

Truthful

Colossians 1:3-8

Wayne Braudrick

February 1, 2026

Life Change: We serve Christ

Encouraging notes motivate godliness

Paul encourages the Colossians to godliness

Christians are rightly related to the Triune God

Christians possess faith, hope, and love

Christians appreciate the gospel truth

I was a graduate student in the 1980s, immersed in deconstruction. We fancied ourselves the smart ones and disdained the rest...[Jacques] Derrida consolidated [Hegel and Heidegger] and gave it a name, “différance.” *Différance* is not. There is no “nature” or “reality” [and] the force or process that yields this broken world, isn’t real—or unreal. *Différance* liquidated the world, but it empowered us. Truth became a high-stakes game of interpretation, and we played it with the fervor of a keen novice. [Of course] it was all nonsense, and it bothers me to recall that condescension. – Mark Bauerlein, “Vulgar Deconstruction”

Christians rejoice at the fruitfulness of God’s work

Christians should serve Christ

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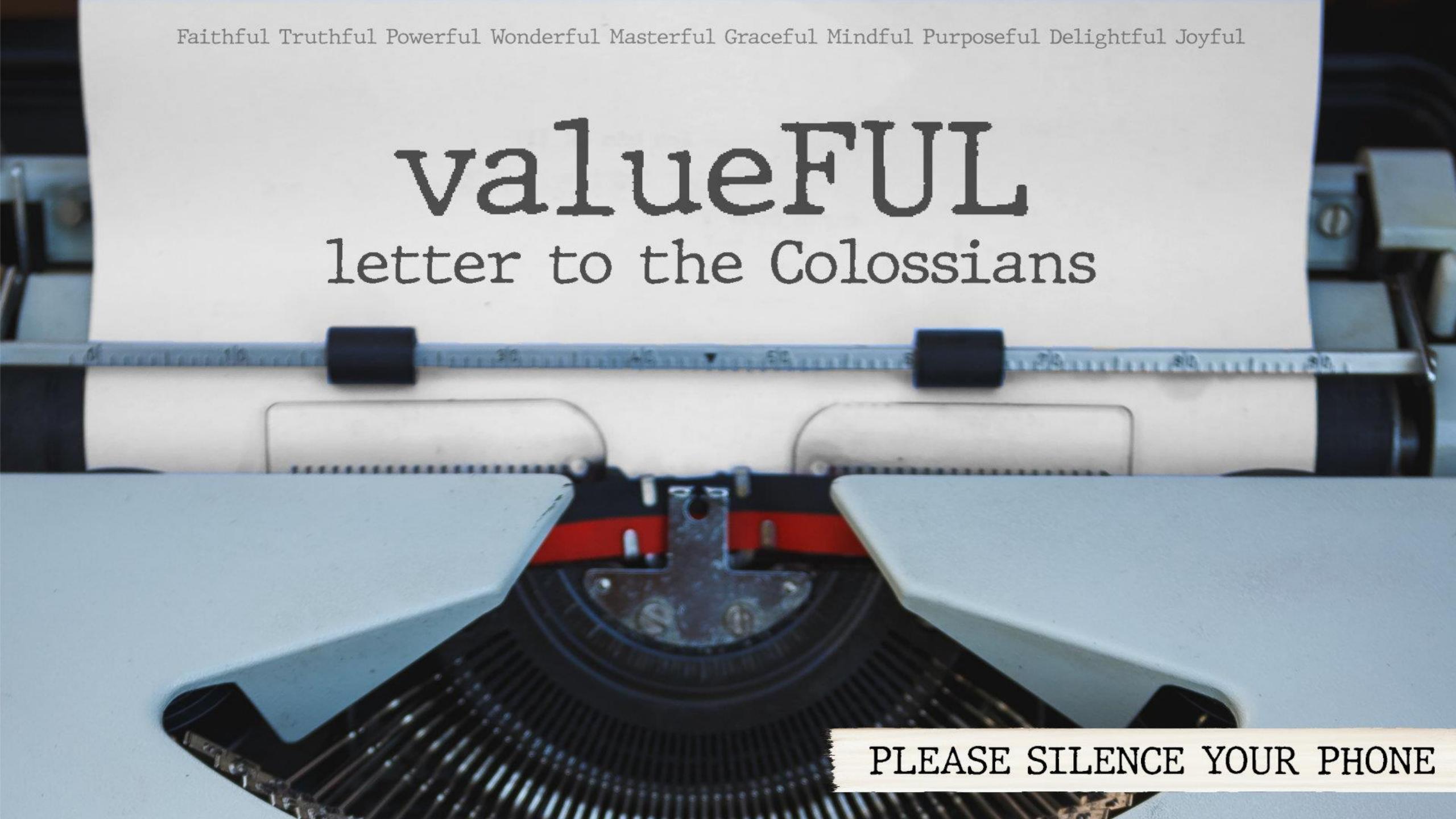


