

# COLOSSIANS STUDY OVERVIEW

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Rev 3: 14-22

**HANDOUT**  
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# COLOSSIANS STUDY OVERVIEW

## 1. BACKGROUND TO COLOSSIANS

### A. Historical and Geographical Setting

- Colossae is in the region of Asia Minor, About 125 miles SE of Ephesus, situated in Lycas Valley, consisting of Hierapolis, Colossae and Laodicea
- Colossian and Laodicean Church were sister churches; Colossae was approximately 12 miles from Laodicea
- It was the meeting point of east-west — vital trade route
- The legs of Iron in the Daniel prophecy of the Roman Empire Split/divided into the East and West in 395AD.
  - ◆ Moved its capital from Italy to Byzantium, (Constantinople), Turkey
  - ◆ Ephesus was the 3rd largest city of the Roman Empire, the eastern axis.

MAP

Daniel 2: 33

### B. Biblical Setting and Relationship with other Epistles

- Paul's imprisonment in Rome for 2 years, about 62AD, he wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and small epistle of Philemon
- Colossians indicates that Paul had never been to the city nor seen his face
- Most likely, Colossae church was the by-product of Paul ministry in Ephesus for 2 years
- Epaphras was pastor of the Colossae church, but remained with Paul during his confinement
- Tychicus and Onesimus carried epistle to the Colossians
- Colossians written same time as Ephesians and are companion books
- Paul's command that Colossians be read from Laodicea was a reference to 1 Timothy
- The postscript to 1 Timothy confirms that 1 Timothy was written from Laodicea
- Importance: 1 Timothy shows how the pastor is to behave, and Colossians shows how Christ is the Head of the Church
- Summary of Epistles—
  - ◆ Ephesians — Prophet;
  - ◆ Hebrews — Priest;
  - ◆ Colossians — King
- Philemon and Colossae Churches—All meetings and churches were based in their houses. Not buildings

Col 2:1

Acts 19: 1,10,26

Col 1: 7; Col 4: 12

Colossians postscript

1 Tim postscript

Phile 1: 2; Col 4: 5

## 2. ANATOMY OF COLOSSIANS

- Ephesians and Colossians, both deal theme of the body and head, but have notable distinctions—
  - ◆ Ephesians focuses on the body, while Colossians looks at the Head
  - ◆ Ephesians looks at the church what the church received — Salvation, Sealing of the Holy Ghost, Acceptance and Inheritance
  - ◆ Ephesians broken into 2 sections: the first 3 chapters are doctrinal and the last 2 chapters are very practical and instructional to the body of Christ
  - ◆ Colossians broken into 2 sections: The first 2 chps are very doctrinal and the last 2 are practical and very personal

Ephesians 1

### 3. DIVISION OF THE BOOK

#### A. Doctrine: Christ's Pre-eminence Declared

##### I. IN THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

- *"Heard of your faith"*: Gospel, faith requires belief on the Lord Jesus and in what he said
- *"hope laid up"* is the hope of the gospel (eternal life); also Christ in us the hope of glory
- *"word of the truth of the gospel"* requires a person to believe the word of God containing the gospel message is true—faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God
- *"Knowing Grace of God in truth"* is prefaced by acceptance of the doctrine of grace — *"saved by grace through faith . . . not by works"*

