

THE LETTER OF COLOSSIANS

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THE LETTER OF COLOSSIANS

General Information: The letter to the Colossians is to be dated during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, where he spent at least two years under house arrest (see Ac 28:16-31). Some have argued that Paul wrote Colossians from Ephesus or Caesarea, but most of the evidence favors Rome as the place

where Paul penned all the Prison Letters (Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Philemon). Colossians should be dated c. A.D. 60, in the same year as Ephesians and Philemon. Colosse had been a leading city in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey). What gave Colosse New Testament importance, however, was the fact that, during Paul's three-year ministry in Ephesus, Epaphras had been converted and had carried the gospel to Colosse (cf. 1:7-8; Ac 19:10). Perhaps as a result of the efforts of Epaphras or other converts of Paul, Christian churches had also been established in Laodicea and Hierapolis. Most of them were house churches (Col. 4:15; Phm 2). Most likely all of them were primarily Gentile. The circumstance which prompted Paul's writing of Colossians seemed to be the special heresy that arose there. The church became the target of heretical attack, which led

to Epaphras's visit to Paul in Rome and ultimately to the penning of the Colossian letter (NIV Study Bible, p. 1811). The purpose of the letter is to demonstrate the apostle's sense of responsibility towards all Christians everywhere, even those he had not met, and lays tremendous emphasis upon the need of correct doctrine and right belief (International Bible Commentary, p. 1451). The exact nature of the Colossian heresy is not described explicitly in the epistle, for the original readers knew it well. From Paul's statements made in opposition to the false teachings, however, it is apparent that the heresy, which was undermining and replacing the centrality of Jesus Christ, was a strange mixture of Christian teaching, certain extra-biblical Jewish traditions, and pagan philosophy (Full Life Study Bible, p. 452).

READ AND DISCUSS EACH VERSE AND TRANSLATION ALONG WITH THE “ADDITIONAL INFORMATION” AND “QUESTIONS.” (Additional translations may be consulted also).

NOTICE : If you read only the **bold face type** you will be reading the *King James Version* in its entirety. If you read only the “light face type” you will be reading *The Last Days Bible* in its entirety.

COLOSSIANS

Colossians 1: [1] Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, [2] To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 *My Dear Friends in Colosse:* This is from Paul, sent out by God’s will and decree as a

messenger of Jesus Christ, and from our brother Timothy. 2 Greetings to all of you dear ones there in Colosse in Asia Minor, who are dedicated to Christ and faithful to Him. May God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord give you peace of mind and heart and literally shower you with undeserved blessings.)

Additional Information: (verse 1) Paul, an apostle. Paul refers to his apostleship because he is unknown to the Colossians. This refers to his authoritative title, signifying equality with the Twelve, because he has seen the risen Christ (1 Cor. 15:8). In his official capacity, he is writing to combat error. **Of Jesus Christ.** Paul is our Lord's ambassador. He bore His commission, and did His work, and sought His acceptance. Paul's life and work were ordered by Christ. **By the will of God.** This speaks of his divine appointment. His appointment as apostle was not by the Twelve, by religious leaders, by his family, nor by himself. **And Timothy our brother.** This trusted companion was with Paul in Rome. Timothy was Paul's spiritual son (1 Tim. 1:2, 18; 2 Tim. 1:2; 1 Cor. 4:17).(Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 588).

(verse 2) To the saints(Gk. *hagios*). This means “holy and separated ones”: separated to God, and separated from the world. The main idea is separation to God, for His purpose and for His service. **And faithful brethren.** Believing brethren who are loyal to Christ. Paul refers to them as brethren. God has one spiritual family, and all are equal, despite difference of cultural background, social status, or racial origin. **In Christ.** This speaks of the spiritual position of believers in union with Christ. (Ibid., p. 588).

1. **Read Col. 1:1.** Paul is an apostle equal with the Twelve. True or False

2. **Read Col. 1:2.** “Saints” are those who are: a. dead for 100 years or more. b. separated to God. c. separated from the world. d. separated to God for His purpose and service.

Colossians 1: [3] We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, [4] Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love

which ye have to all the saints, (3 We are constantly praying and thanking the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for you, 4 after hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus, and how you have shown such love toward all who are dedicated to Him.)

Additional Information: (verse 3) We give thanks to God. Paul and Timothy give thanks to God. All of Paul's letter, except Galatians, begins with thanks or praise to God.

(verse 4) This thanks, Paul said, is rendered when we pray. And thanksgiving was given because Paul had heard (from Epaphras, Col 1:7; cf. 4:12) about their growing **faith in Christ Jesus and their love...for all the saints**. Prayer here is the broader, more inclusive act of worship including thanksgiving and intercession (Acts 16:25) (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 669).

3. Read Col. 1:3-4. Paul thanks God for the Colossians because he heard the reports of their: a. faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. b. large offerings that were going to be sent to him. c. love that was extended to all Christians.

Colossians 1: [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; [6] Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth: (5
And your faith and love are inspired by the irrefutable hope you have of what God is planning and keeping safe for you in Heaven, which you heard about when the truth of the Great News was first made plain to you. 6
That Great News is now going out throughout the whole world, in the same way that it came to you. With great success, it's changing lives, just as it's been doing among you from the first day you heard the full truth and understood the true nature of the rich favor God has granted us.)

Additional Information: (verse 5) When Paul says that our hope is stored up in heaven, he is emphasizing our future destination and salvation. The Christian has a sure hope; and so he does not live for himself, but as one who has an eternal destiny. So the hope of glory is carefully kept by God as a treasure which one day they will fully share (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 31).

(verse 6) The gospel was never intended for an exclusive group of people; it is good news for the whole world (Matt. 24:14; 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15; Rom. 1:8, 14, 16; 1 Thess. 1:8). It transcends all ethnic, geographic, cultural, and political boundaries (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1832). Wherever Paul went, he preached the gospel – to Gentile audiences, to hostile Jewish leaders, and even to his Roman guards. Whenever people believed in the message that Paul spoke, they were changed. God’s Word is not just for our information, it is for our transformation! Becoming a Christian means beginning a whole new relationship with God, not just turning over a new leaf. New believers have a changed purpose, direction, attitude, that results in a new behavior (Life Application Bible, p. 2158).

4. **Read Col. 1:4-5.** The Colossian believers trusted in Christ Jesus and loved God's people because they were looking forward to: a. seeing their pastor on Sunday.
b. the joys of heaven.

5. **Read Col. 1:6.** The good news is spreading all over the world and changing lives. True or False

Colossians 1: [7] As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; [8] Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit. (7 Our dear fellow servant, Epaphras, thru whom you learned these truths, is so faithfully working for Christ for your good. 8 It was Epaphras who told us how the Holy Spirit had filled your hearts with such love.)

Additional Information: (verse 7) Epaphras was the bearer of the good news. But his mission was no mere individual enterprise, for he went with the full support of Paul. Indeed he preached on Paul's behalf. Here is the first hint in the Epistle that Paul has not

actually visited Colossae himself. But above and beyond the commission of the apostle is the authority of Christ. Epaphras may have been sent by Paul; but ultimately he was the **minister of Christ** (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 34). **Fellow-servant** is the Greek word *doulos*, usually meaning “slave” or “one who is wholly owned and who owes undivided allegiance and obedience to a master.” Many believers were called slaves (servants) of God: Moses (Ps. 105:26), Joshua (Josh. 24:29), David (2 Sam. 7:5), Jeremiah (Jer. 7:25), etc. (L. Study Bible, p. 2043).

(verse 8) The Today’s English Version translates this verse, “He (Epaphras) has told us of the love that the Spirit has given you.” The New English Bible states, “It is he (Epaphras) who has brought us the news of your God-given love.” It is rare that one can speak of “love” without designating the object of love. “Love” here may be the love for all fellow Christians (as in Col. 1:4), or it could be the Colossians’ love for Paul and his companions. Perhaps one can render verse 8 as “He has told us how the Spirit has caused you to love fellow Christians” or “...love us” (Translators Handbook, p. 13).

6. **Read Col. 1:7.** The Colossians learned about God's grace from Epaphras, whom Paul loved. He worked together with Paul and was a faithful servant of Christ. True of False

7. **Read Col. 1:8.** Epaphras told Paul how thoroughly love had been worked into the lives of the Colossians by God's Spirit. True or False

Colossians 1: [9] For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; [10] That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; (9 That's why we haven't stopped praying for you since the day we heard his good report about you. We're asking God to fill you with all the wisdom and spiritual

understanding you need, so that you will know exactly how He wants you to live, and what He wants you to do in serving Him. 10 We pray this so that each of you may live a life that will be an honor to the Lord, pleasing Him in every way as you do what is right and honorable, and that you will constantly grow in an ever fuller knowledge of God.)

Additional information: (verse 9-10) Sound doctrine leads to a godly lifestyle (See 1 Tim. 6:3-4; Titus 2:1-8). Unsound doctrine or false teaching leads to lasciviousness (lawless unrestraint) (See Jude 1:4). So Paul prays for the Colossians: (1) That they “might be filled with the knowledge of God’s will” (Col. 1:9). The context (Col. 1:10) implies the moral aspect of God’s will, His will for the conduct of our lives. (2) For wisdom and spiritual understanding (Col. 1:9). “Wisdom” being the discernment of what is right, true and lasting. “Understanding” being to grasp or comprehend that which is expressed by God. It is “spiritual” wisdom and understanding. That which is quickened and taught by the Holy Spirit (1 Jn 2:20, 27). (3) The result of “spiritual

wisdom and understanding in the knowledge of God's will" is a "walk worthy of the Lord," in other words, a life lived in honor to the Lord, pleasing Him in every way (Col. 1:10).

Paul was exposing a heresy in the Colossian church that was similar to *Gnosticism*. Gnostics valued the accumulation of knowledge, but Paul pointed out that knowledge in itself is empty. To be worth anything it must lead to a changed life and right living. Knowledge is not merely to be accumulated; it should give us direction for living (Life Application Bible, p. 2158). "Walk" is the Greek word *peripateo* and means "to order one's behavior, to conduct one's self." Wisdom and understanding is not an end in itself. It must issue in right practice. Doctrines and ethics are for Paul inseparable (Wuest's Word Studies in Greek, p. 176).