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Faithful Truthful Powerful Wonderful Masterful Graceful Mindful Purposeful Delightful Joyful

valueFUL

letter to the Colossians



PLEASE SILENCE YOUR PHONE

Thank you for
being an encouraging,
trustworthy, and
faithful husband!

Have a great day,

Joann

1:3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, **4** for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints **5** because of the hope reserved for you in heaven. You have already heard about this hope in the word of truth, the gospel **6** that has come to you. It is bearing fruit and growing all over the world, just as it has among you since the day you heard it and came to truly appreciate God's grace. **7** You learned this from Epaphras, our dearly loved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, **8** and he has told us about your love in the Spirit.



Imperialism
Middle Platonists &
Peripatetics
Stoicism
Skepticism
Epicureanism
Mystery religions
Angel worship
Jewish mysticism
Judaizing legalism
Gnosticism



Gospel
of
Jesus

valueFUL

letter to the Colossians

The Colossian heresy Paul addresses in this letter had Jewish, pagan, and mystic elements mixed up together. Paul gives the definitive response in his brilliant, inspired letter. The answer to everything is Jesus. Full value comes in him.

- Imperialism. The imperial cult involved the worship of the emperor as deity.
- Classical Plato (Middle Platonists) & Aristotle followers (Perpetetics). Truth can be found (sometimes) through philosophic thought.
- Stoicism. This was possibly the most powerful group, and were somewhat mystical, but not in a wildly pagan sense; rather, Stoics were dutiful, orderly, often ascetic, and held high moral standards. Personal sacrifice was the path to success.
- Skepticism. The Skeptics were decidedly derisive toward the Stoics. They generally taught that true knowledge was unobtainable in this life.
- Epicureanism. Epicureans were flatly atheist in that they considered the gods part of the *intermundia* – the between worlds – from which they took no notice of human affairs.

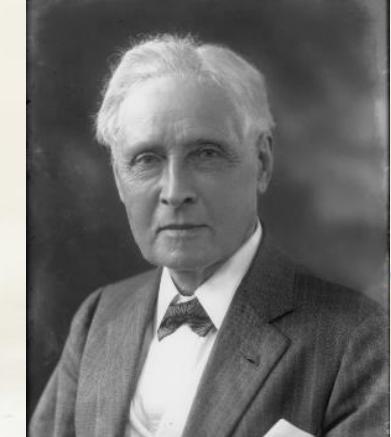
Followers of Epicurus anticipated modern evolutionists in their belief of a closed universe emerging from the chance collision of atoms within a void. In terms of ethics, they regarded pleasure as the ultimate good. Pleasure for them did not signify devotion to sensual excess but a life lived in moderation, since the traditional virtues of prudence and justice in their view yielded true happiness. – *The Archaeological Study Bible*, p. 1937.

- Imperialism. Bow before & leverage government power.
- Middle Platonists & Peripatetics. Truth might be found...if you think hard.
- Stoicism. Ascetic, high standards of sacrifice lead to success.
- Skepticism. There is no truth.
- Epicureanism. Materialism, lived in moderation for happiness.



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- Mystery religions. Secretive closed groups offered personal salvation through levels of earned attainment.
- Angel worship. Pagans worshipped local deities as manifestations and/or servants of Zeus, Caesar, or some other great deity. This transferred almost wholesale into some Christian worship.

The worship of angels was strong in Phrygia. Paul warned the Colossians against it in the first century. The Council held at Laodicea on the Lycus, about A.D. 363, stigmatized it as idolatrous. Theodoret, about 420-50 A.D., mentions that this disease long continued to infect Phrygia and Pisidia. But that which was once counted idolatry, was afterwards reckoned as piety among [the Greek Orthodox.] – Sir William M. Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire*, p. 477.