##### II. IN REDEMPTION

##### III. IN CREATION

##### IV. IN THE CHURCH

#### B. Dangers Beware: Christ's Pre-eminence Defended

##### I. BEWARE OF PHILOSOPHY AND VAIN DECEIT. BROKEN DOWN INTO 3 PARTS—

- Rooted and grounded in the faith—Christ is pre-eminent in our lives, then we are completed in him—we cannot be beguiled
  - Satan subject to authority of God
    - Satan is not opposite to God—no comparison as to opposites. (Chuck Smith). God is omnipotent. Satan created being. His comparable opposite is Michael
    - Credited Satan with more authority and power than he actually has
- (a) Epicureans (Post-Modernism)
- Live any which way you want to.
  - Post-Modernist thought— no absolutes; just live good life how you think best\*
  - Best way to achieve happiness and pleasure to submit to laws of nature, without burdening one's self with worldly cares, and do everything to avoid physical pain
- (b) Stoicism
- Does not require to believe a religious belief, to accept particular doctrines
  - Collection of ideas to help live a good life.
  - Moral, concerned with ethics and practical living. Appeals to live a life of contentment by making sense of suffering and tragedy
- (c) Differences
- Epicureanism — arrange life in such a way that it is completely free of stress—including the stress brought about by over-indulgence and pleasure-seeking.
  - Stoicism says to align one's expectations with the logos—the natural law of the cosmos—and not to worry about the rest.
- (d) Gnosticism
- Means to know — the insiders
  - Only they are in the know concerning the things of God — private, higher interpretation, that only they know (freemasons — logos)
  - This is spiritual aristocracy, the elite — doctrine of Nicolaitans
  - [3534] nikos from 3529 a conquest, triumph, victory; and 2992 laos means people
  - Trapped in the material world, but ignorant of its status, needs those with secret knowledge (gnosis) to inform them of the true status
  - All Flesh is evil and all physical matter is subject to decay, rotting, and death

#### Chapter 1

1: 1-12

1: 4

1: 5, 23, 27

1: 5, Rom 10:17

1: 6; Eph 2: 5,8

1: 13-14

1: 15-17

1: 18-29

#### Chapter 2

2: 1-10

2: 3-4, 7-10

2: 10

\*Deu 12: 8, \*Jdg 17: 6,  
Jdg 21: 25, Pro 12: 15,  
Pro 16: 2, \*Pro 21: 2

Acts 17: 18-34

2 Peter 1: 20

Rev 2: 6; Rev 2: 15

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(e) Christ's Pre-eminence Defended <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ His pre-eminence is the response to gnosticism—Christ is Head and chief of all ...</li> <li>■ “Principality and power” refers to the highest rankings of angelic beings.</li> <li>■ Christ is God manifest in the flesh — refutes the idea that the human body is evil</li> <li>■ God made the body and made it possible to live holy and healthy spiritual life</li> <li>■ Agnostic — Greek for “can’t really know”</li> <li>■ Latin equivalent is ‘ignoramus’</li> </ul> </li> <li>(f) Vain Deceit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Refers to Gentile false religions that are empty and vain</li> <li>■ Creation of Christian religions, like Cain, inventing a new religion thinking it will please God</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Col 2: 3, 9-10, 15</b></p> <p><b>1 Tim 3: 16</b></p>
<p><b>II. RELIGIOUS LEGALISM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Jewish Legalism not for it to have pre-eminence and advantage in your life</li> <li>■ No man to judge to keep sabbath</li> <li>■ The new moon references judging to observe the feasts</li> <li>■ True humility vs. voluntary humility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ One can volunteer one’s time, possessions, heart and soul which God wants</li> <li>■ Humility/humbleness is lowliness of mind</li> <li>■ True humility is not thinking of self, but puts God first, then others, then self (JOY)</li> <li>■ We are naturally disposed to be opposite of humble which is proud — therefore cannot volunteer false humility</li> <li>■ The fear of Lord is instruction of wisdom — knowing what the Bible says, and accepting it</li> <li>■ Willingness to get under God’s word*, rather saying “that’s your opinion, I think I am alright”</li> <li>■ Deut 8:2 identifies it is God that does the work of humbling upon the person — fruit that will last</li> <li>■ One cannot humble oneself if not under God’s hand, spending time in God’s word</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>2: 8</b></p> <p><b>2: 11-17</b></p> <p><b>Eze 46:12</b></p> <p><b>Pro 15:33; Acts 20:19</b></p> <p><b>1 Peter 5: 5-6</b></p>
<p><b>III. MAN-MADE DISCIPLINES AND NEW STANDARDS</b></p> <p><b>C. <u>Believer’s Duty: Christ’s Pre-eminence must be demonstrated in life</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>I. IN PERSONAL PURITY</b></li> <li><b>II. IN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP</b></li> <li><b>III. IN THE HOME</b></li> <li><b>IV. DAILY EMPLOYMENT</b></li> <li><b>V. CHRISTIAN WITNESS</b></li> <li><b>VI. CHRISTIAN SERVICE</b></li> </ul> <p><b>D. <u>Summary of Pre-eminence Themes</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Jesus is Pre-eminent as Head of the Church</li> <li>■ Shows us how Christ is all in all</li> <li>■ Christ is Pre-eminent as Creator</li> <li>■ Christ is Pre-eminent as Redeemer</li> </ul>	<p><b>2: 18-23</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 3-4</b></p> <p><b>3: 1-11</b></p> <p><b>3: 12-17</b></p> <p><b>3: 18-21</b></p> <p><b>3: 22 — 4: 1</b></p> <p><b>4: 2-6</b></p> <p><b>4: 7-10</b></p> <p><b>2: 18</b></p> <p><b>3: 11</b></p> <p><b>1:16</b></p> <p><b>1: 19-20</b></p>