8. **Read Col. 1:9-10.** Paul prays for the Colossians: a. that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will. b. for wisdom and spiritual understanding. c. to walk worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him in every way. d. to be fruitful in every good work. e. that they may increase in the knowledge of God. f. all of the above.

Colossians 1: [11] Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; [12] Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: (Then you will continually be strengthened with unlimited power, because you will be connected to God's glorious power, enabling you to patiently endure every test and trial with joy, and to be long-suffering toward those who oppose you. 12 Likewise, continually thank the Father with joy, as you think of the fact that He has made us eligible to share in the inheritance of all the marvelous things He has prepared in his Kingdom of Light for those who are truly dedicated to Him!)

Additional Information : (verses 11-12)

Verses 11-12 could be paraphrased in the following way:
We pray that God will make you strong in every way by His glorious power, so that you will be able to joyfully

and patiently endure whatever comes, so that you will not quit when troubles comes , and not give up your faith, as you joyfully thank the Father, who made you fit to share the believer's inheritance, God's people who live in the light.

To live the Christian life we must receive God's strength. In order to live in a manner worthy of the Lord (Col. 1:10), we must be strengthened by His power. This impartation of power is an ongoing experience of receiving from God His own life. Nothing else can enable us to overcome sin, Satan, and the world (Full Life Study Bible, p. 454). It is significant that this receiving of power is a continuous experience. *Strengthened* translates the continuous present participle *dunamoumenoi*. We may confidently expect that God who came to us in regenerating power will continue to strengthen us. The fruit of this strengthening is *patience, longsuffering, and joyfulness* (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 37). "Patience" is that quality of steady persistence whereby a man continues to his goal. It is unrelenting endeavor even in spite of difficulty and trial. "Longsuffering" is patiently enduring wrongs or difficulties. "Joyfulness" is the attitude and calmness of heart that is demonstrated under these circumstances.

9. **Read Col. 1:11-12.** Paul prays that you will be strengthened from God's glorious power, so that you may be able to: a. preach longer sermons. b. make more money. c. pass through any experience and endure it with joy. d. thank the Father because you are privileged to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

Colossians 1: [13] Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: [14] In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: (He rescued us from the gloom and darkness of Satan's power over us, and transported us into the Kingdom of the Son whom He loves so dearly. 14 By means of His suffering, bleeding, and dying for us, we have been rescued from sin and its terrifying consequences. By His sacrifice, He made it

possible for God to offer us forgiveness for our sins.)

Additional Information: (verse 13-14)

Delivered us from the power of darkness. Central to redemption in Christ is deliverance from the dominion and power of darkness, that is, from Satan (Matt. 4:8-11; Lk. 22:52-53; Eph. 2:2; 6:12). We are now in the kingdom of Christ and under His rule (Rom. 6:17-22; Acts 26:18) (Full Life Study Bible, p. 454). **Delivered us from ...darkness** conveys the idea of salvation rescuing us from the tyranny of darkness. Drawing on an important Old Testament theme (Ex. 6:6; 14:30), it includes rescue from such negatives as danger, death, sickness, and hostile situations in general (Psa. 33:18-19). These rescues include both present deliverances and future, consummated deliverances in the world to come (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1813). **Translated** is a word with a special use. In the ancient world, when one empire won a victory over another, it was the custom to take the population of the defeated country and transfer it lock, stock and barrel to the conqueror's land. Thus the people of the northern kingdom were taken away to Assyria, and the people of the southern kingdom were taken away to Babylon. So Paul says that God has

transferred the Christian to his own kingdom. That was not only a transference by a rescue; it meant a transference *from darkness to light*, from *condemnation to forgiveness*, from *the power of Satan to the power of God* (See Acts 26:18) (DSB, William Barclay, p. 111).

Kingdom. A kingdom in its most basic sense is a group of people ruled by a king. Christians have acknowledged Christ as their King and are subjects in His kingdom (MacArthur NT Commentary, p. 41). One may translate *kingdom* as “brought us safe under the rule of his dear Son” or “brought us safe to the point where his dear Son rules over us” (UBS Translators Handbook, p. 20). Salvation is thus a present experience of new living conditions and forgiveness based on the shed blood of Jesus (redemption through his blood).

10. **Read Col. 1:13; Acts 26:18.** God has rescued us from the one who rules in the kingdom of darkness, unto the one who rules in the kingdom of light. True or False

11. **Read Col. 1:14.** God has purchased our freedom and forgiven our sins: a. by our church attendance. b.

by giving to the poor. c. by our good works. d. with the blood of His dear Son.

Colossians 1: [15] Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: [16] For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: (15 As we look at Him, we see what God is really like, because He is like God in every way, except that God is invisible. He is God's firstborn Son, whom God has placed in authority over all creation. 16 God created all things by Him – everything in the heavens and everything on earth. This includes everything that can be seen and also everything that's invisible, such as the spirit world with its

kingdoms, powers, rulers, and authorities. God created all things thru His Son and for Him.)

Additional Information: (verse 15) Who is the image of the invisible God. The thought is that, in Christ, man can see what God is like, his very nature and being. In the Son the invisible God became visible (UBS Translators Handbook, p. 22). **The firstborn of every creature** represents a three-word phrase in Greek. It implies “He (Christ) was born before all creation” or in a hierarchical sense, “the begotten One is superior to all creation.” Possibly both are intended? (It should be made clear that “born” or “begotten” refers not to the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, but to the relation of Jesus to God). The use of the word “born” or “begotten” emphasizes the unique relationship between God and Jesus which is best expressed in terms of father and son. The superiority of Christ to all creation can sometimes be expressed as “He is more important than all that was created” or “He ranks higher than all created things” (Ibid., p.22). Consider how various translations translate Colossians 1:15: “Christ is exactly like God, who cannot be seen. He is the first-born Son, superior to all creation” (Contemporary English Version). “Now Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God. He

was born before creation began, for it was through him that everything was made..." (Phillips). "Jesus is the visible representative of the invisible God, the Father's first born and Prince of the whole creation" (The NT Letters). "Christ is the visible representation of the invisible God, the Firstborn (Or, 'born before anything was created.')

and Lord of all creation" (Weymouth). "He is the likeness of the unseen God, born first, before all the creation" (James Moffatt). "That Son is the exact image of the invisible God, who was born before the world was created" (NT in Everyday American English). "He is the image of the invisible God, born before and above everything created" (William Beck Translation).

The Greek word for "firstborn" can refer to one who was born first chronologically, but most often refers to pre-eminence in position, or rank (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1833).

(verse 16) Paul affirms the creative activity of Christ. (1) All things, both material and spiritual, owe their existence to the work of Christ as the active agent in creation (Jn. 1:3; Heb. 1:2). (2) All things hold together and are sustained by Him (Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3) (Full Life Study Bible, p. 455). In order to give more explicit proof of Jesus' role as "the firstborn over all

creation” (Col. 1:15), Paul depicts Him as Mediator, Agent, and Goal of all things (Jn. 1:3). This includes declaring His authority above all negative cosmic powers, which are also subjects of His creation who fell from their first estate. Paul’s reference point is Genesis 1 (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1813). Lest there should be any doubt as to the superiority of the Son to other spiritual beings, Paul stresses that He is not only the agent of the creation of the visible world, but also the invisible world of heavenly beings. These beings who comprise both the angels of God and also the devil and his angels – Paul uses synonymous terms here without giving a precise classification – are all alike due to the creative power of the Son, and so are subject to His control. In fact He is not only the agent, but the very goal of their creation. They exist with a view to His glory, and so are subservient to His eternal purpose (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 43).

12. **Read Col. 1:15.** Christ is the exact likeness of: a. Mary. b. Joseph. c. the unseen God.

13. **Read Col. 1:16.** Christ Himself is the Creator of: a. everything in heaven and earth. b. things we can see and things we can't. c. the spirit world with its kings and kingdoms, and its rulers and authorities. d. all of the above.

14. **Read Col. 1:16.** All things were made by Christ and for His glory. True or False

Colossians 1: [17] And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. [18] 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. (17 Yes, God's Son existed before anything was created, and all things are now held together by Him. 18 He is also the Head of the vast throngs who are His followers, the Church. And just as He has seniority and superiority in time and in power, He was also

the first to rise from the dead, so that He might be first in all things.)

Additional Information: (verses 17) He is before all things. “Christ existed before anything else existed” or “...before anything was created” (UBS Translators Handbook, p. 25) **By Him all things consist.** Jesus is not only the Creator of the world, but He is also its Sustainer. In Him, everything is held together, protected, and prevented from disintegrating into chaos. Because Christ is the Sustainer of all life, none of us is independent from Him (Life Application Bible, p. 2160).

(verse 18) He is the head of the body, the church. Here we have a picture of Christ’s relationship to His Church. He is the directing and controlling power to which the limbs must submit. Indeed that which give them their unity as a body, and enables them to function purposefully, is the control of the Head. So true unity in the body of Christ are due, not to a reorganization of the members, but to a renewed obedience to the divine Head. He is to be supreme in all respects, and at every point. Lord of creation and Lord of His Church, He must be Lord in the lives of His own (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 44). **The firstborn from the dead.**

Christ was the first to rise in an immortal body (1 Cor. 15:20, 53). Paul calls him the “firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20). Others who were raised from the dead (2 Ki. 4:35; Lk. 7:15; Jn. 11:44; Acts 9:36-41; 20:7-11) were raised only to die again (NIV Study Bible, p.1814).

15. **Read Col. 1:17.** Christ existed before everything else began, and He holds all creation together. True or False

16. **Read Col. 1:18.** Christ alone and in every respect is:
a. first and preeminent. b. above all others. c. supreme. d. highest in rank an authority. e. all of the above.

Colossians 1: [19] For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; [20] And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. (19 Because the Father took great delight in having

all the fullness that He Himself is, to also be present in His Son. 20 And God chose to reconcile all things to Himself by means of His Son. This included things on earth and things in Heaven. He made peace possible by means of the blood that Christ Jesus shed in His death on the cross.)

Additional Information: (verse 19) It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.

