

4/26/26

Colossians 1:1-14

Having looked at the introduction to the Colossians we are better able to understand the perspective of Paul about the false teaching at Colosse. Why he says what he says and how he approaches the defense against this heresy that was teaching the insufficiency of Christ for salvation.

* That there was need of greater knowledge, in particular secret mysterious initiatory insight by ascending up these emanations.

1:1-2 The Salutation and Greeting.

1:1 The writer of the salutation.

1) The author is identified, "Paul". vs. 1a

a) Paul formerly was called Saul, the persecutor of the church. Acts 8-9

b) Paul means little one, Saul means ask or request, without doubt after the first king of Israel.

2) The authority of is also stated, "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." vs. 1b

a) The word apostle "apostolos", means one sent out by and of Jesus Christ.

b) The apostolic authority of Paul was by the will of God not man. 1Cor. 9:1; Gal. 1:11-12

c) Paul is using the term as one commissioned to act as a representative and ambassador of Christ. 2Cor. 5:20

d) Such is the way it is applied to the twelve, Barnabas and Paul. Lk. 6:13; Acts 14:14

e) The term is also used as a messenger. Jn. 13:16; 2Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25

f) In the Old Testament the nations were to proselytize into the nation of Israel, being centripetal.

g) In the New Testament the church is centrifugal, the church goes out. to the nations to bring them into the Kingdom of God.

h) Paul was not the twelve apostle to replace Judas Ischariot for Paul did not meet the requirements of one of the twelve apostles, too be with Jesus from His baptism and seen Him after the resurrection. Acts 1:20-22; Gal. 1:1, 15

* Paul only met one of the requirements, he was a chosen vessel of Jesus to bear His name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel, and called an apostle to the Gentiles. Acts 9:15; Rom. 11:13

3) The companion of Paul was Timothy, "and Timothy our brother." vs. 1c

a) Timothy "Timotheos" means he who honors God.

* Timothy joined Paul as a disciple in his Second missionary journey, yet he acknowledges him as a brother. Acts 16

b) Paul identified Timothy as “our brother”

* The word is brother “adelphos”, means one born of the same womb, related spiritually being born again into the family of God.

1:2 The greeting to the recipients.

1) The greeting is addressed to the believers, “To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colosse.” vs. 2a

a) The word saint “hagios” means set apart by God, due to their new birth, not by our own righteousness.

b) The word faithful “pistos”, means in the context believing and continuing to believe, not trustworthy or reliable, faith is active.

* These Colossians were being tempted to be moved away from Christ for their sole dependency on Him for salvation and deceived to add to the work of Christ to complete salvation.

c) The saints were “brethren in Christ”, again the word “adelphos” is a term of affection for all Christians, describing the intimate fellowship with each other in the

family of God, the condition is “in Christ” through the new birth.

1)) This is despite the social, economic of racial barrier.

2)) The key to understand this is the phrase “in Christ”, due to Him and no one else.

3)) It is the position of the believer in relation to God.

4)) It is a term that Paul used more than 160 times in various forms in his letters to emphasize the believers spiritual position.

d) The word Christ “Cristos” means anointed, the Messiah, the Son of God, indicating deity.

1)) The very person the Gnostics were attacking as less than God.

2)) The visible form of the invisible God, the Creator of all things, sustainer, head of the church and Preeminent One of all things. Col. 1:15-18

e) The saints resided in Colosse and had dual citizenship, there and heaven. Phil. 3:20

1)) Colosse was located in Asia Minor in the upper Lycus Valley, on the eastern portion of the Roman Province of Asia, which Ephesus was the capital.

2)) The city of Colossae was a Phrygian city, today in modern day, western

Turkey, about one-hundred miles from Ephesus.

2) The greeting declared to the saints, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” vs. 2b

a) The source of everything they had received was by grace “karis” that was the common Greek greetings.

1)) Grace denotes God’s unmerited favor.

2)) Grace is used 155 times in the New Testament, most in Paul’s writings.

3)) Though it is used as a greeting for Paul it was no mere polite cliché, nor should it be for us.

b) The outcome of grace is peace “eirene”, it means to join something that was previously fractured or separated.

