redemption (1:15-23) Creation (1:15-18) • The Church (1:19-20) • Salvation (1:21-23) Paul's Ministry of Proclaiming the Mystery of Fullness in Christ (1:24-2:5) Mystery: Christ in You (1:24-27) • Purpose: Unified in Maturity (1:27-2:5)	A High Christology Proclaimed and Applied A Warning about Empty and Deceptive Teachings (2:8) Christ, who is truly God, has victoriously brought us fullness of life and forgiveness of indebtedness as a demonstration of His power. • Christ is Our Authority (2:9-10). • Christ is Our Power (2:11-12). • Christ is Our Triumph (2:13-15). Christ is the reality of which all other religious ritual activities and practices are merely a shadow (2:16-19). Christ frees us from legalistic human rules and regulations. • Free from Man Made Rituals (2:16-17) • Free from Secret Knowledge (2:18-19) • Free from Man Made Rules (2:20-23)	A Heavenly Perspective in Your Mind Christ frees us to have God's perspective on the source of life found in Christ (3:1-4) The New Wardrobe in the World God's chosen people live a new lifestyle of love and Christian character. (3:5-14) Transformed Relationships in Your Home The peace and message of Christ are to control our thinking, speaking and living Christ at the Center (3:15-17) • Marriage (3:18-19) • Family (3:20-21) • Employment (3:22-4:1)
1:1-2	1:3	1:14	1:15	2:5
Introduction		Body		Conclusion
Prescript	Exordium	Narratio	Probatio (Development and Defense)	
		Propositio		Peroratio
				Postscript

**Main Idea: Live Life with Christ at the Center (2:6-7)**

When Epaphras reported that the healthy church at Colossae was encountering false teaching that diminished the sufficiency of Christ, Paul wrote to the church from prison affirming the deity and supremacy of Jesus Christ and reminding them that in Christ they have all they need for maturity and godliness in order to make it clear they should not be seeking after anything other than fullness in Christ.



# WHAT IS THE MESSAGE?

---

WHEN EPAPHRAS REPORTED THAT THE HEALTHY CHURCH AT COLOSSAE WAS ENCOUNTERING FALSE TEACHING THAT DIMINISHED THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST, PAUL WROTE TO THE CHURCH FROM PRISON AFFIRMING THE DEITY AND SUPREMACY OF JESUS CHRIST AND REMINDING THEM THAT IN CHRIST THEY HAVE ALL THEY NEED FOR MATURITY AND GODLINESS IN ORDER TO MAKE IT CLEAR THEY SHOULD NOT BE SEEKING AFTER ANYTHING OTHER THAN FULLNESS IN CHRIST.





THE LETTER'S THEME,  
SEEN IN THE LIGHT OF THE RISING HERESY,  
IS THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST.



DAN WALLACE





# RHETORICAL CRITICISM

THESIS: THE EPISTLES ARE SERMONS TO BE READ IN PUBLIC

## STRUCTURE: THE SHAPE OF ANCIENT RHETORIC

- EXORDIUM: ESTABLISHING CONNECTION - **SALUTATION**
- NARRATIO: BACKGROUND INFORMATION - **THANKSGIVING**
- PROPOSITIO: MAIN IDEA - **THEME [MAIN IDEA]**
- PROBATIO: PROOF ESTABLISHING MAIN IDEA - **BODY**
- PERORATION: SUMMARY AND APPLICATION - **EXHORTATION**





# ESTABLISHING CONNECTION

WE ALWAYS THANK GOD, THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHEN WE PRAY FOR YOU, BECAUSE WE HAVE HEARD OF YOUR FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS AND OF THE LOVE YOU HAVE FOR ALL GOD'S PEOPLE — THE FAITH AND LOVE THAT SPRING FROM THE HOPE STORED UP FOR YOU IN HEAVEN AND ABOUT WHICH YOU HAVE ALREADY HEARD IN THE TRUE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL THAT HAS COME TO YOU.