Today's English Version states, "For it was by God's own decision that the Son has in himself the full nature of God." God decided to have His fullness dwell in Christ. God's complete nature, undiminished, undiluted, and unshared with anyone (UBS Handbook for Translators, p. 27). God has chosen to reveal Himself fully in Jesus Christ. Seeing Jesus and understanding Him therefore means seeing and understanding God (NLT Study Bible, p. 2023).

(verse 20) To make peace through His blood means to cause God's enemies (Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:21) to become, by faith, His friends and His children (Eph. 2:11-19) (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 674).

Reconcile to himself all things. Does not mean that

Christ by his death has saved all people. Scripture speaks of an eternal hell and makes clear that only believers are saved. When Adam and Eve sinned, not only was the harmony between God and man destroyed, but also disorder came into creation (Ro 8:19-22). So when Christ died on the cross, he made peace possible between God and man, and he restored in principle the harmony in the physical world, though the full realization of the latter will come only when Christ returns (Ro 8:21) (NIV Study Bible, p. 1814). The verb *katallasso* (**to reconcile**) means “to change” or “exchange.” Its New Testament usage speaks of a change in a relationship. When people change from being at enmity with each other to being at peace, they are said to be reconciled. When the Bible speaks of reconciliation, then, it refers to the restoration of a right relationship between God and man (MacArthur NT Commentary, p. 56). Sin’s ruinous consequence was universal and pervasive, placing all of creation at odds with God and itself (See Rom. 8:20-23). The death of Christ restored the harmony and fellowship that once existed between God and His creation (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1814). Mankind and everything in the universe are brought in unity and harmony under Christ (Col.1:16-18). It does not mean, however, that all

people are reconciled irrespective of their wills. The person who rejects Christ's offer of reconciliation remains an enemy of God (rom. 2:4-10) (Full Life Study Bible, p. 455).

To sum it up: Here we are at the heart of the apostolic message of the cross, that Christ by the offering of Himself through death accepted the curse which was due to us. Thus His death was the basis for a return of sinful men to a position of fellowship with God.

But his reconciliation is not limited to men. It applies to the whole order of created being. It is significant that Paul does not here say 'all men', which would be contrary to his normal teaching, but **all things**. The phrase is indefinite and suggests the completeness of the plan of God. Not only is sinful man reconciled, but the created order which has been made subject to vanity because of sin (Rom. 8:20) will share also in the fruit of the mighty act of atonement on the cross. It is also significant that in this wide sweep of the scope of reconciliation Paul does not include 'things under the earth' as in Philippians 2:10. There he is dealing with the ultimate sovereignty of Christ; and so he insists that one day even Satan and his hosts will be forced to bend the knee. But here he is dealing with reconciliation and

its outcome as seen in a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness; but from this all finally rebellious beings, whether devils or men, are excluded (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 46).

17. **Read Col. 1:19.** It was God's own decision that the Son has in Himself the full nature of God. True or False

18. **Read Col. 1:20.** God chose to reconcile all things to Himself by means of: a. our good works. b. prayer. c. His Son (His blood on the cross).

Colossians 1: [21] And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled [22] In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: [23] If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to

**every creature which is under heaven;
whereof I Paul am made a minister; (21**

There was a time when you had no interest at all, nor any desire, to please God. You were actually enemies of God because of your evil thoughts and behavior. 22 But now you have been restored to friendship with Him by means of the suffering and death of Christ in His physical body. Now you can stand before God as pure and blameless in His sight as if you had never sinned – 23 if you are indeed continuing in the faith, deeply rooted, unflinching, fixed in your direction, and are not allowing yourselves to be seduced and led away from the hope that came to you when you heard and accepted the Great News. This Great News of which I was made a messenger has now been proclaimed to everyone throughout the whole world.)

Additional Information: (verse 21) You, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works. The New Living Translation translated this verse in the following manner: “You who were once so far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions.” The text may be taken as indicating either that mental alienation from God has a behavioral root or that mental alienation is expressed behaviorally. Paul’s point is that the mind and will cooperate in their rebellion against God (New Geneva Study Bible, p. 1866). Reconciliation is necessary because people are alienated (“cut off, estranged”) from life and God (Eph. 2:12; 4:18). Before conversion the Colossian believers were enemies or hostile to God in their minds as well as in their behavior (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 674).

(verse 22) But now you have been restored to friendship with Him by means of the suffering and death of Christ in His physical body. Now you can stand before God as pure and blameless in His sight as if you had never sinned. The three adjectives **holy** and **unblameable** and **unreproveable** in his sight (KJV), denote complete and total purity, the effect of Christ’s redemptive death in purifying His people from all

their sins, blemishes, and faults (UBS Translators Handbook, p. 32).

(verse 23) If ye continue in the faith. It is imperative that the Colossians recognize that they are not just passive objects of God's reconciling work, but must actively do their part in maintaining the state in which they now find themselves. In effect he says, "this is true if you continue..." This type of contrast between the contents of verse 23 and verse 22 may also be expressed as "but you must certainly continue" in the faith firmly established and steadfast, don't drift away (UBS Translators Handbook, p. 33).

19. **Read Col. 1:21.** Once you were alienated from God and were enemies because of: a. wicked works. b. evil deeds. c. evil behavior. d. evil thoughts (that is, an evil heart) and actions. e. all of the above.

20. **Read Col. 1:22.** Now God has made you His friends again. He did this through Christ's death so that He might bring you into His presence: a. as holy. b. with no wrong. c. faultless. d. innocent. e. blameless. f. as if you had never sinned. g. all of the above.

21. **Read Col. 1:23.** Salvation is yours: a. if you continue in your faith. b. if you are not moved away from the hope of the gospel. c. regardless of what you do, or if you believe.

Colossians 1: [24] Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: (24 And even right now, I'm rejoicing that it's my privilege to suffer for you. Because I am merely doing what is still needful when I suffer for Christ in my body, for the sake of His body, which is the Church.)

Additional Information: (verse 24) It is a believer's privilege to suffer for Christ (2 Tim. 3:11; 1 Pet. 3:13-14; 5:9; Heb. 10:32). The Greek word *thlipsis* means "distress," "pressure," or "trouble." Ordinarily it refers to trials in life. Christ does indeed continue to suffer when Christians suffer for Him. He asked Saul on the Damascus Road, "Why do you persecute Me?" (Acts 9:4) Since the church is Christ's body, He is affected

when it is affected. For the sake of Christ's church Paul willingly suffered (Phil. 1:29) (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 675). In the service of Christ his servants are called upon to suffer as He did.

22. **Read Col. 1:24.** There are things that Christ must still suffer (through His Church). Paul was sitting in a jail. He accepted and rejoiced in his part of suffering for Christ. True or False

Colossians 1: [25] Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; [26] Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: [27] To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (25 God, in carrying out His plan to use various people for

various purposes, appointed me to be a servant of His to the Church. He appointed me to reveal to you His complete message. 26 He appointed me to reveal the secret that's been hidden from all generations in past centuries, but which has now been revealed to those who are dedicated to Him. 27 God took great pleasure in making known to you and to everyone else, that which was previously unknown – that the great magnitude of His glory can now be shared by the Gentiles too! And their hope of sharing in that glory can be received when they too invite Jesus to live within them.)

Additional Information: (verse 25) I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God... to fulfil the word of God. “Dispensation” is a word that has been translated as “stewardship, commission or special work to be done.” That commission for Paul was to tell fully and completely the whole counsel of God (See Acts 20:26-27).

(verses 26-27) The false teachers in the Colossian church believed that spiritual perfection was a secret and hidden plan that only a few privileged people could discover. Their secret plan was meant to be exclusive. Paul said that he was proclaiming the word of God in its fullness, not just a part of the plan. He also called God's plan a "mystery that had been kept hidden for ages and generations," not in the sense that only a few would understand, but because it was hidden until Christ came. Through Christ it was made open to all. God's secret plan is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" – God planned to have his Son, Jesus Christ, live in the hearts of all who believe in Him – even Gentiles like the Colossians (Life Application Bible, p. 2161). Christ in you is the only hope of glory, the promise of glorification.

23. **Read Col. 1:25.** Paul became a servant by the commission of God to present to the Gentiles the word of God in its fullness. True or False

24. **Read Col. 1:26-27; Rom. 8:9.** Christ in you is the only hope of glory, the only hope of the promise of glorification. True or False

Colossians 1: [28] Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: [29] Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily. (28 So it's about Jesus that we preach. We warn everyone and teach everyone with all the wisdom given us, with the aim of being able to present everyone possible to God as persons who are altogether dedicated to Christ Jesus. 29 So that's my aim and goal when I work for God. And the energy I put forth is energy given me by Christ, which is working in and thru me in a powerful way.)

Additional Information: (verse 28) Whom we preach. Christ is central in the apostolic proclamation. He is the very heart of the message. **Warning every man, and teaching every man.** The Apostle was neither easy in his demands, nor shallow in his content. Paul described his preaching to the Ephesian elders as

being 'repentance toward God, and faith toward the Lord Jesus' (Acts 20:21) (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 54).

Warning means "to admonish," "to warn," usually implying an act or conduct which is being condemned (UBS Translators Handbook, p. 42). When Paul shared the Christian faith with Felix and Drusilla, they listened "to Paul talk about believing in Christ Jesus. But Felix became afraid when Paul spoke about living right, self-control, and the time when God will judge the world" (Acts 24:24-25, NCV). The aim of **warning** and **teaching** is that each one who responds may be presented spiritually mature before God (v. 28) (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 54).

(verse 29) "So we continue to preach Christ to each person...To do this, I work and struggle like an athlete. I exert all my strength in reliance upon the power of Him who is mightily at work within me" (Col. 1:28a; 29; NCV; Beck; Weymouth). Here is the balance of Christian living. Paul gave the effort to serve and honor God with all his might. "Labor" refers to working to the point of exhaustion. The Greek word for "striving" gives us the English word "agonize" and refers to the effort required to compete in an athletic event. At the same time, he knew the effective "striving" or work, with

spiritual and eternal results was being done by God through him (See 1 Cor. 15:10, 58).(MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1834).

