

The Letter of Paul to the Colossians

(Colossians 1)

Christ Unites All Those in Him under God's Fatherhood

Jesus Sends out His Ministers; God Exerts his Will

1 Paul, an apostle of **Jesus Christ** by the will of **God**, and Timothy our brother,

Christ Makes Those in Him Saints; God is the Source of Peace.

2 To the saints and faithful brethren in **Christ** who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from **God our Father**.

God Deserves Gratitude (1); God is the Father of Jesus; Jesus is the Christ (1)

3 We give thanks to **God**, the **Father** of our **Lord Jesus Christ**, praying always for you,

Jesus is the Christ (2)

4 since we heard of your faith in **Christ Jesus** and the love which you have for all the saints;

5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel

God Exerts His Influence

6 which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of **God** in truth;

Christ Rules his Ministers

7 just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of **Christ** on our behalf,

The Spirit is the Agent of Love

8 and he also informed us of your love in the **Spirit**.

The Father Qualifies the Saints

9For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of **His** will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

**God Deserves Our
Desire to Please
Him; God Can be
Known**

10so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the **Lord**, to please **Him** in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of **God**;

**God Strengthens
His Saints by His
Power; God is
Glorious; God is
Mighty; God Gives
the Saints an
Inheritance**

11strengthened with all power, according to **His** glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously
12giving thanks to the **Father**, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

**The Father
Rescued the Saints
from the Domain
of Darkness; The
Father Transferred
the Saints to the
Kingdom of His
Son; The Son has
a Kingdom; The
Father Loves the
Son; The Son
Confers
Forgiveness of Sins
Upon the Saints**

13For **He** rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of **His beloved Son**,

14in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Son will Come to Have First Place in Everything

The Son is the Image of the Invisible God; The Son is Pre-eminent Over All He Created

15**He** is the image of the invisible **God**, the firstborn of all creation.

The Son Created All Things in the Heavens, Whether Visible or Invisible, Whether Thrones or Dominions or Rulers or Authorities; The Son Created All Things on Earth, Whether Visible or Invisible, Whether Thrones or Dominions or Rulers or Authorities; The Son is the Agent of Creation; The Son is the Reason for Creation

16For by **Him** all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through **Him** and for **Him**.

The Son is Before All Things; The Son Holds All Things Together

17**He** is before all things, and in **Him** all things hold together.

The Son is the Head of His Body, the Church (1); The Son is the Active Cause; The Son is the Prototype of All Who Would be Raised from the

18**He** is also head of the body, the church; and **He** is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that **He Himself** will come to have first place in everything.

The Father was Pleased to have all His Fullness Dwell in The Son; The Son Bears all the Fullness of the Father

19For it was the **Father's** good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in **Him**,

The Father Reconciles All Things on Earth or in Heaven to Himself Through The Son; The Son is the Agent of Reconciliation with The Father; The Father Made Peace with Mankind Through the Death of The Son; The Son Died on a Cross

20and through **Him** to reconcile all things to **Himself**, having made peace through the blood of **His** cross; through **Him**, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

The Son has Reconciled the Saints to The Father Through His Death; The Son Presents Those Who Continue in Faith in Him and in the Hope of the Gospel Before The Father, Holy, Blameless, and Beyond Reproach

21And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds,

22yet **He** has now reconciled you in **His** fleshly body through death, in order to present you before **Him** holy and blameless and beyond reproach--

23if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

Jesus is the Standard for Living for All Who have Faith in Him

The Son is the Head of His Body, the Church (2); Christ is the Inspiration for His Ministers to Live to Benefit His Body, the Church

24Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of **His** body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in **Christ's** afflictions.

God Chooses His Ministers (1); God Spoke

25Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from **God** bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of **God**,

God has Revealed Past Mysteries to His Saints; God Willed that the Gentiles would Know God's Revealed Mystery of Christ in the Saints

26that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to **His** saints,

Christ Lives Within the Saints, Guaranteeing Their Glorious Eternal Destiny

27to whom **God** willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is **Christ** in you, the hope of glory.

Christ is the Theme of the Gospel (1); Christ Makes the Saints Complete (1); Christ Enables His Ministers

28We proclaim **Him**, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in **Christ**.

29For this purpose also I labor, striving according to **His** power, which mightily works within me.

(Colossians 2)

1For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face,

Christ Himself is God's Once Hidden Mystery; Christ Bears all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge

2that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of **God's** mystery, that is, **Christ Himself**,

3in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

4I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.

