

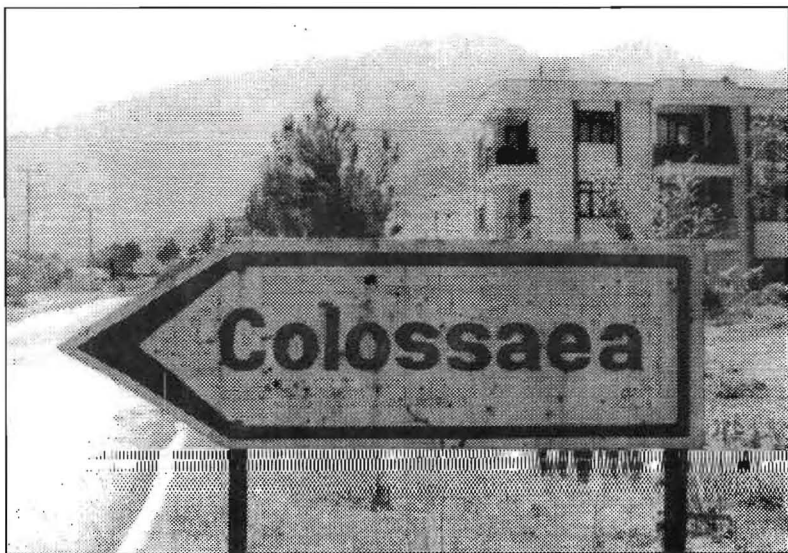
Seek The Old Paths

"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths...and walk therein."

(Jeremiah 6:16)



The Church at Colosse



Editor:
Garland M. Robinson

TWELVETH ANNUAL
"SEEK THE OLD PATHS"
LECTURESHIP

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THEME:

The Church At Colosse

Editor:
Garland M. Robinson

Held at the
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1801 Cruise St.
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FORWARD

This book contains the lesson outlines of the 12th Annual **Seek The Old Paths** Lectureship which is held each year at the East Corinth Church of Christ in Corinth, Mississippi, the week of the fourth Sunday in July.

The theme for this year's lectureship is **The Church At Colosse**. The Word of God is timeless and its precepts are always applicable to every generation. Whatever was true concerning the various congregations in the New Testament is also true today. Whatever problems were among them will also be among us. Whatever blessings and rewards they received can also be received by us. Therefore, to study about the church at Colosse (or any congregation written about in the New Testament) provides much needed admonition for us now. Let the day be hastened that men and women, boys and girls, everywhere would commit their very lives to a diligent and serious study of God's most wonderful Word. Having learned the truth, let each practice the same every day of our lives.

This book was printed by **Old Paths Publishing**. Several hundred copies of this year's book was purchased by the East Corinth Church of Christ and were given free to those who attended the lectureship. If you received your book from the church while attending the lectureship, then you owe your thanks to the generosity of the elders and the good membership there.

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Garland M. Robinson
July, 1997

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The Historical Background of the City of Colosse

Windell R. Fikes

DISCUSSION:

I. SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES TO COLOSSE AND HER PEOPLE.

- A. *"To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ **that are at Colossae...**"* (Col. 1:2).
- B. *"All my affairs shall Tychicus make known unto you,... whom I have sent you for this very purpose"* (Col. 4:7,8).
- C. *"Onesimus,...who is one of you"* (Col. 4:9).
- D. *"Epaphras, who is one of you"* (Col. 4:12).
- E. *"He hath much labor for you, and for them in Laodicea, and for them in Hierapolis"* (Col. 4:13).
- F. *"And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea"* (Col. 4:16).
- G. Onesimus was one of the Colossians (Col. 4:9). Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon (Philemon 12). Paul wrote to the church in Philemon's house (Philemon 2). Thus, it seems likely that the church at Colosse met in Philemon's house.
- H. Paul also lists Apphia and Archippus as members of the Colossian church (Philemon 2).
- I. Some commentators [Barnes, Macknight, Adam Clark, Coffman] believe that Paul visited Colosse.
 - 1. Colosse was a prominent city in Phrygia.
 - 2. Paul passed through Phrygia several times (Acts 16:6; 18:23).
 - 3. Paul typically taught in major cities.
- J. Some commentators [Barclay, Lightfoot, Lipscomb] believe that Paul never visited the area.
 - 1. Paul's typical travel route seems to skirt the area.
 - 2. In Colossians 2:1, Paul seems to imply that the Colossians had never seen his face. *"For I would have you know how greatly I strive for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh"* (Col. 2:1).

II. DATE FOUNDED.

Colosse was thriving by the time of Xerxes, King of Persia (485-465 BC) [Hendrickson, p.10].

III. BRIEF HISTORY.

- A. Colosse was a city of Phrygia which became a major "power in Anatolia after the decline of the Hittite empire after 1200 BC" [Bruce, p.3].
- B. Phrygian dominance gave way to the rise of Lydia about 700 BC [Bruce, p.3].
- C. Phrygia became part of the Persian empire when Cyrus captured Croesus king of Lydia (547 BC). [Bruce, p.3].
- D. Alexander the Great conquered the area in 334 BC [Bruce, p.3].
- E. After Alexander, the region became part of the Selucid empire and remained so until the death of Attalus III who "bequeathed his kingdom to the Roman state" (133 BC) [Bruce, p.4].
- F. In the third century BC, Antiochus III sent 2000 Jewish families into the region [Bruce, p.8]. This, perhaps, explains the strong Jewish population in the area in the days of Paul.

IV. POPULATION IN THE FIRST CENTURY.

- A. UNKNOWN.

V. POLITICAL STATUS IN THE FIRST CENTURY.

- A. Colosse and the surrounding areas were governed by a proconsulship under the authority of Rome [Bruce, p.4].

VI. SOCIAL, COMMERCIAL, AND ECONOMIC STATUS.

- A. Colosse was overshadowed by the wealth and influence of Laodicea [Yamauchi, p.157].
- B. Colosse's importance.
 - 1. The city was famous for the production of wool dyed red/purple, a "distinctive tint known as colossinus" [Yamauchi, p.157]. It seems that the unique tint was, in part, due to the unusually high mineral content of Colosse's water supply [Hendrickson, p.10].
 - 2. Because of its temperate climate the region was

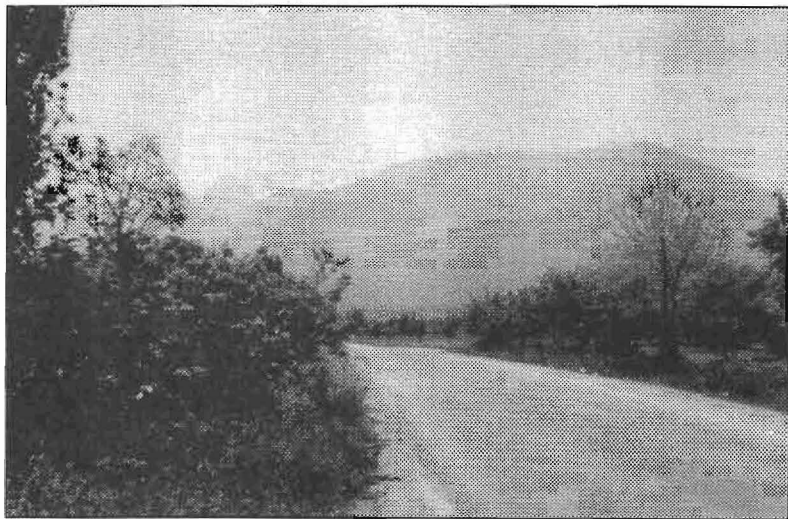
especially well suited for farming. In the middle of May 1997 the weather was warm and dry (70° -80° F).

3. The city was known for fertile pasture and farm land.
4. Colosse was located at the junction of two major trade routes.

VII. ARCHITECTURE — AWAITING EXCAVATION.

VIII. LOCATION.

- A. The city was located in Asia Minor (modern Turkey), in south western Phrygia near the border of Lydia to the North and Caria to the West and South.
- B. The city's latitude is 38° North (About the same as San Francisco and Evansville, Indiana).
- C. Colosse was cradled in the lush green Lycus River Valley.
 1. The city sat on the south bank of the Lycus (Curuk-Su). The river flowed through the city from the Southeast to the Northwest.
 2. The valley narrowed to about two miles across at Colosse.
 3. Just to the South, rising to 8,013 feet was mount Cadmus (below).



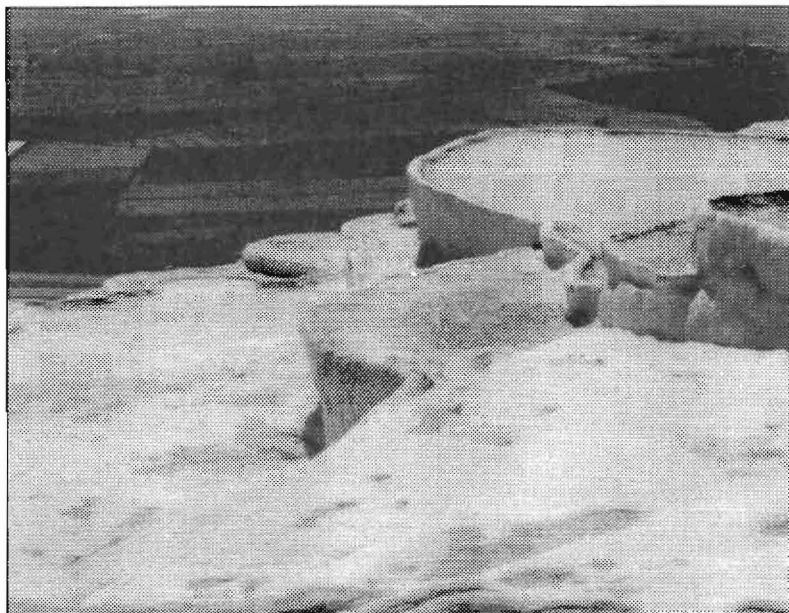
Mount Cadmus (still snow capped May 12, 1997).

- D. The city lay on a major trade route which ran from Ephesus (on the Aegean Sea) inland to the Euphrates. At Colosse, another trade route from Sardis joined this route.
- E. Notable "Neighbors."
1. The Ruins of Laodicea lie 9-10 miles west north-west of the city.



Ruins of Laodicea lie 9-10 miles west northwest of the city

2. Hierapolis (modern Pamukkale) lies 15 miles north northwest of Colosse.

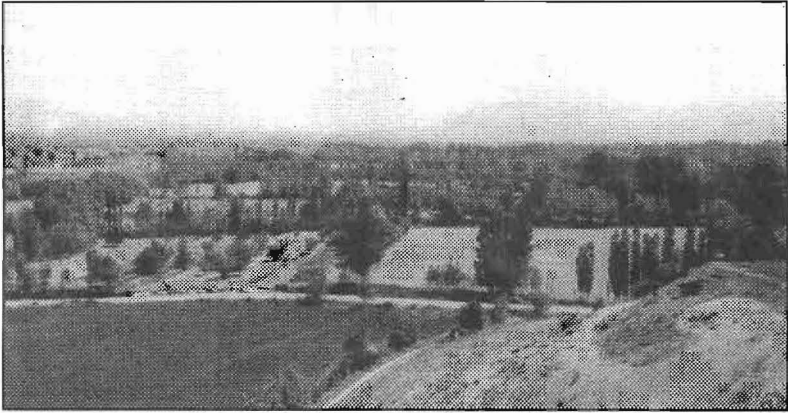


Hierapolis (modern Pamukkale)
lies 15 miles north northwest of Colosse

3. Modern Denizli (pop. 203,100) lies 11-12 miles to the West.
4. Ephesus (modern Selcuk) lies 115 miles west north-west of the site.
5. Smyrna (modern Izmir) (pop. approx. 3,500,000) lies 155 miles northwest of Colosse.

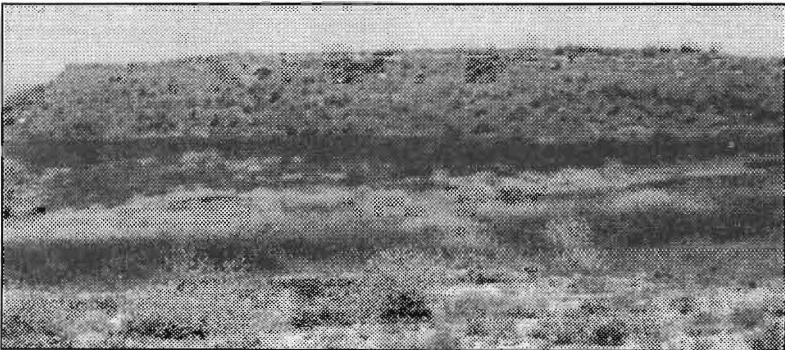
IX. DESCRIPTION.

- A. Ancient Colosse is nestled in a lush valley filled with green fields of alfalfa and hay-like grasses dotted with bright red flowers.
 1. Surrounding the city are rich fertile fields, vineyards, and orchards filled with succulent fruits and vegetables.

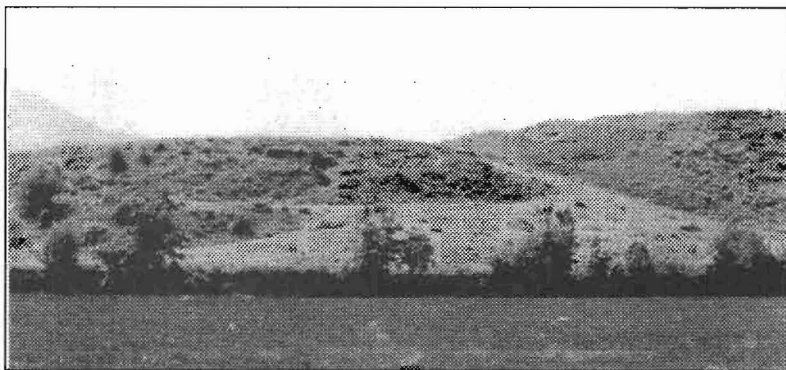


Countryside around Colosse

2. Plowed furrows even wind their way around and between the crumbled remains of the ancient city.
- B. The city itself.
1. The city's elevation was 1,150 feet.
 2. The main part of the city sat on a mound ("tell" or *huyuk* in Turkish) approximately 180 feet by 370 feet (Yamauchi, p.159).



The main part of the city sat on a mound

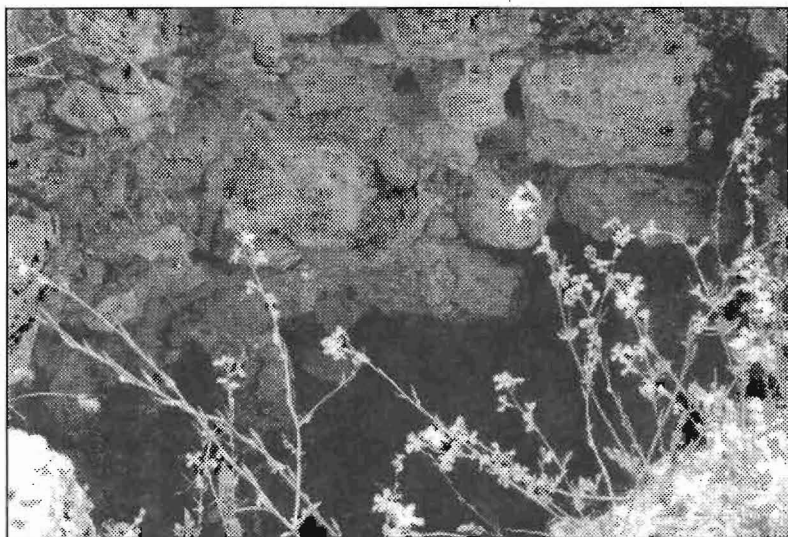


The mound on which Colosse was built

3. The mound's steep north-western slope dropped some 100 feet.
4. The mound on which Colosse was built, was identified by William J. Hamilton in 1835 (Yamauchi, p.155). Hamilton's description of the city differs markedly from the modern site (Yamauchi, p.155).

"a field full of large blocks of stone and foundations of buildings, with fragments of columns and broken pottery strewn upon the ground. Others were strewn about on all sides and the road was lined with marble blocks from ancient buildings amongst which were fragments of columns, architraves, and cornices. A little farther, near the roadside, was the hollow cavea of a theatre, built on the side of a low-sloping hill, and of which several seats were still *in situ*..."

5. Scattered around the top of the tell are holes where the earth has eroded/fallen away revealing small sections of an ancient wall.



Hole where the earth has eroded/fallen away revealing small sections of an ancient wall

- C. Today, a few carved stones and pieces of columns nestled among thistles, tall grasses, and wildflowers are the only evidence of the city's ancient occupants. (Photo on next page)
- D. About 300 to 400 feet southeast of the tell lie sparse remains of an ancient theater.
- E. Across the Lycus on the north bank lay the Necropolis, the city's large elaborate cemetery.
- F. Icy streams flowing from Mount Cadmus provided water for the city while the city's northern neighbor Laodicea had to be content with "lukewarm" water. (*The Historical Background of the Seven churches of Asia*, Fikes. Seek The Old Paths Lectureship, 1996).

X. **SIZE.**

Including the Necropolis, and the sections of the city on both sides of the Lycus River: 1/2–3/4 square miles.



Carved stone and piece of column

XI. RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES OF THE DAY.

- A. *"Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels, dwelling in the things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind"* [Col. 2:18].
- B. Various idol gods were worshipped.
 - 1. Cybele — called in Rome *Magna Mater* or "Great Mother" ["Rhea"].
 - 2. Isis — the chief female deity of the Egyptians who,

in addition to the healing powers ascribed to her, was said to have taught the Egyptians to farm ("Isis").

3. Artemis — fertility goddess whose cult was centered in the city of Ephesus ("Diana..." Hastings).
 4. Demeter — Roman goddess of fruit and grain ("Ceres").
- C. Emperor worship was also very prevalent.
 - D. The names of the gods were inscribed on coins found in Colosse.
 - E. The encompassing belief in these false gods touched all areas of life. The behavior of the people of Colosse was to a large degree controlled by religious mysticism. The result — outrageous debauchery in morality and religious practice.

CONCLUSION:

1. The philosophies of men were empty. Their deceitful promises offered no true healing of the body or the soul. The immorality they promoted would doom the race. Coffman says there are 34 words which appear in the letter to Colosse but no where else in the New Testament. The Colossians needed to know the *True* God and trust in *His* promises.
 - a. 1:5,9,13-18 — The preeminence of Christ and hope of Heaven.
 - b. 2:8-10,14-23 — The philosophies of men versus the power and authority of God.
 - c. 3:1,5-15,17,25 — Seek the things that are above in view of your reward.
 - d. 4:1 — God is just.
2. The ancient city attracts few tourists today. No signs mark the site, though there are signs indicating the road to the city (note the photo at the beginning of this chapter). So lies the un-excavated grassy mound, surrounded by fields, fruit trees, and spring flowers, "a great city" (Herodotus, VII, p.30) with its past nearly forgotten. Paul's letter to the Colossians assures us that there is one *True* God. He warns against fraternizing with false teachers, false religions, and the immorality and pleasure of the world. To do so is to invite destruction.

CREDITS

My thanks to the Airport church of Christ in South San Francisco for making it possible for me to visit this area of Western Asia Minor. I am also thankful that they have supported me in writing and speaking. I am so thankful to the congregation for the love and unity they have demonstrated during these past fifteen years.

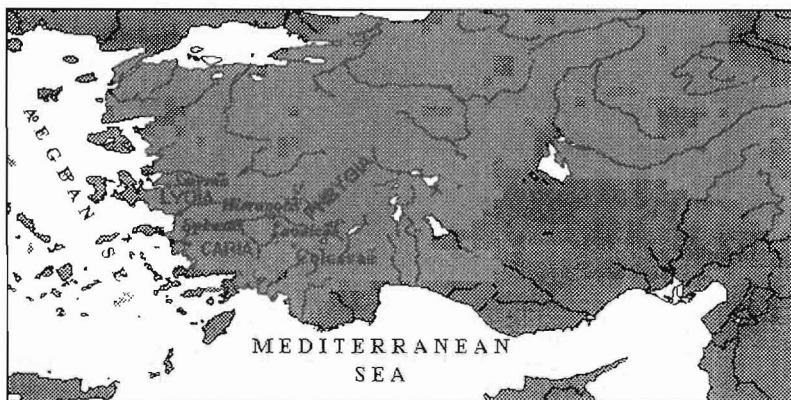
Windell

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Conversion In Colossians

Nat Evans

1. It shall be my purpose to:
 - a. Define the word conversion,
 - b. To show what conversion involves,
 - c. To show how it is brought about,
 - d. To look at some of the fruit or results of true conversion,
 - e. To briefly examine some of the false views relative to this subject, and finally,
 - f. To give some admonitions to Christians to be faithful.

DISCUSSION:

I. CONVERSION CONSIDERED.

- A. We will look first at the verbs *convert* and *conversion*.
 1. From the Greek word *strepheo*, to turn, is translated "*be converted*" in Matt. 18:3, A.V.
 2. From the Greek word *epistrepheo*, to turn about, turn towards, rendered "*convert*" [of causing a person to turn] in James 5:19-20.
- B. Now we will look at the noun form.
 1. From the Greek word *epistrophe*; a turning about, or round, "*conversion*," is found in Acts 15:3.
 2. The word implies a turning from and a turning to as in 1 Thess. 1:9, "*turned to God from idols.*"
- C. The original Greek word, *strepheo*, occurs eighteen times in the New Testament and is translated *turn* in every instance in the [KJV], except Matt. 18:3: "Except ye be converted and become as a little child," etc. "In every instance where the word *strepheo* occurs in the New Testament, except the last one in Rev. 11:6, the person or that which was turned, turned itself." [Benjamin Franklin]
- D. The original Greek word *epistrepheo*, occurs thirty times, and is translated, in the KJV "turn," or its equivalent, twenty two times. It is eight times rendered *converted*, or *convert*. In the majority of these times that which was turned, turned itself. I want to

point out though, that there is nothing in the meaning of the word by itself to show which way the turning or conversion is, whether to bad or good. It remains for the context to determine this. Look at 2 Peter 2:22 and Mark 13:16 for example. It is also interesting to note that the turning or converting is never ascribed to God, to Christ, or to the Holy Spirit." [*The Gospel Preacher* by Benjamin Franklin, Vol. I, pp. 129ff]

- E. The word means to turn, to change. It means to turn, to change or transform one thing into something else, to change from one form or function to another.
- F. The way I am using the word *conversion* in our study implies that a person is turning from an incorrect course of action and conduct to the correct one set forth by God in the New Testament.

II. **CONDITION PRIOR TO CONVERSION.**

- A. Alienated from God (1:21).
- B. Enemies of God because of their evil works (1:21).
- C. Dead through trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1).
- D. Walked according to the course of this world (Eph. 2:2).
- E. Lived in the lusts of the flesh, doing the desires of the flesh (Eph. 2:3).
- F. Children of wrath (Eph. 2:3).
- G. Ye were at that time separate from Christ (Eph. 2:12).
- H. Alienated from God's people (Eph. 2:12).
- I. Separated from the glorious benefits and precious promises of God's covenant (Eph. 2:12).
- J. Having no Hope and without God in the world (Eph. 2:12).
- K. Also note Rom. 3:23; 6:23 and Isa. 59:1-2.

III. **THE CAUSE OR MEANS OF CONVERSION.**

- A. "Ye heard...the word of the truth" (Col. 1:5).
- B. The gospel (Col. 1:23).
- C. The gospel of the Grace of God (Col. 1:6).
- D. Please note that these different terms refer to the same thing. No distinction is to be made between the

gospel, the entire word of truth or the gospel of the grace of God.

- E. What means does God employ to induce men to believe in Christ? One theory is that God puts forth an immediate power or direct influence upon man to save him. I contend that God uses the power in the Gospel to influence one to obey him so that he might be saved. Which of these two positions is the correct one? Which position is in harmony with the Scriptures? I want us to look at several Bible passages and see if we can't settle this once and for all.

In Luke 8:11 we learn that the seed of the kingdom is the Word of God. In verse 12 he warns that the devil will come and try to take away the word of God from their heart. Why? The Lord answers, *"lest he should believe and be saved."*

In Acts 11:14 the angel commanded Cornelius to send for Peter, saying that, *"when he is come, he shall tell you words whereby YOU and your house shall be saved."* Notice it was to be by words, not by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the Word of God.

In John 17:20-21 Jesus said: I pray not for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me *"through their word."* The hearing of the truth is what produces faith.

In John 20:30-31, *"but these are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life through his name."* Notice that it is the word of God that produces saving faith.

Turn to Romans chapter one at verse sixteen. *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."* Also verse 17. *"For therein is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."* Now compare that with the statement of Peter in Acts 15:7; *"God made choice among us, that the Gentiles, by my mouth, should hear the word of the Gospel and believe."*

"How then shall they call on him in who they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher; And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" [Rom. 10:14-17].

But notice also what Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 1:18-21, *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* Now add to that 1 Cor. 15:1-4, *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved...."*

Take the first Gospel sermon in Acts 2 for example. Notice verse 37 *"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?"* ³⁸*And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you....* ⁴⁰*And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.* ⁴¹*They then that received his word were baptized."* Pretty clear isn't it?

But let us go on and look at Acts 8, beginning at verse 5. *"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake."* Now in verse 12, *"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ*

they were baptized, both men and women. ¹³Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptized...!" Then in Acts 18:18 we read, *"...and many of the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized."*

In John 8:32 Jesus said, *"and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* Also in John 15:3 the Lord said, *"Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you."* In John 17:17, *"Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth."*

But someone with his head in a hollow log still may not see how one is made a believer and thus brought to salvation, so I call our attention to a few more passages. Look at 1 Peter 1:22-23, *"Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren,...having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth."* Now that is as plain as the nose on your face.

Now turn to James 1:18 and also verse 21, *"Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. ²¹Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls."* That ought to be sufficiently clear for any man. Also see 1 Cor. 4:15.

Now with these passages in your mind, please look at what Jesus taught in John 6:44-45. *"No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me."* Do you see it my friend? First, there must be teaching. Second, the person must learn the truth. And then third, he now can come to the Father through Christ (John 14:6).

The final thing I want to notice on this point about conversion and how faith comes is to note what Jesus

said in the Great Commission and how it fits in with what we have covered thus far.

Matt. 28:19-20, *"Go ye therefore, and teach (make disciples) all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."*

Now notice Mark's account in Mark 16:15-16, *"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."*

I firmly believe that I have established from the Scriptures that men are saved or converted to God by hearing, believing and obeying the truth and not by a direct miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit upon one's heart separate and apart from the Word of Truth.

IV. CONVERSION'S CHALLENGE.

- A. So that we might be able to stand *"holy and without blemish and unreprouable before him"* [Col. 1:22].
- B. *"When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory"* [Col. 3:4].
- C. *"Whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance; ye serve the Lord. For he that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong he hath done: and there is no respect of persons"* [Col. 3:23-25]. To fail to obey the Gospel is to be lost eternally (1 Peter 4:17; 2 Thess. 1:7-10).
- D. To have Our Sins Blotted Out And to be Able to Enter Into the Kingdom of Heaven. [Col. 1:20., Matt. 18:3; Acts 3:19; John 3:3-5].

V. CONVERSION COMPREHENDED. What It Is And Involves.

- A. It involves a change [Col. 3:5-14].

- B. It involves conviction (Col. 3:23).
- C. It involves submission to the correct covenant (the New Testament) (Col. 1:5-6; 2:14).
- D. It involves being called through the Gospel (2 Thess. 2:14).
- E. It involves a combination of God's plan and our compliance with its commands (Eph. 2:8-10; Heb. 5:8-9; Col. 3:17).
- F. It involves a calculated decision. True conversion is a change from living carelessly to walking circumspectfully (Careful to consider all circumstances and possible consequences) (Col. 3:1-4).
- G. Through conversion one becomes a citizen of God's kingdom (Col. 1:12-13). A person who was once alienated from God because of sin has now decided to conform to the laws and government of His Creator. He now belongs to a new community (those who have answered the call of the Gospel (Col. 3:15; Phil 3:20).
- H. It involves a challenge to leave the world and follow Christ (Col. 3:1-2), to live a life of consecration (Col. 1:22).
- I. It involves a recognition of the Deity of Christ and a confession of the same (Rom. 10:9-10).
- J. It involves a spiritual circumcision (the cutting off of our sins by God when we are baptized into Christ. We are made clean through the blood of Christ (Rev. 1:5; Heb. 9:22; 2:9; Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:11-13).
- K. Through the process of conversion one becomes a child of God (Col. 1:2,12).
- L. True conversion puts one into the one true church (Col. 1:18,24; 3:15; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:13; John 3:3-5).
- M. True conversion is when a person goes by way of the cross to the crown (Col. 1:20,5).

VI. CONDITIONS OF CONVERSION.

- A. No person turns to God properly without undergoing three distinct changes appointed by God.
 - 1. A change of the **heart** (the spiritual mind of man) which involves what one believes (Col. 1:6,9; John 20:30-31; Rom. 10:17).

2. A change in the **life**, or **character** (Acts 3:19; Matt. 3:8).
 3. A change in the **state** or **relation before God** [Col. 2:11- 13; Gal. 3:27; Col. 1:12-13].
- B. In order to bring about these three distinct changes, there are some particular appointments in the Gospel.
1. The Lord has appointed **faith** to change the heart (Rom. 10:17).
 2. He has appointed **repentance** to change the life [Matt. 3:8].
 3. He has appointed **confession of one's faith** in Christ before men as a declaration of the faith that is in one's heart, and of one's allegiance to Christ [Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33; Acts 8:37].
 4. He has appointed **immersion for (unto) the remission of sins** to change the state or relation of the penitent believer who has confessed his faith in the Lord [Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-6; Acts 22:16; John 3:3-5].

VII. CONVERSION'S COMBINATION.

- A. God's Order of Conversion Must be Respected.
1. We must leave God's plan like he gave it [Gal. 1:6-9]. In seeking to understand how man turns to God, we must respect the order in which God has placed the steps in the plan of salvation. We must not seek to reverse God's order as some are doing. The state or relation cannot be changed first and then the life. It should go without saying that we must not reverse God's order, and seek to change one's relation with God before his heart has been changed by faith. The change in the heart must be brought about first. Certainly, we should know that there can be and will be no true repentance till a man first has faith in God and His Word. Why would a man repent who does not even believe in God or Christ? How could he? It is obvious he could not and would not (Heb. 11:6). The proper kind of faith will lead to repentance (Rom. 2:4; Luke 13:3-5). Repentance results in a change of life.

Get it now, God's order is Faith first (Rom. 10:17), Repentance follows next, resulting in a changed life. Now when both the heart and life have been changed through the power of the Gospel then the person is ready for a change in his state or relationship with God.

2. What Step in God's Plan Transfers that person Into The New State or Relation? It is when a man is baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3-6). Now keep in mind that I have not said that baptism changes the heart, nor did I say that baptism changes the life. But what I am saying is, Baptism is that act of turning to God wherein one puts on Christ (Gal. 3:27; Acts 3:19). He is now a child in God's family and an heir to the blessings of Christ (Rom. 8:15-17). Let there be no misunderstanding, it is the person whose heart has been changed by faith, and whose life has been changed by repentance, and who has confessed his faith in Christ who is now ready to be baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 8:37). Where true faith and repentance do not exist, then baptism is worthless (Matt. 3:8; John 3:18; Mark 16:16).
3. What is Meant by a Change of State or Relation?
 - a. It is the very act of obedience in which we enter the kingdom of God, the church. Immersion of a believing penitent who has confessed his faith in Christ is the visible act, in which he is transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:12-13; John 3:3-5; Col. 3:11-13).
 - b. Before this act of obedience he is still outside the kingdom; after it, he is in the body of Christ which is the New Testament church (Gal. 3:27; Col. 1:18,24; 1 Cor. 12:13).

VIII. CONVERSION COUNTERFEITED. Or, What Conversion Is Not.

- A. It is not calvinism (Col. 1:8,23; 2:11-13).
- B. It is not a convulsion (Col. 1:6,9).