25. Read Col. 1:28; Acts 24:24-25; 26:18-20.

“Everywhere we go, we tell everyone about Christ. We warn them and teach them with all the wisdom God has given us, for we want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ” (Col. 1:28,NLT). When sharing the Christian faith, Paul: a. warned. b. taught. c. only said what people wanted to hear.

26. Read Col. 1:29; 1 Cor. 15:10. The strength that Paul used to complete the ministry that God had given, came from: a. God’s energy. b. Christ’s mighty power. c. the grace of God. d. all of the above.

Colossians 2: [1] For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; [2] That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the

full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; [3] In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. [4] And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. [5] For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ. (1 I want you to know how much I am battling for you in prayer, and for those in Laodicea, and for the many others who haven't seen me personally. 2 I'm earnestly praying that all of you will be encouraged in heart, and knit together in love. May all of you also attain the great wealth of having full assurance that you understand the mystery of what we may know about God and His plans, and what the real relationship is between the Father and Christ. 3 Because all

the wisdom and knowledge about God's plans are hidden treasures that are in the treasure house that is Christ. 4 I say this in order to keep you from being deceived and led away from the truth by someone coming to you with smooth, logical-sounding, false arguments. 5 Because even though I'm not with you in person, I so often think about you. And I'm so glad to hear that you are living as you should, and that your faith in Christ is so resolute and strong.)

Additional Information: (Col. 2:1-5) Laodicea was located a few miles northwest of Colosse. The city was a wealthy center of trade and commerce, but later Christ would criticize the believers at Laodicea for their lukewarm commitment (Rev. 3:14-22). The fact that Paul wanted this letter to be passed on to the Laodicean church (Col. 4:16) indicate that false teaching may have spread there as well. Paul was counting on ties of love to bring the churches together to stand against this heresy and to encourage each other to remain true to God's plan of salvation in Christ (Life Application Bible,

p. 2162). The false teachers threatening the Colossians claimed to possess a secret wisdom and transcendent knowledge available only to the spiritual elite. In sharp contrast, Paul declared that all the richness of truth necessary for either salvation, sanctification, or glorification is found in Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:24, 30; 2:6-8). Paul did not want the Colossians to be deceived by the persuasive rhetoric of the false teachers which assaulted the person of Christ. That is why throughout chapter 1,2 he stressed Christ and His sufficiency both to save believers and bring them to spiritual maturity (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1835). Out of concern for their spiritual welfare, Paul agonizes in prayer for the believers at Colosse and Laodicea who are threatened by false teaching. Their unity in combating the heresy and a full recognition of their sufficiency in Christ are the burden of his prayer. On the other hand, he expresses joy because the Colossians are standing resolutely in unbroken ranks, their attention still focused on Christ alone (Col. 2:5) (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1815).

27. **Read Col. 2:1.** Paul was very concerned for the Colossians and for the believers at Laodicea and others he had never met. True or False

28. **Read Col. 2:2-3.** Paul wanted the believers: a. to be strengthened. b. to be joined together with love. c. to be rich in their understanding. d. to have a complete understanding of God's secret plan, which is Christ Himself. e. to know the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are in Christ. f. all of the above.

29. **Read Col. 2:4.** Paul did not want the Colossians to be deceive by persuasive arguments that seem good.
True or False

30. **Read Col. 2:5.** Paul was happy to see the Colossians: a. money. b. attendance at church. c. good lives and strong faith in Christ.

Colossians 2: [6] As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: [7] Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. (6 Always remember that in the same way that you earnestly accepted Christ

Jesus as your Lord, you must now continue to live as Christ would have you live. 7 With your roots deeply and firmly rooted in Christ, allow Him now to build you up by continuing to strengthen and establish you in the faith you were taught. Then, as you think about all that God has done for you and promised you, joyfully overflow in your thanksgiving to Him.)

Additional Information: (verse 6) The exhortation here is that in the same manner as the Colossians saints received the instruction regarding Christ Jesus as Lord, this truth should order their behavior. 'Christ Jesus the Lord' was probably the earliest Christian baptismal confession (Acts 8:37). It was the testing watchword applied in discerning of spirits (1 Cor. 12:3). It is the final confession of a reconciled universe (Phil. 2:10-11). It is the rule of faith that guides all conduct and tests all doctrine within the Church (Col. 1:18-19; Lk. 6:46) (Pulpit Commentary). Jesus is called Lord (Gk. *kurios*) no less than 747 times in the New Testament. The book of Acts alone refers to Him 92 times as Lord, while calling Him Savior only twice.

Clearly in the early church's preaching, the lordship of Christ was the heart of the Christian message (See Acts 2:21; Acts 2:36; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9-10) (The Gospel According to Jesus, p. 206). The terrible thing is that so many preachers today, under the pretence of magnifying the grace of God, have represented Christ as the Minister of *sin*; as One who has, through His atoning sacrifice, procured an indulgence for men to continue gratifying their fleshly and worldly lusts provided a man professes to believe in the virgin birth and vicarious death of Christ. Those preachers who tell a sinner they may be saved *without* forsaking their idols, *without* repenting, without-surrendering to the Lordship of Christ are as erroneous and dangerous as others who insist that salvation is by works and that heaven must be earned by our own efforts (Practical Christianity, Arthur Pink). While justification, in its action, has nothing to do with sanctification, it does not follow that sanctification is not necessary. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14). Holiness starts where justification finishes, and if holiness does not start, we have the right to suspect that justification never started either (Faith Works, p. 114). "Jesus is Lord" endorses the principle of salvation by grace through faith. 'The question is not

whether good works are necessary to salvation, but in what way are they necessary. As the inevitable outworking of saving faith, they are necessary... As the meritorious ground of justification, they are not necessary *or acceptable*' (Studies on Saving Faith, pgs. 12-13). "Jesus is Lord" maintains that faith is *repentant faith*. It involves a supernatural *conversion* experience. Repentant faith is one that turns from sin and receives Christ as Lord. A change of masters takes place (See Rom. 6:17-18). A death and resurrection takes place (Gal. 5:24-25). A work of transforming grace is wrought which must show up in a changed life (2 Cor. 5:17). This is all true from the instant of regeneration and conversion (Robert Lescelius, p. 184).

31. **Read Col. 2:6; Lk. 6:46.** The lordship of Christ is the daily submission and surrender of our entire self to the authority and leadership of Jesus Christ, recognizing his sovereign right to rule preeminently over us. True or False

32. **Read Col. 2:7.** As Christians we must: a. be rooted in Jesus. b. build our lives on Jesus. c. become strong

and vigorous in the truth. d. abound and be filled with thanksgiving to God. e. all of the above.

Colossians 2: [8] Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

[9] For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. [10] And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: (8 Make sure you don't allow anyone to rob and plunder you of your pure faith and hope thru the ideas and conclusions of their hollow and deceptive reasonings. Their arguments may sound ever so reasonable, but they are based on man's feeble and worldly-wise conclusions, not on the teachings of truth that Christ brought us from God. 9 Because in Christ the totality of all that God is in the fullness of His divine nature exists in a body

that can be seen. 10 Thru Him you have been purified and forgiven, and have no need of help from any other spiritual powers, because He is the Head over every power and authority.)

Additional Information: (verse 8) Paul first warns against the danger of being taken captive through a false philosophy and empty deception based on human traditions, the rudiments of the world, and a system not according to Christ. The picture here is of kidnapping you for the purpose of seducing you from faith in Christ (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 594).

“Traditions of men” is that which is handed down by human reason rather than divine revelation (Mk. 7:6-13), man’s theories versus God’s truth and fables versus facts. **“The rudiments of the world”** means a philosophy that depends on the elements of learning in this world system or the elemental spirits of the universe. We know from Col. 2:18 that the Colossian heresy made much of the “worship of angels.” This all was a system not according to Christ. The philosophy of the heretics did not accord with the truth as revealed in Christ. He is the standard by which all doctrine is to be measured (NIV Bible Commentary). *If anyone advocates a*

different doctrine, and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing...(1 Tim. 6:3-4, NASV).

(verse 9) The warning in this verse rests on what is said here about Christ and his fullness. The phrase “**in Him**” stresses that in Christ alone the fullness of deity dwells. The tense is present, stating a general truth and denoting continuous action. The context suggests that the primary reference is to Christ in His present glorified state (NIV Bible Commentary).

(verse 10) Here Paul declares that the Christian is **complete in Christ**, rather than being deficient as the Gnostics claimed. This completeness includes the putting off of the sinful nature (Col. 2:11), resurrection from spiritual death (Col. 2:12-13), forgiveness (Col. 2:13) and deliverance from legalistic requirements (Col. 2:14) and from evil spirit beings (Col. 2:15) (NIV Study Bible, p. 1815).

33. **Read Col. 2:8.** Don't let anyone lead you astray with empty philosophy and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the evil powers of this world, and not from Christ. True or False

34. **Read Col. 2:9.** In Christ the fullness of God lives in a human body. True or False

35. **Read Col. 2:10.** You have everything when you have Christ. He is the highest Ruler, with authority over every other power. True or False

Colossians 2: [11] In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: [12] Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. (11 At the time you acknowledged Christ to be your Lord and Savior, you were also circumcised – not by human hands, but by Christ, when he cut away the chains and freed you from sin’s power of rule over your life. 12 By the picture that

baptism portrays, you were symbolically buried with Christ. Then, in that same baptism, you were raised again, showing that by your faith in the fact that Christ was raised from the dead by God's power, you too have now been raised up by God to live a new life.)

Additional Information: (verses 11-12) In the Israelite faith, circumcision was a sign that the individual stood in covenant relation with God. While this is the only reference where circumcision is associated with baptism, some see the passage as implying that, for the Christian, water baptism is the parallel sign of the covenant relationship (NIV Study Bible, p. 1815). The Gentile Christians in Colosse had no need to conform to Jewish rules and regulations, such as circumcision. For in Christ they had been circumcised. This spiritual "circumcision" was done by Christ, not by man. It was in fact a circumcision of the heart (Rom. 2:29). This putting off of the old life occurs at the moment a believer is buried with Christ in baptism and raised with Him to new life (See 1 Cor. 12:13). In water baptism, immersion portrays burial with Christ, and coming out of the water depicts the resurrection by the power of God to "live a

new life” (Rom. 6:4) (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 677). Paul can link that identification with Christ to baptism because water baptism was so closely related to conversion in the early church (NLT Study Bible, p. 2025).