- Christ is Pre-eminent in the Believer's life

3: 1-4

#### 4. LINK TO LAST CHURCH AGE MODERN-DAY CHURCH APOSTASY

Rev 3: 14-22

##### A. Revelation Summary of Problems penetrating the Church of Laodicea

- Colossians really applicable to our time, and to history of the church in the last century
- The 7th letter was addressed to the Laodiceans
  - ◆ The pre-eminence of Christ, the word of God and the Lord Jesus as creator, they needed to be put in remembrance because of disbelief
  - ◆ Therefore, this led to downfall of being neither hot or cold
  - ◆ Marked by being rich, they have need of Christ to meet their needs
  - ◆ Command to get gold and white raiment from Jesus suggests they are only shallow Believers or just church goers

HANDOUT

Rev 3: 14

3: 15-16

3: 17

3: 18, 20

##### B. Colossians Summary of problems penetrating the Church

- In Colossians, Laodicea is mention 4 times
- Paul commanded Colossians be read at Laodicea, because there were problems believing in Christ's pre-eminence as Creator and Redeemer

Col 2: 1; Col 4: 13; Col 4: 15; Col 4: 16

##### C. Portrait of what the problems are that define the Apostate Church today (1900's -2022)

- The following are cumulative —
  - ◆ The modern church has accepted, unknowingly, the Stoic and Epicurean righteous way of living
  - ◆ The modern church through lack of knowledge, rejects the pre-eminence of Christ in their life, as Revelation highlights,
  - ◆ As a result the preaching, generally, (few exceptions) is very shallow — watered down milk
  - ◆ The modern church is not providing substantive, adequate nourishment for the body to grow properly and increase
  - ◆ This caused Laodiceans doubt and confusion (opposite of full assurance) as a result of being beguiled, had no assurance for modern church
  - ◆ Nobody is endowed with knowledge to rightly discern and correct error
  - ◆ The modern church is plagued by false teachers and false teaching, scoffing at promise of Lord's coming
  - ◆ LGBTQ is infiltrating the churches, and there is nothing anyone can do about it — they have the pre-eminence in the courts
  - ◆ Freemasons are infiltrating churches — churning out graduates from theological seminaries and Universities into roles of leadership pastors and elders into the churches.
  - ◆ They are corrupting the Church with malnourishment—watered down milk. The body is full of wounds, sores and spiritual diseases — the Church CANNOT be corrected unless there radical return to solid teaching from the word of God.
  - ◆ The list goes on . . . .

Col 2: 3,19

Col 2: 2-4

2 Tim 3: 3-5; 2 Pet 2: 1; 2 Pet 3: 4

## APPENDIX A.

SEVEN LETTERS TO THE CHURCHES		
EPISTLE	NAME MEANING	UNFOLDING CHURCH HISTORY
Ephesus	Desired	The Apostolic Church (Birth of the Church)
Smryna	Myrrh; Death	The Persecuted Church
Pergmos	Mixed Marriage	The Married Unchaste Church
Thyatira	Semiramis	The Medieval Church
Sardis	Remnant	Denominational Church
Phildelphia	Brotherly Love	Missionary Church
Laodicea	People Rule	Apostate Church (present age, 2022)

## APPENDIX B.

### PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCHES COMPARED TO REVELATION CHURCHES

EPISTLE	MARKED BY
Ephesus	Ephesians
Smryna	Philippians (Joy through suffering: gives its fragrance when it is crushed)
Pergmos	1 and 2 Corinthians (Married to the world: fornication – world church)
Thyatira	Galations (legalism)
Sardis	Romans (Religious extremism)
Phildelphia	1 and 2 Thessalonians (chaste virgin and looking for His appearing)
Laodicea	Colossians (emphasis on teaching on beginnings of creation. Instructed exchange letters with Laodicea to be read (Col 4:16))