Christ Deserves Faith

5For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in **Christ**.

Jesus is the Christ (3); Jesus is Lord (1)

6Therefore as you have received **Christ Jesus** the Lord, so walk in **Him**,

7having been firmly rooted and now being built up in **Him** and

established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.

God Imparts Spiritual Life to Those Who have Faith in Christ

Christ is the Theme of the Gospel (2)

8See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to **Christ**.

Christ Bore All the Fullness of Deity in a Human Body

9For in **Him** all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

Christ Makes the Saints Complete (2); Christ is the Head Over All Rule and Authority; Christ Frees the Saints from the Power of the Flesh; Christ Raises Up Those Who have Faith in Him; God Raised Christ from the Dead

10and in **Him** you have been made complete, and **He** is the head over all rule and authority;

11and in **Him** you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of **Christ**;

12having been buried with **Him** in baptism, in which you were also raised up with **Him** through faith in the working of **God**, who raised **Him** from the dead.

God Forgives the Transgressions of Those Who have Faith in Christ

13When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **He** made you alive together with **Him**, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

14having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and **He** has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

God Triumphed Over Rulers and Authorities Through Christ

15When **He** had disarmed the rulers and authorities, **He** made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through **Him**.

Christ is the Agent of Genuine Spiritual Life

16Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day--

Christ is the Substance Behind Jewish Festivals and Sabbaths

17things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to **Christ**.

18Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,

God is the Agent of Growth for the Body of Christ

19and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from **God**.

Christ Eliminated the Need for the Elementary Principles of Law for Those Who Have Faith in Him

20If you have died with **Christ** to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,

21"Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!"

22(which all refer to things destined to perish with use)--in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?

23These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

(Colossians 3)

Christ is Seated at the Right Hand of God

1Therefore if you have been raised up with **Christ**, keep seeking the things above, where **Christ** is, seated at the right hand of **God**.

2Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

God Offers True Life for Those Who have Faith in Christ; Christ is in God

3For you have died and your life is hidden with **Christ** in **God**.

**Christ will
Return Visibly to
the Earth; Christ
will Reveal His
Saints Visibly to
the Earth**

4When **Christ**, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with **Him** in glory.

Christ Unites Those in Him, Who have All Received the Enlightened Nature

**God Will Exert
His Wrath on the
Sons of
Disobedience**

5Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

6For it is because of these things that the wrath of **God** will come upon the sons of disobedience,

7and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.

8But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.

9Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices,

**God is the
Creator of the
Enlightened
Nature in Christ;
God is the
Temple of the
Enlightened
Nature in Christ**

10and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of **the One** who created him--

11a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but **Christ** is all, and in all.

**God Initiated the
Salvation of
Believers; The
Lord Extends the
Offer of
Forgiveness**

12So, as those who have been chosen of **God**, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

13bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the **Lord** forgave you, so also should you.

14Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

Christ is the Source of Peace Between the Saints; Christ Spoke; God Deserves Gratitude (2); Jesus is Lord (2); Jesus is the Channel of Our Gratitude to the Father

15Let the peace of **Christ** rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

16Let the word of **Christ** richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to **God**.

17Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord **Jesus**, giving thanks through **Him** to **God the Father**.

The Lord Sets Standards of Behaviour

18Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the **Lord**.

19Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.

The Lord Can be Pleased

20Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the **Lord**.

21Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

The Lord Deserves Reverence

22Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the **Lord**.

23Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the **Lord** rather than for men,

The Lord Will Reward the Saints

24knowing that from the **Lord** you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord **Christ** whom you serve.

25For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done, and that without partiality.

(Colossians 4)

God is Master

1Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a **Master** in heaven.

The Lord is the Master of His Servants

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving;

**God Opens
Doors for the
Spread of the
Gospel**

3 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 forth the mystery of **Christ**, for which I have also been imprisoned;

4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

7 As to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the **Lord**, will bring you information.

8 For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts;

9 and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your number. They will inform you about the whole situation here.

10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him);

11 and also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of **God** who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me.

**Jesus is the
Master of His
Servants;
Jesus is the
Christ (4)**

12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondservant of **Jesus Christ**, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of **God**.

13 For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

14 Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and also Demas.

15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house.

16 When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea.

**God Chooses
His
Ministers (2)**

17 Say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the **Lord**, that you may fulfill it."

18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.