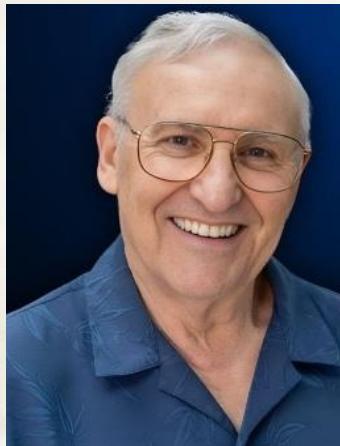


- Imperialism. / Middle Platonists & Peripatetics. / Stoicism. / Skepticism. / Epicureanism. / Mystery religions. / Angel worship.
- Jewish mysticism. Jewish mystics used certain repetitive practices to open the soul to God's special *extra* disclosure.
- Judaistic legalism. Determined to earn salvation, they traded the eternal Abrahamic covenant of grace for a warped Mosaic Law which they pretended was intended for justification.
- Gnosticism. Special seasonal “alignments” and secret knowledge were practiced as a way to reach God.

Epaphras came to Paul in prison to report a problem with false teachers who taught a mixture of Christianity with a bunch of philosophies including Gnosticism (2:8) [WB note: they probably did not yet call this core system Gnosticism.] ...The essence of the problem centered around the person and work of Christ. The Gnostics denied that Jesus was fully man but affirmed that He was fully divine because of their eternal antagonistic dualism between matter and spirit.

...For them there were many angelic levels (*eons*) between a good high god and humanity; Jesus, even though the highest, was only one of the gods. They also tended to be intellectually exclusive (cf. 3:11, 14, 16, 17) and emphasized a special exclusive secret knowledge (cf. 2:15, 18, 19) as the path to God instead of Jesus' atoning, vicarious sacrifice and mankind's repentant faith

response to His free offer of forgiveness. – Bob Utley,
Paul Bound, the Gospel Unbound: Letters from Prison





Imperialism. / Middle Platonists & Peripatetics. / Stoicism. /
Skepticism. / Epicureanism. / Mystery religions. / Angel worship
/ Jewish mysticism / Judaizing legalism / Gnosticism.

Various scholars through the centuries have tried to tie Paul to every one of those cultural voices. Perhaps more than any other single letter, Colossians proves that Paul's thought was distinct from each and every one. In fact, Paul speaks forcefully against people wandering from biblical Christianity into these various influences.

³ We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴ for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints ⁵ because of the hope reserved for you in heaven.

Colossians 1 CSB

*Thank you for
being as encouraging,
trustworthy, and
faithful husband!*

Have a great day,

John



courtesy ABC Australia

People say I'm condescending.
That means I talk down to people.



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Colossians 1 CSB

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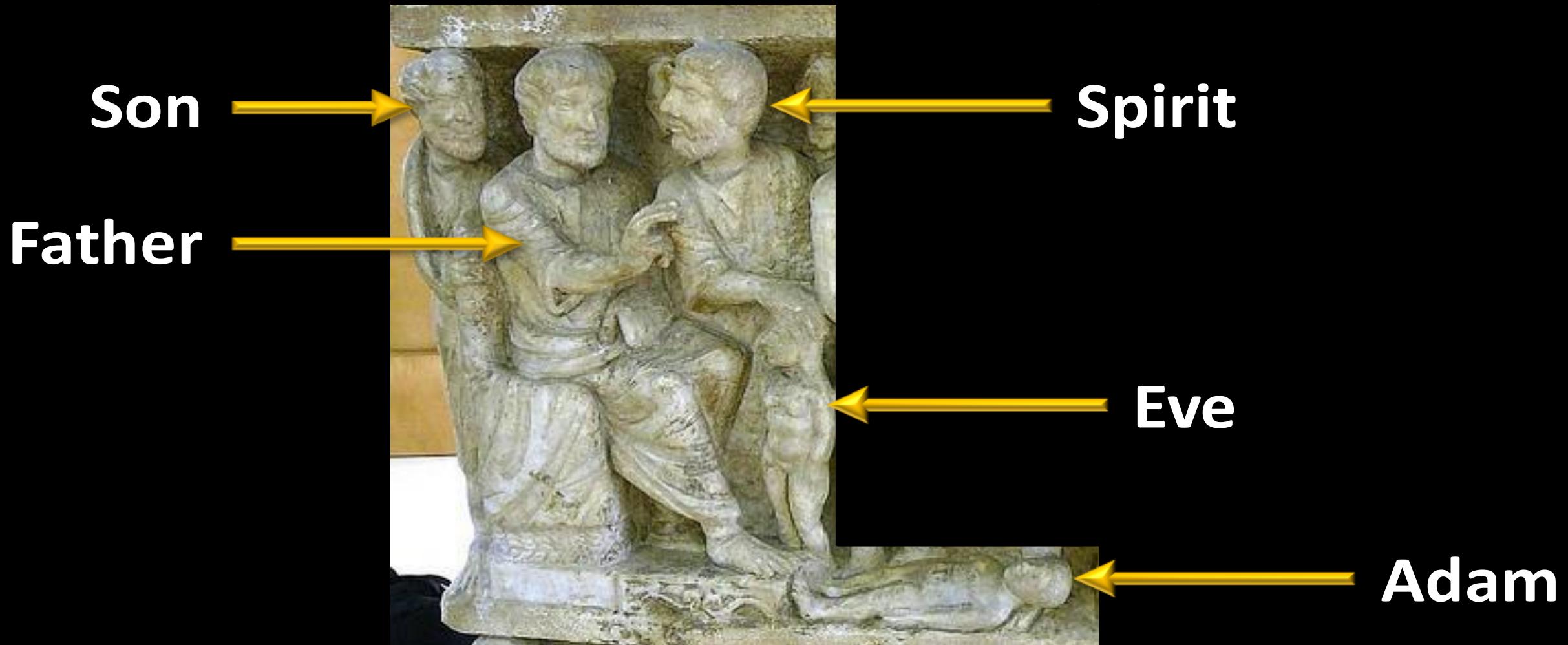
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The Dogmatic Sarcophagus