Colossians 1:3-6



# ESTABLISHING CONNECTION

IN THE SAME WAY, THE GOSPEL IS BEARING FRUIT AND GROWING THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD—JUST AS IT HAS BEEN DOING AMONG YOU SINCE THE DAY YOU HEARD IT AND TRULY UNDERSTOOD GOD'S GRACE. YOU LEARNED IT FROM **EPAPHRAS**, OUR DEAR FELLOW SERVANT, WHO IS A FAITHFUL MINISTER OF CHRIST ON OUR BEHALF, AND WHO ALSO TOLD US OF YOUR LOVE IN THE SPIRIT.



Colossians 1:6-8



# PRAYER

---

FOR THIS REASON,  
SINCE THE DAY WE HEARD ABOUT YOU,  
WE HAVE NOT STOPPED PRAYING FOR YOU.



Colossians 1:9-14



# THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

---

THE SON IS THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD, THE FIRSTBORN OVER ALL CREATION. FOR IN HIM ALL THINGS WERE CREATED: THINGS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH, VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE, WHETHER THRONES OR POWERS OR RULERS OR AUTHORITIES; ALL THINGS HAVE BEEN CREATED THROUGH HIM AND FOR HIM.



Colossians 1:15-16



# firstborn, preeminent, priority (πρωτότοκος)

The Greek word πρωτότοκος (prōtotokos) could mean first in order of time, such as a first born child, or it could mean first as preeminent in rank. In Col 1:15 the emphasis is on the priority of Jesus' rank as over and above creation.





# THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

---

HE IS BEFORE ALL THINGS, AND IN HIM ALL THINGS HOLD TOGETHER. AND HE IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH; HE IS THE BEGINNING AND THE FIRSTBORN FROM AMONG THE DEAD, SO THAT IN EVERYTHING HE MIGHT HAVE THE SUPREMACY.



Colossians 1:17-18



# THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

---

FOR GOD WAS PLEASED TO HAVE ALL HIS FULLNESS DWELL IN HIM, AND THROUGH HIM TO RECONCILE TO HIMSELF ALL THINGS, WHETHER THINGS ON EARTH OR THINGS IN HEAVEN, BY MAKING PEACE THROUGH HIS BLOOD, SHED ON THE CROSS.



Colossians 1:19-20



# THE PURPOSE OF PAUL'S MINISTRY

HE IS THE ONE WE PROCLAIM, ADMONISHING AND TEACHING EVERYONE WITH ALL WISDOM, **SO THAT WE MAY PRESENT EVERYONE FULLY MATURE IN CHRIST.**

TO THIS END I STRENUOUSLY CONTEND WITH ALL THE ENERGY CHRIST SO POWERFULLY WORKS IN ME.



Colossians 1:28-29



# KEYNOTE • BIG IDEA • MAIN POINT

---

SO THEN, JUST AS YOU RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS AS LORD, **CONTINUE TO LIVE YOUR LIVES IN HIM**, ROOTED AND BUILT UP IN HIM, STRENGTHENED IN THE FAITH AS YOU WERE TAUGHT, AND OVERFLOWING WITH THANKFULNESS.



Colossians 2:6-7



# WARNING • DANGER • POZOR

SEE TO IT THAT NO ONE TAKES YOU CAPTIVE THROUGH **HOLLOW AND DECEPTIVE PHILOSOPHY**, WHICH DEPENDS ON HUMAN TRADITION AND THE ELEMENTAL SPIRITUAL FORCES OF THIS WORLD RATHER THAN ON CHRIST.



Colossians 2:8



# DEEP THEOLOGY

---

FOR IN CHRIST **ALL THE FULLNESS OF THE DEITY LIVES IN BODILY FORM**, AND IN CHRIST YOU HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO FULLNESS. HE IS THE HEAD OVER EVERY POWER AND AUTHORITY.



Colossians 2:9-10



# DEEP APPLICATION

---

FOR IN CHRIST ALL THE FULLNESS OF THE DEITY LIVES IN BODILY FORM, AND **IN CHRIST YOU HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO FULLNESS.** HE IS THE HEAD OVER EVERY POWER AND AUTHORITY.