- C. It is not simply a claim [Matt. 7:21-23; Luke 6:46; Col. 1:6; 2:20].
- D. It is not following a human creed or human custom [Col. 2:8; Matt. 15:9,13].
- E. It is not compromise with error [Col. 2:16-22; 2 John 9-11; Eph. 5:11].
- F. It is not contravening or controverting God's Word [Col. 2:4; Gal. 1:6-9].

IX. THE CONSEQUENCES OF CALVINISM.

I have shown that conversion is not brought about by a direct miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit upon the spiritual heart of man [the mind], but by the teaching of the Word of Truth, the Gospel of Christ. Now I want to point out some of the consequences of calvinism's salvation by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit.

- A. If it is an immediate miraculous power (separate and apart from the Word of God) that saves them, then men are converted without Jesus serving as a Mediator between God and men. Any teaching that sets aside the necessity of Jesus as our Mediator is a false position (1 Tim. 2:5).
- B. It sets aside the need of one's hearing the Gospel at all. Why should he be taught the Gospel at all, if he is saved by a direct operation of the Holy Spirit? And of course, if you are familiar with calvinism at all, then you know that it is their position that an alien cannot understand the Gospel anyway until The Holy Spirit first saves him by a direct miraculous operation.
- C. Calvinism sets aside the need for the Bible at all, so far as the alien sinner is concerned. What good would it do him to study it since they say it is absolutely impossible for the alien to understand it without the Spirit first saving him?
- D. It sets aside the work of the church entirely in making men believers through preaching and teaching. It would set aside the need for missionaries [Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15-16].
- E. It nullifies the great commission of our Lord. Why go to teach anyone if that teaching is all in vain? Plus, there is no need to go and preach the gospel to

anyone anywhere, if the only way they can be saved anyway is for the Holy Spirit to come upon them in a miraculous way, separate and apart from the teaching of the Gospel.

- F. It sets aside human accountability. If a man cannot understand the Gospel, and He is lost and there is nothing he can do to change that, and if the only way for him then to be saved would be for the Holy Spirit to come upon him and save him, then where is the role of man in this theory. He is passive. But the actual role of man in the conversion process in the Great Commission and the examples of conversion in the book of Acts in the New Testament is clearly seen to be active.
- G. It would put the blame for anyone being lost on the Holy Spirit. For if a man is saved by a direct immediate miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit, and the man is totally passive, then who is to blame if the Holy Spirit does not come to save him? Who is to be blamed if that miraculous power does not come? Don't you see, my friends, that if this theory is true, then it takes away any responsibility on your part for not ever becoming a Christian? Surely, you can see that the power of God, of Christ, and the Holy Spirit to turn people to God is through the Gospel of Christ, which Paul said is the "*power of God unto salvation*" [Rom. 1:16].

X. CONVICTION AND CONVERSION.

- A. "*That I may make it manifest as I ought to speak*" [Col. 4:4].

Brethren, before a man can be converted to Christ, he must first be convicted of sin. The sort of preaching that we sometimes refer to as "Beat Around the Bush" preaching will not truly convert a person to Christ, and prepare him for heaven. The whole counsel of God should be proclaimed with all boldness [2 Tim. 4:2-4; Acts 20:27].

Some of our own brethren now ridicule straight forward preaching wherein the steps of the plan of salvation are clearly set forth. Some call us "Five

Steppers" because we hold up five fingers like the old restoration preacher Walter Scott was known to do, and then emphasize the necessity of:

1. Hearing
2. Believing
3. Repenting
4. Confessing one's faith in Christ.
5. Being baptized into Christ in order to obtain the remission of sins.

If you will stop and think about it, one begins to wonder about those that say such things, and he wonders why they are saying them. Since salvation is either conditional or unconditional, and can't be both at the same time; are they saying that there are no steps that one must take to obey the Gospel of Christ? Have they become "NO Steppers?" Are they now taking the position that salvation is unconditional on man's part? If they admit that salvation is conditional on our part, then will they mind telling us just what those conditions are? And, if they admit there are some conditions, then I want to know if they ever tell people in their preaching what those specific conditions are? And, if they do, are they a "One Stepper" or are they a "Three stepper," or just what? Could it be the case they also believe in these same five steps, but they are just too ashamed of the Gospel to admit it? And, if they no longer believe in those five steps, I want to know just which ones they are willing to leave off. Would they leave off hearing in light of Romans 10:17? Or **Faith** in light of what Hebrews 11:6 clearly teaches? Would they have us leave off **repentance** in view of Acts 17:30-31 and Luke 13:3-5? And, what about the **confession** of one's faith in Christ? Would they have us leave that off in light of Romans 10:9-10? Or, might it just be the case that some of our own preachers no longer believe in the essentiality of **baptism**? Can we afford to leave it off in view of countless passages (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:19)? If some want to leave it off then they must be laboring under a different commission than

the one Jesus gave. See also Acts 22:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21; John 3:3-5 and Col. 2:10-13.

Friends, I believe that when we preach like Peter on Pentecost and like Philip preached in Samaria, then people who hear us will learn about what God requires of man to be saved. But at some congregations today a man could come and listen for years and never hear the plan of salvation. And many come in lost and go out lost and never know the difference, because they certainly will not hear error exposed. A man who does not recognize that he is lost will feel no need to be saved. Preachers, take the sword of the Spirit and wield it like Peter did (Acts 2:37). The great apostle Paul wasn't ashamed of the gospel but some elders and preachers apparently are (Phil. 3:1, 18-19). My friends, I'm tired of weak brethren letting the precious truth of God take a back seat to denominational error. We ought to be willing to stand up for Jesus and His church everywhere, and at any time (Jude 3; Phil. 1:16).

Brethren should never allow the truth to take a back seat to error. Truth and error are not of equal value. It is not the case that one is good as the other. Error is not as good as the truth, it never has been, and it never will be. Truth alone has the power to convert and save. Error will cause one to be lost (John 8:31-32; Matt. 7:21-29; 1 Peter 1:22-23; Matt. 15:9,13). If I have read my Bible correctly, and I believe I have, those of you who are elders of the church, Titus 1:9-11 is still in the Bible and it still reads: *"holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers. For there are many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."*

XI. CONVERSION CONVEYED.**A. Dying**

Col. 2:20, *"If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world..."*

Col. 3:3, *"For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God."*

Col. 3:9, *"seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings."*

B. Burying

Col. 2:12, *"having been buried with him in baptism."*

C. Rising

Col. 3:1, *"If then ye were raised together with Christ."*

Col. 2:12, *"wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead."*

D. Living

Col. 3:4, *"Christ who is our life."*

Col. 3:3, *"your life is hid with Christ in God."*

Col. 2:13, *"you, I say, did he make alive together with him."*

E. Seeking

Col. 3:1, *"Seek the things above."*

F. Minding

Col. 3:2, *"Set your mind on the things above."*

G. Hiding

Col. 3:3, *"Your life is hid with Christ in God."*

H. Walking

Col. 1:10, *"to walk worthily of our Lord unto all pleasing."*

XII. THE LOCATION OF THE CONVERTED.

A. In the Kingdom [Col. 1:12-13; John 3:3-5].

B. In the body of Christ which is the church [Col. 1:18,24; 3:15; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:23].

C. In Christ, *"the saints are in Christ Jesus"* [Col. 1:2].
"In whom we have our redemption" [Col. 1:14]. *"In him, ye are made full"* [Col. 2:10].

XIII. BLESSINGS OR REWARDS OF CONVERSION CONSIDERED.

A. Our Redemption.

Col. 1:14, "*in whom we have our redemption.*"

B. The forgiveness of our Sins.

Col. 1:14, "*in whom we have...the forgiveness of our sins.*"

C. Peace Through The Blood of The Cross.

Col. 1:20, "*having made peace through the blood of his cross.*"

D. Reconciliation, Col. 1:20.

E. Inheritance

Col. 1:12, "*giving thanks unto the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*"

Col. 3:24, "*knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the inheritance.*"

XIV. GOALS OF CONVERSION.

A. To Put On The New Man [Col. 3:10-14].

B. To Increase In The Knowledge of God [Col. 1:10].

C. To be Strengthened [Col. 1:11].

D. Set The Mind On The Things Above [Col. 3:1].

E. To Walk Worthy of the Lord Unto All Pleasing [Col. 1:10].

F. Heaven [Col. 1:5].

XV. FRUITS OF CONVERSION.

"Bearing fruit and increasing, as it doth in you also, since the day ye heard and knew the grace of God in truth" [Col. 1:6]. "To walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work" [Col. 1:10].

A. Faithfulness, 1:2.

B. Thankfulness, 1:3,12; 2:6; 3:15; 3:17; 4:2.

C. Longsuffering, 1:11.

D. Patience, 1:11.

E. Joy, 1:11.

F. Steadfastness, 2:5.

G. A Heart of Compassion, 1:12.

H. Kindness, 1:12.

I. Lowliness, 1:12.

- J. Meekness, 1:12.
- K. Longsuffering, 1:12.
- L. Love, 1:4; 3:14.

XVI. **CONVERSION'S COMMITMENT.**

- A. Continue In The Faith, grounded, and steadfast, not moved away from the hope of the gospel [1:23].
- B. Let no man Delude you Through Persuasiveness of Speech [2:4,8].
- C. Walk in Christ, rooted and built up in Him, and established in your faith [2:6-7].
- D. Let the Peace of God Rule Your Heart [3:15].
- E. Let the word of Christ dwell in you Richly [3:16].
- F. Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, Do all in the name of the Lord [3:17].
- G. Continue Steadfastly in Prayer [4:2,3].
- H. Walk in Wisdom [4:5].
- I. Redeem the Time [4:5].
- J. Watch Your Speech [4:6].
- K. Use your abilities, fulfill your task [4:17,18; 1:25].
- L. Seek those things that are above, sow to the Spirit [3:1-2; Gal. 6:7-3; 5:22-23].

XVII. **THE CIRCUMCISION OF CONVERSION [Col. 2:10-13].**

- A. Thomas B. Warren wrote, "Paul taught that being complete in Christ involves our being circumcised [spiritually] by Christ [2:11-13]. When men are saved, their sins are "cut away from" them by the blood of Christ, just as a fleshly foreskin is cut away by a knife in a physical circumcision. This spiritual circumcision [in which one's sins are cut away] occurs when one, being motivated by faith in Christ and repentance of sins, is baptized [immersed] in water "unto the remission of sins" in obedience to the instructions of Jesus Christ [Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38]."
- B. The writer of the 1955 Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary printed by The Gospel Advocate Company wrote, "We received the circumcision of Christ which consists in the forgiveness of our sins when we were buried with him in baptism. — So in our burial

in baptism we died to the old manner of life, the old sinful life has been cut off, the sins of the past are forgiven and forever put behind us. Then following the burial we are raised from the dead. Our resurrection with him in baptism is an essential part of union with him. Those dead in sin have no union with the living Christ; only those who have been raised in baptism to walk in the newness of life can enjoy union with the living Christ. In our text he tells us that we were raised from our burial in baptism into union with Christ through our faith in the working of God, or the power of God, which was exercised when he raised Jesus from the dead. We do not look to baptism to make us new creatures, but the God who raised up Jesus from the dead has all the power necessary to make us new creatures. So our faith is in the power of God."

XVIII. CASES OF CONVERSION.

- A. Jesus gave the Great Commission [Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16]. Every case of conversion which is recorded in the book of Acts was simply the carrying out of the instructions of that commission. There is no better way of demonstrating clearly a proposition than by providing an illustration or example. God has done this for us. The Book of Acts gives examples of true conversion to Christ. Several examples are recorded for us. Though the attending circumstances sometimes differ, in every case those that were converted to Christ did exactly that which was required in the Great Commission.
- B. The New Testament clearly teaches there are two sides to man's salvation:
 - 1. God's Part [Eph. 2:8-9].
 - 2. Man's Part [Matt. 7:21; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Acts 2:37].
- C. Some Cases of Conversion.
 - 1. Those on the day of Pentecost [Acts 2].
 - 2. The Samaritans [Acts 8:9-13].
 - 3. The Eunuch [Acts 8:26-40].
 - 4. Cornelius [Acts 10].
 - 5. Lydia [Acts 16:13-16].

- 6. The Jailor (Acts 16:23-34).
- 7. The Corinthians (Acts 18:8).
- 8. Saul (Acts chapters 9, 22, and 26).

XIX. STEPS IN CONVERSION.

- A. Hearing the gospel (Rom. 10:14-17).
- B. Belief (Heb. 11:6; John 8:21,24).
- C. Repentance (Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30-31).
- D. Confession (Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Tim. 6:12).
- E. Baptism into Christ in order to reach his blood that our sins might be forgiven (Col. 2:11-13; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-6; Mark 16:16; and 1 Peter 3:21).

XX. WE ARE COMPLETE IN CHRIST [Col. 2:10].

The Colossian letter emphasizes the Supremacy of Christ and the all sufficiency of Christ. God's plan for converting man is seen to be all sufficient (Col. 1:15-22; 2:3; 2:9-10; 3:3-4).

XXI. CONVERSION'S CONFIDENCE AND FINAL CULMINATION.

- A. If you will take advantage of the hope the gospel offers [the hope of the gospel] (1:23)...
- B. Then you can have "Christ In You the Hope of Glory" (1:27)...
- C. Which in turn makes possible "*the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens*" (1:5).

Exposition of Col. 1:3-8

Colosse:

A Church Surrounded By The World

Charles Blair

1. Churches are faced with choices, just like individuals.
 - a. We can blend in and be absorbed by the world.
 - b. We can be silent and be ignored by the world.
 - c. We can be militant and be opposed by the world.
2. Colosse was a church which chose to be militant against the encroachment of the world around them.
3. In this section of scripture (1:3-8), we shall observe the positive effect which Colosse had on its environment.
4. May God receive glory as we study his Word.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **VERSE 3 — "WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD AND THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, PRAYING ALWAYS FOR YOU."**
 - A. The "we" of this passage is Paul and Timothy, v.1.
 - B. The possession of a thankful spirit is a necessary part of the Christian life.
 1. 1 Thess. 5:18
 2. We hear so often of churches which have departed from the faith but we should always keep in the back of our mind, there are faithful congregations of the Lord's people.
 3. When we cease to give thanks for them, we then succumb to cynicism brought about by those who have departed from the faith.
 - C. Paul offers this prayer to God the Father.
 1. This is a valid example of the way in which we direct our prayers today.
 2. Eph. 1:16-17; 1 Cor. 1:2-4.
 - D. Paul and Timothy were praying for this church at Colosse.
 1. Churches which are doing battle with evil need the prayers of faithful brethren in other places.
 - a. James 5:17; Rev. 3:7-8.

2. It is not occasional prayer but prayers which arise on a continual basis.
 - a. "...*praying always for you*" (text).
 - b. 1 Thess. 5:17; Luke 18:1.

II. VERSE 4 — "SINCE WE HEARD OF YOUR FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS, AND OF THE LOVE WHICH YE HAVE TO ALL THE SAINTS."

- A. The evidence here is that Paul had learned about the activity of Colosse from Epaphras, their minister.
 1. Col. 1:7; 4:12
- B. Faith is not dormant but active. One cannot keep hidden the relationship they have with Christ.
 1. James 2:14,24; Gal. 5:6
 2. Because faith is active, others will see it and begin to question, what is going on with this church or this individual?
 - a. 1 Peter 3:15
- C. It was their faith in Christ Jesus of which Paul spoke.
 1. It was not faith in angels or the worship of them [Col. 2:18].
 2. It was not faith in man-made philosophy [Col. 2:8].
 3. It was not faith in man himself — humanism [Col. 2:23].
 4. It was faith in Christ Jesus which saved [Gal. 3:26-27].
- D. Paul also learned about the love Colosse had for all saints.
 1. Our service to God should always cause us to treat all others with respect [Eph. 4:16].
 2. No one Christian should elevate himself above any other Christian regardless of talent or the obtaining of these world's goods [James 2:1].
 3. The church is one body with many members, different talents and abilities but all alike in our access to God.

III. VERSE 5 — "FOR THE HOPE WHICH IS LAID UP FOR YOU IN HEAVEN, WHEREOF YE HEARD BEFORE IN THE WORD OF THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL."

- A. Faith is the substance of the things we hope for (Heb. 11:1).
- B. The hope for the Colossians was placed in heaven as a spiritual magnet to draw them always toward God.
 - 1. Col. 3:1; 1 Peter 1:4; Matt. 6:19-21.
- C. They came to this understanding about hope through what they had heard.
 - 1. Hope does not arise from false feelings. It arises from an understanding of truth (Phil. 4:9).
 - 2. Their hope was based on evidence (Col. 1:16).
- D. The Word of Truth is here called the Gospel.
 - 1. The gospel to them was not just some facts but the totality of all they had received through revelation of God's will.
 - 2. The words "gospel" and "doctrine" are used to mean the same thing; that is the body of truth which has been revealed to mankind.
 - a. Rom. 1:16; 6:17.

IV. VERSE 6 — "WHICH IS COME UNTO YOU, AS IT IS IN ALL THE WORLD; AND BRINGETH FORTH FRUIT, AS IT DOTHS ALSO IN YOU, SINCE THE DAY YE HEARD OF IT, AND KNEW THE GRACE OF GOD IN TRUTH."

- A. The truth which sets men free comes by public preaching or private teaching but it must be the Word of God which is taught, otherwise faith will not come.
 - 1. Rom. 10:17
- B. The truth had gone into all the world, just as the Lord had prophesied that it would.
 - 1. Matt. 24:14; Col. 1:23.
- C. When the word of God is taught and accepted, it will produce fruit.
 - 1. 1 Cor. 3:6; Gal. 5:22-23
 - 2. The key to fruit bearing for Christians is our complete trust in the Lord and his Word (John 15:5).
- D. Since the faith of Colosse was well spoken of, the truth had produced fruit in their lives as a church.
- E. One "knows" the grace of God when they spend time studying God's Word.

1. Titus 2:11
2. No one successfully preaches the gospel of Christ without teaching grace; it is absolute folly to suggest that one has preached all their life and never taught about grace.

V. VERSE 7 — "AS YE ALSO LEARNED OF EPAPHRAS OUR DEAR FELLOWSHIP, WHO IS FOR YOU A FAITHFUL MINISTER OF CHRIST."

- A. Epaphras is cited as being a fellow servant. Paul was an apostle of the Lord and by such a role will have authority over others.
 1. Yet this expression shows how Paul regarded other Christians; they were *fellow servants*.
- B. He was therefore by implication a servant; a servant of the Lord.
 1. Yet Paul calls his specific duties as being a faithful minister of Christ to the brethren at Colosse.
 2. It is therefore proper to refer to an individual as the minister of the church at a given location.

VI. VERSE 8 — "WHO ALSO DECLARED UNTO US YOUR LOVE IN THE SPIRIT."

- A. The Spirit of God must influence individuals and hence by extension, churches.
 1. Rom. 8:9
- B. What affect did the Spirit of God have on the brethren at Colosse? They had love.
- C. How does the Spirit influence churches?
 1. Through the Word.
 2. Heb. 4:12; 2 Tim. 4:2.

CONCLUSION:

1. How did the church in Colosse deal with the world around them? By practicing and applying the truth in their daily lives.
2. That is the lesson for us today on how to deal with the world.

A Faithful Minister

Col. 1:7; 4:7

Garland M. Robinson

1. The phrase "faithful minister" is found three times in the New Testament.
 - a. Eph. 6:21, "*But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and **faithful minister** in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:*"
 - b. Col. 1:7, "*As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a **faithful minister** of Christ.*"
 - c. Col. 4:7, "*All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a **faithful minister** and fellowservant in the Lord:*"
2. The word "minister" is used almost exclusively in our day to refer to a preacher.
 - a. Though the word "minister" can and does sometimes refer to a preacher...
 - b. The word "minister" is used in a much broader sense than that in the Bible.
 - 1) Minister (*diakonos*) — Thayer #1249: "one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master, servant, attendant, minister."
 - 2) The word *diakonos* is translated:
 - a) 20 times as "minister" — Matt. 20:26; Mark 10:43; Rom. 13:4,4; 15:8; 1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:6; 6:4; 11:15,15,23; Gal. 2:17; Eph. 3:7; 6:21; Col. 1:7,23,25; 4:7; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Tim. 4:6.
 - b) 8 times as "servant" — Matt. 22:13; 23:11; Mark 9:35; John 2:5,9; 12:26; Rom. 16:1.
 - c) 3 times as "deacon" — Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8,12.
3. Basically, a minister is a servant, and in the sense that a preacher serves the Lord, he is a minister.
 - a. Obviously, one can be either a faithful minister [servant] or an unfaithful minister [servant].

- b. Every child of God must always desire to be a "faithful minister," not simply in our own eyes, but in the eyes of the Lord.
- 4. This lesson is designed to look at the work of a Gospel preacher, one who is a "faithful minister."
 - a. Very often, the word "faithful" is used to describe one's church attendance.
 - b. But church attendance is only one of many areas in which we must be faithful.
 - c. One might be faithful in attendance but fail miserably in other areas of serving the Lord.
 - d. Therefore, such an individual could not be considered "faithful."

DISCUSSION:

I. THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT DESCRIBE A FAITHFUL MINISTER.

- A. A faithful minister **will study and prepare himself to preach.**
 - 1. 1 Tim 4:13,15,16, "*Till I come, **give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.** ...¹⁵Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. ...¹⁶Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*"
 - 2. Brethren must allow the preacher time to study and prepare.
 - a. He is often burdened with so many other things that are not his work as a preacher that he has little time to study for that which he should do best.
 - b. Brethren need to understand this.
- B. A faithful minister **preaches the powerful Word!**
 - 1. Rom. 1:16, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for **it is the power of God** unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*"
 - 2. Faithful ministers make no apology for preaching the truth.

- a. A great injustice is done to Truth when we invite people to our services and promise them they will not be offend at anything the preacher says.
 - b. Jesus offended people (Matt. 13:57; 15:12; 26:31; Mark 6:3; John 6:59-66).
 - c. The Word (Gospel) offends people (Matt. 13:21; Mark 4:17).
 - d. We should work to the end that our attitude, manner or conduct never offend people, but when the Truth (Word) offends, so be it.
 - e. The design of Gospel preaching is to make every sinner feel bad — feel the guilt of their sins (2 Tim. 4:2, *reprove, rebuke*) and move them to repent! When we do not preach in such fashion, we are not a faithful minister.
- C. A faithful minister **never lets up or backs off preaching the whole counsel of God.**
1. 2 Tim. 4:2, he preaches "*in season, out of season*" — when his hearers like it and when they don't.
 - a. He just keeps on and keeps on hammering away as a sculptor working at his trade.
 - b. Every sermon ought to be filled with...
 - 1) "*Reproving*" — Gk: "show something up for what it is, prove guilty, condemn, show someone his fault or error." **He identifies what sin is.**
 - 2) "*Rebuking*" — Gk: "to tax with fault, rate, chide, rebuke, reprove, censure severely, to admonish or charge sharply, scold." **He shows who is guilty of sin.**
 - 3) "*Exhorting*" — Gk: "to beg, entreat, beseech, urge, encourage, request, ask, appeal to, invite, summon." **He exhorts those guilty of sin to repent.**
 2. Acts 20:20,26-27, "*And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, ...* ²⁶*Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of*

*all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you **all the counsel of God.**"*

- a. A preacher may both preach and live the Truth all his life and end up being lost because he failed to preach the "whole counsel of God."
- b. I was told by a preacher one time that he did not want to move and therefore he was not going to preach on a certain subject. He would not follow 2 Tim. 4:2 and Acts 20:26-27!
3. Preach so both saint and sinner will be stirred up and moved to repent and/or become more zealous in the Lord's work (2 Tim. 2:19-26).
 - a. Preachers need to say what Nathan said to King David, "*Thou art the man*" (2 Sam. 12:7). Those who have sinned need to say what David said, "*I have sinned*" (2 Sam. 12:13).
 - b. Elijah stood alone against the 450 prophets of Baal. 1 Kings 18:21, "*And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*"
 - c. Micaiah stood alone against the 400 prophets of Ahab, king of Israel. 1 Kings 22:14, "*...Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.*"
- D. A faithful minister **defends the faith — the church of Christ.**
 1. One who will not defend the Cause of Christ needs to quit preaching until he is convicted of the truth, repents and is ready to die in the process of advancing and defending The Way of the Lord.
 2. It is not a pleasant or enjoyable thing to do, but is demanded of the Lord.
 - a. Jude 1:3, "*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and **exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith** which was once delivered unto the saints.*"

- b. 1 Peter 3:15, *"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and **be ready always to give an answer** to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."*
 - 1) To give an "answer" means to "make a defense."
 - 2) It means to make a "reasoned statement or argument."
- c. Rom. 16:17-18; Eph. 5:11; 2 John 9-11; Titus 1:13; 2:1; 2 Peter 1:12; 2 Tim. 4:2-4.
- E. A faithful minister **preaches so everyone can understand.**
 - 1. 2 Cor 3:12, *"Seeing then that we have such hope, we use **great plainness of speech**"*
 - 2. Get to the point. Explain it so everyone can understand. Leave nothing for the hearer to wonder what you meant.
 - a. Too many sermons are preached where hearers leave more confused than when they came.
 - b. It is sadly often the case that the more education one has, the more confusing they become and the harder they are to understand. This does not have to be!
 - 1) When you become more concerned with using big words and impressing people than you are communicating the pure Word of God, you will lose your audience.
 - 2) When you hear a preacher talk about this "theology" or that "theology" or this "model" or that "model," and many other such terms, then beware!
 - c. The best compliment you can receive is for people to say, "I got the point. I understand what you said. I repent."
- F. A faithful minister **lives a pure and upright life.**
 - 1. He must first make his own calling and election sure.
 - a. 1 Tim 4:12, *"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in*

word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

- b. 1 Tim 5:22, "*Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: **keep thyself pure.***"
 - c. Jude 1:21, "*Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*"
2. He is a man of prayer.
- a. He follows the example of Jesus [Mark 1:35].
 - b. Jesus teaches us to pray [Luke 18:1].

II. THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT ARE NOT THE PREACHER'S WORK.

A. Some preachers **act more like a denominational "pastor"** and think that all they must do is hold brethren's hand and pray for them.

- 1. Such preachers do more social visiting than they do studying, teaching and preaching the Word.
- 2. Many brethren have come to expect this of preachers and think that if the preacher doesn't come to visit them in the hospital or nursing home, it is the worst thing in the world.
 - a. Someone says, "My daughter had a baby at the hospital and the preacher has not even been there."
 - b. We may not call our preacher "pastor," but we often treat him like one.
- 3. His responsibility of visiting the sick comes from being a Christian, not from being a preacher.
 - a. He wears different hats just like everyone else. He wears the hat of a man, husband, father, Christian, preacher, etc.
 - b. Each one of these "hats" has its primary responsibility and sometimes overlaps his function in other areas.
- 4. Most of all, I do not want to convey the idea that unless I, as the preacher, pray for you, you may not get well.
 - a. However, any preacher is most happy to visit the sick and pray for them.

- b. Any preacher who is too lazy to be of help to anyone, is "not worth his salt."

B. It is *not* the preacher's work to enforce what he preaches.

- 1. This is a hard lesson to learn but preachers need to learn it.
 - a. Nothing is more discouraging than to preach what needs to be preached and people do not repent.
 - b. We better warn, plead and persuade for people to repent, but when they do not, it is out of our hands [2 Cor. 5:11].
 - c. Acts 20:26, *"Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men."*
- 2. Jesus did not seek to enforce what he taught and neither should we. He keeps account and will repay at the judgment [Eccl. 12:14; Matt. 12:36; 2 Cor. 5:10].

C. It is *not* the preacher's work to be the most popular preacher in the brotherhood.

- 1. Some aspire to "move up the ladder" in the brotherhood.
 - a. By that they mean it is their goal to preach for larger and larger congregations as they move from place to place so that eventually, they will be preaching for the largest congregation in the brotherhood.
 - b. For some reason they think that a congregation with more people in attendance is better than one with fewer people in attendance.
 - 1) Where would such an idea come from except one's own greed and lust?! You can't find it in the Bible.
 - 2) Such a shameful and sinful attitude is shown in Philippians 2:21, *"For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."*
- 2. Isn't it enough to be faithful to God?
 - a. Isn't it enough to be useful in God's service, to spend and be spent in serving the Lord?

- b. One's attitude should be, "where can I best serve the Lord?" Where can I be of most use and profit for the Lord's honor and glory?
- 3. The Lord's work is a "team effort." Each one must seek the others' good and profit.
 - a. 1 Cor. 10:33, *"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."*
 - b. 1 Cor. 10:24, *"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."*
 - c. 2 Cor. 4:5, *"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."*
 - d. 2 Cor. 5:15; Gal. 1:10; Phil. 2:4; Heb. 10:24; Rom. 14:19; 15:2-3;
- D. It is **not the preacher's work to plan every activity of the congregation.**
 - 1. The preacher does not have to be the center of attention.
 - a. He does not have to have his finger on everything.
 - b. He is not one that pouts unless he gets his way.
 - c. A faithful minister is content [and happy] for members to go about their business in working for the Lord. It is a faithful preacher's dream for the membership to pitch in and be involved in local and foreign work, in fellowship and in prayers.
 - 2. I heard about a church in Nashville, Tennessee that advertised for a youth minister, with a starting salary of \$77,000, to manage [coordinate] the use of their "family life center" [play ground]. God help that congregation and the young men who may desire such a position!
 - 3. A faithful minister is not an entertainment director!
- E. A faithful minister is **not one who flaunts his educational degrees.**
 - 1. He may have a G.S. [Grammar School], H.S. [High School], A.A., B.A., B.S., M.A. M.D., Ph.D., etc., but

- you would never know it and may even be surprised if you learned he did.
- a. He will not demand he be called "Doctor," "Father," "Reverend," or even "Brother."
 - b. Matt. 23:5-12; Rom. 12:3; Matt. 18:3-4; Luke 18:10-14.
2. He is a Christian, a servant of God, a slave of Jesus Christ.
 3. He is willing to be used in the service of the Master.
 - a. Matt. 10:24, *"The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord."*
 - b. Luke 6:40; John 13:16; 15:20; 17:14.
 4. The best degree he can have is a BMO. This is earned by many hours of "burning the midnight oil" in serious and sobering Bible study.
- F. A faithful minister is **not one who involves himself in church politics**.
1. He has no favorite preacher, paper or school that he will hold up no matter what.
 2. I appreciate sound preachers, sound papers and sound schools, but when any one (or more) of them stray from the "old paths" (the pattern), then a faithful minister will oppose them as he does any and all error.
 - a. If the school I once attended starts heading in the wrong direction, then I'll be there to rebuke them. How about you?
 - b. If a Gospel paper begins to proclaim an "uncertain sound," then line up with me to help expose it.
 - c. If a good preaching friend of mine (or even someone I don't know personally) will no longer take a stand on the old Jerusalem Gospel, then pardon me if I reveal it and seek to bring them back to the truth.
 3. A faithful minister has nothing to promote or defend except the Lord, his Church and his Way.
 - a. Jude 3; 2 John 9-11; 2 Tim. 4:2-4; 1 Peter 3:15
 - b. Rom. 16:17-18; Eph. 5:11; 1 John 4:1

4. Faithful preachers will preach what is right, regardless of who stands where.

CONCLUSION:

1. There is obviously so much more that could be and needs to be discussed in being a "faithful minister."
2. As any child of God, the preacher must love God supremely, love his Word and love the souls of those to whom he preaches.
3. Congregations must learn about and appreciate the work of Gospel preachers and support him in his work, both morally and financially (1 Cor. 9:3-14; Gal. 6:6).
 - a. They must not burden him with duties that are not his work as a preacher.
 - b. Members must seek to do works that would free the preacher to do those things for which he is most qualified.
4. Preachers must love and appreciate good brethren for their moral, prayerful and financial support.
5. If God be for us, who can be against us (Rom. 8:31)?