courtesy patronsvaticannmuseums

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Colossians 1 CSB

**13 Now these three remain:
faith, hope, and love —
but the greatest of these
is love.**

1 Corinthians 13 CSB

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Colossians 1 CSB

A DC insider said that in his estimation, “between 30 and 40 percent” of the Zoomers [Gen Z] who work in official Republican Washington are fans of Nick Fuentes. [Holocaust denier and leader of the “Groypers,” a collection of Christian nationalists and white nationalists.] I had this confirmed multiple times by Zoomers who live in that world. If you think being raised Christian is some kind of vaccination against anti-Semitism, you’re wrong.



I asked one astute Zoomer what the Groypers actually wanted (meaning, what were their demands). He said, “They don’t have any. They just want to tear everything down.”

Then he went on to explain in calm, rational detail why his generation is so utterly screwed. The problems are mostly economic and material and [not nearly as severe as those faced by previous generations]...But many of these young men are fatherless. Most of them spent their youths being told that as whites, and especially as white males, they are what’s wrong with the world.

Fuentes is a living, breathing illustration of what Hannah Arendt meant when she spoke of people willing to revel in transgression such that they tear down the pillars of civilization just for the fun of seeing those who had been gatekept away breaching containment...If I were writing a new edition of *Live Not By Lies*, I would absolutely revise the book to account for the lies that are consuming the Right today...They really do want to burn it all down. – Rod Dreher, “Groperism’s Spread Among Generation Z Conservative Apparatchiks Is Real,” November 10, 2025 *Rod Dreher’s Diary*

The Greeks had a word for this – ἴδιώτης idiotes. Paul uses the term 4 times in his letters to Corinth. Idiotes is a vulgar person concerned only for their own material benefit. Idiotes are flippant with words, disrespect tradition, see no hope beyond today, and bear loveless grudges. Idiotes want to burn it all down.

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Colossians 1 CSB

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Greek: ἀλήθεια aletheia = something actually true

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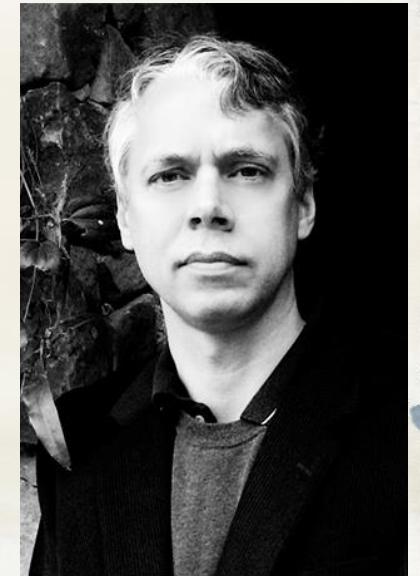
Greek: εὐαγγέλιον euangelion = “good news” – was used among Christians to describe the offer of new life through faith in Jesus

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⁵ Guide me in your truth and
teach me,

for you are the God
of my salvation;