36. **Read Col. 2:11.** In Christ you had a different kind of circumcision, a circumcision not done by hands. It was through Christ’s circumcision, that is, his death, that you were made free from the power of your sinful self. True or False

37. **Read Col. 2:12.** When you were baptized, you were buried as Christ was buried. When you were raised up in baptism, you were raised as Christ was raised. You were raised to a new life by putting your trust in God. True or False

Colossians 2: [13] And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; [14] Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances

that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; [15] And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

(13 So when you were morally and spiritually dead in your sins, (still stupefied by the sinful cravings of your flesh), God reached down and made you alive, and gave you a new life together with Christ. 14 After forgiving our sins, he blotted out the charges against us for not obeying the handwritten Laws and regulations He had formerly given Moses, which had been oppressive and burdensome, and actually a real hindrance to us. He also totally revoked those Laws, declaring them null and void, by nailing them to Christ's cross. 15 By His suffering on the cross, and dying, Christ disarmed and stripped away the rightful authority and power that the Jewish religious

leaders formerly had. He made a public spectacle of their power, publicly crushing all their rules and authority, and leading those rules and regulations along, as it were, tied up as captives on display in the victory parade.)

Additional Information: (verses 13-14) Before a person is liberated to this new life in Christ, he is dead in his sins and in his sinful nature. Death means separation, separated from God. Cut off from spiritual life, they still have human life. But now God made you alive with Christ (Eph. 2:1-6), that is, resurrects believing sinners to spiritual life (Col. 2:13). This new life came when God forgave us all our sins for He canceled the written code. Before God's written Law, His "written code," people stood condemned (Rom. 3:13), so it worked against them and opposed them. This written code, the Law, was like a handwritten "certificate of debt." (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 678). This "written code" is a business term, meaning a certificate of indebtedness in the debtor's handwriting. Paul uses it as a designation for the Mosaic law, with all its regulations, under which everyone is a debtor to God (NIV Study Bible, p. 1815). Jesus took ... away this

criminal charge, this certificate of indebtedness, by His death. It is as if He were nailing it to the cross with Him, showing He paid the debt. He wiped the slate clean (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 678).

(verse 15) Although what the “Last Days Bible” states in verse 15 is true, I believe it is missing the point that most translations bring out. Most translations state something like this: “*And at the same time he stripped away like a cost-off garment every demonic Rule and Authority and made a public exhibition of them, openly triumphing over them on the cross*” (Col. 2:15, The NT Letters). By fulfilling the demands of the Law, Christ disarmed the demonic powers and authorities (Col. 1:16; 2:10), triumphing over them (2 Cor. 2:14). As a result believers are delivered from these evil powers which inspire legalistic rules about foods and festivals (See 1 Tim. 4:3; Col. 2:16) (Ibid., p. 678).

38. Read Col. 2:13. You were dead (separated from God) because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away by Christ. Then God saved you by His grace and made you alive with Christ. He forgave: a. some of your sins. b. most of your sins. c. all our sins.

39. **Read Col. 2:14.** God canceled the debt, which listed all the rules we failed to follow. He took it and destroyed it by: a. overlooking it. b. nailing it to Christ's cross.

40. **Read Col. 2:15.** By nailing the charges against us to Christ's cross, God disarmed the evil rulers and authorities that were against us. True or False

Colossians 2: [16] Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: [17] Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

(16 So don't let anyone point to the Law of Moses and tell you what you may eat or drink, or that you must attend some religious festival or a celebration of the new moon, or that you must observe the various Jewish Sabbath days. 17 Because these were only temporary rules that ended when Messiah died as our

sacrifice on the cross. They were a mere outline, a lifeless shadow of what was to come. The real and the permanent rules were given to us when Messiah came.)

Additional Information: (verses 16-17) No one should judge you by what you eat or drink because Christians are free from the Law's legalistic requirements (such as those in Lev. 11; 17; Deut 14). God does not condemn those who eat everything (Rom. 14:1-4). In fact, God says that all foods may be eaten since they were "created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth" (1 Tim. 4:3). The teaching that forbids this, Paul wrote, is "taught by demons" (1 Tim. 4:1) whom Christ has disarmed (Col. 2:15). This liberation of believers pertains also to festivals such as a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath Day (Gal. 4:10). As Paul put it, the Old Testament Law was a shadow of the things that were to come. The reality or "substance" is to be found in Christ. Once one finds Christ, he no longer needs to follow the old shadow (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 678).

41. **Read Col. 2:16-17.** Don't let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new-moon ceremonies or Sabbaths. These things have only a symbolic value. The solid fact of what is foreshadowed is: a. Christ Himself. b. a better health plan. c. the right way to worship.

Colossians 2: [18] Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, [19] And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. (18 Don't let anyone fool you, and rob you of your prize of eternal life with God by pretending to be so humble while encouraging you to worship angels. They're intruding into areas they know nothing about! They're puffed up by their own

ideas of how great they are, and by their own imaginations. 19 Such a person is not continuing to hold to the true teaching about Christ, the head of the Church. But it's from Him that the whole Church body receives its nourishment, resulting in the muscles, joints, and ligaments being knit together, and growing as God causes it to grow.)

Additional Information: (verses 18-19) Let no man beguile you of your reward is a phrase that means to let no one rob you of your prize., disqualify you for the prize, or cheat you of your reward. **In a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels.** The false teachers were saying that angels should be called upon and worshiped as mediators in order for people to make contact with God. To Paul, calling upon angels would be displacing Jesus Christ as the supreme and sufficient head of the church (Col. 2:19); consequently, he warns against this. Today the belief that Jesus Christ is not the only intermediary between God and man is promoted in some circles (See 1 Tim. 2:5). This practice robs Christ of His supremacy and centrality in God's

redemptive plan. Worship and prayer to anyone other than God must be rejected (See Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9) (Full Life Study Bible, p. 457).

42. **Read Col. 2:18.** Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels or any other false teaching disqualify you for the prize. True or False

43. **Read Col. 2:19.** We must never lose connection (as the false teachers did) with the Head of the church (the body), which is Jesus the Christ. True or False

Colossians 2: [20] Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, [21] (Touch not; taste not; handle not; [22] Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? [23] Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship. and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to

the satisfying of the flesh. (20 So if you died with Christ to the temporary things of this world, why do you act as though you still belong to it, by giving in to its religious rules, such as, 21”Don’t handle that! Don’t taste this! Don’t touch that!”? 22 All these prohibited things affect only our physical self, and they are worn out or consumed as they are used. And besides, any of these religious rules that are merely man-made have no real spiritual value anyway. 23 These rites and ceremonies and prohibitions indeed make one appear to have a deep knowledge about divine things, along with their show of sorrow, their false humility, and severe treatment of the body. But these are of no value at all in restraining physical passions.)

Additional Information: (verse 20-23) The Living Bible translates these verses in the following way:
“²⁰Since you died, as it were, with Christ and this has set you free from following the world’s ideas of how to be

saved—by doing good and obeying various rules—why do you keep right on following them anyway, still bound by such rules as ²¹not eating, tasting, or even touching certain foods? ²²Such rules are mere human teachings, for food was made to be eaten and used up. ²³These rules may seem good, for rules of this kind require strong devotion and are humiliating and hard on the body, but they have no effect when it comes to conquering a person’s evil thoughts and desires. They only make him proud.”

To the Colossians, the discipline demanded by the false teachers seemed good, and attracted many people. Following a long list of religious rules requires strong self-discipline and can make a person appear good, but religious rules cannot change a person’s heart (Life Application Bible, p. 2164).

44. Read Col. 2:20-23. Rules like, “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!” are all going to die out as time goes by. But rules like that don’t help: a. conquer a person’s evil thoughts and desires. b. restrain sensual indulgence. c. control the evil desires of the sinful self. d. restrain physical passions. e. all of the above.

Colossians 3: [1] If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. [2] Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (1 So if you have been raised up to new life with Christ from among those who are dead, you must now continue to be thoroughly ambitious for, and set your heart on, those positions and pleasures which are in Heaven, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Be so filled with intense desire to live to please God and faithfully serve Him, that your mind will be totally centered on the eternal rich inheritance that can be yours forever in heaven. No longer love the trivial, temporary, unsatisfactory, and breakable things of this life, which can be forever taken from us tomorrow.)

Additional Information: (verses 1-2) Were you not raised to life with Christ? Then you must lift your

thoughts above where Christ reigns in power. Setting our hearts on things above means striving to put heaven's priorities into daily practice. Setting our minds on things above means concentrating on the eternal rather than the temporal (Life Application Bible, p. 2165). Setting our minds on things above means 'Fixing our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal' (2 Cor. 4:18).

45. **Read Col. 3:1-2.** If you were raised to life with Christ then aspire to the realm above, where Christ is, and fix your thoughts on the higher realm, not on this earthly life. True or False

Colossians 3: [3] For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. [4] When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. (3 Because you died, and the treasure that your new life is, and the treasured dividends from serving God in the new life, have all been

safely and securely hidden away in the treasure vault that is Christ, in God. 4 When Christ, who is our very life, appears on earth to judge and to reign, then you too will appear with Him in the glory that has been promised you.)

Additional Information: (verses 3-4) For ye are dead. “Your old sinful self has died, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your real life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory (that is, believers will be glorified as He is glorified)” (Easy-to-Read Version, NLT). Some understand this to mean that the new life of the Christian is not obvious to others and is “hidden” or concealed in that sense. However, comparison with Col. 2:3 indicates that more is in view. The believer is united with Christ (Jn. 6:51-58; Gal. 2:20). The full reality of the new life is not yet fully revealed, but is “hidden with Christ in God” (New Geneva Study Bible, p. 1890). Paul points out that the true manifestation of the sons of God is yet to come, so that people cannot see what believers really are like (Rom. 8:19). When Christ...is revealed at His second coming, we also will be revealed in glory for we will be

glorified as He is glorified for He is our life (1 Jn. 3:2: Col. 1:27).