Exposition of Col. 1:9-20

Essentials Of Christianity

Wayne Cox

1. The necessity of expository study of God's Word:
 - a. To avoid abuses of the text.
 - b. To avoid an imbalance in teaching and preaching.
 - c. To provide much needed resource material for students of the Word.
2. The necessity of studying Paul's epistles today:
 - a. That we might know how to live daily for Christ.
 - b. That we might appreciate the struggles and trials of Christians who have gone before, and who remained steadfast.
 - c. That we might learn to confront and deal with doctrinal deviations.
 - d. That we might profit from meditating upon a portion of "*all Scripture*."
3. An exposition of this text reveals the following essentials of Christianity:

DISCUSSION:

I. NEEDS OF CHRISTIANS (1:9-11).

A. Verse 9.

1. The need of prayer, not only for self, but for others also. Paul sets a great example!
 - a. "There is a wonderful rush and fervor in the prayers of Paul. No part of his letters are so lofty, so impassioned, so full of his soul, as when he rises from speaking of God to man to speaking to God for man" (Alexander Maclaren).
2. The fourth of Paul's prison prayers concerns the brethren at Colosse.
 - 1) He prayed unselfishly.
 - 2) He prayed continually (1 Thess. 5:17).
 - 3) He emphasized the spiritual over the material, as his requests go right to the heart of the soul's needs.

- 4) He has heard that they were good; he now prays that they might be better.
 2. The need of a "*knowledge of his will*."
 - a. Important to combat the heresy taught at Colosse.
 - b. Acquiring knowledge does not occur by miraculous means, but by hard work and diligent study (Rom. 10:17; Prov. 1:7).
 3. The need of "*wisdom*."
 - a. Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge we have learned through study.
 - b. Wisdom is knowledge that has been digested and comprehended.
 4. The need of "*understanding*:" the ability to apply knowledge in a practical way to any given situation in life.
 - a. One may know God's Word thoroughly, but without application, his knowledge is worthless!
 - b. "Doctrine must be translated into life."
 - c. The Berean brethren illustrate this process admirably (Acts 17:11).
- B. Verse 10.
1. The need of "*walking worthily of the Lord*."
 - a. One of Paul's favorite metaphors concerns the Christian walk of life (Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thess. 2:12; 4:1).
 - 1) Learning the truth must never be separated from living the truth (1 John 1:7; 2 Cor. 5:7; Titus 2:12).
 - 2) How we live now determines where we will live in eternity.
 - b. The motive for walking worthily is "*unto all pleasing*" — to please the Father.
 - c. Walking worthily demands dedication, discipline, and obedience to God's Word (Rom. 12:1; Psalms 119:105; James 1:27).
 - d. Christ provides the perfect example of one who walked worthily.
 2. The need of "*being fruitful in every good work*."

- a. Though "*work*" strikes fear in the hearts of many, it has always been God's will for man to keep busy [Gen. 2:15; 1 Cor. 15:58; Phil. 2:12].
 - b. Again, Jesus provides the example of one who worked [John 9:4].
 - c. Areas in which we bear fruit in our work for the Lord:
 - 1) Seeking the lost — evangelism.
 - 2) Serving the suffering — benevolence.
 - 3) Strengthening the saved — edification.
 - d. Spiritual service is a powerful means of spiritual growth: "*increasing in the knowledge of God.*"
 - e. Strength to perform the work comes from God's power [Phil. 4:13].
- C. Verse 11.
- 1. The need of "*patience*" — going forward in spite of the setbacks of life.
 - 2. The need of "*longsuffering*" — being patient with people.
 - 3. The need of "*joyfulness.*"
 - a. God's people have every reason to rejoice [Phil. 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:16].
 - b. We know who we are, what we are doing, and where we are going.

II. THANKSGIVINGS TO GOD [1:12-14].

A. Verse 12.

- 1. The need for expressing gratitude, of "*giving thanks*" [1 Thess. 5:18].
 - a. The sin of ingratitude [2 Tim. 3:1-2].
 - b. "The ingrate is one of the most hideous of all Satanic characteristics" [Robert Taylor].
- 2. Reasons for being thankful to God.
 - a. Psalm 103:2
 - b. "*Made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance...*"
 - 1) "*Meet*" — not to be made worthy, but to be made competent, to be given the title.

- 2) Since you have received salvation in principle and will possess it to the fullest in heaven, be thankful!

B. Verse 13.

1. *"Delivered from the power of darkness."*
 - a. *"Deliverance"* — an important Bible theme [Matt. 6:13].
 - b. *"Darkness"* — signifies evil, sin, error, misery [John 3:19].
 - c. God has removed, snatched, rescued, liberated the Christian from the authority and tyranny of darkness — be thankful!
2. *"Has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."*
 - a. We are delivered from the realm of darkness and placed in the sphere of light.
 - b. *"Translated."* In secular literature, this term was used to depict the removal of persons from one country in order to settle them as colonists and citizens in another.
 - c. The *"kingdom"* is thus in existence. This fact delivers a death blow to premillennialism!
 - d. Since you have been removed from Satan's kingdom and have been placed in Christ's, be thankful!

C. Verse 14.

1. *"Redemption"* — *"to buy back."*
 - a. The term was used of the deliverance of slaves from bondage.
 - b. A synonym — *"emancipation."*
2. Since you have been set free from and forgiven of sin by Christ's sacrifice, be thankful!

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRIST (1:15-20).

A. Verse 15.

1. *"The image of the invisible God."*
 - a. Man was created in the image of God, but is not God.
 - b. Christ, being the Son of God, is Himself God.
 - 1) *"Image"* — a representation that can become a manifestation.

- 2) Jesus is the perfect manifestation of God; to see what God is like, we must look at Jesus.
 - 3) "It is in the Son that the invisible God has become visible, so that man sees him who is invisible" (Hendriksen).
2. *"The firstborn of every creature."*
- a. Not the first to be created, as Jehovah Witnesses aver.
 - b. *"Firstborn"*
 - 1) A title of honor [Exodus 4:22]; the rank of eminence and dominion.
 - 2) The designation here refers to supremacy over, which harmonizes with the ensuing verses.
- B. Verse 16.
1. Another refutation of the Gnostic philosophy.
 2. *"By him were all things created."*
 - a. Gen. 1:1,26; John 1:3.
 - b. Christ was not a creature created, but the agent of creation.
 - c. As such, He is preeminent over all things, material or spiritual [1 Peter 3:22].
- C. Verse 17.
1. *"He is before all things."*
 - a. "There never was a time when he was not" [Hendriksen].
 - b. John 1:1; 8:58; 17:5.
 - c. Christ is indeed the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.
 2. *"And by him all things consist."*
 - a. *"In him all things hold together"* [NKJV].
 - b. Christ has enacted the laws of nature to hold the universe together [Heb. 1:3].
- D. Verse 18.
1. *"He is the head of the body, the church."*
 - a. *"Head"* — authority [1 Cor. 11:3].
 - b. The body is the church [Eph. 4:4]. Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other.
 - c. The pope is not the head!
 2. *"Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead."*

- a. Christ began the creation.
 - b. Christ began the church.
 - c. Christ has the supremacy over the grave and death (Rev. 1:17-18). Every sphere is under His rule and reign!
3. *"That in all things he might have the preeminence."*
 - a. With His position as Deity, Creator, Sustainer, and Savior, it is no wonder that Jesus has divine sovereignty in all things.
 - b. If He has all the preeminence, that leaves none for you and me!
- E. Verse 19.
 1. God's delight in His Son is manifested repeatedly (Psa. 2:7,8; John 17:5; Matt. 3:17; 17:5).
 2. *"In him should all fulness dwell."*
 - a. *"Fulness"* — Christ possesses all the powers and attributes of Deity; He is no "lesser god"; He is not "a god"; He is God!
 - b. Col. 2:9-10; John 1:14,16.
- F. Verse 20.
 1. Christ is *peacemaker* because of His sacrifice (Isa. 9:6-7; Eph. 2:13).
 2. Christ is *reconciler* because of the same act.
 - a. *"Reconcile"* — to make friends again.
 - b. As our High Priest, Jesus has built a bridge over the chasm caused by our sin to bring us back to God.

CONCLUSION:

1. May we, having examined this text, realize that these are some of the building blocks, the basic ingredients, the essentials of Christianity.
2. May we also:
 - a. Incorporate the needs discussed into our lives that we, though perhaps already good, may become even better.
 - b. Come to a greater appreciation of God's goodness and blessings He bestows and express our gratitude to Him often through prayer and a pure life.

- c. Love our Lord even more because of who He is and what He has done to create us, sustain us, and eventually save us if we are faithful.

Let No Man Deceive You

Col. 1:23; 2:4,8,16,18,20-23

Bryan Hodge

1. The Colossians pre-obedience to the Gospel state is described as:
 - a. Alienation from God [1:21].
 - b. Enemies of God [1:21].
 - c. Spiritually dead [2:13].
2. The Colossians had obeyed the Gospel:
 - a. They had heard [1:4-7; 1:23].
 - b. They had faith [1:4].
 - c. They had repented [3:7].
 - d. They had been baptized [2:12].
3. The results of their obedience to the Gospel is described as:
 - a. Being forgiven [2:13].
 - b. Having peace [1:20].
 - c. Having spiritual life [2:13].
4. Danger existed, some were trying to deceive them, and rob them of their reward. Possible dangers include:
 - a. Pagan superstitions and practices.
 - b. Gnostic philosophy.
 - c. Hellenism.
 - d. Judaism.
 - e. Syncretism (much like the ecumenicalism of today).

DISCUSSION:

- I. **LET NO MAN CAUSE YOU TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL [Col. 1:22-23].**
 - A. There is but one hope for the child of God [Eph. 4:4].
 1. That hope is eternal life [Titus 1:2; 1 Thess. 5:8].
 2. Paul wanted them (and us) to remember what awaited [Rev. 21:4; Phil. 1:21; Rev. 2:10].
 - B. There is in context that little conditional word "if."
 1. We can fall from Grace [Gal. 5:4; Rom. 11:22].
 2. What is the condition? We must continue in "The Faith."
 - a. The article is present.

- b. The Faith is:
 - 1) To be preached [Gal. 1:23].
 - 2) To be obeyed [Acts 6:7].
 - 3) To be contended for because it is perpetually valid [Jude 3].
 - 4) By implication here, it is something which can be turned from.
 - c. We must keep on continuing in the system of Faith to receive that incomparable reward [Rev. 2:10; 22:14].
- C. Since it is the case eternity is at stake, we should not tolerate any false way [Eph. 5:11].

II. LET NO MAN BEGUILLE YOU WITH ENTICING WORDS [Col. 2:3-4; 6-7].

- A. Paul once again reminds them of their reward. This ought to be forever before us (2 Cor. 4:16-18; Matt. 8:12; Rev. 14:11 — There are only two destinies).
- B. Let's look at a couple of words.
 - 1. The word "beguile" means according to Thayer, "To deceive by false reasoning."
 - 2. The means of doing the deceiving is "*enticing words*" which Thayer says to mean "persuasiveness of speech" (cf. Rom. 16:18; 1 Cor. 2:4-5).
- C. Some people will believe anything if the speaker sounded intelligent, had a Ph.D. behind his name, or used a syllogism (even if neither valid or sound).
 - 1. Brethren, we must make sure that what we hear is true (1 Thess. 5:21; 1 John 4:1; Acts 17:11).
 - 2. Eternity is at stake!
- D. Observe verses 6 and 7:
 - 1. The words "*walk in Him*," let's notice—
 - a. Literally the meaning is "keep on walking in Him" (cf. Phil. 3:16).
 - b. We must walk according to His standards [Amos; 1 John 1:7].
 - 2. Then look at the term "*rooted*."
 - a. It is in the past tense.
 - b. It refers to their obedience to the Gospel or "receiving Christ."

1. They were rooted "*in Him*" (Eph. 1:7; cf. Gal. 3:26-27; Eph. 3:17; John 3:16).
3. Next, they are encouraged to be "built-up."
 - a. This is in the present tense. It represents a growing process.
 - b. He's saying in essence, "keep on growing, you're not mature yet" (cf. 1 Peter 2:2).
4. Then they are encouraged to be "established."
 - a. That is, they are to become mature [Col. 3:16; Heb. 5:12].
 - b. The point is to keep from being deceived you need to continue to grow, study and mature in the Faith.

III. LET NO MAN SPOIL YOU THROUGH PHILOSOPHY AND VAIN DECEIT (Col. 2:8-10).

- A. The word "beware" means, "to see, discern" [Thayer]. This word tells us that they and we are to be watching, ever alert, and never complacent.
- B. The word "spoil" according to John L. Kachelman, Jr.'s Commentary "Studies in Colossians, The Savior's Supremacy" refers to "the spoils of war," especially people who were carried off as slaves by the conquering army. It later came to refer to those who were "kidnapped, seduced, or led away."
- C. Men were trying to lead these Christians astray, and one of the ways they were trying to do so was with philosophies and traditions which came from men.
 1. Many today are more concerned in their preaching with what the latest psychologist or academian has said, than they are with God's eternal Truth [Acts 17:26; 2 Tim. 3:7].
 2. There are those who build entire doctrines in some cases upon traditions.
 - a. The Roman Catholic church is such an example.
 - b. Likewise, the Pharisees of old are [Matt. 15:9].
- D. My friends, we must recognize the fact that all religious practices, and doctrines either came from God or man [Luke 20:4; Col. 3:17].

1. We need to be studious enough to discern between the two (1 John 4:1).
 2. We need to "seek the old paths" (Jer. 6:16).
 3. It will be no excuse in the end to say "I was misled" (Gal. 5; 1 Kings 13, etc.).
- E. Notice, why we don't need any man-made philosophies [i.e., masonry, etc.] to make us more spiritually acceptable to God, or more prepared for eternity (Col. 2:10; Eph. 1:3; 2 Peter 1:3; Acts 4:12; John 14:6).

IV. LET NO MAN JUDGE YOU IN OPTIONAL MATTERS [Col. 2:14-16].

- A. In context, the reference is to those who were binding the Mosaical law upon the Gentiles.
1. They were never under it.
 2. It had been taken away.
- B. But, what is the application?
1. Binding where God hasn't bound is just as sinful as loosing where God has bound.
 2. It is detrimental to the speed of the Gospel.
 - a. I think of Shakerism (cf. 1 Tim. 4:1-5).
 - b. I think of Judaism.
 - c. I think of our non-cooperative brethren.
 3. Sadly, when we adopt such things as doctrine we:
 - a. Sever ourselves from Christ (Gal. 5:4, ASV).
 - b. We fall from (lit. out of) grace (Gal. 5:4, cf. Rom. 5:1-2).
- D. While on this subject let us realize our obligation to provide a Biblically authorized reason for what we do.
1. Jesus did (Mark 2:16, 18, 23-24).
 2. So should we be able to (1 Peter 3:15).
 3. If you are a member of a church whose actions cannot be sustained and defended Biblically, then you are worshipping with the wrong group.

V. LET NO MAN BEGUILÉ YOU OF YOUR REWARD [Col. 2:18-19].

- A. He mentions angel worship and various things.
1. Neither men nor angels are to be worshipped (Acts 10:25-26; 14:11-ff; Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9).

2. We are to worship God (Rev. 22:9; John 4:24; Acts 17).
- B. The term "*beguile*" is not the same term used back in chapter 2:4.
 1. Vines says this particular word means, "to give judgment against...." The verb was used of an umpire's decision against a racer.
 2. In any sparring contest one must realize the necessity of competing according to the rules.
 - a. One could be the fastest man in the world, but if not entered into the event he'll not be awarded the prize. Likewise, many are good moral people but if they are not "in Christ" there will be no reward.
 - b. Once in the event or game, one must compete according to the rules [cf. Ben Johnson]. It would be foolish for any to think he could take certain rules, but disregard others. Even so, the child of God must compete according to the rules as he races toward eternity (2 Tim. 2:5).
- C. Let's notice verse 19.
 1. To be right with God, we must hold to the head.
 2. A healthy body always does only what the head [mind] permits or authorizes.
 3. We are the body of Christ (Col. 1:24; Eph. 1:22, 23; Eph. 5:23).
 4. Therefore, whatever we do, we ought to do in submission and by the authority of our head (Col. 3:17; John 12:48).

VI. LET NO MAN INFLUENCE YOU TO FOLLOW THE DOCTRINES AND COMMANDMENTS OF MEN (Col. 2:20-23).

- A. Some, no doubt, were binding the Old Testament proscription and other things; But, Paul says that what they were actually doing is worshipping according to their own will.
- B. Many are doing the same today.
 1. Examples of this include: handclapping, special music, dramas, increased women's roles, divided

assemblies, partaking of the Lord's supper whenever they choose, etc....

2. Yes, it appears as if they are very religious. It appears they are very sincere. But, really in so many cases it comes down to people doing what they want to do.

C. What does the Bible say? (John 4:24; cf. John 17:17; Col. 3:17).

CONCLUSION:

1. People are after your soul. Are you going to let them have it?
2. Many say that you have to do nothing to meet God's conditions of salvation. Others take some of his conditions but not others. Let's not even try to change His rules [Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 8:37; Rom. 10:10; Eph. 1:3,7; cf. Gal. 3:26-17; Rev. 2:10].

Being Fruitful In Every Good Work

Col. 1:10

Ted Horn

1. *"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God"* (Col. 1:10).
2. One of the things the apostle Paul states in Colossians 1:10 is *"being fruitful in every good work."*
 - a. Being Fruitful — Bearing fruit (bringing forth fruit, that which is produced).
 - b. In Every — All, every, good work, not some left out.
 - c. Good — That which is good and right according to God's word.
 - d. Work — Deed, act.
3. A work must be authorized by Christ in order to be a good work.
 - a. Col. 3:17 — *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."* To do something in the name of the Lord Jesus means to act in recognition of His authority.
 - b. Jesus said, Matt. 28:18 — *"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."*
4. The word of God furnishes the man of God unto all good works.
 - a. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 — *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*
 - b. All good works — There is not a good work left out.
5. Let us study: *"Being fruitful in every good work."*

DISCUSSION:

- I. LET US NOTE THE CONTEXT OF COLOSSIANS 1:10.
 - A. Colossians is from the inspired apostle Paul and is the word of God.

1. Col. 1:1 — *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother."*
2. Paul gave the words of the Holy Ghost. 1 Cor. 2:13 — *"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."*
- B. Colossians is written to *"...the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse..."* (Col. 1:2). Therefore, written to Christians.
- C. *"Being fruitful in every good work"* (Col. 1:10), is a part of Paul's prayer for the Colossians.
- D. Christians must be fruitful in every good work if they are to please the Lord.
- E. In order to be fruitful in every good work, Christians must know God's word, have wisdom, and spiritual understanding (Col. 1:9).
 1. 2 Peter 1:3 — *"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:"*
 2. We must be doers of the word. James 1:22 — *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."*
- F. Let all Christians learn from Paul's prayer for the Christians at Colosse to be fruitful in every good work.

II. LET US NOTE SOME GOOD WORKS THAT ARE MENTIONED IN THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS.

- A. The good work of being **faithful to God**.
 1. 1:2 — *"To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse..."*
 2. Faithful means to be steady, reliable, trustworthy.
 3. *"...Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life"* (Rev. 2:10).
 - a. This means be faithful to God even if it costs you your life.
 - b. Any person can be faithful in easy things? The true test is, will a person be faithful in hard things? We must be faithful.

B. The good work of *prayers*.

1. 1:3 — *"...Praying always for you."*
2. 1:9 — *"Do not cease to pray for you..."*
3. 4:2 — *"Continue in prayer..."*
4. 4:3 — *"Withal praying also for us..."*
5. 4:12 — *"...Always labouring fervently for you in prayers..."*
6. God's people must be a praying people. 1 Thess. 5:17 — *"Pray without ceasing."*

C. The good work of *faith*.

1. *"Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus...."* [1:4].
2. *"...The steadfastness of your faith in Christ"* (2:5).
3. We must have faith if we are to please God.
 - a. Heb. 11:6 — *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*
 - b. Jesus said in John 8:24 — *"...for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."*
 - c. This is obedient faith. James 2:24 — *"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."*

D. The good work of *patience*.

1. 1:11 — *"...Unto all patience..."*
2. Patience is endurance, keeping on keeping on, as we do God's will (Heb. 12:1; James 1:1-4).

E. The good work of *longsuffering*.

1. 1:11 — *"...And longsuffering..."*
2. 3:12 — *"Put on therefore...longsuffering;"*
3. To be longsuffering is to have a long spirit, to suffer long, not to lose heart.

F. The good work of *joyfulness*.

1. 1:11 — *"...With joyfulness;"*
2. 2:5 — *"...Joying and beholding your order..."*
3. *"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice"* (Phil. 4:4).

G. The good work of *holy living*.

1. 3:5 — *"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth..."* (mortify — put to death).
2. 3:8 — *"But now ye also put off all these..."*

3. 3:9 — "...Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds"
 4. 3:10 — "And have put on the new man..."
 5. 3:12 — "Put on therefore..."
- H. The good work of **letting the peace of God rule in our hearts** [3:15].
1. This peace comes from God and is produced by obeying His word [Rom. 5:1; Phil. 4:4-9].
 2. This peace is to rule in our hearts.
- I. The good work of proper **family life**.
1. Col. 3:18-21
 2. People must see the need to have families that obey God regarding the proper order and functioning of the home.
- J. The good work of **servant-master relationships** which we can compare to employee-employer relationships.
1. Col. 3:22-4:1
 2. Both sides are to conduct themselves as fair and just, as rightness requires.
- K. The good work of **being watchful**.
1. Col. 4:2 — "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;"
 2. We are to watch — be spiritually alert, awake.
 3. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity" [1 Cor. 16:13-14].
- L. The good work of **proper treatment of other people**.
1. Col. 4:10-18
 2. Saluting, receiving, comforting, greeting, remembering.
- M. The good work of **reading the word of God**.
1. Col. 4:16 — "And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea."
 2. We must study [2 Tim. 2:15], receive [James 1:21], and obey the word [John 12:48; James 1:22].
- N. The good work of **labouring for the Lord**.

1. Col. 4:17 — *"And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."*
2. *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord"* [1 Cor. 15:58].
3. 2 Tim. 4:7 — *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"*
- O. There are other good works mentioned in Colossians which are not listed in this lesson because they are dealt with in other lessons in this lectureship.

III. LET US NOTE GOOD WORKS WHICH ARE STATED IN OTHER SECTIONS OF THE BIBLE.

- A. Christians are created unto good works. Eph. 2:10 — *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*
- B. Christians must have the right attitude and actions about good works.
 1. Titus 2:14 — *"...zealous of good works."*
 2. Titus 3:1 — *"...to be ready to every good work."*
 3. When a good work comes along, we must be for it and do all we can to get it done, with a mind to work [Neh. 4:6].
- C. Good works bring glory to God.
 1. Matt. 5:16 — *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."*
 2. 1 Cor. 10:31 — *"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."*
- D. We are to do good unto all men. Gal. 6:10 — *"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."*
- E. Jesus, our example [1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6], went about doing good [Acts 10:38].
- F. People are to obey in order to become a Christian [Acts 2:38] and to *"work out your own salvation with*

fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12) after becoming a Christian.

- G. We shall be judged according to what we have done whether it be good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15), by the word (John 12:48).

CONCLUSION:

1. God's people are special people, the called out.
2. We must live a special life of being fruitful in every good work.
3. "*But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves*" (James 1:22).
4. Are you obeying God regarding good works?

Exposition of Col. 1:21-2:3

Once Enemies, Now Reconciled To God

Dean Fugett

1. Paul had been commissioned as the "Apostle to the Gentiles."
2. Paul's yearning for all Gentiles was that they might fully appreciate their blessings because of Christ.
3. This section of the Colossian letter reaffirms this desire.

DISCUSSION:

I. PEOPLE WHO ARE ALIENATED FROM GOD AND ENEMIES OF GOD CAN BE RECONCILED TO GOD IN CHRIST.

- A. Alienation and enmity is established because of sin [Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 3:23].
 1. There is a separation from God due to sin [Isa. 59:1-2].
 2. There must be a separation from sin to return to God [2 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 12:2].
- B. Reconciliation is made possible and is effected in the body of Christ by his death (v.22; Eph. 2:11-17; 2 Cor. 5:17-19).
 1. In Christ Jesus we are made nigh to God by the blood of Christ [Eph. 2:13].
 2. By the offering of his body, Christ broke down the middle wall of partition [Eph. 2:14].
 3. He abolished, by his death, the law of commandments to make two into one in himself [Eph. 2:15].
 4. By this event, his death, he made possible reconciliation for both Jew and Gentile in the one body, the church [Eph. 2:16; 1:22-23; Col. 1:18,24].
- C. Biblical reconciliation is conditional (v.23).
 1. It is conditioned upon primary obedience to the Gospel [Acts 2:36-38; 2 Thess. 1:6-9].
 2. It is conditioned upon continued obedience and faithfulness [Rom. 8:1-4].

II. THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS MADE A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL OF RECONCILIATION [v.23].

- A. He was not ashamed of this gospel [Rom. 1:16-17].
 - 1. Because he was not ashamed and boldly proclaimed it, he was in prison at the writing of this letter.
 - 2. The sufferings of Paul in his flesh was for the gospel's sake, for Christ's sake, for the sake of the body, the church [v.24].
- B. As a minister of the gospel, Paul was also a minister of the church [v.25].
 - 1. The church is the body of Christ [v.24; Eph. 1:22-23].
 - 2. A dispensation or responsibility of stewardship was committed to Paul to fulfill the word of God [v.25].
 - 3. Paul labored constantly to be faithful in the role of a steward of the gospel for the sake of Christ and his church [1 Cor. 4:2].

III. THE MYSTERY IS NO LONGER A MYSTERY [v.26].

- A. Paul says the mystery is now made manifest to his saints [v.26].
- B. Paul had told the Ephesians that the mystery was not made known in the past as it is now made known unto the holy apostles and prophets [Eph. 3:5].
 - 1. This knowledge was made known by the Spirit which was given to the apostles [Eph. 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:10-13].
 - 2. The apostles and prophets then spoke and wrote by inspiration [1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21; Heb. 2:1-4].
- C. God wanted the Gentiles to know the riches of the glory of the mystery [v.27].
 - 1. The glory of the mystery among the Gentiles was that Christ was in even the Gentiles [v.27].
 - 2. This revelation confirmed their hope of glory, that Christ was for the Gentiles as well as the Jews.

IV. PAUL'S LABOR INVOLVED PREACHING, WARNING, AND TEACHING [v.28].

- A. Christ was the center of Paul's preaching (1 Cor. 1:23-24; 2:2; 15:1-4).
 - 1. Paul's command to Timothy was to "*preach the Word, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*" (2 Tim. 4:1-2).
 - 2. Preaching of the cross and its message was the power of God unto salvation for the Jew and the Gentile (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:18).
- B. His preaching, warning, and teaching was to present them perfect in Christ [v.28].
 - 1. This goal is sought through commitment to the sufficiency of the Word (Acts 20:32; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - 2. It is maintained by "*going on to perfection*" (Heb. 5:12-6:1; 1 Peter 2:1-2).
 - 3. It is assured by adding the "Christian Graces" (2 Peter 1:5-10).
- C. Paul's labor and striving was according to God's working [v.29; Phil. 3:7-11].
 - 1. His glory was always in the cross (Gal. 6:14).
 - 2. He was a laborer with God (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 5:20).

V. PAUL HAD GREAT YEARNINGS AND STRIVINGS FOR THE COLOSSIANS [2:1].

- A. He wanted their hearts to be comforted, knit together in love (2:2; Rom. 13:8,10; 1 Cor. 13:1-3).
- B. He wanted them to experience the riches of the full assurance of understanding (Eph. 3:17-19).
- C. He wanted them to be able to acknowledge that the mystery had been manifest to them (Eph. 3:6,9-11).

VI. ALL TREASURES OF WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE ARE IN CHRIST [2:3; Eph. 3:10].

- A. All spiritual blessings are "in Christ" (Eph. 1:3).
- B. "In Christ" is equal to being in the "body, the church," which is the "*fullness of him that filleth all in all*" (Eph. 1:22-23).

CONCLUSION:

1. Paul could bear his sufferings on their behalf if his labor was not in vain and assuring the Gentiles of their noble condition now in Christ.
2. We, as Gentile Christians, should take great pleasure in the study of Paul's efforts on our behalf.

Redeeming The Time

Col. 4:5

John M. Grubb

1. Our lives are governed by time.
 - a. We get up at a certain time.
 - b. We eat at specified times.
 - c. We go to bed because it is time.
 - d. We go to work and get off at certain times.
 - e. We ride trains and airplanes and must be there on time.
 - f. Ball games, radio and TV shows all begin at a certain time.
 - g. Some even talk about the "scriptural time" to begin Bible study and worship services.
2. The word "time" permeates our lives.
 - a. What are some of the phrases we use that mention time?
 - 1) "A stitch in time saves nine."
 - 2) "Time is the stuff life is made of."
 - b. We have a magazine named "Time."
 - c. We even have a watch with the word "time" in it — "Timex."
 - d. Eccl. 3:1-8
3. Examine the text [Col. 4:5].
 - a. The Bible teaches us in a number of passages how to walk.
 - 1) We are to walk in wisdom [Col. 4:5].
 - 2) We are to walk in love [Eph. 5:2].
 - 3) We are to walk in the light [1 John 1:7].
 - b. If we are wise, we will "redeem the time."
4. Parallel text [Eph. 5:15-17].
 - a. "Redeeming the time" is also involved in walking circumspectly.
 - b. "Because the days are evil" [Eccl. 12:1; Psalm 37:27].
 - c. We are not to waste our time.
 - 1) There is a danger to watch too much television, play too much golf, fish too much, etc.

- 2) We do not "redeem the time" when we work too many hours to the neglect of church and family.

DISCUSSION:

I. BIBLE EXAMPLES OF THOSE WHO DID NOT REDEEM THE TIME.

- A. Solomon used his time and efforts to depart from God (1 Kings 11:1-11).
- B. The Jews stopped their work in rebuilding the temple for 16 years because they did not think the time was right (Hag. 1:2-6).
- C. There were those who refused to follow Christ for similar reasons (Luke 9:59-62).
- D. The Athenians are the classic example of those who did not "redeem the time" (Acts 17:21).
- E. The younger widows were warned in this regard as well (1 Tim. 5:13).
- F. Felix did not "redeem the time" (Acts 24:25).
- G. The lazy will find any excuse to waste time (Prov. 22:13).

II. BIBLE EXAMPLES OF THOSE WHO REDEEMED THE TIME.

- A. The example of Caleb (Josh. 14:6-12).
 - 1. He was one of the faithful spies.
 - 2. At age 85, he was ready to conquer the land of his inheritance!
- B. Nehemiah used his time wisely in preparing to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:12-18).
- C. Think of all our Lord accomplished in just a little over three years (Matt. 4:23-25; Acts 10:38; John 9:4).
- D. The apostles are also excellent examples of those who "redeemed the time" (2 Tim. 4:7,8; John in Rev. 1:9,10).

III. OTHER EXAMPLES OF REDEEMING THE TIME.

- A. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, traveled over 250,000 miles on horseback, averaging 20 miles a day for 40 years. He preached some 40,000 sermons, produced 400 books, knew 10 languages, and at 83 was annoyed that he could not write more than 15

hours a day without hurting his eyes. At 86, he was ashamed he could not preach more than twice a day. He complained in his diary that there was an increasing tendency to lie in bed until 5:30 in the morning.

- B. Alexander Campbell was said to work in his study from about 3 A.M. until 8 A.M. supplying enough material to keep the printers busy all day.
- C. Albert Barnes did all of his writing before nine o'clock in the morning. He is the author of "Barnes Commentaries."
- D. J. W. McGarvey wrote his original commentary on the book of Acts at age 33.
- E. R. C. Oliver said, "Sometimes preachers will have to burn the "midnight oil" to do the necessary studying of God's Word."

IV. AREAS WHERE WE NEED TO REDEEM THE TIME.

- A. We must take the time for personal Bible study and prayer (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Thess. 5:17).
- B. We must use our time wisely to evangelize the world [Mark 16:15; John 4:34,35].
- C. We must make sure we are paying attention to our own spiritual needs (Phil. 2:12).
- D. While we recognize our need to be involved in the preaching of the gospel, we must not let our work cause us to neglect our families.
 - 1. Many a "preacher's kid" has left the faith because of the neglect of his father.
 - 2. Preacher's have left the truth because they forget their family responsibilities.

V. PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS.

- A. Do not worry about tomorrow, live for today (Prov. 27:1; James 4:13-17).
- B. Do not dwell on the past (Phil. 3:13,14).
- C. Realize what is most important in this life — going to heaven!
 - 1. Time will end one day (Rev. 10:6; 1 Cor. 15:24).
 - 2. If we have not "redeemed the time" in this life, when time ends it will be too late!

D. The only hope this evil world has is THE GOSPEL
(Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 4:2; James 1:21).

CONCLUSION:

1. Song: "Take Time To Be Holy."
2. Remember, we are stewards of time (Luke 16: 1,2,10;
1 Cor. 4:2).
3. Eccl. 9:10; Col. 3:23.

Dead In Sins

Col. 2:13

Charles Leonard

1. The words death or dead strikes fear, terror and horror in the hearts of people.
2. These words are generally used in connection to physical death.
3. There are other senses in which these words are used that do not produce the same care and concern.
4. The Bible refers to those dead in sin and those who are dead to sin.
5. Our lesson concerns those who are dead in sin.

DISCUSSION:

1. TOTAL HEREDITARY DEPRAVITY IS NOT THE WAY ONE BECOMES DEAD IN SIN.

- A. Scriptures that are used to try and teach that man is born dead in sin.
 1. Psa. 51:5 describes the condition of the mother and environment.
 2. Psa. 58:3 teaches that children learn to go astray and speak lies.
 3. Eph. 2:3 teaches they were children of wrath because of their practices.
 4. Rom. 7:14-16 teaches sin dwells in us as we permit it to do so.
- B. The scriptures teach that one is not born dead in sin.
 1. The spirit of man comes from God [Num. 16:22; Eccl. 12:7; Isa. 57:16; Zech. 12:1; Heb. 12:9].
 2. Man is described as the offspring of God [Gen. 1:26; Acts 17:28-29].
 3. God made man upright [Eccl. 7:29; Ezek. 28:15].
 4. God is the author of that which is good; hence man's spirit is good [James 1:17].
 5. The Jews shed innocent blood when sacrificing their children to false gods [Psa. 106:37-38].
 6. Sin begins in youth, not at birth [Gen. 8:21; Jer. 3:25].

7. If one is born astray, he cannot go astray (Isa. 53:6).
8. If one is totally depraved, he cannot get worse (2 Tim. 3:13).
9. Little children are used by the Lord as examples (Matt. 1:16; 18:3; 19:14).
10. One cannot bear the iniquity of another (Ezek. 18:4, 20).
11. All must individually give account of our deeds (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12).
- C. Only sin can make one dead in sin (Isa. 59:1-2; Rom. 5:12; James 4:17; 1 John 3:4; 5:17).

II. WE CAN KNOW WHEN ONE IS DEAD IN SIN.

- A. Those who love darkness are dead in sin (Matt. 25:30; John 3:19).
- B. Unbelievers are dead in sin (Mark 16:16; John 8:24).
- C. Those who refuse to repent are dead in sin (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
- D. When people refuse to confess Christ, they are dead in sin (John 12:42-43).
- E. All who are outside of Christ are dead in sin (Eph. 1:3, 7).
- F. Those with a dead faith are dead in sin (James 2:17; 2:22).
- G. To live in pleasure is to have a dead faith (1 Tim. 5:6; Heb. 11:25).
- H. All who do not continue to follow Christ, but turn back are dead in sin (2 Tim. 2:17-18; 4:10; 2 Peter 2:20-22).
- I. People in religious error are dead in sin (Matt. 15:9; Rom. 16:17).
- J. Many who think they are obeying Christ are dead in sin (Matt. 7:21-23).
- K. All who travel the broad road are dead in sin and headed for destruction (Matt. 7:13-14).

III. GOD'S DESCRIPTION OF THOSE WHO ARE DEAD IN SIN.

- A. The dead in sin are described as spiritually dead or lost (Luke 15:24,32; Col. 2:13).
- B. Those dead in sin are described as walking according to the course of this world (Eph. 2:2; Rom. 12:2; Gal. 1:4; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17).
- C. To be dead in sin is to walk according to the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2).
- D. Those dead in sin fulfill the desires of the flesh (Eph. 2:3; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21).
- E. God describes those dead in sin as children of wrath (Eph. 2:3).
- F. Paul gives a vivid description of those dead in sin (Eph. 2:12; Titus 3:3).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Sin entered the world through Adam and Eve (Rom. 5:12).
- 2. People are dead in sin because they sin and not because of the sins of others.
- 3. Death came through Adam and life comes through Christ (1 Cor. 15:22).
- 4. One must be in Christ and spiritually alive to be prepared for Heaven.

Alive In Christ

Col. 2:13

Melvin Sapp

1. Emotionalism has a grip on the majority of religious groups of our day.
2. Displays of emotions are seen as evidence of salvation while snaking-handling, shouting, foaming, rolling, babbling, jerking and almost every other expression of emotionalism is commonly practiced today.
3. To avoid this crowd of sign-seekers and to refuse to be lead by these blind leaders of the blind, we are often charged with being dead and unspiritual because we reject putting on a hypocritical show to further mislead the masses.
4. The Colossians were taught the true meaning of being Alive In Christ in contrast to extreme expressions of emotions based on erroneous teachings.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **BECAUSE WE DIED TO THE SINS OF THE FLESH.**
 - A. We were convicted of the high cost of sin (Col. 1:20-22).
 1. The price for peace and reconciliation with God was Jesus going to the cross.
 2. Our sins and wickedness had us alienated from God so that we needed an atonement.
 3. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, God sees the Christian as holy and unblameable.
 - B. Sin causes spiritual death which separates one from God (Rom. 6:23; Isa. 59:1-2).
 1. What we have earned and deserve for our sins is death.
 2. Spiritual death separates one from fellowship with God.
 - C. The Christian is free from the dominance of sin by mortifying the flesh (Col. 3:5-7).
 1. Evil affections and lust must be put to death before one can be Alive In Christ.

2. The fiery wrath of God is waiting for those who live disobedient lives.

II. BECAUSE WE WERE BURIED WITH CHRIST IN BAPTISM.

- A. The old man was buried in the waters of baptism [Col. 2:12].
 1. The old man of sin needs burying so the new man can rise up.
- B. We contacted the precious blood of christ in baptism.
 1. Jesus shed his blood in his death [John 19:33-34].
 2. We are baptized into Jesus' death [Rom. 6:3].
 3. The blood was shed for the remission of sins [Matt. 26:28].
 4. We are baptized for the remission of sins [Acts 2:38].
 5. Thus, we contact the blood of Christ in baptism for the remission of sins.
- C. Baptism is when God operates on us and cuts away every sin [Col. 2:12].

III. BECAUSE WE WERE RESURRECTED TO A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST (Col 2:12-13).

- A. The old man of sin was left buried and a new man gets up.
 1. We are new creatures in Christ [2 Cor. 5:17].
 2. Christ now lives in the Christian [Gal. 2:20].
- B. We share in the fellowship of Jesus' resurrection [Col. 2:12-13].
 1. Our assurance of forgiveness rests in our faith in the operation of God.
 2. The resurrection of Jesus presents physical evidence of God's power to make us Alive In Christ.

IV. NOW, IN CHRIST, THE CHRISTIAN ENJOYS:

- A. GRACE [1:2].
 1. Unmerited or earned favor bestowed that effect one's salvation and presents one acceptable before God [Eph. 2:8-9].

2. God sent Jesus as His agent of salvation to provide the way and conditions for our salvation [John 3:16; Titus 2:11-12; Heb. 5:8-9].
 3. Grace requires obedience to the law of Christ before the blessings of Christ can be enjoyed.
 4. Grace continues to be available to the Christian as he continues to need forgiveness, providing that he repents and confesses his sins appropriately [1 John 1:7-9].
- B. PEACE [1:2].**
1. A harmonious relationship between men, nations and God; an undisturbed state of mind; absence of mental conflict.
 2. Our obedience to God put us at peace with Him which creates a spirit of tranquillity.
- C. FREEDOM FROM COMMANDMENTS AND DOCTRINES OF MEN [2:20-22].**
1. Our alliance is to Christ not to man-made doctrines [Col. 3:17; 2 John 9-11].
 2. Elevation of doctrines of men above the Word of God will cause one to perish [Mark 7:7-9].
- D. HEAVENLY ASPIRATIONS [3:1-4; 1:5].**
1. Our heart's desire is for things from above.
 2. Our earnest expectation is to be with God in heaven.
- E. KNOWLEDGE TO ELEVATE OVER SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS [3:10-11].**
1. As new creatures, we should reflect the attitude of God regarding differences in people.
 2. All children of God are the same in Christ Jesus [Gal. 3:26-27].
- V. MARKS THAT IDENTIFY THOSE WHO ARE ALIVE IN CHRIST.**
- A. SETTLED AND GROUNDED IN THE GOSPEL [1:23; 2:7].**
1. A mature Christian is committed to the gospel that provides his salvation.
 2. A spirit of thanksgiving will radiate from one who is established in the faith.
- B. MERCIFUL [3:12].**

1. Outward manifestation of pity; compassionate; being lenient toward one that deserves punishment.
 2. God's mercy motivates us to live acceptable lives [Rom. 12:1-2].
 3. One who refuses to "get even" despite the power and opportunity to do so [Neh. 9:12-21].
- C. KIND.
1. Gentle; pleasant; gracious; tender-hearted; friendly or benevolent.
 2. We are to be kind even to those who are unkind [Luke 6:35-36].
- D. HUMBLENESS OF MIND [Col. 3:12].
1. A humble spirit waits for God to exalt, not self-exaltation [1 Peter 5:5-6].
 2. Our need of one dying for us ought to humble us [1 Peter 1:18-21].
- E. LONG-SUFFERING, FORBEARING & FORGIVING [Col. 3:12-13] – "to endure suffering for a long time without crying out."
1. God has been long-suffering toward us [1 Peter 3:20-21; 2 Peter 3:9].
 2. We must be forbearing toward one another.
 3. We must forgive as we have been forgiven [Mark 11:25-26].
- F. CHARITABLE [3:14].
1. Love is the quality that shows maturity.
 2. Love makes all other characteristics valuable [1 Cor. 13:1-8].
- G. OBEDIENT & RESPONSIBLE [Col. 3:17-25].
1. Complete submission unto God equals obedience.
 2. Behaving as we ought under every circumstance shows responsibility and brings glory to God.
 3. Christ is alive in us when we develop these divine qualities in our lives [Gal. 2:20].

CONCLUSION:

1. Being Alive In Christ is not empty emotionalism but commitment to Christ based on our gratitude for God's grace, mercy and love.

2. The Christian is Alive In Christ because his past sins are forgiven and he is a new creature in Christ.
3. Everyone can and should enjoy this new life in Christ by becoming a Christian today!

Exposition Of Col. 2:4-12

Ben F. Vick, Jr.

1. The medical and scientific fields are searching desperately for an antidote for the terrible disease, cancer.
2. "Antidote" is a remedy to counteract the effects of poison, or "something that relieves, prevents, or counteracts a disease."
3. As cancer destroys the body, false doctrine destroys the soul.
4. The apostle Paul holds forth the only antidote, remedy, or cure for false doctrine — Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION:

I. EXPOSITION OF THE TEXT [2:4-12].

A. Verse 4.

1. "*And this I say*" refers back to the statement in verse 3; i.e., in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
2. The purpose for stating this was "*lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.*"
 - a. "Beguile" means to reckon wrong, to cheat by false reckoning, to deceive by false reasoning. The word was used in the papyri of a keeper of a state library who had shown a willingness to make a wrong use of certain documents. Paul applies it to one's drawing erroneous conclusions from the evidence.
 - b. "Enticing words" denotes persuasive speech or words. It is plausible speech but that which has no foundation in the truth.

B. Verse 5.

1. Paul was in a prison in Rome. The year was A.D. 62. But his thoughts were with the church at Colosse.
2. He had heard from Epaphras concerning their spiritual welfare (Col. 1:7-8). It was not uncommon for Paul to hear of the welfare of churches when he

was absent from them (Phil. 1:27; Eph. 1:15; 1 Thess. 3:4-6).

3. Paul rejoiced to learn of their discipline.
 - a. "Order" is a military term, meaning unbroken line. Everyone was in his place (Judges 7:21; Ezek. 22:30).
 - b. "Steadfastness" means "a solid bulwark, an immovable phalanx." This depicts an army set out in an unbreakable square, solidly immovable against the enemy. Their steadfastness in the faith did not waver (1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 3:14; 10:23).

C. Verse 6.

1. They had not received Christ personally; i.e., Christ had not been to Colosse (Acts 10:38-40; Rom. 15:8). But to receive or reject Christ's word was to receive or reject Christ (John 12:48; Eph. 2:13-17).
2. They received the word of Christ delivered by the apostle who had received that which was handed down by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; 14:26; 1 Cor. 11:23; 15:1).
3. Receiving Christ means believing, repenting, confessing Christ, and being baptized into Christ (John 8:24; Acts 17:30; Acts 8:37; 2:38).
4. In the manner that they had received Christ, they were to continue to walk in him. This was to be done by:
 - a. Humility (Matt. 18:3-4);
 - b. Faith (Heb. 11:6);
 - c. Obedience (Heb. 5:8-9).
5. "So walk in him."
 - a. "So" is an adverb of manner, describing how to walk.
 - b. "Walk" means to live, conduct one's self.
 - c. "In him" is the sphere or realm in which one is to live or walk. One cannot walk in Christ unless he is in Christ. Baptism is the act that puts one into Christ (Gal. 3:27).

- D. Verse 7.** The colon in verse 6 is significant. "The colon is used between parts so distinctly separated

that the second appears as an explanation of the first..." (Rigdon, *The English Sentence*, p.27).

1. "Rooted" is the figure of a tree whose roots go deep into the ground. This gives support and stability to the tree. One who is rooted in the truth will be stable through all kinds of adversity.
2. "Built up in him" is another figure. Thayer says, "...in the N.T. only in the fig. which likens a company of Christian believers to an edifice or temple; to build upon, build up,...viz." "To finish the structure of which the foundation has already been laid," i.e. in plain language, to give constant increase in Christian knowledge and in a life conformed thereto:...in fellowship with Christ to grow in spiritual life."
3. "Stablished in the faith" means what?
 - a. It means to make firm, to establish, to strengthen. The present tense indicates the idea of "being more and more established." Christian growth is a lifetime process.
 - b. Paul exhorts them to be planted firmly in the faith, i.e., in the gospel (1 Tim. 3:13; 2 Tim. 4:7; Titus 1:13; 1 Peter 5:9; Jude 3).
4. "As ye have been taught." Stability, faithfulness, dependability, and soundness must be taught just as Paul was doing and Epaphras had been doing (Col. 1:7). As goes the pulpit, so goes the congregation.
5. "Abounding" is not just trying to get by. It means "overflow" (Rom. 15:13; 2 Cor. 8:7; 9:8; Phil. 1:9; 4:17; 1 Thess. 4:1; 2 Peter 1:8).
- E. **Verse 8.** This is a warning against being led astray by false doctrines (Acts 20:28-32; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1).
 1. "Beware" is a warning. The indicative mood of the verb indicates that the danger is real.
 2. "Spoil" is the idea of being carried away captive, kidnaped. To be led into error makes one a slave to the error.
 3. "Tradition" refers to that which is handed down. The word can be used in a good sense (2 Thess.

2:15]. "Of men" indicates the source of that which is handed down.

4. "Rudiments" translates the Greek word which refers to things set out in a series, like the letters of the alphabet. It is also used in reference to elementary teaching. It may be that the false teachers were claiming to impart advanced and profound instruction; but in reality, it was puerile [foolish for a grown person to say, childish]. The original word for rudiments can also refer to the "elemental spirits of the world, and especially the spirits of the stars and the planets." There are people today who place a great deal of stock in the zodiac.
5. The Colossian heresy seems to have been a mixture of Judaism, Gnosticism, and Greek philosophies.

F. Verse 9. In Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

1. Christ was the Word that became flesh (John 1:14). The Word was God (John 1:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:16).
2. Christ possessed all the attributes of God because he is God. The fact that he gave up some of his privileges to come to earth does not mean he ceased to be God (Phil. 2:5-9).
3. "Godhead" is found three times in the New Testament (Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:20; Col. 2:9). However, the word here differs from the word used in Romans 1:20. Here it emphasizes his divine nature, but in Romans 1:20 it highlights divine attributes.
4. "Bodily" focuses on the humanity of Christ (Heb. 2:14; 4:15).

G. Verse 10. *"And ye are complete in him...."*

1. To be in Christ is to be in his church; for the same act that puts one into Christ puts one into the church (Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13).
2. If we are complete in Christ, then:
 - a. There is no need to seek fellowship with denominations (2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 John 9-11);

- b. We should be satisfied with the scheme of redemption God has provided [Gal. 1:6-9];
- c. We do not need to tack man-made organizations onto the church, e.g., missionary societies, businesses.

H. Verses 11-12. The circumcision made without hands. "Circumcision" is figurative language here.

- 1. The purpose of it? The putting off the body of sins. The NIV [New International Version] misses it by using "sinful nature."
- 2. This takes place in baptism. Again, the use of the colon. See note on verse 6.
- 3. "The *aorist* tense puts the burial as contemporaneous with the circumcision. Ye were circumcised when ye were buried, etc." (*Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament*, Vol. III, p.489)
- 4. Baptism is a burial. We are buried with Christ and risen with him [Rom. 6:3-4].
 - a. "*Through the faith*" means by the gospel. Priests did this [Acts 6:7].
 - b. "*Of the operation of God*" is parallel to the expression "*made without hands*" in verse 11.
- 5. Note the order in verse 13:
 - a. "*Being dead in your sins.*"
 - b. "*Quickened together with him*" refers to coming up out of the watery grave of baptism.
 - c. Then (and not until then): "*having forgiven you all trespasses.*"

II. LESSONS FROM COLOSSIANS 2:4-12.

- A. Christians can be beguiled by persuasive words [Col. 2:4; 2 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 6:10-11; 2 Cor. 2:14; 11:13-14; 1 Peter 5:8].
 - 1. Otherwise, why did Paul give the warning?
 - 2. This shows the importance of listening [Mark 4:24; Luke 8:18; Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22].
- B. Brethren need to be exhorted to continue to live for and in Christ [Col. 2:6-7; 1 Thess. 4:9-12; Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27]. We need to "abound." See the concordance on this word found in this outline at: I. D. 5.

- C. The best defense against sin in our lives is to be rooted and grounded in the truth [Col. 2:6-7; 1:23; Psalm 119:11; 1 John 2:1; James 1:25]. See the parable of the sower [Matt. 13:18ff].
- D. The philosophies of men will spoil our souls; the gospel of Christ will save our souls (Col. 2:8; 1 Cor. 1:18-19).
 - 1. Philosophies of men, being from men, are powerless and directionless [Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12].
 - 2. But the gospel of Christ is powerful, because in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the godhead bodily [Col. 2:9; Heb. 5:8-9; 12:1-2].
- E. In Christ we are complete [Col. 2:10]. Therefore, we need to see that all of our supplies to live, work, and worship in him are met.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. May each of us apply the wonderful principles taught in this passage of Scripture [John 3:17; Rev. 22:14].
- 2. I appreciate the opportunity to speak on the lectureship this year.

The Nature And Preeminence Of Christ

Col. 1:15-19

Robin W. Haley

1. Our text reads: "who is the IMAGE of the invisible God, the FIRSTBORN of *ALL* CREATION; for in him were *ALL* things CREATED, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; *ALL* things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is BEFORE *ALL* things, and in him *ALL* things CONSIST. And he is the HEAD of the body, the church: who is the BEGINNING, the FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD; that in *ALL* things he might have the PREEMINENCE. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should *ALL* the FULNESS dwell."
2. Please notice that certain words have been capitalized and the word "ALL" is italicized.
 - a. These are the things which must be emphasized in this lesson.
 - b. In addition to these, we shall consider first our title, the context of this text, how Christ is seen in this book, and then make an application to our present situation for all men living today.

DISCUSSION:

I. DEFINITIONS FROM OUR TITLE.

- A. The nature of Christ is seen in His eternal existence and fellowship with the Father. He is thus deity [Isa. 7:14; 9:6; 10:20,21; Micah 5:2; Matt. 1:22,23].
- B. Being eternal, His nature thus demands His preeminence. This means He has "first place" in all things [Psalm 2:11,12; Heb. 6:17,18].

II. THE CONTEXT OF OUR STUDY.

- A. Colossians is the parallel book to Ephesians. Together they teach us about the church of the Christ [Ephesians], and the Christ of the church [Colossians].

- B. The emphasis of Colossians appears to be "Christ in you...you in Christ" (1:27,28; 2:6,10; 3:3,11).
- C. Two key verses come to the fore: 2:10 and 3:11. These keep ever before us the fact of our perfection or completeness found only in Christ.
- D. In our text, we notice the absolute term "all." It is found 30 times in Colossians, 13 times in chapter one and seven times in the text under present consideration. These seven occurrences make this point: Christ is all you need!
- E. Our text (1:15-19) teaches us why Christ is all we need. It is because of who He is. Let us then always remember these words: "knowing that from the Lord ye shall receive the recompense of the inheritance: ye serve the Lord Christ" (3:24).

III. CHRIST IN COLOSSIANS.

- A. The word "Christ" is found 23 times in this book, with at least 16 different applications.
- B. From chapter one, He is seen as savior, Lord, the object of our faith, the source of some of our afflictions [see 2 Tim. 3:12], our hope and our source for perfection.
- C. From chapter two, He is God's mystery, our circumcision, and our death.
- D. Then from chapter three, we find Him as resurrection, seated monarch, our life, our all, our peace, the word and our master.

IV. WHO IS CHRIST?

- A. First, He is the image of God (Heb. 1:1-3). He is the sum and substance of deity. He is not some kind of "God-possessed man" as JW's contend, neither is he some mere being with two natures. We might illustrate this from numismatics. A coin blank is struck with the die, the image of the die is now on the coin. He is the representation of all that deity is (John 1:18; 14:8,9; 20:28; Col. 2:9; 1 Tim. 6:16).
- B. He is the firstborn of creation. This does not have reference to procreation nor generation, but means to have first place. This was the place reserved for the

inheritor of the estate. It meant to have headship and rule.

- C. He is the creator. Consider these texts: Gen. 1:26; Zech. 13:7; John 1:1-3; 17:5 and our present text.
- D. He is before all and the consistor. Jesus makes clear His eternal existence in such passages as John 8:58 [see Exo. 3:14]. Seven times in Genesis chapter one we read that "God said." We learn from these that the plural term is used and that necessarily includes Jesus in the creation account. Jesus "bears and carries" creation (Heb. 1:3). He is the One Who holds all things together. Our text uses a perfect tense indicating that all things "always has held together this way" (Acts 17:28).
- E. Jesus is the head. For every head there must be a body. The body is the church (Eph. 1:22,23; 5:23,24). Being the head, He is the source of all doctrine (John 16:14).
- F. He is the beginning and the firstborn from the dead. He is not the first ever to rise from the dead (1 Kings 17:17-22; Heb. 11:35; John 11:43). But He does have the first place for those who die (Matt. 22:32; Rom. 14:7-9).
- G. Our Master has all the preeminence. Having already noted His first place above, we cite simply Matthew 28:18, "*And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in Heaven and on earth.*"
- H. Finally, He is the picture and substance of all the fulness, "*for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*" (Col. 2:9).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Since it is the case that "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever*" (Heb. 13:8), all that was true of Him when Paul wrote the Colossian epistle is still true today.
 - a. Therefore, He still is to have first place in our lives and for our love; He is still to be honored as the "first cause" of all creation, in Whom all things hold together.

- b. He is the sole authority for all that we do, think and say.
 - c. He is our life (Col. 3:4) in Whom we have been made complete.
2. Without Him and the fulness which He represents and offers, none can be saved today. Let us *"kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, For his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him"* (Psalm 2:12)!

The Kingdom of God's Dear Son

Col. 1:13

Chuck Northrop

1. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:"
 - a. God is the "who" of this passage (verse 12) and He has delivered us or rescued us [Christians] from the power of darkness.
 - b. "The power of darkness" is the rule, authority, or kingdom of darkness and it refers to when we were "*dead in trespasses and sins*," "*children of disobedience*" and "*of wrath*" who walked in darkness rather than light.
 - c. But now, Christians have been [past tense] translated, moved, or changed into the kingdom of God's dear Son.
2. This was accomplished through Christ Jesus [2 Cor. 5:18] when Christians were called out — *ekklesia* [church].
 - a. Called by the gospel [2 Thess. 2:14].
 - b. Called "*out of darkness into his marvellous light*" [1 Peter 2:9].
 - c. Called "*unto his kingdom and glory*" [1 Thess. 2:12].
3. This "kingdom" that Christians have been translated into is the church of Christ.
 - a. "The kingdom" is the church [Matt. 16:18-19].
 - b. "His dear Son" is Jesus Christ.
 - c. Acts 2:47, "*Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*"
4. From this we learn that the kingdom was in existence when Paul wrote this and was not still in the future as the premillennial heresy teaches.
5. Let us examine the glorious church of the Bible.

DISCUSSION:

I. PROPHECIES OF THE CHURCH:

- A. The word that Isaiah saw [Isa. 2:2-3]:
 1. "The last days" — Acts 2:16-17; Heb. 1:1-2.

2. "The Lord's house" — 1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:19.
 3. "Shall be exalted" — Eph. 5:27; 1 Cor. 15:24.
 4. "All nations shall flow unto it" — Acts 2:39; Matt. 28:19.
 5. "For out of Zion" — Acts 1:8; 2:14.
- B. The five kingdoms of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream [Dan. 2:28-45]:
1. The "heads of gold" — Babylonian kingdom.
 2. The "breast" and "arms of silver" — Medo-Persian kingdom.
 3. The "kingdom of brass" — Grecian kingdom.
 4. The "strong as iron" — Roman kingdom.
 5. God's kingdom.
 - a. *"In the days of these kings"* — in the days of the Roman Empire.
 - b. *"The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom"* — this kingdom will be established by God.
 - c. *"Which shall never be destroyed"* — 2 Peter 1:11.
 - d. *"The kingdom shall not be left to other people"* — no one will take it over as did these other kingdoms.
 - e. *"It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms"* — by the preaching of the gospel, the church has consumed all nations of the world [Mark 16:15].
- C. *"The kingdom of heaven is at hand."* ("At hand" means near or soon to be established.)
1. Preached by John the baptizer [Matt. 3:2].
 2. Preached by Jesus [Matt. 4:17].
 3. Preached by the twelve [Matt. 10:7].

II. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH:

- A. In the Gospel accounts, the kingdom was still future.
1. Jesus taught the disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come" [Matt. 6:10].
 2. When Jesus instituted the Lord's supper, He said, *"I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come"* [Luke 22:18].
 3. Joseph of Arimathaea "waited for the kingdom of God" [Mark 15:43].

4. Jesus taught, *"Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power"* [Mark 9:1].
- B. Beginning in the book of Acts, the kingdom or church was a reality.
 1. Col. 1:13, *"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."*
 2. 1 Thess. 2:12, *"That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory."*
 3. Heb. 12:28, *"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."*
 4. Rev. 1:9, *"I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."*
- C. The church fulfills all the kingdom prophecies.
 1. It came with power (Acts 2:2-4).
 2. It came in the city of Jerusalem (Acts 2:5).
 3. It came in the lifetime of those to whom Jesus taught.
 4. It came in the days of the Roman Empire.
 5. It came when all nations could flow into it (Acts 2:5).
 6. Any church not established with these criteria cannot be the church of Christ which you read about in the Bible.

III. NAME AND NATURE OF THE CHURCH:

- A. It is called the **church of Christ** [Rom. 16:16] because it belongs to Christ for He promised to build it [Matt. 16:18] and He purchased it with His own blood [Acts 20:28].
- B. It is called the **body of Christ** [Col. 1:18] because it is one body [Eph. 4:4] over which Christ is head [Eph.

- 1:22-23], and Christians are individual members of it [1 Cor. 12:12-13].
- C. It is called the **kingdom of Christ** [Col. 1:13] because Christ is its King [Rev. 17:14], Christians are its citizens [Eph. 2:19] and the New Testament its law [Gal. 6:2].
 - D. It is called the **temple of God** [1 Cor. 3:16-17] which is not made with hands [Acts 17:24] but with "lively stones" which offer "spiritual sacrifices" [1 Peter 2:5].
 - E. It is a divine institution because it was divinely purposed in eternity [Eph. 3:11], it is divinely guided [James 1:25], it was divinely purchased [Acts 20:28], and those who are members of it were divinely added [Acts 2:47].
 - F. It is not a denomination because it wears no denominational name, it has no denominational creed, it has no denominational organization, it offers no denominational worship, and it has no denominational alliances.

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHURCH:

- A. The Lord's church has the right message — the gospel of Christ [Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3].
- B. The Lord's church has the right foundation — *"the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone"* [Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11].
- C. The Lord's church wears the right name — collectively, the church of Christ and individually, Christians [Rom. 16:16; Acts 11:26].
- D. The Lord's church teaches the right entrance — faith, repentance, confession, and baptism.
- E. The Lord's church offers the right worship — prayer, singing, the Lord's supper, the collection, preaching [Acts 2:42].
- F. The Lord's church has the right mission — evangelism, edification, and benevolence.
- G. The Lord's church has the right organization — Jesus as its head with bishops and deacons laboring with its autonomous congregations [Eph. 1:22-23; 4:11-12].

V. REWARD OF THE CHURCH:

- A. Judgment day is coming [Heb. 9:27; 2 Cor. 5:10].
- B. One of two rewards await every person — the resurrection of life or the resurrection of damnation [John 5:27-29].
- C. Those who are faithful members of the church of Christ can look forward to that great and notable day because Jesus is *"the saviour of the body"* [Eph. 5:23].
- D. "In Christ" are *"all spiritual blessings"* [Eph. 1:3] including salvation [2 Tim. 2:10] whereas out of Christ are no spiritual blessings and no salvation [John 14:6].
- E. The rewards of being a Christian, a member of the church of Christ, is twofold for Jesus said, *"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting"* [Luke 18:29-30].
 - 1. This present time's rewards include God's care [1 Peter 5:7]; peace [Phil. 4:7], hope [Col. 1:27], redemption [Rom. 3:24], and salvation [2 Tim. 2:10].
 - 2. The Psalmist summarizes it well in Psalm 68:19, *"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation."*
 - 3. But Christians also have the rewards "in the world to come" which will be eternal (endless in duration), everlasting (permanent and unchangeableness), and immortality (deathlessness).
 - 4. Listen to this beautiful picture of the heavenly reward! *"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away"* [Rev. 21:4].

CONCLUSION:

1. *"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:11).*
2. The description of the church of Christ found within the pages of holy writ are so unlike, so dissimilar, and so noticeable deferent to the "Johnny-come-lately" denominations of our present time.
3. It is truly a delight and a joy to hear and read about the distinctive nature of the church.
4. A church set free by the truth (John 8:32).
 - a. Free from the bondage of denominationalism.
 - b. Free from manmade doctrines and creeds.
 - c. Free from sin!
5. Therefore, we call all men to unity.
 - a. Put away your manmade churches!
 - b. Put away your manmade names!
 - c. Put away your manmade doctrines!
 - d. Follow only the New Testament!
 - e. Be only the church of Christ!

Exposition of Col. 3:16

Singing With Grace In The Heart

Charles A. Pledge

1. THERE IS GREAT POWER IN SINGING.
 - a. National Anthem moves many people.
 - b. Cults such as Mormonism develop songs for very small children to brainwash them at an early stage in life.
 - c. The military in many countries has long recognized the power in chants and songs.
 - d. Look at the changes wrought by Rock & Roll music.

DISCUSSION:

I. A PASSAGE AUTHORIZES ONLY WHAT IT AUTHORIZES.

A. Several years ago a capable young man argued that choirs, choruses, duets, solos, etc., could be authorized by Col. 3:16.

1. Question: What statement within that passage authorizes such?
 - a. Singing is authorized.
 - b. Responsive singing, or singing in parts is authorized.
 - c. Individuals singing at the same time with the intent of instructing and admonishing each other is authorized.
2. There is no explicit, implicit, or example of choirs, etc. in this passage.