⁶ Remember, Lord, your
compassion

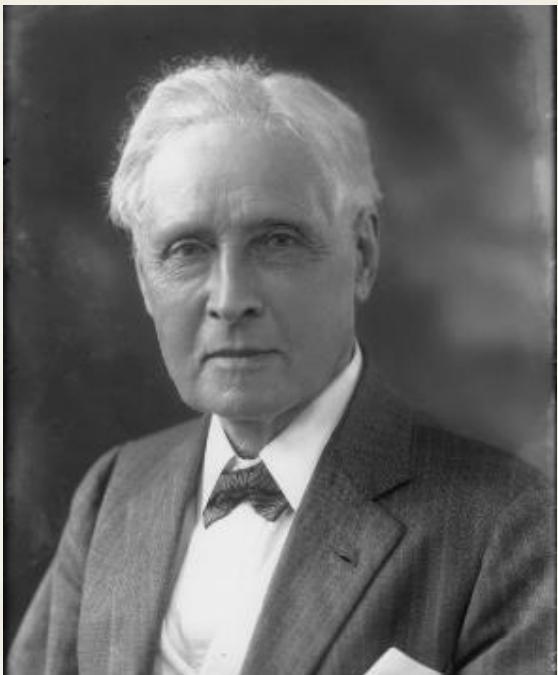
and your faithful love,
for they have existed from
antiquity.

¹⁰ All the Lord's ways show
faithful love and truth.

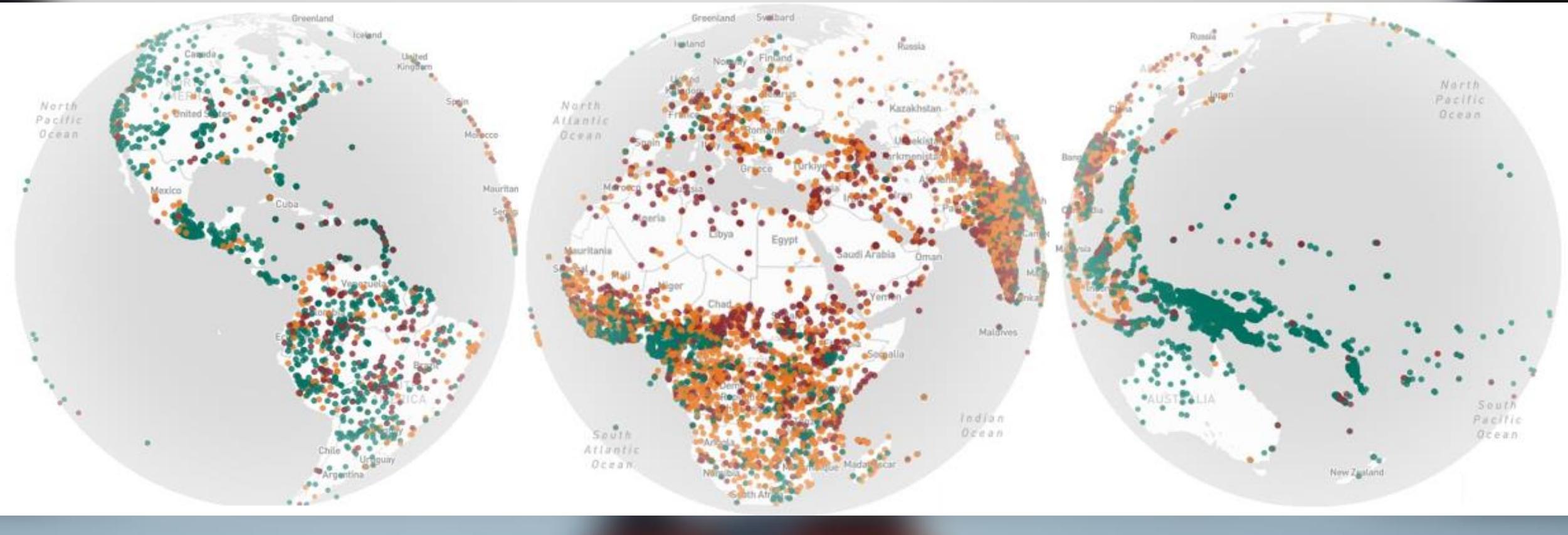
Psalm 25 CSB

⁶that has come to you. It is bearing fruit and growing all over the world, just as it has among you since the day you heard it and came to truly appreciate God’s grace.

Colossians 1 CSB



The overall Church of Jesus is shrinking. It doesn't grow like in the old days.



