



Colossians: Christ Surpasses All

May 7, 2014

Theme of the Letter

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 1:18 (NIV)

Background of the Letter

Prison Letters:

Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
Philemon

- Written approx 62-63 AD?
- Written to the “holy” and “faithful” brothers at Colossae.
- Colossae the city: Part of the Tri-Cities in the Lychnus Valley. Located about 100 miles inland from Ephesus. Once on an important trade route, and it had some status. But Romans cut a new road and the traffic it once had went to its sister cities of Laodicea and Hieropolis.
- Have no evidence that Paul ever visited Colossae.
- Epaphrus was the messenger for the letter. Apparently he became a Christian while in Ephesus, and returned to his hometown to spread the Gospel. But he encountered a situation there that sent him back to Paul for further instruction. When he returned to the valley, he brought with him a letter to the church at Colossae.
- To the “Who is Jesus?” In this brief letter, Paul answered definitively, “He is the One who is supreme over all.”

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Key Passages

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. 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. 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 1:15-20 (NIV)

But now He has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

Colossians 1:22 (NIV)

...rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Colossians 2:7 (NIV)

...having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through your faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; He has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

Colossians 2:12-14 (NIV)

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Colossians 3:9-10 (NIV)

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:12-14 (NIV)

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Colossians 3:17 (NIV)

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Colossians 4:6 (NIV)

5. Believers grounded in the _____ of Christ can withstand the attacks of those outside the faith. (2:3, 4, 8, 16-19)
6. As believers, we have been given freedom from _____, victory over _____, and the certainty of new life. (2:12-14, 20)
7. A New Life in Christ necessitates that I conform to a new _____ of _____. (3:5, 9-14; 4:5, 6)
8. Believers in _____ must continually pray for the spread of the _____. (4:2-4)

Eight Straight from the late great Apostle Paul —Timeless Truths from the Colossian Church

1. God's design for spreading the Gospel hinges upon the _____ of those who come to faith. (1:6)
2. In God's growth plan, right _____ precedes right _____. (1:9, 10)
3. The keystone universal truth for all of creation is this: Christ is _____, over and above all! (1:15-20)
4. As a community of believers, we have a common _____, a common _____, and a common _____. (1:27b-29)

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