B. This passage only authorizes:

1. Singing.
2. Teaching (each) one another; reflexive pronouns indicate the action is between one another, not to one, or some, to others with participants and spectators.
3. Singing in worship, Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.
4. Singing with grace in the heart. (This grace will be developed in a later part of this discourse.)

II. THERE IS NO AUTHORITY IN THIS PASSAGE FOR SPECIAL GROUP SINGING.

- A. This passage simply does not touch that kind of singing.
 - 1. Whether schools, churches, or just special group singers, they must seek authority from some other passage.
 - 2. We would suggest the passage that authorizes the mechanical instrument of music in worship might also authorize such groups.
- B. We should be content with accepting the statement that is made by any passage of Scripture.

III. THERE IS NO AUTHORITY FOR THE MECHANICAL INSTRUMENT OF MUSIC IN THIS PASSAGE.

- A. Time forbids dealing with the approximately 20 different arguments espoused by advocates of mechanical instruments of music in worship. Will briefly note a few.
 - 1. Does not say NOT to use it.
 - a. Bible does not say do not use heroin; do not beat your wife; and do not commit suicide, or hundreds of other things.
 - b. Bible is not written like that. Look at your driver's license. Who is authorized to drive according to what is written on it?
 - 2. Was used in the O.T. and N.T. does not say do not use it, therefore may use it with approval of God.
 - a. The N.T. is a closed covenant, Gal. 3:15.
 - b. A closed covenant may not be added to or modified in any way without breaking it, thereby negating the blessings, or promises, of that covenant.
 - c. Because the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship is not authorized anywhere in this covenant, then the use of them would negate all the blessings of the covenant for the one so doing.
 - 3. Current argument many use is as follows.
 - a. We do not need explicit authority from God's word to do an action.

- b. We do need to be in harmony with the heavenly disposition, or nature, in our actions.
- c. This must be determined by the individual, not those who would sit in judgment on the individual.
- d. Therefore, I may use the mechanical instrument without any explicit Bible passage.
- 4. A number of serious questions are raised by this assertion.
 - a. How is it to be determined if my disposition is in harmony with the heavenly disposition as I participate in specific activities? Is it the nudging of the Holy Spirit within? This raises another problem.
 - b. Exactly what is the heavenly disposition? Who may define it? Is it different, changing with the individual's activities?
 - c. If we do not need the word itself to authorize any activity, then just how did one determine that the heavenly disposition is to be our authority? Will one please step forth with the passage that teaches such?
- B. The fact is, there is no authority in the N.T. for using the mechanical instrument of music in worship and very few of the advocates of that music care any longer to debate the question.
 - 1. Col. 3:17 shows the need for authority.
 - 2. Deut. 29:29 and many other passages in the O.T. show the need for having authority before one acts in the name of the Lord.
 - 3. We want to move to the next aspect of this passage.

IV. SINGING WITH GRACE IN THE HEART.

- A. This is parallel in thought and principle to Eph. 5:19.
 - 1. What one declares, so declares the other.
 - 2. One uses the term melody and the other grace.
- B. Ephesians 5:19: melody.
 - 1. *Psallo* has inherent within its meaning the idea of plucking.

2. N. B. Hardeman in his debate with Boswell agreed with Boswell and all the authorities Boswell cited to prove this fact.
 - a. There is no need, nor any authority to deny this fact.
 - b. The idea of a plucking, or twanging, inheres in Eph. 5:19.
 3. Brother Hardeman showed that the text proves the twanging, or plucking, is on the strings of the heart.
 - a. What are these strings?
 - b. How does singing these particular types of songs pluck the heart strings?
 - c. Illustrate with songs praising God and/or Christ for blessings bestowed [God Has Been Mindful Of Me as well as other songs of this nature.]
 - d. The emotions are moved. Some bring tears unbidden and others arouse other emotions.
- C. Col. 3:16 uses the idea of grace to challenge the imagination.
1. Grace is used in different ways:
 - a. Objective, as applied to beauty or gracefulness of a person, Luke 2:40; also applied to objects as, word of grace, Acts 20:32.
 - b. Subjective, as applied to the bestower, the friendly disposition from which flows blessings, Acts 14:26.
 - c. To indicate thanksgiving, Rom. 6:17: God be *charis* [thanked].
 2. It is in this last sense, the feeling of gratitude due to gifts of God's grace that Heb. 12:28 uses the word.
 3. It is also in this sense that Col. 3:16 uses the word grace.
- D. The application.
1. Thanksgiving is one of the most basic virtues needed to serve God.
 - a. Romans 1:21 shows the second step away from God.
 - b. 2 Tim. 3:2, "*For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blas-*

phemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,"

- c. Phil. 4:6, *"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."*
2. In singing praises to God [praise is giving credit to one] for all blessings, then gratitude swells within the heart as the emotions stir.
 - a. As each blessing is contemplated, the gratitude enlarges the heart and makes it more capable of service that pleases God.
 - b. It is out of gratitude that man may serve acceptably with reverence, Heb. 12:28.
3. In Colossians 3:16, grace is a simple figure of speech [a metonymy of cause] where the cause [grace] is stated for the effect [gratitude produced by thinking upon the gifts of grace].

CONCLUSION:

1. LET US EACH STRIVE TO THINK UPON THE WORDS AND THOUGHTS OF THE SONGS WE SING.
2. If the song does not fit the worship category of this passage, we should not use it in worship to God.
 - a. Some songs are lovely songs but have no place in worship to God.
 - b. Some songs teach error and detract from thoughts about the grace of God.
 - c. Some songs teach nothing in particular and only arouse secular thoughts.
 - d. Song leaders have a difficult task and elders must make certain they are up to that task.
3. Let us sing worship songs with the understanding.
 - a. Let us remember we are singing praise to God, to Deity.
 - b. Let us allow the thoughts to work good within us that we might be better servants of Him whom we praise.
4. May we each strive to grow in the gratitude produced by thinking upon the wonderful blessings of the grace of God.

- a. Concentrate upon the song we sing each time.
- b. Do our best to understand every word of it.
- c. Strive to be grateful for all God has done for us. Can you count your blessings? If you can, you have failed to consider all God has done for you.

Exposition of Col. 3:17

Biblical authority in word or deed

Kenneth Burleson

1. Col. 3:17, "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*"
 - a. All must be done to God's glory [1 Cor. 10:31].
 - b. Our thanksgiving unto God must be in the name of Christ [Eph. 5:20].
2. Biblical authority is that which many today will not heed. They want to do their own thing.
3. There is nothing new under the sun.
 - a. Authority is being abused today.
 - b. It was abused in Biblical times as well.
4. Division in religion is a direct result of the failure to heed the authority of Christ.

DISCUSSION:

I. EXPOSITION OF COL. 3:17.

- A. "...*Whatsoever ye do....*" Everything ye do; whatever ye do.
 1. One must do His will [Matt. 7:21].
 2. Must be doers and not hearers only [James 1:22; Matt. 7:24-27].
 3. Paul is an example [2 Tim. 4:6-8].
- B. "...*In word or deed....*" This has to do with doctrine and practice.
 1. Acts 2:42; 2 John 9-11.
 2. 2 Peter 1:5-11; James 1:27.
 3. God will not accept a divided or perverted allegiance.
 - a. We are to worship God according to His will [Matt. 4:10].
 - b. Some are involved in vain worship [Matt. 15:9].
 - c. He has nothing to divide with others.
 - d. He will not reward what one does in another body or institution [Matt. 7:22,23].
- C. "...*Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.*"

1. This means that we do it for Him as He directs.
2. All that His name represents, especially authority.
3. His name must not be attached to that which He does not approve.
4. In order for anything to be done in the name of Christ it must be that which He has authorized.
5. To do it by His authority, is to do it as His servant for His glory and honor.
6. One must practice that which the Lord has authorized and honored by His name.
7. Paul encouraged the Colossian brethren throughout the book.
 - a. Col. 1:23; Col. 2:8; Col. 2:18.
 - b. Col. 3:16; Col. 3:17.

II. **BACKGROUND OF COL. 3:17.**

- A. The Book of Colossians was born out of controversy brought on by false philosophies.
- B. Some of those who believed in Christ brought with them ideas from Jewish and Pagan religions.
- C. As a result of individuals not discarding their false ideas, the gospel was in danger of being overcome by these false beliefs and practices.
- D. The problem of mysticism and Gnosticism were prevalent in that day.
- E. Much of Paul's teaching, in all of his letters, was brought about by the errors in the congregations.
- F. "Paul presses three normative conceptions upon the minds of his readers:
 1. The uniqueness of Christ's personality.
 2. The completeness of His work.
 3. And the finality and perfection of His revelation."
[A commentary on the New Testament Epistles by David Lipscomb. Edited with additional notes by J. W. Shepherd, p.244.] [Format into outline by K.B.]
- G. "The Colossians sought a true idea of God — in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, of creation — Christ is the creator of all created beings, including the angelic orders; of history — all things are from Christ and unto Christ; or redemption —

believers in Christ are all buried with him in baptism, and rise with him to walk in newness of life; of atonement — Jesus Christ has by the blood of the cross secured the sinners peace." Ibid pp. 44-45.

- H. "They sought a philosophy — in Christ are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden; a higher life — it is hidden with Christ in God." Ibid p.245.
- I. "They sought initiation into the mysteries of God — Christ is the open secret of the universe." Ibid
- J. "They desired to obtain perfection — man is complete in Christ." Ibid
- K. Verse 16 is an example of the need to do all things by the authority of Jesus Christ. Verse 16 is another lesson in this lectureship.

III. GOD'S LAW HAS BEEN STRICT IN EVERY DISPENSATION.

- A. The Patriarchal.
 - 1. Adam and Eve.
 - 2. Cain and Abel.
 - 3. The flood.
- B. The Mosaical.
 - 1. The children of Israel.
 - 2. David.
 - 3. Uzzah.
 - 4. Nadab and Abihu.
- C. The Christian.
 - 1. Matt. 7:21; 2 Thess. 1:7-9.
 - 2. Rev. 21:8; 2 Cor. 5:10.

IV. ABUSE OF THE LORD'S AUTHORITY.

- A. The entertainment craze.
 - 1. Ball teams.
 - 2. Beach parties.
 - 3. Gymnasiums.
 - 4. Youth rallies.
- B. Perverting the plan of salvation.
 - 1. Salvation by "faith only doctrine."
 - 2. Salvation by "grace only doctrine."
 - 3. Baptism for any purpose.
 - 4. "Once saved always saved," doctrine.

- C. Perverting the worship.
 - 1. Adding mechanical instrumental music.
 - 2. Two acts of worship at the same time.
 - 3. Lack of reverence.
 - 4. Not giving as one has been prospered.
- D. Creeds.
- E. Councils.

V. THE STANDARD OF AUTHORITY.

- A. It is not:
 - 1. Majority rule [Exodus 23:2; Matt. 7:13,14; Luke 6:46].
 - 2. Pope, Church [2 Thess. 2:3-4; Acts 10:25-26; Gal. 2:11-13; Eph. 5:23ff; Eph. 1:22, 23].
 - 3. Councils, conferences.
 - a. Catholics and denominations.
 - b. Gal. 3:15; James 4:12; Prov. 30:6.
 - 4. Conscience [Acts 26:9-14; 23:1; Rom. 2:15; 9:1; Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12].
 - 5. Feelings.
 - a. They vary [Gen. 27:22; Gen. 37:7-35; 1 Kings 13].
 - b. Law of Moses [Deut. 5:2-3; Col. 2:14].
- B. It is:
 - 1. Christ.
 - a. He is to be heard [Matt. 17:5; Acts 3:22-23].
 - b. He has all authority [Matt. 28:18].
 - c. His word will judge us [John 12:48].
 - d. He is the author of eternal salvation to those who obey Him [Heb. 5:8,9].
 - 2. The New Testament.
 - a. It is His Testament.
 - b. We hear Him by hearing the word.
 - c. Heb. 9:16-17; Acts 2:42; 2 John 9; Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

VI. THE ORDER OF AUTHORITY.

- A. God the Father first [Heb. 1:1-2; John 12:49-50].
- B. The Father committed it to Christ [Mark 9:2-8; Matt. 28:18; Acts 3:23].
- C. The Holy spirit did the revealing [John 16:13-15].

- D. The apostles delivered the message [Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-20].
- E. The New Testament [2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:3; Jude 3].

CONCLUSION:

1. The word of Christ is our authority today.
2. The perverters will be condemned.
3. There are those who claim we "need a new gospel for this age." The gospel is relevant today.
4. There are those who ridicule Bible preaching. We must not allow them to tongue lash us into speaking smooth things.
5. Preach the word [2 Tim. 4:2]. This is Biblical authority.

Punishment Of The Wicked

Col. 3:25

Ron Cosby

Col. 3:25, *"But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."*

1. Commentators are divided on whether Paul's primary application is solely to servants or solely to masters. Others believe that it is for both. Study leads me to conclude that he is addressing his remarks to the servants. Note how Paul draws a contrast between verse twenty-five and verse twenty-four: *"Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."* Even though Paul cautions servants, others are not excluded from what he had to say; the general principle herein introduced pertains to all men in every circumstance of life. This broad principle which Paul has applied to servants is repeated in other passages (Gal. 6:7-8; 1 Peter 1:17; Rom. 2:4-11).
2. An interesting point to consider is the fact that both the runaway slave Onesimus and his Christian master Philemon were inhabitants of Colossae. How many offenses had Onesimus committed against his lord? Paul writes, *"But if he hath wronged thee at all, or oweth thee aught, put that to mine account; I Paul write it with mine own hand, I will repay it: that I say not unto thee that thou owest to me even thine own self besides"* (Phl 18-19). Apparently, Onesimus was not only irresponsible but he was a thief as well. Concerning the phrase "But if he hath wronged thee," A. T. Robertson says that this is a "Condition of the first class, assumed to be true. Onesimus did wrong (...adikw, to wrong, without justice). He had probably robbed Philemon before he ran away."¹ This same scholar also said that "oweth" is a "[d]elicate way of putting the stealing."² Irresponsibility and purloining will enter our discussion later.

3. In this verse, we learn at least three things about wrong doers: [1] God will recompense the wicked. [2] Their recompense is a place of punishment. [3] Their recompense is certain.

DISCUSSION:

I. GOD WILL RECOMPENSE THE WICKED.

- A. A just recompense of reward awaits the evil doer, for **"he that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he hath done."**
- B. Wrong doing or evil must be defined by God, not man.
 1. When Job's three friends arraigned themselves in the robes of the Eternal Judge, they condemned a good man (Job 4:7-8; 8:4-6; 11:6).
 2. When agnostic Robert Ingersoll put on the raiment of Universal Rulership, he condemned God.
 - a. He said, "...I had no love for God. ... This God withheld the rain—caused the famine, saw the fierce eyes of hunger—the wasted forms, the white lips, saw mothers eating babes, and remained ferocious as famine. It seems to me impossible for a civilized man to love or worship, or respect the God of the Old Testament. A really civilized man, a really civilized woman, must hold such a God in abhorrence and contempt."
 - b. Yet, this same man who claimed for himself greater compassion than God glorified and praised the soldiers of the Civil War, exclaiming, "The soldiers of the republic...fought to preserve the homestead of liberty, that their children might have peace. They were defenders of humanity, the destroyers of prejudice, the breakers of chains, and in the name of the future they [slew] the monsters of their time."
 - c. Mr. Ingersoll complains because God will forgive the penitent, no matter the degree of wickedness. Agnostic Ingersoll would only forgive the ones who do good; but the good is according to his standard of right and wrong.

According to Mr. Ingersoll's standard, if you were a democrat in the mid 1800s, you were wicked (lost).³

3. Who do you want to judge you, fallible, imperfect men or an infinite God? Without any reservations, men are blessed in that they will not appear before Col. Ingersoll's judgeship of self-imposed ignorance.
- C. The Master Teacher of Israel enumerates that which is wicked (Luke 16:19-31; Matt. 25:31-46; Matt. 23).
- D. *"There is no respect of persons."*
 1. Men will not be punished for being blue-eyed blondes, or for being black or red, or for being born in a foreign land (Jew or Gentile).
 2. Regardless of one's state—rich or poor, male or female, servant or master—judgment will be based upon what we have done, not our station or status (2 Cor. 5:10; Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 2:4-11).
 3. "The doctrine of Calvinism contradicts this truth in that it teaches that God chooses some individuals over others for salvation, not based on any standard of obedience to God's commands, but merely on His whim" (See full article by Gil Yoder in the appendix).
- E. Sins of servants noted.
 1. Onesimus fled his responsibilities.
 2. Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, through greed, lied unto Naaman (1 Kings 5:20).

II. THE RECOMPENSE FOR THE WICKED IS A PLACE OF PUNISHMENT.

- A. Receiving *"for the wrong that he hath done"* indicates retribution and penalty. Evil doers shall be punished; they shall not escape (Heb. 2:1-3; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).
- B. When one studies at the feet of the Teacher of the Ephesian School of Tyranny, he receives God's true message concerning the eternal abode of the wicked.
 1. While patient seekers of righteousness will be blessed, the hardhearted will reap the wrath of God (Rom. 2:4-10).

2. Those who wilfully sin appoint for themselves a fearful expectation of judgment (Heb. 10:26-31).
3. Evil doers shall be eternally separated from God [2 Thess. 1:7-9].
- C. When one studies at the feet of the Teacher of teachers, he receives a full biblical description of hell.
 1. Hell is a place of pain (Luke 16:23-24).
 2. Hell is a place of fire (Matt. 25:41).
 3. Hell is a place for the vile of the ages (Matt. 25:41). Hypocrites will be there!

III. PUNISHMENT FOR THE WICKED IS CERTAIN.

- A. *"For he that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he hath done."* "[S]hall receive" is future indicative, indicating that the wrong doer's punishment is assured.
- B. Illustration: "Why did you not tell me there was such a place?"⁴
- C. Hell is as certain as death (Heb. 9:27-28).
- D. Hell is as certain as the Lord's resurrection (Acts 17:30-31).
- E. Hell is as certain as other events predicted by God.
 1. The flood (Gen. 6).
 2. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18 and 19).
 3. The destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. 24).

CONCLUSION:

1. The rich man had Moses and the prophets to forewarn him, and he listen not. We today have Moses, the prophets, the apostles and the only begotten Son of God. Will we hearken unto the invitation of the Master? Or, will we be keeping company with those in the rich man's eternal abode?

After the Joys of earth,
 After its song of mirth,
 After its hours of light,
 After its dreams so bright—
 WHAT THEN?

Oh, then—the judgment throne,
Then all the woes that dwell
Oh then—the last hope—gone!
In an eternal hell!⁵

¹ *Word Pictures of the New Testament*, A. T. Robertson, Vol. IV.

² *ibid*

³ All quotes and thoughts from Mr. Ingersoll are from *Complete Lectures of Robert G. Ingersoll*, unnamed reporter and compiler.

⁴ *Knight's Master Book of NEW Illustrations*, Walter B. Knight, p.285

⁵ *ibid*, p.284

APPENDIX

RESPECT OF PERSONS

by Gil Yoder

One of the great characteristics of God is that He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:24; Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; 1 Peter 1:17). This truth insures God's fairness to mankind. The doctrine of Calvinism contradicts this truth in that it teaches that God chooses some individuals over others for salvation, not based on any standard of obedience to God's commands, but merely on His whim.

In effect it says that God might choose to save someone who has never done a single thing to live righteously, and at the same time choose to condemn forever another who has sought to live as God would have him to live his entire life. But the biblical doctrine of God's inherent fairness debunks this myth. While no one earns his salvation, if it were true that salvation has nothing at all to do with conditions of obedience, then the only way God could save some and condemn others to eternal condemnation would be for Him to be a

respector of persons, and there would be no inherent fairness in God's character.

Not only does the Bible tell us of God's fairness in these terms, it uses the same terms to instruct us toward fairness toward one another. Hear these words of James: *"My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.... But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors"* (James 2:1,9).

James used the illustration of those who show respect of persons toward the wealthy, while mistreating the poor, to drive this principle home, because it is such a common manifestation of the sin. However, there are other ways that we can show respect of persons that might not be so obvious.

(1) It is possible to reverse the illustration and show respect of persons for the poor, while mistreating the rich. The cultural class warfare promoted by many liberal politicians is a case in point. To show no respect of persons all men should be treated equally regardless of their social status in society. Neither the rich nor the poor deserve second class treatment.

(2) One can show respect of persons by treating one man differently from another solely based on the race of the men. We usually use the term "prejudice" to describe this characteristic. That is a good term for it, because to show respect of persons is to pre-judge a man on faulty grounds. Men should be judged on their works, not on their color, just as God judges us (1 Peter 1:17).

(3) We also demonstrate respect of persons when we condemn actions we see in our "enemies," but defend those same actions when we see them in our friends. Many brethren are well known for their defense of the truth, and willingness to call a spade a spade when error is perceived among those outside their sphere of association, and especially among those who have been previously marked for their error.

We would not fault those actions at all, but sometimes the same brethren fail to show the same zeal of spirit, when the same errors are discovered among their friends. Perhaps all men have this tendency to protect

those with whom they are close, but it is an error that is dangerous to all. It hurts the church, because error is not more quickly corrected. It hurts the brother we seek to protect, because it makes it more likely that he will not repent. And it hurts us because we become a partaker in his evil deeds.

If we would be more like God, this characteristic should be put away from us. Let us treat all men with equanimity, and have not respect unto persons.

Redemption Through His Blood, The Forgiveness Of Sins

Col. 1:14

Gilbert Gough

*"In whom we have redemption through his blood,
even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14).*

1. Let us examine the context of Colossians 1:14.
2. In Colossians 1:9-13, Paul with prayerful language desires good upon the Colossian brethren. He desired they....
 - a. *"Be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (v.9).*
 - b. *"Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing" (v.10).*
 - c. Be *"Fruitful in every good work" (v.10).*
 - d. Be *"Increasing in the knowledge of God" (v.10).*
 - e. Be *"Strengthened with all might" (v.11).*
 - f. Have *"all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (v.11).*
 - g. Be thankful "unto the Father," because...
 - 1) God made them suitable *"partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (v.12).*
 - 2) God "delivered" them *"from the power of darkness."*
 - 3) And God "translated" them *"into the kingdom of his dear Son" (v.13).*
3. In Colossians 1:14-17, Paul remembered the preeminently good Son of God who...
 - a. Has provided *"redemption" (v.14).*
 - b. Has provided *"forgiveness of sins" (v.14).*
 - c. Is the *"image of the invisible God" (v.15).*
 - d. Is the *"firstborn of every creature" (v.15).*
 - e. He is the Creator: *"For by him were all things created" (v.16).*
 - f. He is eternal because *"he is before all things" (v.17).*
 - g. He is the Sustainer because *"by him all things consist" (v.17).*
4. Analyzing the Key Verse.

- a. "In whom" refers back to verse 13 where the antecedent of "whom" is God's "dear Son"; thus, it means "in Christ."
 - b. In Christ, "we have redemption," meaning Christians have been redeemed, purchased, bought and brought back into a saved relationship with God.
 - c. In Christ, redeemed Christians have received "the forgiveness of sins" which is the result of Christ paying the price for redemption and man's obedience.
 - d. It was "through his [Christ's] blood" which was shed on the cross of Calvary (John 19:34) that the saved have been redeemed and forgiven. The blood was the purchasing price (Acts 20:28).
5. Blood always has been an important part of God's plan no matter what era of Bible history is considered.

DISCUSSION:

I. BLOOD BEFORE THE GIVING OF THE LAW AT SINAI.

- A. The first intimation of the shedding of blood came after Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden.
 1. After God pronounced judgments upon Adam and Eve, He made them "*coats of skin, and he clothed them*" (Gen. 3:21).
 2. For there to be coats of skin, there had to be the shedding of the blood of animals.
 3. Take note that sin occurred before God gave any law concerning blood (Gen. 3:1ff).
- B. Next, Abel offered sacrifices of the "*firstlings of his flock*" unto God (Gen. 4:4).
 1. The Hebrew writer makes clear that Abel's action was done in faith (Heb. 11:4) and faith comes by the "*hearing of the word of God*" (Rom. 10:17).
 2. The implication is that God had instructed Abel on how to please God and that included blood.
- C. Third, Noah offered sacrifices when he and his family safely came off the ark (Gen. 7:23; 8:20, 21).
 1. He sacrificed clean beasts and fowl.
 2. God's response to Noah's gestures of praise was as the smell of sweet fragrance.

- D. Fourth, when God made the covenant of circumcision with Abraham, blood was shed as a token of the agreement between them (Gen. 17:11).
- E. Fifth, Abraham was willing to offer his only son's blood believing God would again raise Isaac from the dead (Gen. 22:1-19; Heb. 11:17-19).
- F. Fifth, in preparation for the Passover, God required that blood of a lamb without blemish be put on the lintel and on the posts of the door of their houses (Exodus 12:3-13).
 - 1. When God passed over Egypt in judgment and if He saw not the blood (representing life), death came to the firstborn child and beast (v.12).
 - 2. However, God said, "*...when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you....*" God granted life when He saw the blood.
- G. Life (soul) is in the blood (Gen. 9:1-4; Lev. 17:11, 14; Deut. 12:23) and blood was not to be eaten.
 - 1. This commandment was required after the flood (Gen. 9:4).
 - 2. Israel was told to eat "neither fat nor blood" (Lev. 3:17).
 - 3. Israel was to eat no blood of fowl or of beast lest they be cut off from the people (Lev. 7:26, 27).
 - 4. It must not be eaten because in it is life (Deut. 12:16, 23, 24).

II. BLOOD FROM THE GIVING OF THE LAW AT MT. SINAI TO CHRIST.

- A. The covenant God made with Israel was ratified by blood (Exodus 24:1-8; Heb. 9:18-22).
- B. Blood was given for an atonement (covering) annually (Lev. 16).
 - 1. Aaron was to make an atonement for himself, his family and Israel (11,17; cf. Heb. 9:7).
 - 2. He was to make atonement for the holy place (v.16).
 - 3. He was to make an atonement for the altar (v.18).
- C. Offerings of blood were made (Exodus 29:12-16; Lev. 1; 3; 4).

- D. Blood was used in the consecration of the priests [Exodus 29:19-21; Lev. 8:24].
- E. The tabernacle and its vessels were dedicated with blood [Heb. 9:18-22].

III. THE BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- A. The new covenant was ratified by the blood of Christ [Matt. 26:28].
- B. The new covenant was different from the old covenant.
 - 1. The new covenant was written in the hearts and minds of people, and under it sins were remembered no more [Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13].
 - 2. Under the old covenant priests entered into the most holy place for the sins of the people yearly, but under the new covenant, Christ, our high priest, offered His blood once for the sins of His people [Heb. 9:18-26].
 - 3. The blood of the new covenant is for the remission of sins [Matt. 26:28].
 - a. For the faithful under the old covenant [Heb. 9:15].
 - b. For all sins of all men [Heb. 9:26; 10:10].
 - 4. This new covenant is not temporary, but eternal [Heb. 13:20, 21].
- C. Why did Christ have to shed His blood?
 - 1. Because all men [no matter when they lived, where they lived] have sinned [Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8, 10]. Sin is universal.
 - 2. Because the consequences of sin is death [Ezek. 18:20; Isa. 59:1,2; Rom. 6:23; James 1:14, 15].
 - 3. Because man cannot save himself.
 - a. He cannot provide a sacrifice for sin to appease God's wrath.
 - b. He cannot pay the penalty for sin with precious stones such as silver or gold [1 Peter 1:18].
 - c. Man cannot redeem himself with animal sacrifices [Heb. 10:4].
 - d. Man cannot save himself by the sacrifice of other human beings since all humans are blemished with sin [Rom. 3:10].

- e. Man cannot perform enough good works of human merit to redeem himself (Eph. 2:8,9; Rom. 3:28; Gal. 3:10; James 2:10).
- 4. Because Christ shedding His blood was part of God's plan for the redemption of lost man. It is shown in prophecy and fulfillment.
 - a. Prophecy foretold: Gen. 3:15; Zech. 12:10; 13:6; Isaiah 53.
 - b. Prophecy fulfilled: Heb. 2:9; Rom. 5:9; Matt. 26:26-29; John 19:34.

IV. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST BRINGS TO MAN...

- A. Justification (Rom. 3:23-26; 5:9). To be justified is to be made right before God.
- B. Sanctification (Heb. 13:12; 10:10; 1 Peter 1:2).
- C. Redemption (Col. 1:14; Eph. 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18,19; Rom. 3:24; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:20).
- D. Nearness to Christ (Eph. 2:11-13). Once "far off" but now "made nigh."
- E. Peace (Col. 1:20; Eph. 2:15). We can have peace with God and our fellowman (Phil. 4:6, 7; John 16:33).
- F. Reconciliation (Eph. 2:15, 16; Col. 1:20). We are brought back into a right relationship with God.
- G. Cleanness (1 John 1:7; Rev. 1:5). This is accomplished through the Word (John 15:3; Eph. 5:26,27) when one is baptized (Acts 22:16).
- H. Boldness (Heb. 10:19).
- I. A New Song (Rev. 5:9).
- J. Thus, we are saved by the blood of Christ, because it is for the remission of our sins (Heb. 9:22; Matt. 26:28).

V. APPROPRIATION OF THE SAVING BLOOD.

- A. One must be taught about Christ and the sacrifice of His blood (John 6:44,45).
- B. One must have faith in Christ and His blood to save (Rom. 3:23-26) both past and present.
 - 1. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17).
 - 2. Trusting in God's Word that the blood of Christ saves is absolutely essential (Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18).

- C. One must be willing to repent of their sins, no longer practicing sin [Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; Rom. 6:1,2,12,13] and confess their faith in Christ [Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9,10; Acts 8:37]. Failure to do so is a failure to meet the next condition of salvation for the appropriation of Christ's blood to your soul.
- D. One must be baptized into Christ, into His death, for in His death is where His blood was shed [Rom. 6:3-5; John 19:34].
 - 1. **God's Mind:** The shed blood of Christ is for the remission of sins [Matt. 26:28; Heb. 9:22].
Man's Response: Baptism is for the remission of sins [Acts 2:38].
 - 2. **God's Mind:** Christ washed away sins in His own blood [Rev. 1:5; cf. Rev. 7:14; Heb. 10:22].
Man's Response: Baptism is for the washing away of sins [Acts 22:16].
 - 3. Therefore, lost men and women must be baptized to access the blood of Christ in the mind of God to be saved.
 - 4. The blood of Christ ratified and sealed the commands of the plan of salvation.

VI. APPROPRIATED BLOOD CONTINUED EFFICACY AFTER INITIAL OBEDIENCE.

- A. As we walk in the light (i.e. obey Christ's will), Christ's blood continues to cleanse us of our sins [1 John 1:7]. Walking in the light means when we stumble into sin, we repent of our sins, confess our sins and pray for forgiveness [Acts 8:22; James 5:16; 1 John 1:9].
- B. As we remember Christ's death in the Lord's Supper each and every first day of the week [Acts 20:7; Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; 1 Cor. 11:20-29].

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Great punishment will come for those who disregard and discriminate against the blood of Christ [Heb. 10:29].
- 2. But the ultimate victory for the faithful is through "the blood of the Lamb."

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Rev. 12:10,11).

Suggested Songs:

Nothing But the Blood
There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood
There is Power in the Blood
I'm Redeemed
Are You Washed in the Blood?

Exposition of Col. 2:13-23

Wayne Coats

A careful study of the Colossian letter will show that serious problems existed in the congregation. The book abounds in warnings about heresies and also extols the full Divinity of Christ.

DISCUSSION:

I. PAUL AFFIRMS SEVERAL THINGS ABOUT CHRIST.

- A. Brethren needed to be reminded.
 - 1. Christ **is** the image of the invisible [1:15].
 - 2. Christ **is** before all things [1:17].
 - 3. Christ **is** the Head of the Body [1:18].
 - 4. Christ **is** the beginning, the firstborn from the dead [1:18].
 - 5. Christ **is** Head of all principality and power [2:10].
 - 6. Christ **is** our life [3:4].
 - 7. Christ **is** all in all [3:11].
- B. What a contrast with dead sinners!