46. **Read Col. 3:3.** As Christians we are dead (thru Christ), that is, separated from our former life and everything of an evil nature that pertained to it. True or False

47. **Read Col. 3:4.** When Christ who is our life, is revealed to the whole world, then we will be revealed as who we are and share in His glory.
True or False

Colossians 3: [5] Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: [6] For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: [7] In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. [8] But now ye also put off all

these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. (5 That's why you need to ruthlessly kill every last one of those evil inclinations of your earthly nature that relentlessly plague you, such as: sexual immorality, all kinds of uncleanness, various evil passions, evil desires, and the greedy desire of always wanting more of the things of this world, which is the same as worshiping idols. 6 Because of just such sinning, God's judgments are continuing to fall on those who continue in their disobedience toward Him. 7 And all of you at one time went right along with people who live like that. You thought very little about how evil your lives were when you were living the same way yourselves. 8 But now you must also put all these things out of your lives: violent outbursts of anger, bitter hatred, and cursing. And you

must stop using your lips to say anything that is filthy or insulting and humiliating.)

Additional Information: (verse 5) Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.

The **therefore** of verse 5 points to what has gone before. It is because Christ is our life that the believer is called upon to put to death the deeds of the flesh. Not in our own strength, but in dependence on the living Christ. Sin has forfeited any claim upon the believer (Rom. 6:6). We must now turn our back on sin and turn in submission to Christ (Rom. 6:12-13). Any activity or tendency of the body which makes us subject to the flesh calls for mortification, a determined refusal to yield to its appeal (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 81). Death to our old life must be made real in the way that we live day by day (Lk. 9:23). **Fornication** is illicit sexual intercourse between unmarried partners; similar to, but not identical with, adultery (Matt. 15:19). **Uncleanness** is impurity in thought and speech. **Inordinate affection** is uncontrolled lust. **Evil concupiscence** is wicked craving and sensualness beyond natural expression. **Covetousness** is greedy desire to have more (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 597). When people engage in either greed or the sexual sins Paul has cataloged, they

follow their desires rather than God's, in essence worshiping themselves – which is **idolatry** (See Eph. 5:3-5; 1 Jn. 5:21) (MacArthur Study Bible, p. 1837). Idolatry can involve professing allegiance to God and His Word while at the same time giving equal or greater allegiance to persons, institutions, traditions, or authorities on earth. Nothing may be placed higher than one's faithful relationship to God and His Word as revealed in the Bible (Full Life Study Bible, p. 457).

(verse 6) For which things' sake. God does not regard sin with indifference. **The wrath of God.** God's vengeance and judgment. **Cometh.** Denoting certainty (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 597). **On the children of disobedience.** In the Greek text, these words occur verbatim in Ephesians 5:6 (NLT Study Bible, p. 2026).

(verse 7) In the which ye also walked. These vices characterized the past, the pre-Christian experience. **When ye lived in them.** The Greek imperfect tense implies the constant conduct and habit of existence of the unbeliever (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 597).

(verse 8) But now ye also put off all these. Literally this means “taking off” like the taking off of dirty

clothes. Taking off clothes is a metaphor for ridding our lives of practices that interfere with our walk with the Lord (Rom. 13:12; Eph. 4:22, 25; Heb. 12:1; Jas. 1:21; 1 Pet. 2:1) (NLT Study Bible, p. 2026). **Anger** is uncontrolled temper. **Wrath** is fiery outburst of temper, violent fits of rage. **Malice** is a willful desire to injure. **Blasphemy** is slanderous talk. **Filthy communication** is obscene speech (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 597).

48. **Read Col. 3:5.** The continuation of living in evil and greed is really: a. so much fun. b. bad for you. c. servicing a false god.

49. **Read Col. 3:6.** Because of the evil things listed in verse 5, God's wrath is coming upon: a. those in the wrong denominations. b. those who continue in their disobedience toward God.

50. **Read Col. 3:7.** Christians are not to live (walk) like unbelievers live. True or False

52. **Read Col. 3:8.** As Christians we are to put aside (using God strength): a. anger. b. wrath. c. malice. d. slander. e. abusive speech. f. all of the above.

Colossians 3: [9] Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; [10] And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: [11] Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. (9 And stop lying to each other. You have turned away from your old life and all the wrong things you once did. 10 You are now living an altogether new life, that is constantly receiving new knowledge so that you can become altogether like the One who created you. 11 So it's of no importance at all whether we are Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian or Scythian, slave or free. Our only concern must be that Christ has become our everything in all of life.)

Additional Information: (verse 9) Lie not one to another. The Greek present imperative forbids a continuation of action that is going on. Stop lying (Eph. 4:25) (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 598). Whether it be a deliberate untruth, or the half truth which conveys a wrong impression, or the exaggeration which distorts the facts, all these savor of the old unregenerate self rather than of the new (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 84).

Seeing that ye have put off the old man. The old man is the old unregenerate self.

(verse 10) And have put on the new, that is, have clothed yourselves with the new. The new man is the person you are after having been saved. The new man is the regenerated man (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 598). Paul contrasts old and new identities (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22-24). Believers strip off their old life and put on Christ's new life, allowing Him to be Lord and to guide the way they live (NLT Study Bible, p. 2026). **Renewed in knowledge.** This present passive participle (Gk. *anakaineo*) indicates constantly being renewed. This is a continuous process. The new man is ever being renewed in knowledge to be like Him or to act as He acts (Helps for Translators, p. 83).

(verse 11) Where there is neither Greek nor Jew. National privilege has been obliterated; cultural standings have been obliterated; and social castes have been obliterated. **Christ is all, and in all.** Christ is absolutely everything. Christ dwells in all His people whatever their race or background (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 85).

53. **Read Col. 3:9.** Do not lie to each other. You have left your old sinful life and the things you did before. True or False

54. **Read Col. 3:10.** You have clothed yourselves with a brand-new nature that is continually being renewed as you learn more and more about Christ. True or False

55. **Read Col. 3:11.** Christ is all that matters, and He lives in all His people. True or False

Colossians 3: [12] Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; [13] Forbearing

one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. [14] And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. (12 So as God's chosen people who are dedicated to Him and loved by Him, conduct yourselves with great concern for the welfare of others, showing compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. 13 Always be considerate of others, especially if you have a grievance against someone who has done you wrong. Always be ready and willing to forgive. Forgive them in the same wholehearted way that Christ has forgiven you. 14 But to all these things add an overflowing love for one another. Love is what binds all of these other virtues together in perfect harmony.)

Additional Information: (verse 12) In Colossians 3:5-9, Paul told believers what to put off. In

Colossians 3:9-11 Paul describes the believer's new identity in Christ. In Colossians 3:12, Paul begins to tell believers what to put on. A righteous identity must issue in righteous behavior. Such behavior is the outward manifestation of the inward transformation, and it is the only sure proof that such transformation has taken place (MacArthur NT Commentary, p. 153). **Put on therefore** means to clothe yourselves with. **As the elect of God** is the Greek phrase *eklektoi tou theou*. Israel was called this (Dt 4:37), and so is the Christian community (1Pe 2:9). Divine election is a constant theme in Paul's letters, but the Bible never teaches that it dulls human responsibility (NIV Study Bible, p. 1816). Here (v.12) it has the idea that your manner of life is to be in accordance with that kind of life the elect of God should live (Wuest's Word Studies, p. 223). We see something similar to this in 2 Peter 1:10 (See 2 Pet. 1:10). **Holy and beloved.** *Holy* means 'set apart,' or 'separate.' *Beloved*, is not here used as a term of affection by Paul, but rather stresses the fact that they as the chosen people have been made the objects of God's love (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 86). **Bowels of mercies** means a heart of compassion. **Kindness** is thoughtfulness of others. **Humbleness of mind** places

self last. **Meekness** is not weakness but lowliness. It is the opposite of arrogance. **Long-suffering** denotes restraint which enables one to bear injury and insult without resorting to retaliation (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 598).

(verse 13) Forbearing one another means to put up with things we dislike. **Forgiving one another** is *charizomai* and means 'to show one's self gracious, kind, benevolent, to grant forgiveness.' The Greek word 'grace' is *charis*, and has the same form as this word (Wuest's Word Studies, p. 224). **As Christ forgave you.** The key to forgiving others is remembering how much God has forgiven you (Life Application Bible, p. 2166).

(verse 14) And above all these things. On top of all these things, like an outer garment. **Put on charity.** Love is the basis and cloak of all the graces (1 Cor. 13:13). **Bond** means that which binds the others together (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 598). Love, then, makes all the other virtues acceptable to God (Tyndale NT Commentary, p. 88).

56. **Read Col. 3:12.** Since God chose you to be His holy people whom He loves, you must clothe yourselves with:

a. new Levi jeans. b. the latest fashion. c. great concern for the welfare of others. d. compassion. e. kindness. f. humility. g. gentleness. h. patience. i. all of the above.

57. **Read Col. 3:13.** You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. True or False

58. **Read Col. 3:13.** The Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. True or False

59. **Read Col. 3:14.** Love is your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it. True or False

Colossians 3: [15] And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. (15
Then you must also allow yourselves to be governed and controlled by the profound peace that God gives, because God has called us to

be united in one body, in peace. And always be thankful in every situation.)

Additional Information: (verse 15) Let the peace of God rule in your hearts. Paul uses a vivid picture. “Let the peace of God be the decider of all things within your heart.” Literally what he says is, “Let the peace of God be the umpire in your heart.” He uses a verb from the athletic arena; it is the word that is used of the umpire who settled things in any matter of dispute. If the peace of Jesus Christ is the umpire in any man’s heart, then, when feelings clash and we are pulled in two directions at the same time, the decision of Christ will keep us in the way of love and the Church will remain the one body it is meant to be. The way to right action is to appoint Jesus Christ as the arbiter between the conflicting emotions in our hearts; and if we accept his decisions, we cannot go wrong (DSB, William Barclay, p. 159).

60. **Read Col. 3:15.** The peace that Christ gives is to be the judge in your hearts. True or False

Colossians 3: [16] Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. [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. (16
And you simply must allow the truths of Christ's words to continually take full possession of your hearts and minds. Then use all possible wisdom in teaching, correcting, and challenging one another in regard to those same truths. Also, sing out those truths in psalms and hymns and other kinds of spiritual songs, doing so with joy that comes from deep within your hearts in sincere adoration and thanksgiving to the Lord. 17 And whatever you say or do, make sure it will please and honor the Lord Jesus. And continue to thank God our

Father thru Jesus for whatever you're able to say and do for Him.)