1)) Having made peace with God through repentance by grace through faith, now they had the peace of God available to them for all their needs in life, good time and bad times.

2)) It appears 92 times in the New Testament and 46 are in Paul’s letters.

3)) The LXX uses this Greek word to translate the Hebrew word “Shalom” more than 250 times in the Old Testament.

4)) The Hebrew greeting “Shalom” communicated a wholeness or

soundness to all of life, including prosperity, contentment and good relations, not so much the opposite of war like the Greek.

5)) Paul uses the word peace in his greeting of the benefit the Colossians had entered into by believing in Christ.

1:3-8 The prayer of Paul’s thankfulness.

* The entire section is one continuous sentence, even as in Ephesians. Eph. 1:3-23

1:3 The thanksgiving is to God for the Colossians, “We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.”

1) The prayer is by “we”, Paul and Timothy.

2) The declaration is not that they are always praying, but always giving thanks to God for the Colossians when they pray.

3) Thanks is a chief characteristic of Paul and for the believer. Col. 1:12; 2:7; 3:15, 17; 4:2

a) Thanks is an expression of gratitude.

b) Thanks is also an expression of praise.

c) The thanks is to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the One Jesus revealed as our Father.

4) The word for praying “prosuckomai”, means activity in prayer in general to God, never

used for man, while giving thanks
 “ukaeisteo” a specific form of praying.

- 5) Praying always for them as others is Paul’s habit and it should be of the believer. Col. 1:9; 4:2

* The reference is to regularly and continuously at times of prayer not that he was praying at all times!

- 6) The word ask “aita” refers to specific requests. vs. 9

1:4 The inception of prayer for the Colossians.

- 1) The point in time, “Since we had heard of your faith in Christ Jesus”, this is the very grounds for Paul’s prayer.
- a) Rejoicing for their salvation and God’s grace!
 * They had heard through Epaphras. vs. 7
 - b) Faith is the root, uniting man with God.
 - c) Faith “in Christ” does not mean in His name as the object, but in the sphere which faith moves, commitment, trust and reliance, active faith. Linski
 * As birds in the air and fish in water!
- 2) The people they loved, “Since they heard, “and of your love for all saints.”
- a) Rejoicing over the confirmation of their salvation. Col. 3:14
 - b) The word love is “agape” the fruit of the Spirit, uniting man with man. Gal. 5:22

- c) Agape love for one another is the mark of the believer. Jn. 13:35
- d) Agape love is to be for all saints, Jew or Gentile. Col. 3:11
- e) Agape love is selfless, sacrificial and indiscriminate.

1:5 The reason for their love is due to the common hope of all saints.

- 1) Their hope was not on this earth, “because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven,” vs. 5a
- a) This hope is laid up for them in heaven, it is objective, eternal and incorruptible and certain in the future. 1Pet. 1:4; Phil 3:20
 - b) The word laid up is made up of two words “keimai” to lie and “apo” off or away from, their hope is awaiting them in heaven, stored up or reserved, like the pound in the napkin. Lk. 19:20
- 2) Their source of this hope is identified, “of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.” vs. 5b
- a) They had heard about this hope by the content of the word of truth, the gospel, the glory of the mystery is Christ in them the hope of glory. Col. 1:27; Rom. 10:13-15, 17
 - b) The message of reliability and trustworthiness, the gospel.

- b) The gospel proclaimed by Epaphras was the true hope in contrast to the false hope of the false teaching at Colosse by the Gnostics.
- c) They were thanking God for the Colossian's hope in Christ who is also in heaven.
 - * Faith, hope and love but the greatest of these is love! 1Cor. 13:13

1:6 The proclamation of the gospel.