II. TRESPASSES AND SINS BRING DEATH — V.13.

- A. Notice some passages — Eph. 2:1-5; Rom. 8:2,6,10; John 5:24.
- B. These trespasses were personal, not inherited.
 - 1. Col. 1:21; Eph. 2:2-3.
 - 2. They were not of a sinful nature.
- C. These trespasses were forgiven and people were blessed.
 - 1. Col. 1:13 — made alive.
 - 2. Col. 1:20 — peace.
 - 3. Col. 1:21 — reconciled.
 - 4. Col. 1:22 — Holy, unblamable, unproveable.
 - 5. Col. 2:10 — complete.
 - 6. Col. 3:13 — forgiven.

III. THE BOND WAS CANCELED — V.14.

- A. The bond was given by a debtor in writing.
 - 1. The handwriting was against one.

2. It was taken out of the midst.
- B. When Christ was crucified — the bond was also cancelled.
 1. Compare Eph. 2:15.

IV. CHRIST STRIPPED THE POWERS, THUS REJECT THEM — V.15.

- A. This is a refutation of all the heretical teachings.
 1. All must be understood in connection with the law abolished.
 2. This refutes any power of angels — v.18. Matt. 28:18; Heb. 1:2.
- B. Christ triumphed over "them in it."
 1. The law abolished, mediation of angels could not exist.
 2. 2 Cor. 2:14
 3. The bond canceled — the triumph came.

V. THEREFORE, THE BASIS OF CONDEMNATION DOESN'T EXIST — V.16.

- A. Appeals to the law was part of the problem.
 1. There were ascetic heretics — v.23.
 2. Compare Heb. 9:10.
- B. Sacred times were kept.
 1. Possibly an appeal to the law.
 2. Obviously some mysticism had developed.

VI. THE BODY VERSUS THE SHADOW — V.17.

- A. The shadows of verse 16 are not substance.
 1. The shadow may resemble the body.
 2. Foolish to cling to a shadow.
- B. The body belongs to Christ.
 1. Angels, Holy Days, food restrictions are not of Christ's Body — *to be worshipped or revered*.
 2. The Head of the body cannot be replaced.
 3. The body of Christ must not be turned over to heretics.

VII. MAN'S PROPENSITY TO WORSHIP ANGELS — V.18.

- A. Angels play an important part in medieval Theology.
 1. Adoration of saints and angels.

2. The Council of Leaders (364 A.D.) rejected angel worship.
3. Still the practice continues.
- B. Visions could be related.
 1. Paul says the heretics "have not seen."
 2. Every heretic will say that they have seen.
 3. "Intruding into" suggests that they would say they have seen.
 4. The mind of the flesh relies upon such.
 5. This swells, inflates, lifts.

VIII. THE HEAD WAS REJECTED — V.19.

- A. There can be no increase apart from the Head.
 1. Paul's analogy with the physical head is striking.
 2. A denial of the head works destruction.
- B. There are joints and bonds knit together.
 1. Compare this with "Unity in Diversity."
 2. Unity and Diversity makes a mocking of the Body.
 3. The increase comes from God.

IX. THE CHRISTIAN HAS DIED WITH CHRIST — V.20.

- A. The death of Christ is crucial to Christians — Col. 1:18; 2:12,20; 3:3; Rom. 6:8; 2 Tim. 2:11; Gal. 6:11ff.
- B. Made alive through Christ — Rom. 6:11,13.
- C. Why prescribe to imposed precepts?
 1. They had — middle voice — submitted.
 2. They should have rejected these precepts.

X. THE COMMANDMENTS AND DOCTRINES OF MEN — VS.21-22.

- A. Worldly ordinances are condemned.
 1. Touch not.
 2. Taste not.
 3. Handle not.
- B. These prohibitions pertained to perishable things.
 1. The doctrine of man made laws not made by the Head.
 2. The commandments of men were being bound.
 3. Matt. 15:9; 1 Tim. 4:16; Titus 2:1; Heb. 13:9; 2 John 9-10.

XI. FALSE DOCTRINE DISPLAYS ITSELF — V.23.

A. Will worship.

1. Such is vain — Matt. 15:9.
2. False humility.
3. Asceticism or punishment of the flesh.

CONCLUSION:

It is tragic that brethren were made alive through Christ, yet turned aside to pagan practices which would perish. Such has been the history of men, and it is very popular today.

The Mystery Of The Gospel

Col. 1:26-27; 2:2; 4:3

Melvin Elliott

1. The meaning of the word "mystery."
 - a. If you would look in Webster under the word Mystery;
 - 1) in Christianity; 1) "The Mass." 2) "A sacrament; especially, the Eucharist." 3) "Any of the fifteen events in the lives of Jesus and Mary serving as a subject for meditation during the sayings of the rosary."
 - a) As the Bible knows nothing of the Mass, sacrament, or the rosary, so this cannot be the meaning of the N.T. word.
 - 2) Under theology; "any assumed truth that cannot be comprehended by the human mind but must be accepted on faith."
 - a) This definition seems to be based on agnosticism and must be totally rejected.
 - 3) The general definition in several dictionaries all defined the word as referring to something kept secret, that is unknown, and most, after being revealed, indicated something not completely understood or is unexplained.
 - a) This last phrase is also unacceptable.
2. It was only in The American Heritage Dictionary Of The English Language that I found a satisfactory definition for the usage of the word mystery in the N. T. It defined the word as "A religious truth revealed through Christ to the Elect." It then quoted; "...unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God, Mark 4:11."

DISCUSSION:

- I. **USAGE OF THE WORD MYSTERY IN THE COLOS-SIAN LETTER.**
 - A. Something previously hidden but now made known [Col. 1:26].
 - B. Something understood and acknowledged [Col. 2:2].
 - C. Something that could be spoken [Col. 4:3].

1. These passages makes it clear that the mystery referred to hidden knowledge first known by God, later revealed to inspired men who made it known to others and understood by their hearers.
2. This is also shown by Paul to the Ephesians (Eph. 1:9; 3:3-4).
3. When something is made known, it is no longer a mystery. Those who say there is something incomprehensible about the gospel when fully revealed, simply refuse to accept the facts of the case.

II. WHAT WAS REVEALED WHEN THE MYSTERY WAS MADE KNOWN?

- A. Christ was in the Gentiles (Col. 1:27).
- B. Gentiles were fellowheirs, of the same body and had a part in the promise to Abram (Eph. 3:5-6).
- C. This is all proven by the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15).
 1. Peter told about his being sent to the house of Cornelius. He stated in Acts 15:9, *"And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."*
 2. Paul in Acts 15:12, *"...declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them."*
 3. James then quoted the O. T. scripture of Amos 9:11. Instead of saying *"all of the heathen, which are called by my name,"* said, *"...and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who knoweth all these things."*
- D. *"Christ in you, the hope of glory"* or *"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:"* is the MYSTERY that was revealed as Paul also said in Eph. 3:8-12.
- E. This was all made possible by the gospel of Christ and their faithful obedience to it (Col. 2:9-15).
 1. Some in the denominational world correctly teach that circumcision was given to Abraham as a sign of the righteousness he already had. Then they use Col. 2:11-12 in an attempt to prove circumci-

- sion corresponds to baptism and therefore, baptism is an outward sign of inner righteousness.
2. But Paul DID NOT say circumcision corresponded to baptism! Observe please that Paul said, *"...the circumcision made without hands,..." WAS "...putting off the body of the sins of the flesh..."*
 3. This is further clarified by Paul in Eph. 2:13-22.
- F. We conclude that which previously had not been made known is now fully revealed unto the apostles and prophets as stated in Col. 1:27, is *"...Christ in you..."* and Eph. 3:6; *"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."* THIS IS THE MYSTERY!

III. GOD'S SCHEME OF REDEMPTION.

- A. When Adam and Eve sinned, as Franklin Camp said, God headed for Jerusalem. The first mention of redemption is in Genesis 3:15.
- B. God instituted sacrifice, for Abel offered "by faith" which comes by hearing God's word.
- C. When Enos was born to Seth, men began to call upon God [Gen. 4:26]. Inasmuch as one cannot call upon God if he has not heard of God [Rom. 10:14], it follows that God had begun to reveal himself.
- D. God separated Abram from his kinsman, then his father's house. God further revealed himself to Abram in some promises: 1) promises to Abram and 2) promises through Abram.
 1. Gen. 12:2-3, *"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee:"*
 2. The last part of verse 3 is the far reaching promise. Paul, in Gal. 3:8, showed the implications of this promise.
- E. Paul in Gal. 4:4-5 speaks of the fulfilling of the promise.
 1. It was through Christ that God revealed the true nature of his scheme of redemption.

2. There were great barriers between the Jews and Gentiles.
 3. This feeling was so strong that Peter had to defend his actions before the Jewish brethren [Acts 11:2-4,18].
- F. Gentiles were to be accepted upon their obedience.
1. Biblical principle that two competent witnesses establishes a truth [Deut. 19:15].
 2. Christ recognized and followed this eternal truth shown by a passage of scripture usually misapplied [Matt. 18:19-20].
 3. At the Jerusalem conference, Peter was a witness and Paul was a witness. James showed where such was according to the book of Amos; so, we have the necessary witnesses to establish the truth.
 4. Unless there was obedience to God and man's heart is right, circumcision of the flesh was worthless [Rom. 2:23-29].

IV. GENTILES ARE COMPLETE IN CHRIST!

- A. Gentiles complete in Christ. Paul said "...Ye are complete in Him..." Proselyting the Gentiles to conform to the Law of Moses or Jewish customs was not necessary for fellowship in the Gospel [Col. 2:9-12].
- B. The blessings to all nations promised to Abram was to come through his Seed, which is Christ and not the Law of Moses.
- C. This promise was not to physical Israel but to spiritual Israel [Rom. 9:6-7].
1. God made a distinction between the Seed of Abraham and the children of Abraham (John 8:37-40; Gal. 4:21-31).
 2. Only children of the promised seed received the promise [Gal. 3:13].
 3. How was, and is, this accomplished? Paul said, not through the Jewish law but through the system of faith established upon the promise made to Abraham and completed in Christ [Gal 3:26-27].

- D. This is how the Gentiles also became the children of Abraham, of spiritual Israel, Christians, fellow citizens, complete in Christ and partakers of the promise. This is the revealed mystery, "...Which is
CHRIST IN YOU. THE HOPE OF GLORY!"

Worshipping Of Angels

Col. 2:18

Walter W. Pigg, Jr.

1. The word angel defined.
 - a. The word angel is applied in Scripture to an "order of supernatural or heavenly beings whose business it is to act as God's messenger to men, and as agents to carry out His will." — *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, p. 132.
 - b. An exception to the above definition would be the angels of the devil (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 9:11; 12:9).
2. The form of angels.
 - a. Angels sometimes appear in human form (Gen. 18:2, 16; 19:1-15; Daniel 9:21).
 - b. They are always referred in the masculine gender.
3. Functions of angels.
 - a. Agents of destruction.
 - 1) Commissioned to destroy Sodom (Gen. 13:19).
 - 2) Assyrian army destroyed (2 Kings 19:35).
 - 3) Herod killed (Acts 12:23).
 - b. A variation of activities performed.
 - 1) Abraham was commanded not to take the life of Isaac (Gen. 22:10-12).
 - 2) Spoke to Moses from the burning bush (Exodus 3:2-4).
 - 3) Appeared to Joseph in dreams (Matt. 1:20; 2:13, 19).
 - 4) Gabriel appeared to Zacharias and Mary (Luke 1).
 - 5) Announced the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:8-15).
 - 6) Strengthened Jesus when tempted (Matt. 4:11), and at Gethsemane (Luke 22:43).
 - 7) Released apostles from prison (Acts 5:19).
 - 8) Directed Philip to the Ethiopian (Acts 8:26).
 - 9) Christ will come in judgment with His angels (Matt. 25:31; 1 Thess. 1:7-9).
4. The origin of angels.
 - a. All things were created by Christ. this must include angels (Col. 1:16-17).

5. Misunderstandings about angels.

- a. The word angel is mentioned more than 170 times in the New Testament, yet little study is done on the subject. Many misunderstandings exist.
 - 1) Though there are some things about angels that have not been revealed.
- b. Most people think of angels as having wings.
 - 1) Cf. "Do you think you are about to sprout wings?"
 - 2) Daniel 9:21; Rev. 14:6, represent angels as flying, though wings not mentioned.
- c. In our time, some people claim angels appear to them.
 - 1) No evidence of visible angels today. Their work as mediators is finished and
 - 2) God speaks to us directly through His word.
 - 3) If angels appear to some, why not to others? Is God a respecter of persons?
- d. The 39 people in California who committed suicide were said to have claimed they were angels.
 - 1) If this were true, there would be good, bad and dumb angels.
- e. TV show, "Touched By An Angel," and others, convey unfounded things about angels.
- f. The Colossian brethren were warned of the danger of error relative to angels [2:18].

DISCUSSION:

I. WORSHIPPING OF ANGELS [Col. 2:18].

- A. Colossians 2 sounds a warning of the dangers facing the Colossian brethren.
 1. They should not be beguiled by the "*enticing words*" of men, but rather "walk" in Christ (vs.1-7).
 2. There was the danger of being spoiled through philosophy and tradition of men (vs.8-15).
 3. They were complete in Christ, having been saved from sin.
 4. Particular errors to which they were exposed, and which should be rejected as the doctrines of men (vs.16-23).
- B. Don't let anyone condemn you for failure to observe ordinances of the law, neither be led astray by false teachers relative to angels (vs.16-19).

C. Worshipping of angels in particular (v.18).

1. "Worshipping" is from *threskeia*, used four times in the New Testament.
 - a. Vine's defines: "signifies religion in its external aspect (akin to *threskos*), religious worship, especially the ceremonial service of religion" [p.954].
 - 1) Gr. *threskos* defined by Vine's: "religious, careful of the externals of divine service" [p.954].
 - 2) *threskos* is the word used in James 1:26.
 - b. *threskeia* is used in Col. 2:18.
 - 1) Used of the Jews religion in Acts 26:5.
 - 2) Used in James 1:27, where the emphasis is upon "pure religion" rather than that which is outward or superficial.
 - c. Thayer defines *threskeia*: "religious worship, esp. external, that which consists in ceremonies" [p.292].
2. The word worship used in John 4:21-24 is an entirely different word, *proskuneo*.
 - a. *proskuneo*: "To make obeisance, do reverence to [from *pros*, towards, and *kuneo*, to kiss], is the most frequent word rendered to worship" (Vine's, p.1258).
 - b. An oft used and accurate definition of worship is: "Acts of reverence paid to God by man."
3. The difference in the word translated "worshipping" in Col. 2:18, and the most commonly used word translated "worship" is significant.
 - a. *threskeia* as used in Col. 2:18 indicates an outward form of religious practice.
 - b. This was not based on the teaching of God's word, but rather a man-made system.
4. Possibly shedding some light on the term "worshipping of angels" is seen in the following:

"What is perhaps most remarkable is what the New Testament texts do not say about angels. The interbiblical period, under Persian and Greek influences, had seen an explosion of speculation about angels. Angels [or comparable spiritual

beings) in detailed hierarchies came to be understood by many as necessary mediators between God and humanity. Knowing the names, ranks, and how to manipulate these lesser spiritual beings enabled one to gain blessings in this life and attain the level of the divine in the next" (*Holman Bible Dictionary*, p.52).

D. Two views of "worshipping of angels" held by commentators.

1. One view holds that rather than the actual worshipping of angels, the statement has reference to the reverence and piety which would characterize angels in their worship.

- a. Adam Clark says: "Let no man spoil you of the prize adjudged to you, who delights in mortifying his body, and walking with the apparent *modesty of an angel*, affecting superior sanctity in order to gain disciples" (Vol. VI, p.254).

- b. Albert Barnes has a similar view: "This does not mean, as it seems to me, that they would *themselves worship angels*, or that they would teach others to do it... The reference is rather to the profound reverence, the spirit of lowly piety which *the angels evinced*, and to the fact that the teachers referred to *would assume* the same spirit, and were, therefore, the more dangerous" (*Eph.-Col.*, p.265).

- c. Lenski also holds a view which has much in common with the above.

2. A number of commentators hold the view that the actual worship of angels was taught by the Gnostic teachers who held that man could not approach God except through a lower being, that is, through the angels.

E. Whatever the meaning of "worshipping of angels," it was something which was false doctrine and could rob a Christian of his reward, namely, eternal life.

1. The "volunteer humility" connected with worshipping angels is a false humility, by which men could be impressed in a favorable way.

- a. These false teachers, acting in a humble and pious manner, would try to lead the brethren to submit to their own self made rules or standards which involved, "touch not; taste not; handle not," certain man-imposed regulations.
2. The lesson for us from the passage under consideration is a warning against certain kinds of religion.
 - a. Religion based on speculation.
 - b. Religion in the absence of revelation.
 - c. Religion based on subjective manifestations.

II. RELIGION BASED ON SPECULATION.

- A. A good example of this is Roman Catholicism.
 1. This accounts for their worship of "saints" and veneration of so-called sacred relics.
 2. The false doctrine of purgatory arose from the minds of men.
 3. The ideas of sainthood, confession to a priest, tradition as a basis of authority, and a host of other false doctrines are the result of speculation.
- B. Jehovah's Witnesses speculate in various areas.
 1. A dislike for everlasting punishment resulted in their "no hell" doctrine.
- C. Our own brethren are engaging in speculation.
 1. Premillennialism is based on speculation, not Scriptural evidence.
 2. Some speculate that the gospel would be more effective if some helps were added; such as entertainment, material rewards, and elements of a social gospel.
 3. Philosophers, rather than inspired men, are being seen as a valid basis for action.

III. RELIGION IN THE ABSENCE OF REVELATION.

- A. Man-made denominations are without Scriptural authority.
 1. Creeds, Confessions of faith, Disciplines, etc. are standards of authority.
 2. These are not of the faith which comes from hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17).

- B. Some of our current practices have no scriptural basis.
 - 1. Organizations, separate from the church and under no eldership, doing the work which God gave the church to do.
 - a. Schools doing mission work and benevolence apart from congregations.
 - 2. The fellowshipping of denominations is a growing practice, but is forbidden (Eph. 5:11).
 - 3. We are seeing our brethren start "Community Churches."
 - 4. Belief in the direct operation of the Holy Spirit is growing.
 - 5. The Biblical distinctiveness of the one New Testament church is not being proclaimed as it once was, and as the Bible authorizes.
 - 6. We are not speaking as the Bible speaks and remaining silent where it is silent as we once did and should be doing now.

IV. RELIGION BASED ON SUBJECTIVE MANIFESTATIONS.

- A. Holiness and Pentecostal churches are an example of being guided by subjectivism.
 - 1. Their emotional highs are sought and highly prized as evidence of spirituality.
 - 2. Tongue speaking is a display of emotions uncontrolled.
- B. We reason that our schools are doing good because of our feeling of loyalty to them.
 - 1. Therefore, efforts to change them are few and far between.
 - 2. To a great degree, as our schools go, so will the church go.
- C. Our false concept of love forbids negatives, and efforts to correct error and make judgments which are commanded.
 - 1. Cf. church discipline which involves withdrawing fellowship. "I just think it will work."
 - 2. Truth is being allowed to suffer because people "don't want to hurt anyone's feelings."

CONCLUSION:

1. False worship, based on the doctrines of men, is a greater threat now than ever in our lives.
 - a. False teachers put on a "show" of wisdom, humility and piety.
2. To accept the doctrines of men is to reject Christ, the Head, and forfeit the prize of eternal life which is available only in Christ.
3. We must reject the efforts of our "loving" brethren who:
 - a. Manifest a self-imposed humility and a fake piety.
 - b. Set their own rules or standards which disallow God's word as our only rule of faith and practice.
 - c. Would like to impose their false standards upon the honest seeker of truth.

Exposition of Col. 3:1-15

Life With Christ: The Melding of Philosophy, Profession and Practice

Alan Adams

1. As to the context, we might say that our text serves as a connector between the conceptual and the concrete. That which melds the two is Christ.
 - a. The *conceptual* — "...the mystery of God, even Christ" (2:2): (References without "book" name are from Colossians; those without book name and chapter number, are verses from Colossians 3.
 - 1) "...In whom" are "redemption...forgiveness of sins" (1:13-14) and "reconcil[iation]" (1:22).
 - 2) "...Who is:" God's image, Creator, Sustainer, Head of the church, and the Hope of Glory (1:15-27).
 - 3) It is He "in whom are all the treasures [*theisauros*: treasure-trove; cf. *thesaurus*] of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (2:3). Wrong thinking about Christ will lead to some fundamentally wrong conclusions [cf. Matt. 22:41-46].
 - 4) The theme of Colossians may be summed up as, "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full" (2:9-10).
 - b. Warning against:
 - 1) False philosophy (2:8-15). — In particular, as it relates to the nature and work of Christ.
 - 2) False piety (2:16-19). — In particular, as it relates to worship that does not recognize Christ as the "head [of] the body," and does not recognize the distinction between things that are mere "shadow" and the "body" which "is Christ's."
 - 3) False purity (2:20-23). — In particular, as it relates to manmade "ordinances...precepts and doctrines...and severity to the body [that is] not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh."
 - c. The *concrete*—"Wives...Husbands...Children...Fathers...Servants...Masters" (vs.18-4:1).

d. The *connector* [vs.1-17] — "...your life is hid with Christ in God" [3]. We see connection to:

1) The preceding [1:1-2:23], which generally shows the relation between what one thinks of Christ and how this affects behavior.

It is possible to wear a hair shirt and be sensual. It is possible to lacerate the body with whips and scourges and think indecently while we do it. We are risen with Christ; therefore we are to seek the upper things, to set our minds on the upper things; to have a true view of our Lord, to see Him Lord of creation, Master of death, Reconciler of the universe; and then by living union with Him, we shall need none of these things which never yet made men spiritual. All the fullness of the Godhead is in Christ, and we are made full in Him!¹

2) The following [vs.18ff], which shows the relation between recognizing the sovereignty of Jesus and how that affects social obligations — "...do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" [v.17].

2. The problem. Then, as well as now:

a. People seeking a personless, purposeless, planless, passionless, dutyless, and demandless religion.

b. As Morgan has said, "We are being told that it does not matter what a man thinks, it matters what a man is. Yes; but let us not forget that as a man thinks, so is he. The supreme matter for the... [c]hurch is what she thinks of Christ."²

c. We have *gnostics* who think they can somehow separate the "inner man" from the "outer man."

1) As then, we have our "ascetics" who will make up their own rules of spirituality and foist them upon others; and,

2) We have those who think that an impure outward life has no bearing upon the purity and destiny of the spirit; and vice versa.

3. The proposition and objective.

a. An exposition of Colossians 3:1-15 with emphasis as to its meaning and application in light of its immediate and more remote context.

b. With the objective of showing,

- 1) That the spirit must control the flesh, and do so based upon correct ideas about Christ; and,
- 2) That "The christian must never become spiritually inactive, for there are always vices to be "put off" and graces to be "put on"... "Words" and "deeds" are the outward expressions of thoughts and desires; therefore let us look within."³
- 3) So, let us proceed to look at "life...with Christ" (3) *from the inside out.*

DISCUSSION:

Regarding this "life," let us note that it involves a —

I. **PERSON [3:1].**

- A. A real, living, breathing, eating, sleeping, dying person who lived on planet Earth; yet one who is far more than a mere earthling, and who, even now, is "above."
- B. The common denominator of all aspects of this "life" under discussion is: Christ, Christ, Christ, Christ, Christ...He is:
 - 1) A master of death: "raised" (v.1).
 - 2) Above: "where Christ is;" an actual location.
 - 3) Rules: "seated on the right hand of God."
 - 4) Vault: "hid with Christ in God;" one day to be "manifested in glory."
 - 5) Essence: "Christ, our life."
 - 6) Coming: "shall appear."
 - 7) Pattern: "image of him that created him."
 - 8) Sum: "all and in all."
 - 9) Elector: "as God's elect."
 - 10) Forgives: "even as Christ forgave you."
 - 11) Peace-maker: "peace of Christ rule in your hearts."
 - 12) Teacher: "word of Christ dwell in you richly."
 - 13) Sovereign: "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."
 - 14) Access: "God the father through Him."

II. **PHILOSOPHY [3:1-4].**

—Here we see such fundamental ideas as:

- A. Transformation [Death and Life] — "ye died"; "ye were raised."
- B. Aspiration — "seek."

- C. Existence — "above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God;" "in glory;" in contrast to "the earth" and the "things which are upon" it.
- D. Intellect — "set your mind."
- E. Divinity — "hid with Christ in God" (cf. 2 Peter 1:4).
- F. Anticipation — "When Christ shall appear...then..."

III. PROFESSION.

—You [Christians] profess the following to be true:

- A. "If [lit., since] then ye were raised..." (v.1; cf. 2:13, 20).
 - B. "For ye died..." (v.3).
 - C. "Wherein ye also once..." (v.7).
 - D. "Seeing that ye have..." (v.9).
 - E. "As God's elect, holy, and beloved..." (v.12).
 - F. "As the Lord forgave you..." (v.13)
 - G. "To the which ye also were called..." (v.15).
- live, therefore, in harmony with it.

IV. PRACTICE [3:5-14].

—Out of the philosophical and the professed, must flow the blending of the conceptual with the concrete. There must be:

- A. *Mortification* of the "old man" (v.9): "put to death [*nekrosate*: aorist active imperative; 'treat as dead'⁴] (v.5); "put away" (v.8); "put off" (v.9).

Paul boldly applies the metaphor of death (2:20; 3:3) pictured in baptism (2:12) to the actual life of the Christian. He is not to go to the other Gnostic extreme of license on the plea that the soul is not affected by the deeds of the body. Paul's idea is that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.⁵

- 1. That which must be mortified:

- a. "Members" (v.5a).

- 1) By way of a figure of speech (synecdoche), the means of certain actions is used to stand for the actions themselves (cf. Rom. 6:19; 7:22-25; James 4:1).

- 2) These "members" are "upon the earth" (v.5b) — Cf. verse 2. Note the contrast be-

tween "above where Christ is" and "upon the earth."

3) Rom. 8:1-13; Matt. 15:19; Mark 7:21-23.

b. "These things" [vs.6,7,8]; "old man," [v.9].

2. "Things" or "doings" [v.9] which must be purged from one whose "life is hid with Christ."

NOTE: They are "things" related to, and perversions of—

- a. Sexual desire [v.5c] — "fornication" → "unclean-ness, passion, evil desire."

1) "Bad" is "good" messed up. Sin is about man's perversion of what God made "very good" [cf. Gen. 2:9-11, 16, 18, 21-25].

2) Husband and wife, mutually giving their bodies to the satisfaction of the other is a marvelous and wonderful thing. Paul calls it "due benevolence" [1 Cor. 7:3-4].

3) Sexual desire is a fire that "burns" [1 Cor. 7:9]. Fire is a good thing when controlled and used within its intended bounds.

4) "Play with fire, and you'll get burned." Any manner of dress, activity, or pursuit which fan the fire of sexual desire; but which desire cannot be fulfilled in the "marriage... bed" (Heb. 13:4) is wrong [e.g. swim wear, sports wear, stylish wear; dancing, touching, viewing, listening] [cf. Prov. 6:24-29].

- b. General desire [v.5d] — "covetousness" → "idolatry."

1) "Covetousness" translates *pleonexia* which means "a desire to have more [pleon, more, echo, to have] [Vine].

2) In our text, it is "greediness" — In the sense of: possessions (Luke 12:15), and sensuality [Eph. 4:19]. In connection with the list of sexual sins, we have the picture of a person who will have what he wants without regard to propriety, society; not even God.

3) In either sense, it leads man into allegiance to, and service of, something other than

God: it is "idolatry" [cf. 1 Cor. 6:12-13; 1 John 5:21].

- c. Temperament (v.8b) — "anger" → "wrath, malice."
 - d. Talk: (v.8c, v.9a) — "railing [*blasphemia*; cf. James 3:9]" → "shameful speaking [foul talk]," "lying."
3. Three reasons as to why "[*ta panta*; including the list started in verse 5] all these things" ought to be "put...away."
- a. Consequences — "for which things' sake cometh [*erchetai*, present indicative: i.e. presently continually coming to pass or happening] the wrath of God" (v.6a; cf. Rom. 1:18).
 - b. Category — those who do such things are "sons of disobedience" (v.6b).
 - c. Conversion (v.7)—
 - 1) These "things" were "once" true "when..." [cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11].
 - 2) These are past things "in" which you "walked" and "lived" before. For the Christian, the distinction between "then" and "now," must be more than mere spelling!
 - 3) NOTE: The oft-heard claim that a person cannot "live" in such things as adultery is false.
- B. *Vivification* of the "new man" (v.10) — "put on" (v.10a); "being renewed" (v.10c). In this process if new life, we see [a]:
1. Beginning — "and have put on [first aorist middle participle; having put on]" (v.10a).
 - a. There is a definite line of demarcation between when one was "old" and when one became "new."
 - b. The Bible is clear as to that line [cf. Acts 22:16; note the Greek grammar] in contrast to nebulous accounts of experiences that are subject to a variety of subjective interpretations.
 2. Nature — "new" [*neos*: fresh, recent; as opposed to the old and worn out] (v.10b).
 3. Sustenance — "knowledge" (v.10c).

- a. The newness must be maintained. Unlike a "new" car which grows old and loses its "new" look and smell, the new man "is" continually "being renewed [*anakainoumenon*: present participle]" (cf. Rom. 12:2; Titus 3:5).
 - b. The new man is said to be renewed in knowledge; because an ignorant soul cannot be a good soul. Without knowledge the heart cannot be good (Prov. 19:2). The grace of God works upon the will and affections by renewing the understanding.⁶
 - c. Both as a means and the goal of this "being renewed" is "knowledge" [*eis epignosin*: unto, or with view toward the end or attainment of full knowledge] (cf. 2 Peter 1:8; Rom. 12:1-2). Learning/living is the vehicle of renewal which transports us daily "unto the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."
4. Pattern — "after the image of him that created him" (v.10d; Cf. Gen. 1:26,28).
- a. Life with Christ carries with it the lifelong responsibility of cleaning up and restoring the Divine property we defaced with sin.
 - b. It is the Lord who has made this restoration work possible (Eph. 2:10; Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1John 3:2).
 - c. Ours is a life of artistry: not of following our own genius or inspiration; rather, tracing over the "express image" of God (Heb. 1:3, KJV; cf. John 14:9).
5. Parity with Distinctions (v.11).
- a. Human distinctions are erased: "where there cannot be..."
 - b. The Divine distinction is upheld and maintained: "but Christ who is all, and in all."
 - 1) "Christ" is a figure of speech (metonymy) used to represent all that relates to Him: His Will (testament, gospel, word, etc.), His church, His example, etc.
 - 2) The only distinctions we may, and must, make are those made by, and which exist in

Him. [Creator/Creature; Male/Female; Husband/Wife; Lost/Saved; In/Out; Then/Now, etc.].

6. Apparel [vs.12-14].

- a. The figure of apparel is often used in Scripture to describe how a Christian is to "adorn" himself; which is to say, how he is to live [1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Peter 3:3-4].

1) We are not to dress like commoners, rather as "God's elect, holy and beloved" (v.12a). One would suspect that God has provided quite a wardrobe for those whom He has chosen, set aside, and whom He loves.

2) It would be sacrilege to attempt to put these garments on over that which is soiled, worn and nasty; thus, those "things" are to be "put off" (v.9).

3) Furthermore, this suit of clothing is for those who have had their sins "wash[ed] away" [Acts 22:16] and have "put on Christ" [Gal. 3:27].

4) One might say, these are Divine Designer Originals [Zech. 3:4; Psa. 96:9].

- b. Consider such garments as:

1) Empathy [vest] — "heart of compassion" → "kindness" (v.12b).

2) Humility [pants with extra-thick knees] — "lowliness" → "meekness" (v.12c).

NOTE: Compare "voluntary humility" [2:18] with "lowliness." Both come from *tapeinophron*. In other words, there's good humility and bad humility.