Additional Information: (verse 16) Although the early Christians had access to the Old Testament and freely used it, they did not yet have the New Testament or any other Christian books to study. Their stories and teachings about Christ were memorized and passed on from person to person. Sometimes the teachings were set to music, and so music became an important part of Christian worship and education (Life Application Bible, p. 2166). **The Word of Christ** refers especially to Christ's teaching, which in the time of the Colossians was transmitted orally. But by implication it includes the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Some of the most important doctrines were expressed in Christian hymns preserved for us now only in Paul's letters (Col. 1:15-20; Eph 5:14; Php 2:6-11; 1Ti 3:16). "Psalms" refers to the Old Testament psalms (see Lk 20:42; 24:44; Ac 1:20; 13:33), some of which may have been set to music by the church. "Psalm" could also describe a song newly composed for Christian worship (compare 1Co 14:26, where "hymn" is lit. "psalm" in the Greek text). A "hymn" was a song of praise, especially

used in a celebration (see Mk 14:26; Heb 2:12; Ac 16:25), much like the Old Testament psalms that praised God for all that He is. A "song" recounted the acts of God and praised Him for them (see Rev 5:9; 14:3; 15:3), much like the Old Testament psalms that thanked God for all that He had done (NIV Study Bible, p. 1817).

Charles Wesley used to write as many as 18 verses to his songs for the express purpose of teaching theology, and in their song services they would sing all 18 verses! It was a catechism as much as it was an act of worship (Last Days Bible, p. 341). **Teaching and admonishing one another.** **Teaching** is the impartation of positive truth. **Admonishing** is the negative side of teaching. It means to warn people of the consequences of their behavior. When Paul tells believers to sing **in your hearts** he does not mean not to sing with the voice. His concern is that the heart agree with the mouth (Amos 5:23) (MacArthur NT Commentary, p. 160).

(verse 17) Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. In the Bible, a person's name represents that person. To do something *in the name of the Lord Jesus* is therefore to act in a way that is in harmony with His

identity and under His authority (NLT Study Bible, p. 2027).

61. **Read Col. 3:16.** Remember what Christ taught and let His words make you wise. Sing out those truths in psalms and hymns and other kinds of spiritual songs. True or False

62. **Read Col. 3:17.** Everything you do or say should be done to obey Jesus as your Lord. Let whatever you do or say represent Him. True or False

Colossians 3: [18] Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. [19] Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. [20] Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is wellpleasing unto the Lord. [21] Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. [22] Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice,

as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: (18 Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as this is definitely proper for a woman who is trusting in the Lord. 19 Husbands, you must always be loving and kind toward your wives. Never be harsh with them. 20 Children, obey your parents in everything. You make the Lord very happy when you do. 21 Parents, never drive your children to anger by expecting too much from them, or they may get discouraged and give up. 22 Employees, always obey the instructions of your human employer. Don't obey only when the boss is watching, as those who are only concerned about pleasing men, but enter into your work with superabounding sincerity, knowing that God is watching, and that you are accountable to Him for everything you do and the way you do it.)

Additional Information: (verses 18-22) This series of exhortations is called a *household code*. Paul gives instructions to wives (Col. 3:18), husbands (Col. 3:19), children (Col. 3:20), fathers (Col. 3:21), slaves (Col. 3:22-25), and masters (Col. 4:1). Such codes appear in Greco-Roman writers and elsewhere in the New Testament (Eph. 5:22-6:9; 1 Pet. 2:18-3:7) (Ibid., p. 2027). These verses are a brief parallel passage to Ephesians 5:19-6:9.

63. **Read Col. 3:18.** Wives, yield to the authority of your husbands, because this is the right thing to do in the Lord. True or False

64. **Read Col. 3:19.** Husbands must be loving and kind to their wives and not bitter against them, nor harsh. True or False

65. **Read Col. 3:20.** You children must always obey your fathers and mothers. This pleases the Lord. True or False

66. **Read Col. 3:21.** Fathers, do not exasperate your children, or drive them to anger. If you do, they will become discouraged and quit trying. True or False

67. **Read Col. 3:22.** Slaves or employees must obey willingly their masters because of their reverent fear of the Lord. True or False

Colossians 3: [23] And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; [24] Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. [25] But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. (23 Whatever you may be doing, do it with all your heart, with enthusiasm, as if you were working for the Lord instead of for men. 24 In fact, always keep in mind that even when working for others, you really are working for Christ the Lord, and that it's from the Lord that

you will receive the reward of the inheritance that will be yours forever. 25 But those who cheat their employers of time and effort (and in other ways), will also be rewarded for the wrong they have done. And God judges everyone by the same standard. He doesn't play favorites with anyone.)

Additional Information: (verse 23)

Whatever you do, do it as to the Lord. Paul exhorts Christians to regard all labor as a service rendered to the Lord. We must work as though Christ were our employer, knowing that all work performed "as to the Lord" will someday be rewarded (Col. 3:24; Eph. 6:6-8) (Full Life Study Bible, 458).

(verses 24-25) Principles in Colossians 3:22-25 for Christian slaves may be applied today to Christian employees. If more Christian employees today served their employers with genuine concern and as though they were serving God, quality and productivity would increase dramatically! **It is the Lord Christ** whom all Christians **are serving**. After all, the final "payday" (**an inheritance ...as a reward**) is coming **from the Lord** (2 Cor. 5:10). He will judge without **favoritism** (Rom. 2:9;

Eph. 6:9), that is, in full justice, repaying wrongdoers and rewarding those who serve Him (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 684).

68. **Read Col. 3:23.** In all the work you are doing, work the best you can. Work as if you were doing it: a. for people. b. for the Lord. c. for the government.

69. **Read Col. 3:24.** Full and proper payment, nothing less is what is given to those who serve the Lord Christ. True or False

70. **Read Col. 3:25; Rom. 2:7-11.** He who does wrong will receive the consequences of the wrong which he has done. True or False

Colossians 4: [1] Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven. (1 Employers, always give your employees wages and other benefits and treatment that are just and fair. Remember, you also have an Overseer, in Heaven.)

71. **Read Col. 4:1.** Whether it be slaves or employees, show justice and fairness. Don't forget that we too serve a Master in heaven. True or False

Colossians 4: [2] Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; [3] Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: [4] That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. (2 If you want answers to your prayers, you must keep praying, and not give up. And as you continue to wait before God for what you are praying, fill your prayers with praise and thanksgiving. 3 And as you pray, be sure you continue to pray for us as well. Keep asking God to open doors of opportunity for us to preach His message, revealing the secret that God has also included the Gentiles in His salvation plan, even though

I'm in jail because I preached that message. 4 Pray that I'll have courage to continue to tell everyone about it, which is the only right thing for me to do.)

Additional Information: (verse 2) Paul not only practiced a mature prayer life (Col. 1:3-12) but he also prescribed it for all believers. They should **devote** themselves to (Literally, “persist, continue in”) **prayer**. (See Rom. 12:12; 1 Th. 5:17). In his praying, a Christian should be **watchful** (“alert, aware”) against spiritual drowsiness caused by attention to the world (Matt. 24:42; Acts 20:31; 1 Cor. 16:13; 1 Th. 5:6) and/or by the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:16; 1 Pet. 5:8). Being **thankful** should always accompany prayer (Phil. 4:6; Col. 1:12; Col. 3:16-17; 1 Thess. 5:18), for it places a believer in the proper attitude before God (Rom. 1:21) (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 684).

(verses 3-4) Pray for us was a request Paul often made of his readers (Rom. 15:30; Eph. 6:19; 1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1). His request was not selfish; it was for an **open...door** (1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12) through which he could clearly minister the gospel **message...the mystery of Christ** (Eph. 3:4; 6:19; Col.

1:26-27; 2:2), **for which** he was **in chains** (Phil. 1:7, 13-14, 16; Col. 4:18; Phile. 1, 9-10, 13). He desired not only an opportunity to preach but also clarity in preaching: **that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should** (that is, “as I am obligated to”; See Rom. 1:14-15) (Ibid., p. 684).

72. **Read Col. 4:2.** As Christians we are to devote ourselves to: a. having fun. b. enjoying life. c. prayer with thanksgiving.

73. **Read Col. 4:3-4.** As Christians we are to pray for: a. God to make us rich. b. more money to come into the church. c. many opportunities to preach Christ and proclaim His message clearly.

Colossians 4: [5] Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. [6] Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man. (5 Always be wise and considerate in the way you conduct

yourselves toward those who are not followers of the Lord. But never fail to make use of every opportunity to speak out and tell them the Great News. 6 In doing so be gracious and kind. However, in every conversation, take the opportunity, or make the opportunity, to include a warning about our ultimate meeting with either Jesus as Lord and Savior or Jesus as Judge. And as you are challenged with objections and arguments for which you don't have an answer, pray and investigate, so that the next time you'll have the answer.)

Additional Information: (verse 5) Walk in wisdom toward them that are without. It takes wise walking as well as wise talking to win the lost to Christ. The walk refers to one's behavior. Christians are to conduct themselves wisely, to be prudent in their behavior, and be discreet in their conduct (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 600). **Redeeming the time** means making the most of every opportunity. Be ready "in season and out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2) to proclaim Christ.

(verse 6) Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt. A believer's speech must be pleasant, winsome, kind, and gracious. It must be language that results from the operation of God's grace in our hearts and speaks the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). "Seasoned with salt" may mean conversation that is appropriate and marked by purity, not corruption (Eph. 4:29). Speech with grace, however, does not exclude ferment and stern words when necessary (See Acts 24:24-25; Luke 3:7; Col. 1:28) (Full Life Study Bible, p. 459).