21st century:
Red – reached but no churches
Orange – churches planted
Green – churches growing/planting

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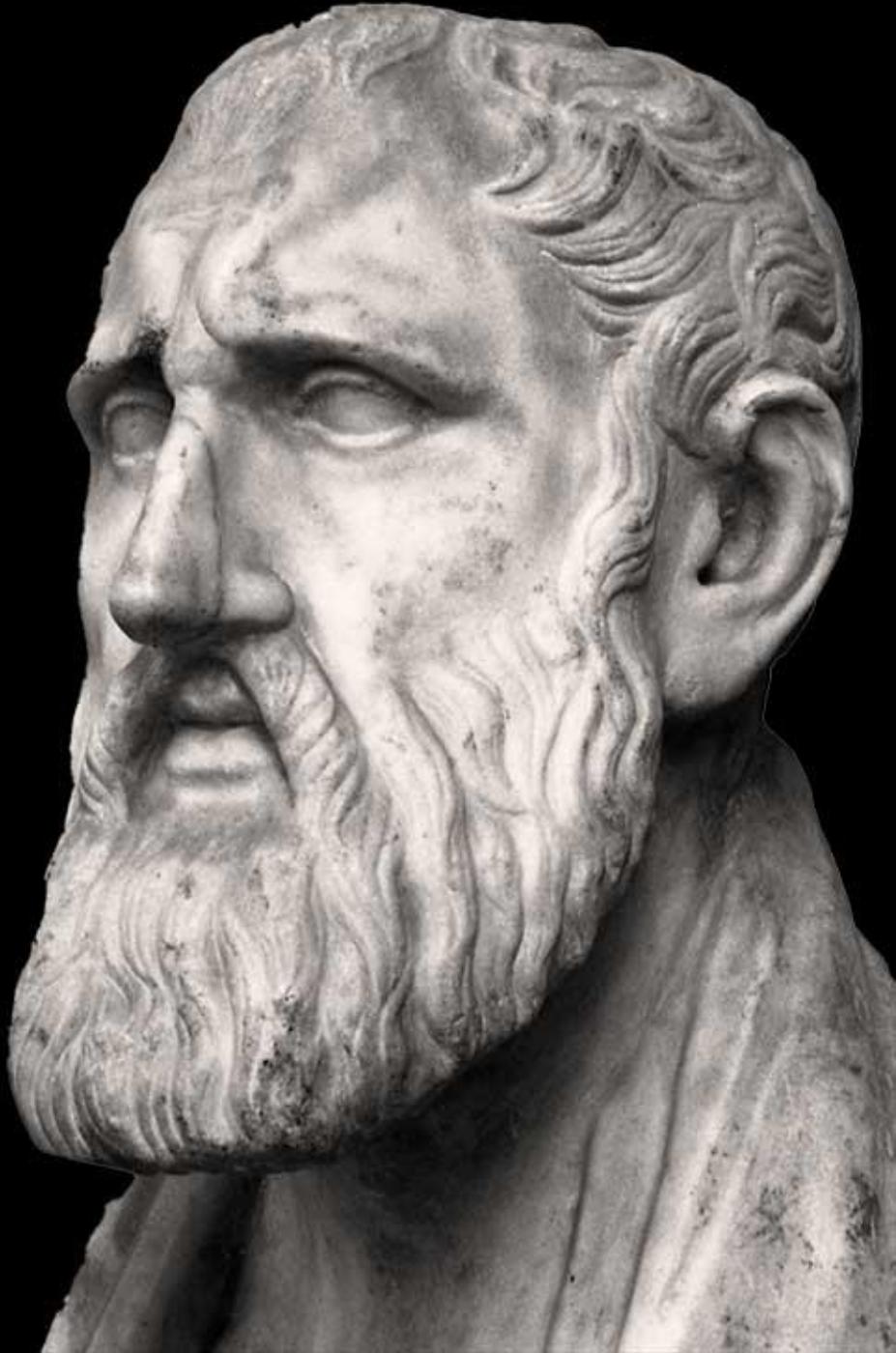
Colossians 1 CSB

**18 ...I will build my church,
and all the powers of hell
will not conquer it.**

Matthew 16 NLT

**Though the numbers may
grow, nothing of great value is
crafted by modern Christians.**

**– Zeno of Citium, founder of
Stoicism, d. 262 B.C.**





courtesy RIBA

Nuvi Mumbai airport designed by Christian Charles Correa



courtesy Mahara

⁶that has come to you. It is bearing fruit and growing all over the world, just as it has among you since the day you heard it and came to truly appreciate God's grace.

