

COLOSSIANS

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COLOSSIANS

I. OPENING GREETING

FROM

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

TO

2 To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse:

GREETING

Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

II. PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE COLOSSIANS

A. GOD'S PROMISE (OUR HOPE)

– RESPONDING WITH A FAITH THAT EXPRESSES ITSELF – THROUGH ACTS OF LOVE

3 We always thank **God, the Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4 because we have heard

of your **faith** in Christ Jesus and
of the **love** you have for all the saints--

5 the faith and love

that spring from the **hope**

that is stored up for you in heaven and

that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel 6 that has
come to you.

All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing,

just as it has been doing among you

since the day you heard it and understood **God's** grace in all its
truth.

7 You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant,
who is a faithful minister of **Christ** on our behalf, 8 and
who also told us of your love in the **Spirit**.

B. GOD'S WILL -- CENTERED AROUND HIS SON

9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and

TO LEARN ABOUT, UNDERSTAND AND KNOW GOD'S WILL...

asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will
through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

... BUT ALSO - TO DO IT

10 And we pray this in order that you
may live a life worthy of the Lord and
may please him in every way:

- **bearing fruit** in every good work,
- **growing** in the knowledge of God,
- 11 being **strengthened** with all **power** according to his glorious might
so that you may have great **endurance** and **patience**, and
- **joyfully** 12 **giving thanks** to the Father,

GOD'S MESSAGE -- THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S WORKS

who has QUALIFIED YOU TO SHARE IN THE INHERITANCE of the saints in the kingdom of light.
13 For he has

<u>RESCUED US</u>	FROM	THE DOMINION OF DARKNESS and
<u>brought us</u>	into	the kingdom of the Son

... THROUGH GOD'S SON -- THE ONE AND ONLY SUPREME KING

he loves,

14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

15 He is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn over all creation.

16 For by him all things were created:
things in heaven and on earth,
visible and invisible,
whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things
were created by him and for him.

17 He is before all things, and
in him all things hold together.

18 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.

FULLNESS OF GOD DWELLS IN CHRIST

19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and

... IMPACTING GOD'S CHILDREN

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.

21 **Once** you were **alienated** from God
and were enemies in your minds because of your evil
behavior.

22 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-- 23 if you continue in your **faith**,
established and firm, not moved from the **hope** held out
in the gospel.

This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under
heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

III. GOD'S PLAN –

A. CHRIST LIVING IN EACH BELIEVER

24 Now

I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and
I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of **his body**,
which is **the church**.

25 I have become its servant
by the commission God gave me
to present to you the **word of God** in its fullness--

26 the **mystery**
that has been kept hidden for ages and generations,
but is
now disclosed to the saints.

27 To them God has chosen to make known
among the Gentiles the glorious riches of **this
mystery**,

GLORY ONCE LOST IS NOW RESTORED (See Romans 3:23)

which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**.

28 We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with
all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.

29 To this end I labor, **struggling** with all **his energy, which so powerfully
works in me**. (NIV)

2:1 I want you to know how much I am struggling
for you and
for those at Laodicea, and
for all who have not met me personally.

2 My purpose is that
they may be encouraged in heart and united in **love**,
so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding ,
in order that they may know **the mystery of God, namely,
Christ**,

3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and
knowledge .

WARNING AGAINST FALSE WISDOM OF MAN

4 I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. 5
For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and
delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your **faith in Christ** is.

B. EACH BELIEVER LIVING IN CHRIST – AS LORD

6 So then,

just as

you received Christ Jesus as Lord,

continue to **live in him,**

THE TRUTH – GOD'S WAY OF DEPENDING ON HIS WORKS ACCOMPLISHED IN CHRIST

7 rooted and built up in him,

strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and

overflowing with thankfulness.