73. **Read Col. 4:5.** Be wise in the way you act toward those who are not believers. Be sure you make the best use of your time with them. True or False

74. **Read Col. 4:6.** Choose your words carefully when talking to unbelievers. Be ready to give answers to anyone who asks questions. True or False

Colossians 4: [7] All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and

fellowservant in the Lord: [8] Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts; [9] With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here. (7 Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He's a much-loved brother, a faithful minister and a fellow servant in the Lord's work. 8 I'm sending him to you for the very purpose of finding out how you are coming along, and to encourage you. 9 Your own faithful and much-loved brother, Onesimus, will also be coming. They will also give you a full report of what's happening here.)

Additional Information: (verses 7-8) Tychicus who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister. Tychicus (a leader in the church and bearer of this letter) **was a dear brother, a faithful minister** (Eph. 6:21), **and a fellow servant** with Paul in the ministry.

He was from the province of Asia (Acts 20:4) and was mentioned by Paul also in 2 Timothy 4:12 and Titus 3:12. Paul sent him to Colosse **for the express purpose** of informing them about his state of affairs to **encourage** them (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 684).

(verse 9) Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. Onesimus (a converted runaway slave of Philemon) was also a **faithful and dear brother** (Phile. 16) to Paul and a fellow Colossian: **one of you** (Col. 4:9). He would accompany Tychicus and also report on Paul's circumstances (Ibid., 9. 685).

75. **Read Col. 4:7-8.** Tychicus: a. is a much-loved brother in the Lord. b. is a faithful minister. c. is a fellow servant in the Lord's work. d. will give the Colossians all the news about Paul and his present circumstances. e. will encourage the Colossians. f. all of the above.

76. **Read Col. 4:9.** Onesimus is from the Colossians own group. He along with Tyshicus will bring up-to-date information on everything that relates to Paul. True or False

Colossians 4: [10] Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;) [11] And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me. (10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. You've already been told to warmly welcome Mark if he comes your way. 11 And Jesus, who is called Justus, sends greetings. These are the only Jewish followers of the Lord here among my fellow workers for the Kingdom of God, and they have been such a comfort to me!)

Additional Information: (verse 10)

Aristarchus is a Macedonian, who is mentioned three

times in Acts: 1. He was with Paul during the Ephesian riot (Ac 19:29) and therefore was known in Colosse. 2. Both he and Tychicus (Ac 20:4) were with Paul in Greece. 3. He accompanied Paul on his trip to Rome (Ac 27:2). **Mark** is the author of the second Gospel. Against Barnabas's advice, Paul refused to take Mark on the second missionary journey because Mark had "deserted" him at Pamphylia (Ac 15:38). But now--about 12 years later--the difficulties seem to have been ironed out, because Paul, both here and in Phm 24 (sent at the same time to Philemon, who was in Colosse), sends Mark's greetings. About five years later, Paul even writes that Mark "is very helpful to me in my ministry" (2Ti 4:11) (NIV Study Bible, p. 1817).

(verse 11) Jesus was a common Jewish name. This companion of Paul's was also **called Justus** ("righteous"), also a common name (Acts 1:23; 18:7). These three – Aristarchus, Mark, and Justus – were **Jews** (lit., "of the circumcision") by either birth or conversion (proselytism). These three **fellow workers for the kingdom of God** comforted or consoled Paul by their loving loyalty to him. **Comfort** is the unusual word *paregoria* ("relief, consolation"), found only here in the New Testament (Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 685).

77. **Read Col. 4:10-11.** At this time, Aristarchus, Mark and Justus were the only Jewish followers of Jesus who had stuck with Paul in working for God's kingdom. True or False

Colossians 4: [12] Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. [13] For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis. [14] Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you. (12
Epaphras, who is also one of you and a devoted servant of Christ, sends greetings. He's always wrestling in prayer for you, praying that God will help you to obey Him in everything, perfectly and completely. 13 I can testify to the fact that he has great zeal for you,

and also for those in Laodicea and Hierapolis. 14 Our dearly loved Doctor Luke also sends greetings, and so does Demas.)

Additional Information: (verse 12) Epaphras founded the Colossian church, and his report to Paul caused Paul to write this letter. Epaphras was a hero of the Colossian church, one of the believers who helped keep the church together despite growing troubles. His earnest prayers for the believer show his deep love and concern for them (Life Application Bible, p. 2168).

Labouring fervently for you in prayers. “Labouring fervently” (Gk. *agonize*, from which we derive the English word “agonize”) denotes an intense desire, an agonizing, a wrestling, or a striving in prayer. Faithful New Testament believers not only continued steadfast in prayer (Col. 4:2), but *agonized* with strong pleading in their prayers. The needs of our families, churches, and the world are no less significant today. We ought to pray fervently, knowing that in our struggles Christ’s power is working mightily with us (Col. 1:29) (Full Life Study Bible, p. 459).

(verse 13) Laodicea and Hierapolis were the two most important cities in the Lycus River Valley. The

fact that Epaphras prayed for the believers in Colosse and in these nearby cities suggests that he was the pioneering evangelist in all three cities (NLT Study Bible, p. 2028).

(verse 14) Luke spent much time with Paul, not only accompanying him on most of his third missionary journey, but sitting with him in the prison at Rome. Luke wrote the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. His profile is in Acts 17. Demas was faithful for a while, but then he deserted Paul, “having loved this present world” (2 Tim. 4:10) (Life Application Bible, p. 2168).

78. **Read Col. 4:12-13.** Epaphras: a. was from the Colossian group, that is, from their city. b. was a servant of Christ. c. prayed earnestly for the Colossians and also for the Christians in Laodicea and Hierapolis. d. all of the above.

79. **Read Col. 4:14.** Luke was a beloved physician and also the writer of the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. True or False

80. **Read Col. 4:14.** Demas was a faithful servant of Christ for a while, but then he deserted Paul, “having

loved this present evil world” (2 Tim. 4:10). True or False

Colossians 4: [15] Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. [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. (15 Give my greetings to all in Laodicea who love our Lord, and to Nymphas, and to all who meet as a church in his home. 16 After you read this letter, be sure that it's also read by the church in Laodicea. I want you in turn to read the letter I sent to the Laodiceans, which they will send to you.)

Additional Information: (verse 15) The church which is in his house. There is no evidence of churches owning separate property for worship until the middle of the third century. Until then, house churches were the norm. Those who exercised a ministry of

hospitality by having churches in their homes were important benefactors of the early church (See Acts 12:12; Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Philem. 2) (New Geneva Study Bible, p. 1892).

(verse 16) When this epistle is read among you. Paul's letters were read out loud to the congregation when they assembled for worship. In this way the church continued in the apostles doctrine (See Acts 2:42). The Colossian Christians, after receiving this letter, would most likely have made a copy of it to keep for themselves and then sent one of the copies to the nearby Laodiceans (Full Life Study Bible, p. 462).

Likewise read the epistle from Laodicea. The letter from Laodicea does not necessarily mean a letter by the Laodiceans. Rather, it could have been a letter that the Laodiceans were to lend to the Colossians--a letter that Paul had originally written to the Laodiceans. This may have been a fourth letter that Tychicus carried to this area in what is present-day Turkey, in addition to Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon. Or this letter could have been Paul's letter to the Ephesians--a circular letter making the rounds from Ephesus to Laodicea to Colosse (NIV Study Bible, p. 1818).

81. **Read Col. 4:15.** The early church met in small groups in people's private homes. True or False

82. **Read Col. 4:16; Acts 2:42.** The early church continued in the apostle's doctrine by reading the apostle's letters in their worship service. True or False

Colossians 4: [17] And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. [18] The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen. (17 And there's this message for Archippus: "Have real concern for the assignment the Lord gave you, and keep working diligently at it so that you may complete it." 18 I, Paul, write this final greeting with my own hand. Remember to pray for me here, chained in jail. May God's special blessings be with all of you. So be it! Most Sincerely, Paul and Timothy)

Additional Information: (verse 17) And say to Archippus. Archippus is mentioned in Philemon 2 in such a way as to suggest that he was a member of Philemon's household, probably his son (Liberty Bible Commentary, p. 602). He was perhaps a pastor or deacon in Colosse (Spirit Filled Life Bible, p. 1819).

Take heed to the ministry...that thou fulfil it. Paul encouraged Archippus to make sure that he completed the work he had received in the Lord. There are many ways for us to leave our work unfinished. We can easily get sidetracked morally, we can become exhausted and stop, we can get mad and quit, or we can let it slide and leave it up to others. We should see to it that we finish God's assignments, completing the work we have received (Life Application Bible, p. 2168).

(verse 18) The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Paul usually dictated his letters to a scribe, and then often ended with a short note in his own handwriting (1 Cor. 16:21; Gal. 6:11). This assured the recipients that false teachers were not writing letters in Paul's name. It also gave the letters a personal touch (Ibid., p. 2168). **Remember my bonds.** During Paul's first Roman imprisonment he wrote Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, and Philipians. In spite of Paul's

being unjustly confined to prison for four or more years, his letters are filled with “thanksgiving” (Col. 1:3; 12; 2:7; 3:15; 4:2), “grace” (Eph. 1:2, 6-7; 2:5; 3:2; 4:7; 6:24), “joy” (Phil. 1:4, 18; 2:2; 3:1; 4:1, 4), and “love” (Philem. 5, 7, 9) (Full Life Study Bible, p. 462). **Grace be with you.** To understand the letter to the Colossians, we need to know that the church was facing pressure from a heresy that promised deeper spiritual life through secret knowledge (an early form of Gnosticism) (Life Application Bible, p. 2168).

Paul makes it clear in Colossians that Christ alone is the source of our spiritual life, the Head of the body of believers. Christ is Lord of both the physical and spiritual worlds. The path to deeper spiritual life is not through religious duties, special knowledge, or secrets; it is only through a clear connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. We must never let anything come between us and our Savior (Ibid., p. 2168).

83. **Read Col. 4:17.** Tell Archippus: a. take more time off, you are working too much. b. you are not paid enough, ask for more money. c. Be sure to carry out the work the Lord gave you.

84. **Read Col. 4:18.** Paul ended his letter by saying: a. I am signing this letter myself. b. Don't forget that I am in jail. c. May God's special blessings be with all of you. d. all of the above.

This work is presented to you from the Discipleship Evangelism Ministry, a 501c3 non-profit organization that provides discipleship tools to Third-World nations. Your letters of encouragement are welcomed. Thank you for your prayers!

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