Colossians 1 CSB

- The believer in Jesus has value – ^{1:13} He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. ¹⁴ In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- The Christian should live by God's values – ^{1:10} so that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God.
- The Christian creates value in society – ^{3:23} Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people.

Colossians CSB

7 You learned this from Epaphras, our dearly loved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, 8 and he has told us about your love in the Spirit.

Colossians 1 CSB

1:7 You learned this from Epaphras, our dearly loved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,⁸ and he has told us about your love in the Spirit.

4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. He is always wrestling for you in his prayers, so that you can stand mature and fully assured in everything God wills. **13** For I testify about him that he works hard for you, for those in Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis.

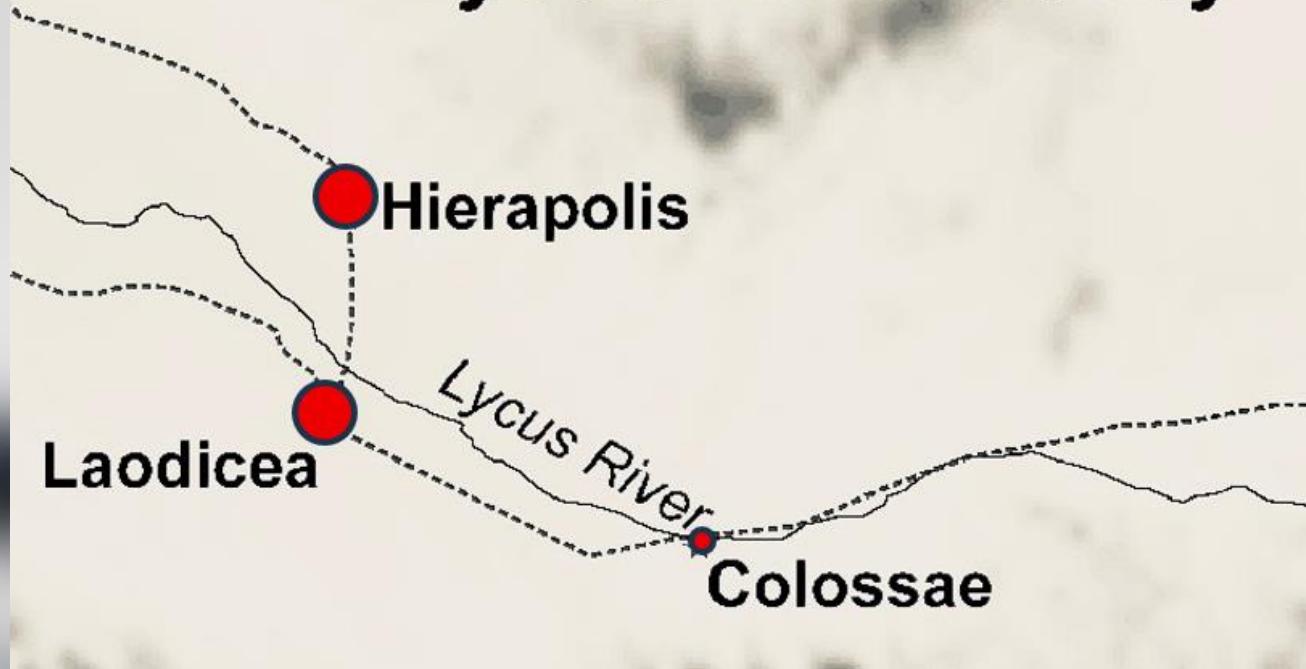
Colossians CSB

Greek: δοῦλος doulos = a slave that willingly binds himself to a master

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Colossians CSB

Lycus River Valley



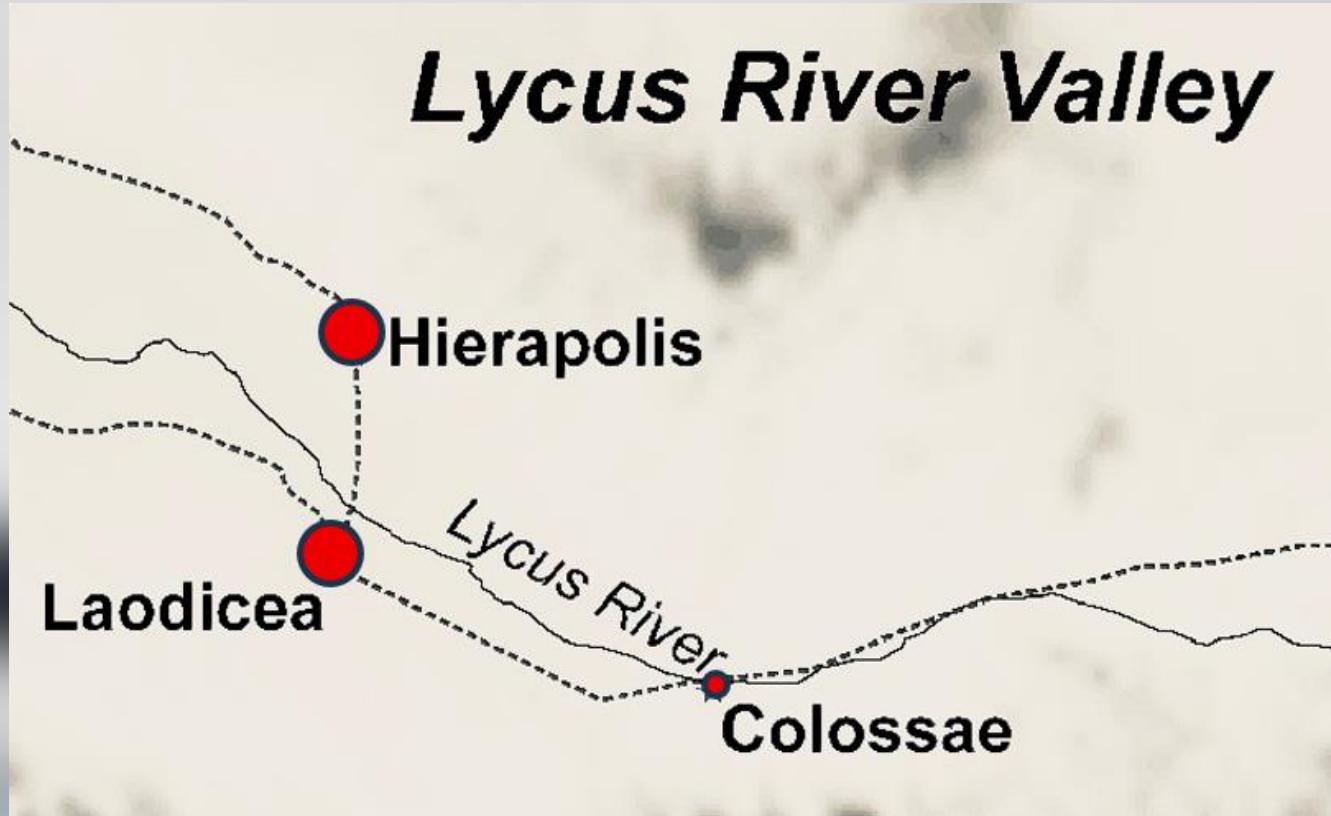
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Colossians 1:7 You learned this from Epaphras, our dearly loved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,⁸ and he has told us about your love in the Spirit.

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Philemon 1:23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings

Lycus River Valley