FALSE TEACHINGS -- A WARNING ABOUT MAN'S WAY OF DEPENDING ON SELF

8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy,

which **depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world** rather than on **Christ.**

1. GOD'S WORKS – RESULTS BEING INCLUDED IN CHRIST

9 For

IN HIM, FULLNESS OF CHRIST IS GIVEN TO HIS CHILDREN – PRESENCE OF POSITIVE

in **Christ** all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and

you have been given fullness in Christ,

who is **the head over every power and authority.**

IN HIM, RESCUED FROM THE DOMINION OF DARKNESS – ABSENCE OF NEGATIVE

11 **In him** YOU WERE ALSO CIRCUMCISED,

IN THE PUTTING OFF OF THE SINFUL NATURE,

not with a circumcision done by the hands of men

but with the circumcision **DONE BY CHRIST,**

12 **HAVING BEEN**

BURIED with him in baptism and

RAISED with him THROUGH YOUR FAITH IN THE POWER OF **GOD,**

who raised him from the dead.

13 When **you were dead**

FREED FROM SIN'S POWER

- in your sins and
- in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature,

God made you alive with Christ.

FREED FROM LAW'S CONDEMNATION

He forgave us all our sins,

14 having **anceled the written code,** with its

regulations, that was against us and that stood

opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.

FREED FROM SATAN'S RULE

15 And having **disarmed the powers and authorities,** he

made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

WARNING AGAINST RELIGIOUS SELF RIGHTEOUSNESS

16 Therefore

do not let anyone

judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.

17 These are a shadow of the things that were to

come; **the reality, however, is found in Christ.**

18 Do not let anyone

who delights in false humility and the worship of angels

disqualify you for the prize.

Such a person goes into great detail about what he has

seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle

notions. 19 He has lost connection with the Head, from

whom the whole body, supported and held together by

its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to

grow.

2. **MAN'S WORK – RESPONDING IN REPENTENCE
(INTERNAL/EXTERNAL CHANGE IN CONDUCT/BEHAVIOUR)**

20 Since **you died with Christ**

to the basic principles of this world,
why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: 21 "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? 22 These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. (NIV)

3:1 Since, then, **you have been raised with Christ,**

(a) **SET YOUR HEART / MIND IN A NEW DIRECTION**

set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

3 For you died, and **your life is now hidden with Christ in God.**

4 When **Christ, who is your life,** appears,
then you also will appear with him in glory.

**WHAT IS NOW AVAILABLE TO US IN CHRIST
(WHAT WE CAN DO – AN INVITATION)**

(b) **WHAT TO TURN FROM**

5 **Put to death,** therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature:

sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. 8 But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9 Do not lie to each other,
since you

have **taken off your old self**
with its practices 10 and

have **put on the new self,**
which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. 11 Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

(c) **WHAT TO TURN TOWARDS**

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, **clothe yourselves**

with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

3. *LIVING IN CHRIST AS LORD PLAYS ITSELF OUT IN RELATIONSHIPS*

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD (IS WHERE IT STARTS)

- 15 Let the **peace of Christ** rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be *thankful*.
- 16 Let the **word of Christ** dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with *gratitude* in your hearts to God.
- 17 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.

RELATIONSHIPS – DAY TO DAY SUBMISSION (LIVING YOUR LIFE ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF ANOTHER)

- 18 **Wives**,
submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
- 19 **Husbands**,
love your wives and do not be harsh with them.
- 20 **Children**,
obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
- 21 **Fathers**,
do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.
- 22 **Slaves**,
obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.
- 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. 25 Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism. (NIV)
- 4:1 **Masters**,
provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BELIEVERS

- 2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.
3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN NON-BELIEVERS

- 5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders;
make the most of every opportunity. 6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

IV. CLOSING GREETING

PEOPLE PAUL WILL SEND

7 Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. 8 I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts.

9 He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

PEOPLE STAYING WITH PAUL

JEWS

10 My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)

11 Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings.

These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me.

NON-JEWS

12 Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. 13 I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis.

14 Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings.

PEOPLE AT COLOSSE

15 Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

16 After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

17 Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord."

18 I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. (NIV)