3) Endurance [shoes with extra-thick heels and soles] — "longsuffering" → "forbearing," "forgiving" [vs.12d, 13].

NOTE: Wearing these shoes designed by the Lord ("even as Christ..."), we are able to walk the second mile [Matt. 5:41].

4) Completion [belt or girdle which binds garments together]: "above [*epi*, upon] all these

things, put on love which is the bond of perfectness" (v.14).

NOTE: This is *agape*, which is concerned, not so much with the feelings of its object, but rather its welfare.

NOTE: Without this Christian "belt," one is at best unkempt and disheveled (cf. 1 Cor. 13).

V. PILOT (vs.15-17).

[Verses 16-17 are not a part of the assigned passage, thus are herein given but little attention. They are, interpreted in that light.]

—This "life" is not self-governed, nor on autopilot. It is governed by three grand principles:

A. The "peace of Christ" [Umpire, or Arbiter of this "life's" problems and associations] (v.15a).

1. It must be Christ's peace, not a contrived peace (John 14:27; Phil. 2:1-8; cf. Matt. 10:32; James 4:4).

2. It is a nurtured and maintained peace which can only be done through Christ and on His terms, which are:

a. We remember that to this end we "were called in one body" (v.15b; cf. 1:18,24; 3:11; see also 1 Cor. 7:15).

b. If we are constantly counting our blessings and saying, Thank you — "and be ye thankful" (v.15e).

1) NOTE: This prevents whining, which so often leads to dissension within the "one body." As Paul says, "be ye thankful [lit., keep on becoming, proving, and showing that you are thankful]."

2) NOTE: "Be" is from *ginomai*, to "become." It is something toward which we strive; something we must prove (cf. Luke 10:36). The point is: "becoming, or proving" oneself "thankful" is a constant demonstration.

3) NOTE: Whereas "rejoice" is thematic in Philippians, the idea of "thanks" is promi-

ment in Colossians [1:3,12; 2:7; 3:15,17; 4:2].

3. This is a located peace — "rule in our hearts" (v.15c).

a. In deciding where our interests lie, Paul says we should bring to bear our critical faculty of perceiving and judging, the "mind [*phreîn*]" (v.2); and in regard to how we get through, get by, during our sojourn in this world, he says we must bring to bear our "hearts [*kardia*], "the centre and seat of spiritual life, the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes endeavors" [*Thayer*, p. 325].

b. With the "peace of Christ" ruling in the *kardia* of each "member" (1 Cor. 12:12), the unity of the "one body" is protected (cf. Eph. 4:3-5).

4. Let peace "rule [*brabeuo*, to act as umpire, or arbiter]" (v.15b).

a. Much of the turmoil which plagues individual Christians, and consequently the "one body," comes as a result of people deciding to call their own balls and strikes, fouls and fairs.

b. This "peace of Christ" is an objective umpire; an objective rule book.

B. The "word of Christ" (Teacher).

C. The "name of Christ" (Sovereign).

CONCLUSION:

1. A thorough exposition of such a text as Colossians 3:1-17 shows the beauty and importance of interpreting and applying passages within their immediate and remote context.
2. Neither the ancient Judaizers nor the *gnostics*; the modern hedonists nor the Boston-Crossroaders with their "voluntary humility" and "severity to the flesh" — none of these have ever, nor ever shall, develop a system of thought, purpose, profession, and practice to compare with that given by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul in this marvelous passage.

3. God help us to strive diligently to live that "life hid with Christ"; which begins with "minds" set on things above, and ends with man's every word or deed being done "in the name of the Lord Jesus."

END NOTES

¹Morgan, G. Campbell, *Living Messages of the Books of the Bible*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1982), p.238.

²Ibid.

³Scroggie, W. Graham, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976), Vol. III, p.167.

⁴Robertson, A.T., *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville: Broadman, 1931), Vol. IV, p.501.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Henry, Matthew, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, (Grand Rapids: Guardian Press, 1976), Vol. III, p.1167.

Give Thanks To God — Gratitude

Col. 1:3,12; 2:7; 3:15,17; 4:2

H. D. Simmons, Jr.

1. The book of Colossians overflows with thanksgiving from the beginning to end, and is a good sample of the grace of thanksgiving (*Bible Exposition Commentary*, Wiersbe, Vol.2, p.106)
 - a. The salutation opens the book with thanksgiving [1:3].
 - b. The book closes with thanksgiving [4:2].
 - c. Thanksgiving is also found throughout the book [1:12; 2:7; 3:15,17].
 - d. The duty of thanksgiving is emphasised after various exhortations (*Word Studies*, Vincent, vol.3, p.507).
2. Why did Paul say so much about thanksgiving in a book that had as its major purpose to defeat false doctrine by exalting Christ?
 - a. If these brethren learned to really appreciate what they had in Jesus and His word, then false doctrine would have no appeal to them [3:16].
 - b. If they learned to appreciate the wonderful life they had in Jesus, the different life-style that was advocated by the false teachers would have no appeal to them [2:9-10].
 - c. If they learned to appreciate the beautiful peace they had in Jesus, then they would not be disrupted by the false teachers 3:15.
 - d. In a day of false doctrine and change-agents, these same points apply to our brethren.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE WORD GROUP THAT IS TRANSLATED "THANKS, THANKFUL, AND THANKSGIVING," IN THE BOOK.**
 - A. All these words in the book of Colossians come from the same root word, the Greek word *ukaristos* [2170 word number in Strong's Concordance]. In Colos-

sians we find the word used as a noun, verb, and an adjective.

B. In the Greek New Testament this word group is used mostly by Paul.

1. He used the verb form 24 times, the noun form 12 times, and the adjective form only once in 3:15.
2. The verb and the noun form are used almost exclusively for thanksgiving to God in the New Testament (*New International Dictionary*, ed. Colin Brown, Vol. 3 p.818).
3. This fascinating word is actually a combination of two Greek words: *eu* meaning well, and *charizomai* meaning to give freely. Thus the word denotes gratitude; thankfulness (*Vines*, p.625). Thayer defines the word as the giving of thanks (*Thayer*, p.264).

II. NOTICE HOW THE WORD WAS USED IN THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS.

A. [1:3] Here the word appeared as a verb and meant to give thanks (*Thayer*, p.263). It is the expression of joy toward God (*Vines*, p.625). "Paul begins with expressing great joy for the favorable character which he had heard of them and assured them that he daily prayed for their future improvement" (*Introduction To The Scriptures*, Thomas Horne, vol.4, pp.380-381). Though these brethren had problems there was much for which he could heartily give thanks (*Gospel Advocate Commentary*, p.249). He used this word at the beginning of most of his letters (*Arndt and Gingrich*, p.328). What were the grounds of Paul's gratitude? He was thankful to God for the spiritual condition of these brethren. He was thankful for their character, and how it had been formed in them. There was much in these brethren for which he desired to thank the Lord. He was thankful to God for He is the One responsible for the ultimate success of the gospel. Then he expressed the grounds of that thankfulness (1:4-6). These are truly wonderful spiritual possessions. All Christians should truly be thankful for such blessings (Matt. 6:19-21). Paul often

expressed gratitude for his brethern and used the same word (Eph. 1:16; Phil. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2:13; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2:13; Philemon 4). The church is facing many serious challenges in our day. In the present apostasy, we have likely already lost many sheep. But how thankful we should be for the many sound, faithful, loving Christians and congregations who love the Lord and His church, and are ready right now to defend His precious word. As Paul, we need to have genuine sincere appreciation for these brethren, and sound congregations need to support one another.

- B. **[1:12]** Paul used the same verb form as in verse 3. The Colossians needed to be ever so thankful that God had rescued [the Greek word means to rescue] them from the power of darkness and translated them into His Son's kingdom. Thus he made them suitable to be partakers with the saints [vs.12-13]. Not only the Colossians, but all who have been rescued from darkness should overflow with gratitude. Brethren then and now would be much less susceptible to false doctrines if they possessed this deep and sincere gratitude in their hearts. Note what wondrous blessings we possess in that kingdom (1:14; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 12:28). He made us fit "by a mighty act of rescue..." (*Lenski*, p.40). cf. (Rom. 7:24-25).
- C. **[2:7]** To withstand the false teachers, those brethren needed to be have their hearts knit together in love (2:2), realize that in Christ are found all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (2:3), be steadfast in their faith (2:5), walk in Christ (2:6), be rooted and built up in Him, established in their faith, and be abounding in thanksgiving (2:7). Thanksgiving here is in the noun form. The meaning here is to overflow with thanksgiving (*Arndt and Gingrich*, p.328). It means for one to possess a thankful attitude and is used to express a rendering of thanks (*Brown*, p.817; *Gingrich*, p.328). Note how Paul used this word in 1 Timothy 2:1. Since they had received such precious knowledge and blessings through the truths of the Lord, they should abound in thanksgiving. Paul wrote in the present tense here which indicated their

gratitude should be a continual thing. The word abound is used by Paul over 26 times in the New Testament. It has the same meaning as a river overflowing its banks. "The present passage may imply that those who lack a deep sense of thankfulness to God are especially vulnerable to doubt and spiritual delusion" (*Expositor's Bible Commentary*, editor Frank Gaebelein, 2:196). Gratitude was a preservative against the false doctrines the congregation was being troubled by (*Expositor's Greek Testament*, Nicoll, vol.3, p.521). cf. (Eph. 5:4).

- D. **[3:15]** In this verse Paul used the word as an adjective. This is the only place the word is found in the New Testament. Its meaning was grateful; thankful; mindful of favors (*Vines*, p.625; *Thayer*, p.264; *Gingrich*, p.329). The Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:2) offers true peace to his followers (John 14:27; Rom. 5:1). This was the peace spoken of in 1:2. Who won't thank God for being called by Him into one body and for the peace in their hearts? "This calling into a participation in and enjoyment of peace was in one body" (*Wuest's Word Studies*, Wuest, vol. 1, p.226). How thankful we should be that we have been called into that one body, the Lord's church (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4). How thankful we should be that we are not in the bondage of denominationalism. We should be so thankful that we refuse to allow the change-agents to change the nature of that one body into a denomination, so we will better connect with our ungodly culture. That call gave us peace, and as the Colossians, we must be so thankful as to allow no false teacher to take it from us. This is our continuous obligation for the Greek says "keep on becoming thankful, ever be thankful" (Present imperative) (*Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Robertson, vol. 4, p.505; *Lenski*, p.176). One of Paul's indictments against the Gentiles was being ungrateful for the physical blessings of God (Rom. 1:21). How much more gratitude is due to Him from those of us who have received such spiritual blessings? (*New International Commentary*, Simpson and Bruce, pp.282-

283). Thanksgiving is not added as an afterthought but because peace is intimately associated with peace. Gratitude for this wonderful peace becomes an incentive for preserving it in the midst of false teachers (2:8). (*Expositor's Commentary*, pp.215-216).

- E. **[3:17]** Is in the verb form as in 1:3,12 and basically meant to show one's self grateful; to give thanks (*A Critical Lexicon And Concordance To The English and Greek New Testament*, Bullinger, p.768). What does doing all in His name mean? As even a denominational leader said, "It means that absolutely everything is to be done in the light of the revelation of our Lord and harmonize with that revelation" (*Lenski*, p.179). As they acted only by the authority of Jesus they were at the same time to be thankful. We should be grateful that we are not left afloat in all the changing theories of men. Rather the Lord has lovingly shown us the true way. How thankful we should be that we are not lead in religion by the creeds of mere men, but rather by the authority of God's own Son (Matt. 15:9). "Giving thanks points to an essential accompaniment of acting in the name of the Lord" (*Expositor's Com*, p.217). Doing all things in His name is an expression of thankfulness (Ex. Test 542). We should thank God for giving us the opportunity to do all things in His name. "Such gratitude is through Him since what He is and what He has done as our Redeemer not only makes us grateful, but also gives us a Mediator for the expression of our thanksgiving" (*Gospel Advocate*, p.301).
- F. **[4:2]** Here the word is in the noun form as in 2:7 and carries the meaning of gratitude; thankfulness (*Bullinger*, p.769). As Paul closed the letter again, he sang the refrain of thanksgiving. He admonished them to continue steadfastly in prayer (cf. Rom. 12:12, 1 Thess. 5:17). The Lord said, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). Paul explained that these watchful prayers should be uttered in the atmosphere of gratitude. Paul blended thanksgiving with prayer (Phil. 4:6). Thanksgiving "...springs from the heart thankful for God's gifts and

therefore watchful against losing them" [Ex. Test. 544]. These brethren were in danger of losing so much because of the false teachers among them. They must learn to be so grateful for God's gifts that they will not give them up for anyone. "Continue" meant to give constant attention to a thing. "Watch" meant to give strict attention to, to take heed lest through remissness and indolence some destructive calamity suddenly overtake one (*Wuest*, p.233). This verse speaks of constant spiritual alertness, and diligence in prayer; and being thankful is the spirit in which prayer is to be offered. It forms the sphere for all of our praying. We must cling to our Lord in prayer, and be careful that nothing helps remove us from Him, and constantly thank Him for all the blessing we have in the Lord.

CONCLUSION:

1. In the parallel book to Colossians, the book of Ephesians, note Paul's beautiful statement (Eph. 5:20). In the letter to the Colossians Paul thanked God for the spiritual possessions of these brethren. Good news had come to Paul and Timothy about these brethren, and he thus blended his thanksgiving with prayer (Phil. 4:6). Thankfulness is a constant exercise of the Christian heart, and a true part of earnest prayer (*Pulpit Commentary*, p.27).
2. If these Christians were truly abounding and overflowing with gratitude for all their spiritual possessions in Jesus, they would be less likely to be deceived by the false teachers they were encountering. Thus sincere gratitude could help with the situation there. It can help with our situation now. If we are truly grateful for all we have in Jesus, then we will guard those possessions more closely. If we are truly grateful for God's dear word, then we will defend it at all costs. If we are truly grateful for the Lord's body, we will not allow the change agents to transform that precious body into another denomination to please our culture. Yes, true gratitude will help to obey (Jude 3). We know our people will fight for those things they really love. God help us as we watch and pray with all gratitude.

Grounded And Settled

Col. 1:23

Virgil Hale

1. Paul had heard of these brethren [1:4] but had never met them [2:1].
2. He had learned of them from Epaphras [1:7-9].
3. If there was ever a time that we need to be grounded and settled it is now.
4. There are more and more "uncertain sounds" being heard.
5. The use of women in worship and errors regarding the Holy Spirit are two of the many errors we face today.

DISCUSSION:

I. LET US EXAMINE THE TEXT THAT HAS BEEN ASSIGNED.

A. Let us look at the first word "**If.**"

1. There is an "if" in the middle of "life."
2. The "if" in our text shows there was a possibility of their not continuing in the faith.
 - a. Why warn if such were not possible as some claim?
3. This if makes it conditional.
4. This is like, "*But if we walk in the light...*" [1 John 1:7] or "*...if a son, then an heir of God...*" [Gal. 6:4] or "*...if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ...*" [Rom. 8:17].

B. "**ye continue in**"

1. This proves they were in "the faith."
 - a. Could not continue in something they were not in.

C. "**the faith**"

1. The system of faith — the gospel.
2. Today men speak of, "Preachers of all faiths."
 - a. Paul taught there is but one faith [Eph. 4:5].

D. "**grounded and settled**"

1. We need elders, preachers and members who are *grounded and settled*.

- a. There are many unsettling doctrines being taught.
 - b. Sadly, some are grounded and settled in error.
- 2. Note some other passages in this book where the same kind of thought is expressed.
 - a. 2:4, *"And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words."*
 - b. 2:7, *"Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."*
 - c. 2:8, *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."*
 - d. 2:21-22, *("Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men."*
 - e. 3:17, *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."*
 - f. 4:12, *"...That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."*
- 3. Let us look at some other passages that teach the same thing.
 - a. John 8:31-31; Acts 20:28-32; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 4:1-4; Titus 1:9-11; 2:1; 2 Peter 3:14-18
- 4. Paul was set for the defense of the gospel (Phil. 1:7; 17).
 - a. He admonishes us to do the same (Phil. 1:27-28).
- E. **"be not moved away from"**
 - 1. Many preachers and members have been moved away from.
 - a. This proves that one can fall.
 - b. Note: 2 John 9-11; Gal. 5:1-5.
- F. **"the hope"**
 - 1. There is but one hope (Eph. 4:4).
 - 2. Hope is desire with expectation.
 - 3. We do not hope for what we already have (Rom. 8:24-25).

4. In this book Paul talked about our "**hope which is laid up for you in heaven**" [1:5] and "the *hope of glory*" [1:27].
5. Hope is extremely important.
 - a. Hope is the anchor of the soul [Heb. 6:19].
 - 1) It is what causes us to endure.
 - b. If there is no hope, we are miserable people [1 Cor. 15:19]
 - c. Hope causes one to purify himself [1 John 3:3]
- G. "**the gospel**"
 1. There is but one true gospel — there are many perverted gospels [Gal. 1:6-9].
 2. Without the gospel there can be no hope [Eph. 2:11-12; 2 Peter 2:20-22; Heb. 6:4-6].
- H. The people at Colosse had heard the gospel--the truth.
 1. It was preached to them [Col. 1:5-6].
 - a. It was also preached "in all the world" [1:6] and to "*every creature which is under heaven*" [1:23].
 2. The Great Commission demanded that it be preached to "all nations" [Matt. 28:19] — to "every creature" [Mark 16:15].

II. BRETHREN, WE MUST TAKE A STAND AND WE MUST STAND FAST.

- A. Passages that teach this great truth.
 1. We must "**hold fast** the confidence and the rejoicing of *hope* firm **unto the end**" [Heb. 3:6] if we are to be the *house of God*. Note also Heb. 3:14; 4:14; 10:23.
 2. We must "**hold fast** that which is good" [1 Thess. 5:21].
 3. We must "**hold fast** the form of sound words" [2 Tim. 1:13].
 4. We must "**stand fast** in the faith" [1 Cor. 16:13].
 5. We must "**stand fast** in the Lord" [1 Thess. 3:8].
 6. We must "**be strong** in the Lord" [Eph. 6:10].
 7. We **stand** in the gospel [1 Cor. 15:1].
 8. We **stand** by faith [2 Cor. 1:24].
 9. We must **stand** against the wiles of the devil [Eph. 6:11].

- B. It is a known fact that if we do not **stand** for **something** we will **fall** for **anything**.
- C. Let us heed the words of Paul, "...and having done all, to **stand, stand** therefore..." (Eph. 6:13-14).
 - 1. Three times in Ephesians chapter 6 Paul used the word "**able**" [vs.11,13,16].
 - a. We have everything we need to overcome the devil if we will but take advantage of and use what has been provided.
- D. May we never be found guilty of **retreating**—let us **stand!**

The Wrath Of God

Col. 3:6

Terry Joe Kee

1. Wrath defined: Sadness [Psa. 85:4], Frown, turning face away [2 Chron. 26:19 Jer. 3:12], Indignation [Psa. 38:3], Bitterness [Judges 18:25], Fury [Esther 1:12], Full of anger [Gen. 4:5; John 7:23].
 - a. Man exhibits his wrath at times.
 - b. Sometimes justified: Jesus (Mark 3:5); Jacob (Gen. 31:36); Moses [Exodus 11:8; 32:19; Lev. 10:16; Num. 16:15]; Nehemiah [Neh. 5:6; 13:17-25].
 - c. Sometimes unjustified: Cain [Gen. 4:5,6]; Esau [Gen. 27:45]; Moses [Num. 20:10,11]; Balaam [Num. 22:27]; Herod [Matt. 2:16]; Jews [Luke 4:28]; High Priest [Acts 5:17; 7:54].
2. Text describes the wrath of God.

DISCUSSION:

I. "FOR WHICH THINGS SAKE."

- A. Fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, etc. [Col. 3:5].
- B. Works of the flesh [Gal. 5:19-21].
- C. Things which will not inherit the kingdom [1 Cor. 6:9,10].
- D. Those Hell bound [Rev. 21:8].
- E. All things that oppose God and His will.

II. "THE WRATH OF GOD COMETH."

- A. Natural expression of divine nature—absolute holiness manifested against sin.
- B. Righteous indignation compatible with holy, righteous nature of God [cf. Num. 11:1-10; Deut. 29:27].
- C. God's wrath is not easily provoked [Psa. 103:8; Isa. 48:9; John 4:2; Nah. 1:3].
 1. It is to be dreaded [Psa. 2:12; 76:7; 90:11; Matt. 10:28].
 2. Not to be provoked [Jer. 7:19; 1 Cor. 10:22].
- D. Certain things arouse the wrath of God:

1. Continual provocation (Num. 32:14).
 2. Unbelief (Psa. 78:21,22; Heb. 3:18,19).
 3. Impenitence (Isa. 9:13,14; Rom. 2:5).
 4. Apostasy (Heb. 10:26-31).
 5. Idolatry (Deut. 32:19-22; 2 Kings 22:17; Jer. 44:3).
 6. Opposition to the gospel of Christ (Psa. 2:2-5; 1 Thess. 2:16).
- E. No loving-kindness can exclude the wrath of God.
1. God vents wrath against all transgression (John 3:36; Rom. 1:16-18; 5:8,9).
 2. Never should we think that postponement of God's wrath presently will omit its coming one day (Rom. 2:5-9; 2 Peter 3:9,10; Rev. 6:16-19; 19:15).

III. "CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE."

- A. Walked in sin.
- B. Lived in sin.
- C. Were not seeking those things above.
- D. Had their affections on the things on the earth.

CONCLUSION:

1. It is not desire of God to bring His wrath on man (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9).

Exposition Of Col. 3:18–4:1

Bill Crossno

1. The Colossian church are called Saints.
 - a. Col. 1:2
2. Paul speaks of their,
 - a. Faith — 1:4.
 - b. Hope — 1:5.
 - c. In the Kingdom — 1:13.
 - d. Redemption — 1:14.
 - e. Reconciliation — 1:21.
 - f. Raised in Christ — 3:1.
 - g. Hide in Christ — 3:3.
 - h. A new man — 3:10.
 - i. Elect of God — 3:12.
3. Such people respect Christ.
 - a. Respect is lost today in most circles. Neither adults nor children use it, not even the President of the United States. God has always demanded respect. Without it there is no hope of heaven.
 - b. Col. 1:18; 2:18-22; 3:20,22,25.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE HOME IS ARRANGED BY GOD.

- A. God's first institution, the home, was created to work. If the right elements and conditions are in place, all things will work together to the glory of God. Sad it is that man has tried to change it to satisfy self rather than God, parent and/or children.
 1. Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7,15-24; Matt. 19:3-9.
 2. The only grounds for a divorce is either "*Fornication*" or "*Adultery*."
 - a. Matt. 5:32
 - b. This would include:
 - 1) Homosexuals.
 - a) They cannot marry, so they commit adultery.
 - 2) Lesbians.

- a) They cannot marry, so they commit adultery.
 - 3) Living together out of marriage.
 - a) They must marry (if it agrees with God's plans for marriage), or they are living in adultery.
- 3. 1 Tim. 4:1-2
- B. Col. 3:18
 - 1. Wives submit.
 - a. Yield to the power, control, or authority of another, surrender.
 - b. Eph. 5:22-23; Verse 22: for the man is the head of woman.
 - c. 1 Cor. 11:3
- C. Col. 3:19
 - 1. Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter against her.
 - a. Eph. 5:24-29
 - b. Verse 24: man's attitude must come from the Lord.
 - 2. If a man does not love his wife as himself, he does not love her properly. If he listens to the Lord's advice, he will love her as he loves the Lord. Try it and see.
- D. Heb. 13:4

II. THE AUTHORITY OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

- A. When we throw the Bible out with the bath water, we also throw the home out, that includes, the husband and wife with the children.
 - 1. Our over-worked mothers do not have anytime for their children, dads are too busy also.
 - 2. Col. 3:20; Eph. 6:1-3; Luke 2:49,51.
- B. Col. 3:21; Prov. 13:24; Prov. 13:14.

III. ATTITUDE: SHOWN TO LABORERS AND MASTERS.

- A. Most love Friday and pay day.
 - 1. God's plan works better.
 - 2. Col. 3:22-25; Matt. 20:1-16; 1 Tim. 5:8; 2 Thess. 3:10.
- B. Col. 4:1

1. Luke 10:7; John 9:4; Luke 9:62; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; 4:16.
2. 1 Peter 1:4-5; Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 4:6-8,10.

CONCLUSION:

1. Titus 2:1-5.

Endnotes:

- a. The Book of Colossians, Getwell Lectureship 1986.
- b. Great Lessons From Colossians, Andrew Connally.
- c. Christ In The Home, Robert R. Taylor.
- d. Northwest Florida School Of Biblical Studies Lectureship, 1996.

Love To All The Saints

Col. 1:4

Don W. Tate

1. The source of the New Testament writings is the Lord (2 Tim. 3:16).
 - a. God is love [1 John 4:8], thus that would mean that the writers would write with love in their hearts.
 - b. Paul dwelt with this subject as it is very important.

DISCUSSION:

I. A COMPARISON OF SCRIPTURES ON LOVE.

- A. A fellowservant informed those with Paul of the love that the brethren at Colosse had for all the saints (Col. 1:8).
- B. Paul was not personally acquainted with some of those brethren, but he loved them and desired that they all be knit together in love (Col. 2:2).
 1. It is charity or love that ties everything so perfect in Christ (Col. 3:14).
- C. Christians are the beloved of God (Col. 3:12) as they are the recipients of the blessings from Him.
 1. Onesimus was beloved of Paul in a special way (Col. 4:9).
 2. Luke was also beloved of Paul (Col. 4:14).
 3. Are there certain Christians that you have a unique love for?
- D. A husband must display the proper Christian attitude toward his wife in showing love (Col. 3:19).
- E. Whether Paul used the word love or just implied it; it was found in all his letters.
 1. Due to the readers of the epistles feeling this emotion from Paul; many have been moved to do better.

II. WHAT LOVE IS.

- A. Love is understanding the needs of others!
 1. Paul wrote to the saints with a deep understanding of their needs.

- a. What congregation exists today that doesn't have some problems and needs?
- 2. If Paul truly wanted to show these people how he felt about them, then he should spend some time in praise for the good they were doing.
 - a. These brethren were showing love to all the saints.
- 3. As a preacher views a congregation today, can he also find the good in them?
- B. Love is a subject that must be taught and learned!
 - 1. What does love mean to you?
 - a. Do you need to be taught on this subject or does it just come natural?
 - 2. Did Paul see the need of teaching on this (Titus 2:4)?
 - 3. In what ways are the leaders of the congregation you attend teaching on love?
- C. Love is shared!
 - 1. Love is an emotion that should be shared and it doesn't matter if the person you share it with loves you or not (Matt. 5:44).
 - 2. While we should show everyone how much we care for them; we especially must show the saints (Gal. 6:10).
- D. Love seeks out the best interest for others!
 - 1. Jesus Christ gave the prime example by giving His life for those who didn't deserve it (Rom. 5:6-8).
 - 2. Since Jesus is our example; how can you say you love Him and not live for Him?
 - 3. Love is giving and a refusal to give is a sign of a lack of it.

III. WHAT LOVE IS NOT.

- A. Love is not just a show!
 - 1. You will discover all kinds of woes placed upon some religious people (Matt. 23).
 - 2. Is love found in your home congregation where Christians communicate with you and you with them due to a real concern for each?
- B. Love does not fail to point out sin!

1. Are you willing to go to the rescue of an erring child of God and even point out sin so to save him [James 5:20]?
- C. Love does not fail to discipline!
 1. When Paul wrote to the brethren at Corinth the first time; they displayed a lack of concern for the church.
 - a. They were failing to discipline members who were living in open sin (1 Cor. 5:1-3).
 - b. What do you think about a parent who refuses to discipline his child?
 - 1) Is the parent showing the proper love?
 2. Paul felt that an erring brother should be made to feel ashamed of living in sin and the way to do this is to admonish him about the sin [2 Thess. 3:14-15].
 3. John recorded the information on who really loves the saints (1 John 5:2).

CONCLUSION:

1. If you love the saints you will protect them!

Let Your Speech Be Seasoned With Salt Col. 4:6

Arthur Burnett

1. Contextual Setting
 - a. The brethren at Colosse are to pray for Paul that a door would be open to speak the gospel (v.3).
2. Paul at this time was in prison for speaking the gospel (v.3).
3. Paul desired the gospel message be manifested by him in a way that brings glory (v.4).
4. Paul instructs the brethren how to conduct themselves toward those outside the church:
 - a. Wisely (v.5),
 - b. Seize opportunities (v.5),
 - c. Speak in a manner that befits the gospel (v.6).

DISCUSSION:

I. SOME SIMPLE DEFINITIONS.

- A. *Speech* — That which is spoken expressing thought or emotion.
 1. Can be audible.
 2. Can be inaudible.
- B. *Seasoned* — Something added to increase the enjoyment or render fit for use.
- C. *Salt* — Sodium chloride, a compound used as a seasoning and as a preservative.

II. JESUS TAUGHT ON SPEECH AND SALT.

- A. Our speech reflects our heart (Matt. 12:34; Luke 6:45).
- B. If salt is in us, it will come out — even in our speech (Matt. 5:13; Luke 14:34; Mark 9:50).

III. SPEECH THAT IS CONDEMNED BY GOD.

- A. Evil speaking Eph. 4:31 — We must determine if what is said is evil by God's standard and not our own. Many will say that to mark a false teacher,

church, or activity is speaking evil, but they're the ones speaking evil of those practicing good.

- B. Fair speech that deceives [Jer. 23:30-32; Rom. 16:18]. [This type of speech is smooth and gives the mass of people what they want to hear, or it tells some truth and slowly changes that truth].
- C. Speech that exalts the speaker [Psalm 12:3,4; James 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:1]. [This type of speech uses words for self-praise and talks about self].
- D. Speech which is:
 - 1. Cruel,
 - 2. Profane and vulgar,
 - 3. Hypocritical [pretense] [Psalm 10:7; 5:9, James 3:9-11].

IV. **SPEECH WHICH GOD APPROVES.**

- A. Sound speech [Titus 2:8]. [These are words that are according to the doctrine of Christ and godliness].
- B. Plainness of speech [2 Cor. 3:12]. [This is speech that is brave and simple to understand].
- C. Speech which is spoken out of love [Eph. 4:15]. [This is speech that is spoken out of respect and concern for the things of God and the well being of humanity].
- D. Speech that praises God and is joyful for God's goodness [Psalm 71:24; 126:2; Heb. 13:15; Acts 2:47].

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Let us be careful what we say and where we say it [James 1:26; Psalm 39:1; 1 Peter 3:10].
- 2. Let us not become like Israel of old [Ezek. 16:4].
- 3. Our speech should be ordered to draw men to Christ [1 Peter 4:11; 3:15]. [A little humor or a little wit is fine at times but always speak as the oracles of God and our speech will be properly seasoned.]

Exposition of Col. 4:2-18

Jimmy W. Bates

1. Paul concludes this letter to the Colossians with a series of exhortations and commendations.
2. Preaching the Gospel requires one to "...*reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine*" [2 Tim. 4:2]. And, there is a place for "*commending*."
 - a. We are encouraged when we hear of the faithfulness of others.
 - b. Paul commended the Macedonians to encourage and exhort the Corinthians [2 Cor. 8:1-7].
3. Let us learn valuable lessons from these exhortations and commendations.

DISCUSSION:

I. EXHORTATIONS CONCERNING PRAYER (4:2-4).

A. "Continue in prayer" (v.2a).

1. Luke 18:1; Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17; Phil. 4:6.
2. From same Greek word as in Acts 2:42,46; 6:4.
3. We should have set times for prayer, but beyond these, we should maintain a prayerful attitude and hold ourselves in tune with God at all times.

B. "...and watch in the same with thanksgiving" (v.26).

1. "watch" from [Gr. *gregoreo*], "to watch," is used
 - a. Of keeping awake, e.g., Matt. 24:43; 26:38,40, 41;
 - b. Of spiritual alertness, e.g., Acts 20:31; 1 Cor. 16:13; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:6,10 [Vines, p.201].
2. As we "*continue in prayer*," attuned to God, we must be spiritually alert to our own needs and dangers and the promises of God.
3. "*with thanksgiving*" — Prayers must involve thanksgiving and praise to God.
 - a. Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1; 4:3,4; Col. 2:17, 3:17; Psal. 100:4.
 - b. Be thankful for the avenue of prayer.