23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings

Philemon CSB

As His doulos, I trust Jesus to lead my life. If His word commands something, I happily obey

- A – Every time, thanks to God’s empowerment.**
- B – Much of the time.**
- C – As long as it doesn’t cramp my style.**
- F – Very rarely.**

I labor diligently for my church

- A – Continually, by God's grace.**
- B – Much of the time.**
- C – As long as it doesn't cramp my style.**
- F – Very rarely.**

I wrestle in prayer for other Christians

A – Every day.

B – When the Spirit prompts me.

C – As long as it doesn't cramp my style.

F – Very rarely.

I sacrifice (time, money, energy, etc.) so others can grow up in Christ

A – Continually, by God's grace.

B – Much of the time.

C – As long as it doesn't cramp my style.

F – Very rarely.

I am willing to do small things for God and His people

- A – When that is appropriate.**
- B – If I get recognition or appreciation.**
- C – As long as it doesn't cramp my style.**
- F – Very rarely.**

Write Justin Metz, our Connections Director. He or one of the other pastors will personally walk you through the ways to serve that should prove most valuable for you and the church.

Write jmetz@friscobible.com.



To start producing A level work:

1. Write Justin Metz, our Connections Director to discover ways to serve that should prove most valuable for you and the church. jmetz@friscobible.com.

2. Look to Epaphras-like brethren for encouragement.

Colossians 4:12 He is always wrestling for you in his prayers... he works hard for you

Faithful Truthful Powerful Wonderful Masterful Graceful Mindful Purposeful Delightful Joyful

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