

Epistle to the Colossians

- Introduction



Colossae:

- A prominent city during the days of Paul; located in southwestern region of modern Turkey.
- Now buried in ruins;
- No records of Paul visiting Colossae (2:1);
- The Colossian church was likely started through the ministry of Epaphras (see 1:7; 4:13); nevertheless it was a flourishing ministry;

The Epistle:

- Like Romans, written to a people the Apostle had never met;
- From Rome, Approx. AD 62, while Paul was in prison;
- About the same time with the epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians;

Focus:

- Praise for their faith in Christ Jesus, and their love for all the saints;
- Warning against judaism and those who promote it;
- The primacy of Jesus Christ, and His unique, exclusive position;
- The position and response of the believers;

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Colossians Chapter 1

Theme: Christ Jesus, the image of the invisible God

Introduction

As with any threat among Gods people, there is always a haven to run to, (Christ Jesus). In the book of Colossians Apostle Paul is telling the Church to maintain and strengthen their integrity, by steadfast faith and love for Christ and for the saints. The Colossians like other Gentile believers were being presented with doctrines that were not in line with the Gospel of Jesus. Therefore, the need for Apostle Paul to warn them about heresies among the Church would open their eyes to know how to tell the difference between the truth and a lie. The relationship that Christians should have with Christ Jesus gives access to a calling of service to bring forth fruit worthy unto God.

Preparation

Mnemonics:

- your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,
- the word of the truth of the gospel
- bringeth forth fruit
- do not cease to pray for you
- that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will
- that ye might walk worthy of the Lord
- Christ the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature
- And you... has he reconciled
- I Paul am made a minister of the gospel
- the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints
- this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Please read chapter 1 of Colossians. As you read, highlight any words or phrases that impress you; use the mnemonics above as a model.

After reading, please spend a few moments in prayer to God in response to what you heard, focusing on one or more highlights from your reading.

Please select one (1) of your highlight and be prepared to share it when you come to class.

Ask God to guide you as you answer the study questions below.

Epistle to the Colossians

V1-2 It is apparent that Paul is the author of this letter. As he greets the Colossian Church, he refers to them as "The saints and faithful brethren in Christ". What is the significance of this identification in the Church?

The Apostle has a signature greeting that is common in almost all his letters. As you reflect on this greeting, what parallel can you make in our modern life and Christian experience, and what application would you propose to the church? Why?

V3 What does praying for each other do for the Church body?

V4-8 As a companion to God's people (the Colossian Church), Paul was thankful for their faith and love. What more can be said concerning their eternal destiny based on their fruitful lives?

The Apostle Paul had not met the Colossians personally, yet he observes for their edification and our learning, several virtues (their faith in Christ Jesus, their love for all the saints, the hope laid up for them in heaven, the fruitfulness of the Gospel they received...) which he must have assessed from the report he received on their behalf. What traits can we learn about Paul and his focus in ministry?

Give another example in scriptures that compare to the above, and what you've learned.

V9-11 Paul's prayer included that they might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. What does this answered prayer mean for the Colossian Church?

In what ways do we at CMBC show ourselves to be thankful and prayerful for one another?
