

Key to COLOSSIANS

1. BACKGROUND:

Writer: Paul the Apostle. Written from Rome in A.D. 62. Colossians is one of the "prison epistles."

The church was located in a city called Colosse, not far from Ephesus in Asia Minor. Evidently Paul had not personally established the church (2:1) but no doubt it had come from his ministry (Acts 19:10). Possibly, Epaphras (Colossians 1:7) or even Archippus (4:17) had begun it.

Occasion: It is thought that Epaphras had come to Rome with news of a dangerous heresy making headway in the church. Subsequently, Epaphras was imprisoned too (Philemon 23). Paul, therefore, writes to the church sending the letter by way of Tychicus and Onesimus (Colossians 4:7-9).

2. THEME:

Colossians has a great theme. . . CHRIST the Head of the Church which is His body. It is closely related to Ephesians. Emphasis is strongly placed on the fullness of the dear Son of GOD. Correction too, is taught. Pagan asceticism was creeping in, endeavoring to add its works to the finished ministry of CHRIST. Also, there were those suggesting mysticism, worship of angels, regard for the secret things. Paul answers all by a strong emphasis on the person of CHRIST.

3. MAIN DIVISIONS:

Introduction: apostolic prayer; CHRIST. . . Creator, Redeemer, Indweller; believer complete in Christ; union with CHRIST in resurrection life and glory, Christian union, the fruit of union; Christian fellowship.

4. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The answer to error in the church is the preaching of a definite, specific message. The Colossians were taught to put the Lord JESUS CHRIST in the center of all they were doing.

Some worldly things which are often held in high repute . . . philosophic speculation, mysticism, asceticism, legality, worship of angels, are all shown in their true light. They are not for the child of GOD. In CHRIST, in His person and work, we find everything we need.

No greater honor to the person of CHRIST is found anywhere else in the New Testament. CHRIST is shown here in all the glory of His creative, redemptive work, possessing all the fullness of the Godhead.

5. OUTLINE:

Introduction (1:1-8)

Prayer (1:9-12)

Exposition -
CHRIST (1:13-29)
Redeemer
Reconciler
Perfecter
Admonition (2)
False Doctrine
Angel Worship
Exhortation (3:1-4:6)
Holiness
Charity
Submission
Sincerity
Prayer
Practice
Conclusion (4:7-18)

6. OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:

The problem here seemed to be the attainment of sanctification. Paul shows this already true positionally (2:10) and true experimentally by a close walk with CHRIST (2:6). The dangers of philosophical education apart from CHRIST are shown (2:8) to be tradition of men and therefore, valueless. One of several great passages emphasizing the Creatorhood of CHRIST is here (1:15-19). This passage shows further the reason for the creation. It is "for Him," that "**He might have the pre-eminence.**"

Things which are to be put off (3:8, 9) by the Christian, and things which are to be put on (3:12-14) are specifically mentioned here.

One of the great principles of Christian conduct, covering many specific and individual life problems, is mentioned in 3:17. Related to this verse is 1 Corinthians 10:31.

The interweaving of doctrine and practice is again demonstrated in this Epistle. The method is to know the teaching and find it unconsciously influencing your Christian conduct.

7. KEY:

Just write across every verse in Colossians "**Complete in Christ**" and understand that you need nothing more. Let your manner of life demonstrate this by a daily reliance on the Word of CHRIST (3:16).

~ end of Colossians ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