Colossians 2:9-10



# PRINCIPLES # 1 & 2

---

**JESUS CHRIST IS GOD!**

**IN HIM YOU HAVE  
ALL YOU NEED!**



Colossians 2:9-10



# PRINCIPLE #3

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**CANCEL THE QUEST  
FOR SOMETHING MORE!**



Colossians 2:9-10



# DEEP APPLICATION

---

- CANCEL YOUR QUEST FOR MORE **RITUALS**.
- CANCEL YOUR QUEST FOR MORE **KNOWLEDGE**.
- CANCEL YOUR QUEST FOR MORE **EXPERIENCES**.
- CANCEL YOUR QUEST FOR MORE **RULES**.



Colossians 2:9-10



# NO MORE RITUALS NEEDED

THEREFORE DO NOT LET ANYONE JUDGE YOU BY WHAT YOU EAT OR DRINK, OR WITH REGARD TO A RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL, A NEW MOON CELEBRATION OR A SABBATH DAY. THESE ARE A SHADOW OF THE THINGS THAT WERE TO COME; THE REALITY, HOWEVER, IS FOUND IN CHRIST.



Colossians 2:16-17



# NO MORE KNOWLEDGE & EXPERIENCES NEEDED

---

DO NOT LET ANYONE WHO DELIGHTS IN FALSE HUMILITY AND THE WORSHIP OF ANGELS DISQUALIFY YOU. SUCH A PERSON ALSO GOES INTO GREAT DETAIL ABOUT WHAT THEY HAVE SEEN; THEY ARE PUFFED UP WITH IDLE NOTIONS BY THEIR UNSPIRITUAL MIND. **THEY HAVE LOST CONNECTION WITH THE HEAD,** FROM WHOM THE WHOLE BODY, SUPPORTED AND HELD TOGETHER BY ITS LIGAMENTS AND SINEWS, GROWS AS GOD CAUSES IT TO GROW.



Colossians 2:18-19



# NO MORE RULES NEEDED

---

SINCE YOU DIED WITH CHRIST TO THE ELEMENTAL SPIRITUAL FORCES OF THIS WORLD, WHY, AS THOUGH YOU STILL BELONGED TO THE WORLD, DO YOU SUBMIT TO ITS RULES: “DO NOT HANDLE! DO NOT TASTE! DO NOT TOUCH!”? THESE RULES, WHICH HAVE TO DO WITH THINGS THAT ARE ALL DESTINED TO PERISH WITH USE, ARE **BASED ON MERELY HUMAN COMMANDS AND TEACHINGS.**



Colossians 2:20-23



# NO MORE RULES NEEDED

SUCH REGULATIONS INDEED HAVE AN APPEARANCE OF WISDOM, WITH THEIR SELF-IMPOSED WORSHIP, THEIR FALSE HUMILITY AND THEIR HARSH TREATMENT OF THE BODY, BUT **THEY LACK ANY VALUE** IN RESTRAINING SENSUAL INDULGENCE.



Colossians 2:20-23



# HEAVENLY MINDSET

SINCE, THEN, YOU HAVE BEEN RAISED WITH CHRIST, SET YOUR HEARTS ON THINGS ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST IS, SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. SET YOUR MINDS ON THINGS ABOVE, NOT ON EARTHLY THINGS.



Colossians 3:1-2



# THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST AT HOME IN YOU

---

LET THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELL IN YOU RICHLY, WITH ALL WISDOM TEACHING AND ADMONISHING ONE ANOTHER WITH PSALMS AND HYMNS AND SPIRITUAL SONGS, SINGING WITH GRATEFULNESS IN YOUR HEARTS TO GOD.



Colossians 3:16



# DEVOTED TO PRAYER

---

DEVOTE YOURSELVES TO PRAYER, BEING WATCHFUL IN IT WITH THANKSGIVING; PRAYING AT THE SAME TIME FOR US AS WELL, THAT GOD WILL OPEN UP TO US A DOOR FOR THE WORD, SO THAT WE MAY SPEAK THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST, FOR WHICH I HAVE ALSO BEEN BOUND, THAT I MAY MAKE IT MANIFEST IN THE WAY I OUGHT TO SPEAK.