C. Prayer for the preacher and the preaching of the Gospel [6:3,4].

1. Paul often asked for the prayers of his brethren [Eph. 6:19,20; 2 Cor. 1:11; Phil. 1:19; Heb. 13:18, 19; Rom. 15:30].
2. He wanted their prayers, not for his personal benefit and comfort but for the door of opportunity to preach the Gospel [v.3, cf. 1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12].
3. Pray that he may preach the Gospel as it ought to be preached [v.4].
 - a. "...make it manifest" — make it clear or evident, to show plainly; to prove [1 Thess. 5:21].
 - b. "...as I ought to speak." Boldly, without fear or compromise, unashamed [cf. Acts 20:17-32; 26:24-29; Rom. 1:14-16; 2 Tim. 4:2-5].

II. **EXHORTATIONS CONCERNING CONDUCT TOWARD THOSE WITHOUT [NON-CHRISTIANS] (VS. 5-6).**

A. "*Walk in wisdom toward them...*" [v.5; cf. Eph. 5:15, 16].

1. Must conduct ourselves wisely before those outside the church. Why?
 - a. Because of the value of each soul [Matt. 16:26].
 - b. Because Christ died for all [Heb. 2:9].
 - c. Because God wants all to be saved [1 Tim. 2:4].
 - d. Because our mission is to teach the Gospel and lead the lost to Christ [Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15,16].
 - e. Because our effectiveness in leading the lost to Christ will depend largely on maintaining a good influence [cf. Matt. 5:13-16; 2 Cor. 3:2,3].
2. To walk in wisdom is to walk:
 - a. In newness of life [Rom. 6:4].
 - b. After the Spirit [Rom. 8:1-5].
 - c. In honesty before men [Rom. 13:13].
 - d. By faith [2 Cor. 5:7].
 - e. In good works [Eph. 2:8-10].
 - f. Of love [Eph. 5:2].
 - g. In the light [1 John 1:7].
 - h. In the truth [2 John 4].

- i. After the commandments of the Lord (2 John 6).
- B. "...redeeming the time" (v.56).
 - 1. We must use every opportunity to do good to the glory of Christ that we might influence those outside of Christ for good (Gal. 6:10).
 - 2. Eph. 5:16 — "...because the days are evil."
 - a. There are plenty of allurements and temptations to get us to waste our time in sin.
 - b. Thus, we must walk "circumspectly" (Eph. 5:15) — aware of those dangers around us.
- C. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt..." (v.6a).
 - 1. Our speech must be kind and gracious, pure, to bless and uplift (Eph. 4:29).
 - 2. The word seasoned (Gr. *ertumeos*) means "having been seasoned."
 - 3. Salt flavors and preserves. Our speech must be flavored with grace and preserved from corruption.
 - 4. What is speech "with grace, seasoned with salt?"
 - a. It is not:
 - 1) Coarse or abusive, untactful speech.
 - 2) Condescending — talking down to another, or speech that is always on the defensive.
 - 3) Destructive criticism, tale-bearing, gossip, slander, etc.
 - 4) Corrupt, impure, vulgar speech.
 - b. It is:
 - 1) Speaking truth with love and kindness.
 - 2) Speech that is pure, uplifting, edifying.
 - 3) When this kind of speech is used, people want to hear. Enjoyable conversations take place and friendships are made.
- D. "...that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (v.66).
 - 1. 1 Peter 3:15
 - 2. How ought (must) we answer every man? With speech that is "with grace, seasoned with salt."

III. COMMENDATIONS OF PAUL'S FAITHFUL CO-WORKERS [4:7-17].

A. Tychicus — a faithful messenger [vs.7-8].

1. Was from the province of Asia in Asia Minor [probably from Ephesus] and accompanied Paul from Corinth to Macedonia on his third journey [Acts 20:4].
2. He had grown to have a close friendship with Paul. He probably had been sent to Rome at this time to assist and comfort Paul in prison and to bring back news of Paul to the church at Ephesus. He returns with Onesimus and delivers three great epistles from Paul: Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon [Eph. 6:21,22; Col. 4:7-9].
3. He is mentioned in Titus 3:12 and 2 Tim. 4:11,12.
4. Paul's commendation of him [v.7].
 - a. *"a beloved brother"*
 - b. *"a faithful minister"*
 - c. *a "fellow servant in the Lord."*
5. An example of what every Christian should be in Christ.

B. Onesimus, a new convert [v.9].

1. A slave (from Colosse) who had run away from his master, Philemon. He came into contact with Paul and was converted [Col. 4:7-9; Phile. 10-19].
2. Paul sent him back (accompanied by Tychicus) to his master and entreated Philemon to receive him not as a slave, but as a brother in Christ [Col. 4:9; Phile. 16]. In Christ there is neither "bond nor free" [Col. 3:11; Gal. 3:28].
3. Paul's commendation of him:
 - a. *"a faithful and beloved brother"* Col. 4:9.
 - b. Was unprofitable, but now profitable [Phile. 11].
 - c. Paul wished that he could have him stay in Rome as his fellow-worker [Phile. 13].
4. A great example of the change that must accompany the new life in Christ [Rom. 6:1-18].

C. Salutations from six co-workers [4:10-14].

1. Three Jewish brothers [vs. 10,11].
 - a. Aristarchus:
 - 1) A *"fellow prisoner"* with Paul.

- 2) He was a Macedonian of Thessalonica who was converted from Judaism and became a faithful traveling companion of Paul [Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2; Col. 4:10; Phile. 24].
- 3) Both Luke and Aristarchus volunteered of their own choice to accompany Paul to Rome [Acts 27:2].
- b. Marcus [Mark, John Mark]:
 - 1) The son of a certain Mary who lived in Jerusalem. Peter came to her house following his deliverance from prison by an angel when the disciples had met to pray for him [Acts 12:12].
 - 2) He was the nephew [cousin, ASV] of Barnabas.
 - 3) He failed to remain faithful in his early work with Paul and Barnabas [Acts 13:13; 15:36-41].
 - 4) But, he worked with Barnabas and proved himself to be a profitable servant. He became a valued co-worker of Paul [Col. 4:10, 11; Phile.24; 2 Tim. 4:11].
- c. Jesus, who is called Justus [v.11].
 - 1) A Jewish Christian associated with Paul while he was in prison.
 - 2) He, along with Aristarchus and Mark, brought comfort and encouragement to Paul in prison.
2. Three Gentile brothers:
 - a. Epaphras [vs. 12,13].
 - 1) *"one of you"* — that is, a Colossian.
 - 2) He possibly preached the Gospel first to Colosse and then to Laodicea and Hierapolis [Col. 1:5-8; 4:13].
 - 3) Paul's commendation of him:
 - a) *"a servant of Christ"* [4:12a].
 - b) a *"dear fellow servant"* [1:7a].
 - c) *"a faithful minister of Christ"* [1:7b].
 - d) *"my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus"* [Phile. 23].

- e) *"always laboring fervently for you in prayers"* (4:12b).
- f) *"he hath a great zeal for you..."* (4:13).
- b. Luke, the beloved physician (4:14).
 - 1) Wrote two New Testament books: Luke and Acts of the Apostles.
 - 2) He was a Gentile and probably was the brother of Titus (2 Cor. 8:16; 12:18).
 - 3) He joined Paul, Silas, and Timothy at Troas on Paul's second missionary journey. Note the change from "they" to "we" (Acts 16:10).
 - 4) He journeyed with Paul and his companions to Philippi. He and Timothy stayed at Philippi while Paul and Silas left for Thessalonica (Acts 17:1).
 - 5) On Paul's third journey (at least five years later) Luke again joined his company (Acts 20:5) and traveled with Paul to Miletus, Tyre, Caesarea, and on to Jerusalem (Acts 21:18).
 - 6) After Paul's two-year imprisonment at Caesarea, Luke again appears in company with Paul, as Paul was taken under Roman guard to Rome (Acts 28).
 - 7) Luke remained at Paul's side for at least the first year of Paul's imprisonment at Rome (Col.4:14; Phile. 24).
 - 8) Paul wrote 2 Timothy during his second imprisonment in Rome and near the end of his life on earth and stated, *"only Luke is with me"* (2 Tim. 4:11).
 - 9) He was a faithful companion and co-worker to the end!
- c. Demas (v.14).
 - 1) Called a *"fellow laborer"* in Phile. 24.
 - 2) Approximately six years or more later, Demas forsook Paul, *"having loved this present world"* (2 Tim. 4:9,10).
 - 3) The danger of falling prey to the world faces each of us daily!

D. Salutations for the Laodiceans and Nymphas (4:15, 16).

1. Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis were all cities in the Lycus Valley within ten to twenty miles of each other. The churches in these cities were closely associated.
2. Laodicea was the capitol of Phrygia in Asia Minor about ten miles south of Colosse. The church here would later receive a terrible rebuke from Jesus (Rev. 3:14-22).
3. These two churches [Laodicea and Colosse] were told to exchange epistles (letters). The "Laodicean epistle" (1) has either been lost, or (2) and more likely, was a copy of the Ephesian letter, as Colossians and Ephesians address similar conditions and dangers.
4. Nymphas. Verse 15 is the only mention of him.
 - a. A faithful Christian in Laodicea as the church met in his house. The church often met in homes (cf. Phile. 2; Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19).
 - b. He, evidently, was a man full of zeal for the church in Laodicea.

E. A message to Archippus (v.17).

1. Called a "*fellow-soldier*" in Phile.2.
2. He evidently was a member of the church at Colosse, who had been given some work to perform and Paul encourages him to "*take heed*" to it and "*fulfill*" it.

IV. FAREWELL GREETINGS (V.18).

A. "*The salutation by the hand of me, Paul.*"

1. Paul made it his practice, beginning with at least 2 Thessalonians, to write the salutation of his epistles with his own hand (2 Thess. 3:17; cf. 2:1,2).
2. He usually employed a "letter-writer" (amanuensis) for the remainder of the epistle (Rom. 16:22).

B. "*Remember my bonds.*"

1. At this time Paul had been in prison for three years and he longed to be freed to preach the Gospel where it had not been preached.

2. Paul had already asked for their prayers (4:2-4), to pray for an *"open door"* to preach the Gospel.
 3. One year later, Paul wrote Philippians 1:12-14. The sum and substance of Paul's statements in these two epistles, written one year apart, is that when he was writing the Colossian epistle, he was hoping for, longing for, and praying for an open door; but when he was writing the Philippian epistle, he had come to realize that he had been standing in that open door all the time. There is a lesson in this for Christians today.
 4. Remembrance of his bonds would prompt their prayers and encourage them to faithfulness in their own afflictions.
- C. *"Grace be with you. Amen."*
1. Paul's opening and closing wish for them is God's grace [Col. 1:2; 4:18].
 2. There is no richer word — it carries in it all of God's love as seen in the gift of His Son for us!

CONCLUSION:

1. The Colossians needed the exhortations and personal commendations and encouragements sent to them in the close of this letter from one whom they loved and respected.
2. Let us realize the importance of personally exhorting, commending (when deserved), and encouraging our brethren and co-worker in Christ!

Laboring Fervently — Zeal

Col. 4:12

Jimmy Young

1. The Christian life is to be a life of fervent labor [Matt. 9:37,38; 1 Cor. 3:9].
2. We will sing, "I Want To Be A Worker," but how many of us are truly **laboring fervently**?
3. Do **many** or **few** abound in the work of the Lord [1 Cor. 15:58]?
4. Our labors in the Lord's Kingdom involves the greatest privileges, responsibilities, and **rewards**.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **THE UNIVERSALITY OF LABORING FERVENTLY.**
 - A. Paul's admonition for the church at Colosse was for them to be "perfect" [mature] and "complete" in **all** the will of God.
 1. This isn't for the elders only, though they must be setting the example [1 Peter 5:3].
 2. It isn't for the deacons only, though deacon means "servant" [Acts 6:1-3].
 3. It isn't for the preacher only, though he has a work to do [2 Tim. 4:5].
 - B. The New Testament teaches that **every** Christian must labor and do it fervently [Col. 4:12].
 1. We should consider the parable of the talents [Matt. 25:14-30].
 2. If we only have "one" talent; we must use it fervently.
 3. The church as a body has a function and each member plays a vital role in that function [Rom. 12:1,2; 1 Cor. 12].
 - C. There will be differences but **NO** exceptions.
 1. There will be differences of ability [1 Cor. 12], desire, opportunity, etc. but **no** exception to education, age, sex, etc. Acts 8:4].

2. There will always be a work in the church for a Paul and Timothy, a Eunice and Dorcas; a Barnabas and Mark.

II. THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR LABORING FERVENTLY.

- A. Conviction [Steadfastness and immovability] is necessary for the Lord's work (1 Cor. 15:58).
 1. The Corinthian brethren were hindered in their work by doubts, opinions, etc.
 - a. They were faced with:
 - 1) Problem of eating meats [chapters 8-10].
 - 2) The veil question and the Lord's Supper [chapter 11].
 - 3) Importance and use of spiritual gifts [chapters 12-14].
 2. The Philippians were admonished to be steadfast and united as they strove for the faith of the gospel (Phil. 1:27).
- B. Zeal for the Lord is impossible without strong faith and conviction.
 1. Our labor will be in proportion to our faith (Phil. 4:13,19).
 2. Laboring fervently requires **total** commitment (Mark 12:30).

III. THE CONSTANCY OF LABORING FERVENTLY.

- A. The religion of Christ is the religion of **ALWAYS!**
 1. Saints are to always remember we are God's tools.
 - a. We are to always:
 - 1) Let our speech be with grace (Col. 4:6).
 - 2) Rejoice always in the Lord (Phil. 4:4).
 - 3) Always obey (Phil. 2:12).
 - 4) Be ready always to give an answer (1 Peter 3:15).
 2. To work always means to be "*instant in season, out of season*" (2 Tim. 4:2).
- B. Spasmodic service is not acceptable to the Lord (1 Cor. 15:58).
 1. Always means six days a week plus Sunday.
 2. Sunday only is vanity.

3. Always means when we are watched and praised plus when our work is unseen or unknown.
 4. Always means 365 days, not 364.
 5. Let us be wise not to forget [Prov. 27:1; Psa. 119:60; Heb. 3:15; 2 Cor. 12:15].
- C. A lack of constancy in our zeal as Christians simply means we aren't dependable.

IV. ZEALOUS WORKS REQUIRE "ABOUNDING" (1 Cor. 15:58).

- A. The Greek word translated "abounding" is an interesting study.
1. It is word *perisseous*: "to be over and above; to excel."
 2. We are to excel above "all others" (religious) [Matt. 5:20].
 3. Our zeal is to exceed beyond the minimum [Luke 15:17].
- B. Christian labor must be an abounding service.
1. This abounding service is a willing service [Matt. 20].
 2. This abounding service is a fervent service [Rom. 12:11].
 3. This abounding service receives first place [Matt. 6:33].

V. MOTIVES FOR LABORING FERVENTLY.

- A. The final resurrection.
1. The entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 15 deals with our resurrection and immortality.
 - a. Proof of our resurrection: Christ's resurrection, vs. 12f.
 - b. Consequences of no resurrection: all is vain, vs. 14-19.
 - c. The nature of our resurrected body: incorruptible, glorious, vs. 35-49.
- B. The final judgment.
1. Judgment day will be a day of accounting [2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12].
 2. Judgment day will be a day of reward [Gal. 6:9; 2 Tim. 4:8].

3. Our fervent labor will not be in vain [Matt. 25:34].
4. The certainty of God's Word is the certainty of the reward of our labors in Christ.

CONCLUSION:

1. Laboring fervently for the Lord means "**HAPPINESS**" here and "**HEAVEN**" hereafter.
2. We must examine ourselves and ask, "Am I abounding in the work of the Lord?"
3. We must not forget, "*...the night cometh when no man can work*" [John 9:4].
4. The great need of the church today is not more **members**, but more **workers**,
5. Are you laboring fervently that you may stand mature and complete in **all** the will of God?

The Priorities Of Life

Col. 3:1-2

Ed Casteel

1. The book of Colossians helps us to see the superiority of Christ and the way of Christ over the philosophies and teachings of men. Particularly is Paul concerned about vain philosophies. Therefore, the challenge of Colossians 3:1,2 is to "seek the things that are above." When one follows that instruction then he has his priorities right.
2. Paul was pleased there were some at Colosse who were seeking to rise above the indulgences of the flesh. But, they thought that to do so they needed some special means to achieve that end.
 - a. They sought to develop a system of superior knowledge. Paul calls it "philosophy and vain deceit."
 - b. They sought to worship angels so as to have the advantage of mystical revelations and influences. Paul calls it "a voluntary humility."
 - c. They sought to observe certain Jewish practices such as refusing to eat certain meats and observing certain feast days. Paul calls this as having only a "shadow of the things to come."
 - d. They sought to subject the body to severe punishments. Paul says this is of no value against the indulgences of the flesh.
3. From here, Paul proceeds to teach the Colossians how they could overcome the flesh. They would never become sinlessly perfect, but they could become full grown in Christ by looking to him in whom, "*dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*" (Col. 2:9).
4. The question is how is this achieved? Paul's answer is found in Colossians 3:1-2.

DISCUSSION:

I. ANALYZE THE TEXT

A. "*If ye then be risen with Christ.*"

1. Zerr points out that the passage should be translated "since." "Since ye have been risen with

Christ." Therefore, whatever follows does so based on the condition set forth in this text.

2. "Ye" shows the personal nature of the challenge.
3. "Risen with Christ."
 - a. To be risen with Christ one first must be buried with Christ. This burial is pictured in baptism [Col. 2:12].
 - b. As one is risen with Christ he is risen to walk with Him in the *"newness of life"* (Rom. 6:3,4).
 - c. As one is risen with Christ he becomes, *"a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"* (2 Cor. 5:17).
- B. "Seek the things that are above."
 1. Seek demands a great deal of effort on the part of the individual. It is to desire, to endeavor, to enquire.
 - a. Jesus said when ye seek ye shall find [Matt 7:7].
 - b. Jesus commanded *"seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness"* [Matt 6:33].
 - c. After the crucifixion the women came to "seek" the place where Jesus was laid, not knowing that he had already been resurrected [Mark 16:6].
 - d. We are challenged in Luke 13:24, *"Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."*
 - e. Jesus came to *"seek and save that which was lost"* [Luke 19:10].
 2. The parallel to verse 1 is verse 2. *"Set your affections on things above."*
 - a. To set your affections is to be mentally disposed. It demands an intent, it is not an accident, it is an exercise of the mind.
 - b. We are to set our *"affections on things that are above."* Adam Clarke says, "let your heart be entirely engrossed by them" [Clarke Commentary, Vol. 6, p. 526].
 3. Those things that are above.

- a. To be able to seek the things that are above we must first know the source of our guidance and the results of that direction.
 - 1) Man's wisdom comes from one of two directions, and where he sets his heart will determine the action of his life.
 - 2) The wisdom that descendeth not from above, is earthly, sensual, and devilish [James 3:15]. And will result in our living a life that is controlled and dominated by sin.
 - 3) "*But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy*" [James 3:17]. And will lead to a heavenly reward, for he will be seeking the things that are above.
- b. Thayer says concerning that which we are seeking it is a "higher place." Paul leaves no uncertainty as to where that place is when he says "*where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*"
 - 1) Peter's great Pentecost sermon exalts both the resurrection of Christ, as well as his exaltation.
 - a) Peter quotes Psalm 16:8 to prove that David predicted that one would be raised from the dead.
 - b) The logical question is "of whom was he speaking?"
 - c) Peter shows that David was not speaking of himself, but rather of another, and that one was Christ [Acts 29:31].
 - d) These passages are solid evidence that David was speaking concerning Christ, for David is still in the grave.
 - 2) David knew that God made a promise and confirmed it with an oath, that he would set one upon His throne; and being a prophet he foresaw that the promise had direct refer-

- ence to the resurrection of Christ [Acts 2:30,31; 2 Sam. 7:12-16; Psalms 89: 35-37].
- 3) The exaltation of Christ to David's throne, at the right hand of God, is a fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy in Daniel 7:13,14.
 - a) Peter says this prophecy is a fulfillment of that promise.
 - b) Jesus was to go away that the comforter could come (John 16:7).
 - c) Peter says Jesus received the promise of the Spirit when he went to the right hand of God [Acts 2:33-36].
- C. The conclusion therefore is, when we set our priorities in proper order we will seek the things that are above.
1. 2 Cor. 4:18, *"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."*
 2. Heb. 13:14, *"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."*

II. APPLICATION OF THE TEXT

- A. We live the new life that we have in Christ because we have been raised with Christ and are directed to the spiritual rather than the physical things of life [Matt. 6:19,20].
- B. Whatever material things we have we are to use them to the glory of God. And in doing so we are seeking the things that are above.
 1. The Christian uses material things to serve his family while seeking the things that are above [1 Tim. 5:8].
 2. The Christian uses material things to help others while seeking the things that are above [Eph. 4:28; James 1:27].
 3. The Christian uses material things to help support the preaching of the gospel while he is seeking the things that are above [Gal. 6:6; 1 Cor. 9:14; Phil. 4:15-17].

- C. While we are seeking the things that are above we cannot serve God and mammon (Matt. 6:24). The choice of service was made when we decided to be buried with Christ and to be raised with him.

II. A FEW EXAMPLES OF THOSE WHO FOLLOWED THIS CHALLENGE

- A. Enoch was translated by God because he walked with him (Gen. 5:22). Truly, he must have had his priorities right and was seeking the things that are above.
- B. Noah lived in a world that was so corrupt that it repented God that he had even made the world (Gen. 6:6). But, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Gen. 6:8). Certainly he had his priorities right, and was seeking the things that were above.
- C. Abraham became the father of the faithful. There is no doubt that as he traveled by the direction of the Lord, that he was seeking, *"a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God"* [Heb. 11:10].
- D. *"By faith Moses when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season"* [Heb. 11:24,25]. Was he not seeking the things that were above when he esteemed, *"the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward"* [Heb. 11:26]?
- E. Elijah stood before the 450 prophets of Baal and challenged all Israel to decide if they were going to serve God or Baal. *"How long halt ye between two opinions."* Truly, he sought the things that were above, and was, like Enoch, rewarded by the Lord by being translated that he should not see death. And his mantle of responsibility was passed to Elisha.
- F. Paul would suffer great persecution because he would not bow to the pressures of the people (2 Cor. 11). All the while, he was seeking the things that were above. To the church at Philippi he wrote, *"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to*

be with Christ; which is far better, Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you" (Phil. 1:23-24).

- G. Antipas, the faithful servant, would not deny the name of the Lord, so he became a faithful martyr (Rev. 2:13). Heavenly gain was more important than earthly life.

CONCLUSION

1. With the challenge that Paul gave and the examples of these who have gone before, are you willing to be risen with Christ, and to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God? If so, then, *"set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."*
2. *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:1,2).*

The Hope Which Is Laid Up For You In Heaven

Col. 1:5

Ronnie Whittemore

1. The subject assigned for this hour is taken from Colossians 1:5 which reads in part, "*the hope which is laid up for you in heaven....*"
 - a. One important subject noted in our text is HOPE.
 - b. A second important subject mentioned in our text is HEAVEN.
2. Hope is a Bible subject that is often neglected or at least rarely discussed. It may be mentioned in passing as a point in a sermon or in an article, but it does not get much attention by way of study or presentation. Yet, hope is a very fundamental principle in everything that we believe and practice in our spiritual lives.
 - a. The word hope is found 129 times in 121 verses in the King James Bible.
 - b. The English word hope is translated from a number of Hebrew and Greek words in the Bible.
 - 1) In the Old Testament, these Hebrews words are used:
 - a) *tigwa*, which means "to look for something with eager expectation."
 - b) *batach*, which means "to rely on something reliable."
 - c) *yachal*, means "trust."
 - 2) In the New Testament, the following Greek words are used:
 - a) *elpizein* (verb) and *elpis* (noun) which mean "to anticipate, usually with pleasure; expectation or confidence:—faith, hope" (Strong's Dictionary).
 - b) *pepoithenai* which means "to trust."
 - c) *hupomenein* which means "to endure."
 - d) *prosdokan* which means "to expect or to await."
 - c. Bible hope is not a wish or desire that something will happen; Neither is hope simply an expectation without

sincere desire; Bible hope is desire and expectation that is based upon confidence.

- d. Please notice the comments in Holman's Dictionary concerning the subject of hope.
 - e. "HOPE is trustful expectation, particularly with reference to the fulfillment of God's promises. Biblical hope is the anticipation of a favorable outcome under God's guidance. More specifically, hope is the confidence that what God has done for us in the past guarantees our participation in what God will do in the future. This contrasts to the world's definition of hope as "a feeling that what is wanted will happen." Understood in this way, hope can denote either a baseless optimism or a vague yearning after an unattainable good. If hope is to be genuine hope, however, it must be founded on something [or someone] which affords reasonable grounds for confidence in its fulfillment. The Bible bases its hope in God and His saving acts."
3. Heaven is the second word upon which we want to focus.
- a. While the KJV and other versions uses the word "heaven" in the singular, the ASV of 1901 uses the plural, "heavens."
 - b. Some commentators indicate that the plural is a Hebrew conception, which probably originated in such language as Deut. 10:14 which reads: "*Behold, unto Jehovah thy God belongeth heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that is therein.*" In all probability, the apostle is referring to "all regions and spheres of the unseen world."
 - c. Likewise, the word "heaven" represents all of the heavenly things to which Paul refers throughout this book.
 - 1) Things in heaven that are visible and invisible [Col. 1:16].
 - 2) Things in heaven [Col. 1:20].
 - 3) Every creature under heaven [Col. 1:23].
 - 4) Our Master is in heaven [Col. 4:1].
 - d. It is interesting to note the similarities between Col. 1:5 and Col. 1:23.

DISCUSSION:**I. THE NATURE AND DESCRIPTION OF HOPE.**

- A. Hope is unique in that it points neither to the past nor to the present (Rom. 8:24-25).
 - 1. Hope points forward; it is always in the future.
 - 2. Hope is expectation, desire and anticipation.
- B. While many people have a plurality of hopes, religiously speaking, the New Testament teaches there is ONE HOPE in Ephesians 4:4-6.
 - 1. The Christians's hope is heavenly, not earthly.
 - 2. This hope descends from God and includes the ONE resurrection (Acts 24:14-15).
 - 3. This same hope was preached by Paul to king Agrippa in Acts 26:6-7.
- C. This hope is eternal life and is centered in heaven (Titus 1:2; 1 Peter 1:3-4).
- D. What Bible hope really is.
 - 1. The Christian's hope is described as an anchor (Heb. 6:17-20).
 - a. The hope described in this passage is secure and stable.
 - b. This hope is anchored to the promises and blessing which Jehovah delivered to Abraham (Heb. 6:13).
 - c. It is fastened to the faithfulness of God's Word and the fact that He cannot lie (Heb. 6:17-18).
 - d. Hope is also attached to Jesus who serves as our High Priest (Heb. 6:19-20).
 - e. No wonder the Christian hope is described as a strong, secure and stable anchor of the soul.
 - 2. The Christian hope is also connected with the new birth (1 Peter 1:3; 1:22-23).
 - a. One is begotten by the Spirit through the Word (1 Cor. 4:15) and born of water (John 3:3-5).
 - b. The result of one's obedience to the gospel is salvation in Christ which is THE HOPE of the world.
- E. What Bible hope does.
 - 1. "Hope maketh not to shame" (Rom. 5:4-5).
 - 2. "Hope gives an answer" (1 Peter 3:15).
 - 3. Hope motivates (1 Cor. 9:7-14, 24-26).

4. Hope gives us mercy (Psalm 33:22).
 5. Hope gives us security and safety (Job 11:18).
 6. Hope abides (1 Cor. 13:8, 13).
 7. Hope produces patience (Rom. 8:25).
 8. Hope purifies (1 John 3:1-3; Rom. 15:13).
- F. Where the Christian places his hope.
1. In the Godhead.
 - a. Can you imagine the existence of hope without God? There would be NO HOPE without God.
 - b. Can you imagine the hope of salvation without Christ, the sacrificial Lamb of God?
 - c. Can you imagine the hope of a better life on earth and an eternal life in heaven without the Word of truth revealed by the Holy Spirit through inspiration of men?
 - d. All hope is based in the Godhead and their faithfulness in showing mercy and delivering precious promises (Psalm 38:15; 43:5; 1 Tim. 4:10).
 2. In the resurrection of the dead.
 - a. The subject of hope and the resurrection are tied together in several passages in the New Testament (Acts 23:6; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18).
 - b. Man's resurrection from the dead is assured because of Jesus' bodily resurrection from the tomb nearly 2,000 years ago!
 - 1) He is described as "*the firstfruits of them that slept*" (1 Cor. 15:20).
 - 2) Jesus promised His hearers that they would be raised from the dead (John 5:28-29).

II. NATURE AND DESCRIPTION OF HEAVEN.

- A. Heaven is a real place.
1. Where is heaven located? We know very little.
 - a. Astronauts have not located it.
 - b. Heaven is up.
 - 1) Paul was caught up to the third heaven – 2 Cor. 12:2.
 - 2) "Lord looked down from heaven" (Psalm 14:2).

- 3) "Jesus was taken up into heaven" [Acts 1:11].
- 4) Saints will be caught up together with him [1 Thess. 4:17].
2. Heaven cannot be seen with the human eye, nor the most modern telescope.
 - a. Heaven is seen through the "eye of faith."
 - b. God has given us the assurance He will let us know where it is when the time comes [1 Peter 1:3-5].
3. The Bible teaches that heaven is a real place for real people.
 - a. Bodies will not be "flesh and blood," but incorruptible [1 Cor. 15:50-53].
 - b. Some people who will be there:
 - 1) Jesus [Acts 1:9].
 - 2) Enoch [Gen. 5:24].
 - 3) Elijah [2 Kings 2:11].
- B. Heaven is a place where we will never be alone.
 1. It is the dwelling place of the Godhead.
 - a. God the Father will be there [John 14:2; Matt. 6:9; 1 Kings 8:30].
 - b. Christ will be there [Heb. 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22].
 - c. The Holy Spirit will be there [Matt. 3:16; 1 Peter 1:2].
 2. It is the dwelling place of the Redeemed.
 - a. Moses [Matt. 17:3; Heb. 11:23-28].
 - b. Noah [Gen. 6:9; Heb. 11:7].
 - c. Abel [Heb. 11:4].
 - d. Enoch [Heb. 11:5].
 - e. Abraham [Gal. 3:29; Luke 16:22ff; Heb. 11:10-16].
 - f. Joseph [Heb. 11:22].
 - g. Faithful Israelites [Heb. 11:29-30].
 - h. Stephen [Acts 7:60].
 - i. Paul [2 Tim. 4:6-8].
 - j. Faithful we have known [Eph. 3:15; Col. 1:13; Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23].
- C. Heaven is a place where the righteous will know where they are.
 1. It is a place of righteousness [Rev. 21:27].

2. It is a place of beauty (Rev. 21:10).
3. It is a place of happiness (Rev. 21:4).
4. It is a place of rest (Matt. 11:28; Heb. 4:9).
- D. Heaven is a place where the righteous will have selective memory.
 1. What do we know and remember in this life?
 - a. Sorrow (2 Cor. 6:10).
 - b. Suffering (1 Peter 4:16; 2 Tim. 3:12).
 - c. Separation (Eccl. 12:7).
 2. What will we remember in heaven?
 - a. There is no indication in Luke 16 that Lazarus remembered the rich man.
 - b. We are told that "*God shall wipe away all tears*" (Rev. 21:4).
 3. Who will we know in heaven?
 - a. Saved will know Christ (1 John 3:2).
 - b. Saved will know one another (2 Sam. 12:23).
- E. Heaven is an eternal place (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 22:14; 1 Cor. 15:22).

CONCLUSION:

1. The words "hope" and "heaven" are beautiful words to every Christian.
2. His hope will be fulfilled when heaven is realized and the crown of life is placed on his head.
3. But heaven will only be gained by preparing in this life and living for the Master.