- 1) The gospel had come to the Colossians, "which has come to you." vs. 6a
- 2) The extent of the preaching of the gospel is stated, "as it has also in all the world." vs. 6b
 - * "It has reached all the world, the known Roman empire of the world. at that time.
- 3) The result and outcome of the gospel was the same wherever it was preached and believed, "and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you." vs. 6c-d
 - a) The present middle indicative, emphasizing the continuity of the process. Robertson
 - b) Fruit and growth from within to transform the individual and growth from without to spread the gospel!
- 4) It was due to the hearing and knowing of the grace of God in truth by personal

experience, "since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth." vs. 6d

- a) The Colossians heard and knew by full comprehension the grace of God in truth of the genuine gospel.
- b) Paul and Timothy heard that they had heard the gospel of grace, in truth and he reminded them, in contrast to the false heresy. vs. 4, 5, 6, 9
 - * Hearing to receive and to rejoice!
- c) Fruit is the result of new birth, the gospel has its own inherent power to be fruitful!
- d) One put it this way, "Faith is the soil from which the fruit of love springs, and hope is the sunshine which ripens this fruit of love". Linski
- e) The implications are only obvious there was a point in time when they began to produce fruit, faith and love, due to the truth about God, called the gospel and the danger was that they might cease to give ear at the present to the very gospel of truth and embraced the false doctrine, this was the clear danger at hand! Col. 1:23, 2:8

1:7 The messenger of the gospel to the Colossians.

- 1) Epaphras was the instrument through whom the Colossians had learned the gospel, “as you also learned from Epaphras.” vs. 7a
 - a) Epaphras was a valuable preacher and teacher of divine truth, the gospel.
 - b) His name is a shortened form of Epaphroditus and means lovely.
 - c) The hope laid up in heaven, the grace of God in truth, are all the truth of the gospel opposed to religious untruth and works without hope! Col. 1:4-5
- 2) Epaphras is called “out dear fellow servant”. vs. 7b
 - a) The word dear “agapeto” means esteemed servant “sundoulos”, a bond slave by choice like Paul.
 - b) A servant of Christ.
- 3) Epaphras is identified as loyal, “who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf.” vs. 7c
 - a) Faithful “pistos” trustworthy and reliable servant of the Lord.
 - * As Paul and Timothy preached, warned every man and taught every man in all wisdom, that they may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Col. 1:28
 - b) The word minister “diakonos” means one who executed the commands of others.
 - * We get our word “deacon” from it, minister, a waiter on tables!

- c) The purpose is indicated, “on your behalf”, for their benefit and good, as Paul’s representative and Pastor.
- d) Epaphras was a Colossian and probably the Pastor of the church. Col. 4:12

1:8 The report of Epaphras.

- 1) He was a loving shepherd, “who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.”
 - a) The word love is “agape”, the love of God.
 - b) The agent was the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity.
- 2) Like their Good Shepherd Jesus by and through the Holy Spirit. Zech. 4:6; Jn. 10
 - * Epaphras was a faithful witness motivated by the love of God!

1:9-14 **The intercessory prayer of Paul.**

- * This is the main purpose of the letter for the situation at Colosse by the words of Epaphras, that they abide in Christ, containing 218 words in the Greek, from verse nine to twenty!

1:9 The prayer for spiritual discernment.

- 1) The apostle Paul and Timothy were praying for the Colossians, “For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you.” vs. 9a-c
 - a) This verse is pointing back to the words they heard from Epaphras about the faith

and agape love in the Spirit of the Colossians. vs. 4a, 7

- b)** Prayer for them was the natural response of family love for their brothers and sisters in Christ.
- c)** The word pray “proseuchomai” is used for prayer in general and is in the present middle voice, both of them individually praying for them from when they first heard and continued to pray for them, unceasingly.
 - * This does not mean constantly day and night, but rather as they came to mind and the Lord impressed them to pray.
- 2)** The prayers of Paul and Timothy progressed to very specific petitions for the Colossians, “and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will.” vs. 9d
 - b)** The word ask “aiteo” is in the middle voice and refers to something to be given, not done, giving prominence to the thing asked for, rather than the person and it denotes an asking for the one entitled to receive. Robertson, Linski
 - c)** The word filled “pleeroo” is key to the epistle referring to the ongoing process of their salvation and the completion of it. Phil. 1:6
 - d)** The word knowledge “epignosis” means full knowledge, a mark of ongoing