Colossians 4:2-4



# WINSOME AND WISE

---

WALK IN WISDOM TOWARD OUTSIDERS, REDEEMING THE TIME. LET YOUR WORDS ALWAYS BE WITH GRACE, SEASONED WITH SALT, SO THAT YOU WILL KNOW HOW YOU SHOULD ANSWER EACH PERSON.



Colossians 4:5-6



# WHERE DOES THIS FIT?

- AS A SHORT EPISTLE, COLOSSIANS IS FULL OF RICH THEOLOGY, CLEAR APPLICATION AND PERSONAL CONNECTION.
- WE LEARN A LOT ABOUT THE “PAULINE CIRCLE” AT THE END OF THE BOOK.
- COLOSSIANS IS A DEEPLY THEOLOGICAL LETTER THAT IS WRITTEN TO A CHURCH THAT IS BEING THREATENED WITH TEACHING THAT DIMINISHES THE SUPREMACY AND SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST.





# WHERE DOES THIS FIT?

- COLOSSIANS PRESENTS PERHAPS PAUL'S MOST LOFTY PRESENTATION OF CHRISTOLOGY (DOCTRINE OF CHRIST).
- COLOSSIANS ALSO PRESENTS THE CLEAR APPLICATION OF A HIGH CHRISTOLOGY TO DAILY LIVING.





# WHAT SHOULD WE BELIEVE?

---

- JESUS CHRIST IS GOD AND NOTHING LESS.
- IN HIM WE HAVE ALL WE NEED.





# HOW SHOULD WE BEHAVE?

---

- CANCEL YOUR QUEST FOR MORE **RITUALS**.
- CANCEL YOUR QUEST FOR MORE **KNOWLEDGE**.
- CANCEL YOUR QUEST FOR MORE **EXPERIENCES**.
- CANCEL YOUR QUEST FOR MORE **RULES**.





# NEXT STEPS

---

- LOCK IN TO THE SUPREMACY AND SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST.
- DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST.
- ALLOW GOD'S WORD ABOUT HIS SON TO BE "AT HOME"  
IN YOUR LIFE.





COLOSSIANS WAS WRITTEN EXPLICITLY TO COMBAT THE HERESY THAT HAD ARISEN IN COLOSSAE AND WAS THREATENING THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH. IT WAS OCCASIONED, AS WE HAVE ARGUED, BY NEWS BROUGHT BY EPAPHRODITUS. BUT RATHER THAN SENDING EPAPHRODITUS BACK, A FRESH COURIER, TYCHICUS, WAS DISPATCHED. HE TOOK ALONG WITH HIM ONESIMUS AND, AFTER VISITING EPHESUS AND DEPOSITING PAUL'S CIRCULAR LETTER THERE, HE WENT STRAIGHT TO COLOSSAE.



DAN WALLACE





# HOW IS COLOSSIANS ORGANIZED?

Salutation and Greeting (1:1-2)

**Personal Connection: Paul's Care for and Ministry to the Church (1:3-2:5)**

- Thanksgiving and Prayer: Thankful for faith, hope, and love, and praying for pleasing fruit. (1:3-14)
- Background: The Supremacy of Christ in the Gospel and Paul's Ministry. (1:15-2:5)

**Main Idea: Life with Christ at the Center of Life (2:6-7)**

**Doctrine of Salvation: The Supremacy of Christ in the Life of the Church (2:8-23)**

- Christ is fully God; in Him you have all you need. (2:8-15)
- Christ is the reality, all else is shadows. (2:16-19)
- Christ frees us from human rules and regulations. (2:20-23)

**Practice of Sanctification: The Supremacy of Christ in the Life of the Believer (3:1-4:6)**

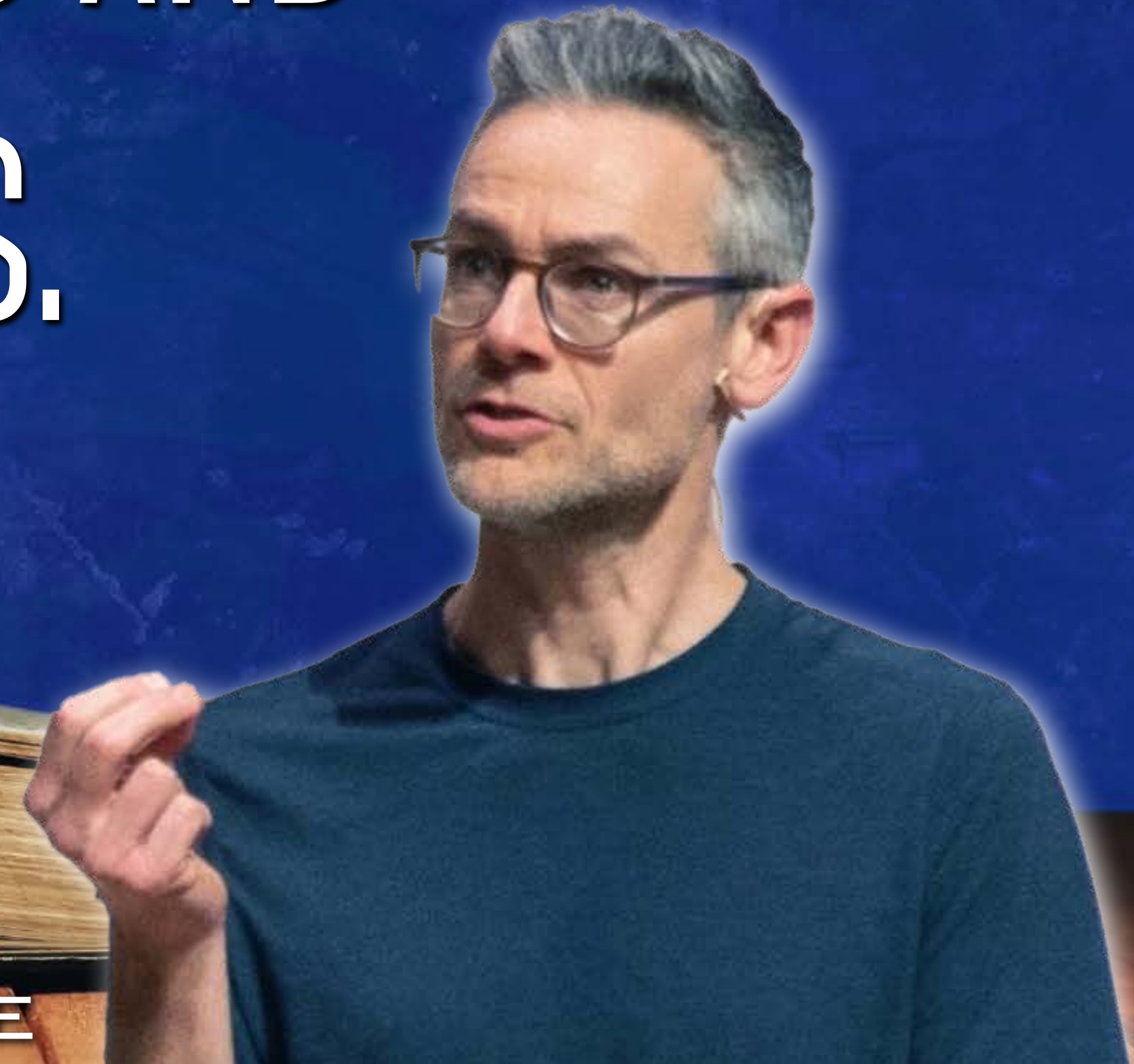
- Transformation: The Old Self and the New Self. (3:1-14)
- Relationships: Christian Living in the Home. (3:15-4:1)
- Evangelism: Devotion to Prayer and Winsome Living. 4:2-6)

Conclusion: Greetings, Exhortation, and Benediction (4:7-18)





NO PART OF HUMAN EXISTENCE REMAINS  
UNTOUCHED BY THE LOVING AND  
LIBERATING RULE OF JESUS.



TIM MACKIE



# HEAVENLY MINDSET

---

LET THE MESSAGE ABOUT CHRIST,  
IN ALL ITS RICHNESS, FILL YOUR LIVES. (NLT)

LET THE WORD OF CHRIST — THE MESSAGE — HAVE THE  
RUN OF THE HOUSE. (MESSAGE)



Colossians 3:16