maturity, in order to see through the deception, as well as oppose it. Eph. 1:17

- * The false teachers were using this term to identify the special knowledge to be lifted above the evil matter of this world, Paul says all believers can obtain it in Christ through the word of God!
- e)** The knowledge about the will of God is revealed and found in the word of God, this is what they were to be filled with, not the knowledge of their own will now that they were saved.
 - 1))** This is received by asking, not by secret knowledge, as the deceiving Gnostics were teaching!
 - 2))** The treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ, no one else! Col. 2:3
- 3)** The prayers of Paul and Timothy were that as they were filled with the knowledge of the will of God that they would also be filled “in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” vs. 9d
 - a)** This indicates the full capacities for every person in Christ to know the things of God clearly by the word “all”, no exception.
 - b)** The word wisdom “sohpiea” is the general principle and goal, while spiritual understanding “sunesis” is the process

and faculty of deciding in particular cases by insight.

- 1)) This is not mere information or facts, but rather he spiritual apprehension, comprehension and application of God's word to one's life in contrast to fleshly wisdom. 1Cor. 1:12-16; Eph. 1:8
- 2)) The Gnostics depended on mere intellectual and specially revealed knowledge.
- 3)) Their understanding about the things of God were based on speculation and opinion, therefore distorted, wisted and false.
- 4)) The problem was not knowing the will of God, but having the right relationship to God, through Christ, who reveals the will of God. Rom. 12:1-2

1:10 The prayer for spiritual conduct, the will of God. Col. 2:6; 3:17, 23

- 1) The purpose of the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and understanding is stated now, "that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him." vs. 10 a-b
- 1) That you may walk worthy of the Lord, this is the purpose for knowledge, wisdom and understanding.

- a) This is the reason and goal of the spiritual knowledge and wisdom! Eph. 4:1; 1Thess. 2:12
- b) The word to walk "paripateo" means to order one's behavior. Eph. 4:1; 5:15
 - 1)) The tense is the aorist, it is not descriptive but a decisively final, "so as to walk: once and for all, corresponding to the previous aorist "to be filled", the former is the result of the latter.
- c) The word worthy "axios" speaks of being proportioned in weight, we equal to the Lord's character, Christ-like, being fully pleasing to the Lord. 1Thess. 2:12
 - 1)) The phrase "fully pleasing" appears only once here n the New Testament.
 - 2)) In classical Greek it meant pleasing others before yourself.
 - 3)) Doing those things that are the direct will of God in order to please Him.
 - 4)) Doctrine and ethics are inseparable and right thinking results in right conduct and living!
- 2) The result of walking worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him will result in two particular things, "being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." vs. 10c
 - a) Quality and quuality are indicated, fruitful in evry good work.

- 1)) The gospel bears fruit of itself.
- 2)) The gospel bears its own kind, good works.
- 3)) The gospel bears fruit continuously, present active tense.
- 4)) The gospel calls men and women to service, this is His will.
- b) Ongoing growth, development and maturity are also indicated, “Increasing in the knowledge of God.”
 - 1)) The sphere in which spiritual growth takes place, in quantity and quality, this is God’s will.
 - 2)) Living things grow.
 - 3)) Living things develop.
 - 4)) Living things mature.

1:11 The prayer for spiritual enablement.

- 1) The Divine empowerment, “strengthened with all might.” vs. 11a
 - a) The word strengthened “dynamoo” identifies the potential available by virtue of its own nature and inherent power of the Holy Spirit.
 - b) The efficiency of the Spirit is declared by a continuous empowerment enabling the believer, “with all might”, “pas dunamis”, all sufficient.
- 2) The proportion of enablement, “According to His glorious power, God’s not ours for the things He calls us to do. Phil. 4:13

- a) In proportion to our need and in proportion to God’s abundant supply, the might of His glory! Eph. 3:20-21
- b) The word glorious “doxa”, meant magnificent, excellent and preeminent describing the power “kratos” the power to rule or control is available to us for all things pertaining to life and conduct, the manifested strength. 2Pet. 1:3-4
* Col. 1:29; 2:12
- c) All failure is due not to the Holy Spirit, but to us, failing to trust and depend on Him. Eph. 6:10
- 3) The purpose and goal of all this enabling of knowledge and power is declared, “for all patience and longsuffering with joy”. vs. 11c
 - a) All patience “hupomone” is in respect to trials and situations is more than enduring, it is the opposite of cowardice and despondency, contending with the obstacles in perseverance bravely and seeing things through, learning and growing without succumbing.
 - b) All long-suffering “makrothumia”, is in respect to people and means to hold out long against provocation, a decisive action, opposite of wrath, a spirit that bears up under injury and insult without retaliation.
 - c) Joy is the first manifestation of Agape love, the fruit of the Spirit and the

evidence of fellowship with God, not the circumstances. Gal. 5:22; 1Jn. 1:3-4

* Paul clearly reveals this in his epistle to the Philippians, called the epistle of joy! Phil 1:18; 2:17; 3:1

1:12 The prayer for spiritual response.

- 1) Our expression of gratitude, “Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.”
 - a) The word qualified “hikanoo”, means to make us sufficient, fit or competent to be partakers of the inheritance in the saints in the light.
 - b) Only found two times in the New Testament, to make able ministers. 2Cor. 3:6
 - c) It is an illusion to the casting of lots for the inheritance of the promise land!
- 2) Giving thanks to the Father for having qualified us to be in the sphere of light. 1Jn. 1:7; 2:10
 - a) Giving thanks to the Father for being the initiator regarding our salvation.
 - b) He calls by His grace, convicts by his Holy Spirit and word and saves by and through His Son!
 - c) The tense is aorist, pointing to the time of the Colossians’ conversion.

* All four participle, bearing fruit, growing, being strengthened and giving thanks are the things that are pleasing to the Lord because they reveal a walk worthy of the Lord! vs. 10-11

1:13 The specific details. about our redemption.

- 1) First, He has delivered us from the power of darkness.”
 - a) The word delivered “ruomai” meaning to liberate, save or rescue us out from “ek”, the power “exousia” the authority of darkness.
- 2) Second, “and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.”
 - a) He conveyed “methistemi” meaning transferred or reestablished us into the kingdom or rule of the Son of His love, focusing on “the Son”.
 - b) The word “conveyed” was used in secular literature in reference to removing people from one country and settling them as colonist and citizens in another country.
 - c) The implication being that there are no spirit, powers, aeons or angel that are above the power of Jesus like the false teaching was declaring!

- 1)) It appears five times in the New Testament? Lk. 16:4; Acts 13:22; 19:26; 1Cor. 13:2; Col. 1:13
- 2)) Even as God transferred Israel from Egypt to the promise land!
- d) The phrase emphasizes His deity not “His love”, words spoken from heaven at the baptism of Jesus and the mount of transfiguration.
 - 1)) It is called the kingdom of God.
 - 2)) It is called the kingdom of heaven.
 - 3)) It is called the kingdom of Christ.
 - 4)) The kingdom is spiritual, present and yet to come. Rom. 14:17; 1Cor. 4:20
 - 5)) The kingdom is among us as the corporate church and within us as individual saints.
 - a)) The believer in Christ is in the kingdom through Christ and has no need of special knowledge!
 - b)) The kingdom of God is present and yet to come! Ps. 2:7-8; Heb. 1:3-9

1:14 The special offering for our redemption.

- 1) The person, In whom”, the Father redeemed us by the Son of His love.
 - a) He redeemed “apolutrosis” released, the ransomed paid for us, as a slave from bondage or a captive in war. Heb. 9:15; 1Jn. 2:2

- b) The Gnostics use the word for their initiation into certain mysteries.
- 2) The payment, “through His blood”, resulting in the forgiveness of our sins.
 - a) The token was set after the fall and in the Law prophetic of the cross. Gen. 3; Lev. 17:11; Col. 1:20; Eph. 1:7; 1Pet. 1:18-19
 - b) The word forgiveness “aphesis” literally means “ascending away” or “to bid to go away” like the idea of the scapegoat of the Old Testament, on the Day of Atonement.
 - c) The sins of the repentant person are sent away forever. Ps. 103:12; Mic. 7:19b
 - d) All the participles take place in this life, here and now!
 - e) We are to thank God for those who come to Christ. 2Thess. 2:13