



Colossians - 4 chapters

Title:

The Epistle to the Colossians – because it is written to the church in Colossae.

Author:

Written by Paul the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul was a strict Pharisee in Jerusalem until he had a revelation of Christ on the road to Damascus. Paul spent the rest of his life as a missionary proclaiming Jesus to Gentiles around the Mediterranean. Paul wrote 13 of the Books of the New Testament.

Occasion and Purpose:

Paul wrote in response to false teaching in the church. The precise nature of the false teaching is debated. It was probably an early form of gnosticism which taught that certain activities, knowledge, or intermediaries were needed to supplement or complete the salvation in Christ. This probably included observing strict religious rules (2:16-17, 11, 3:11) and asceticism (2:21-23), the need for secret knowledge (2:2-3, 18) and human wisdom (2:4, 8) and relying on angels as intermediaries (2:18). This false teaching can be summarized as “Christ and...” – the need for something beside Christ. And Paul responds by stressing the supremacy, exclusivity, and sufficiency of Christ (1:15-20, 2:2-3, 9).

Themes:

1. **Christ PERIOD** – Nothing is needed to supplement Christ because He is fully sufficient for absolutely everything.
2. **Christ is Preeminent** – Christ is above everything in creation. He is the creator and sustainer of all. He is the redeemer and reconciler of all. All things are subservient to Him. All things are for Him. There is nothing that could possibly be greater than Him.
3. **Christ is Fullness** – Because Christ is the fulness of God Himself – He is the fulness of spiritual wisdom and understanding. He is redeeming everything, cancelling our debt and triumphing over every power.
4. **Union With Christ** – Christians (through faith) are united with Christ in all His fulness.
5. **Old Off/New On** – The old life is gone, get rid of it. Put on the new life in Christ. Do not cling to the things below, but put all your hope in the things above, where Christ is.

Summary:

The teaching that claims the need for special knowledge, wisdom, and strict religious observances is false. It is a distraction toward a weaker, less wise counterfeit. Christ, however, is the real deal. Ignore the false teachings and look to Christ. He is the fullness of God, and Lord over all. He has provided the fullness of salvation. Therefore, be unified with Christ and put away all pale imitations and live as God's holy people.

Organization:

1:1-14 Thanksgiving and Prayer	
	1:1-2 Introduction 1:3-8 Thanksgiving 1:9-14 Prayer
1:15-23 Christ is Preeminent	
1:24-2:19 Christ, Not Deception	
	1:24-2:5 Paul's Mission <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1:24-27 Paul Suffers for His Commission• 1:28-2:5 The Mystery of Christ 2:6-15 Live in Christ, Not by Deceptive Philosophy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2:6-8 Let No One Take You Captive Through Deceptive Philosophy• 2:9-12 The Fullness of Deity is in Christ• 2:13-15 God Made You Alive in Christ 2:16-19 Therefore, Don't Follow the Shadow. You Have the Reality
2:20-4:1 Died and Raised With Christ	
	2:20-23 You Died to the World, Don't Submit to Its Rules 3:1-4 You Have Been Raised with Christ, Set Your Heart on Christ 3:5-11 Put to Death Earthly Things, Put on Your New Self in Christ 3:12-4:1 Live as God's Holy People <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3:12-14 As God's Holy People, Clothe Yourself with Virtue• 3:15-17 Let the Peace and Word of Christ Live in You• 3:18-4:1 Household Relationships
4:2-18 Prayer and Conclusion	
	4:2-6 Pray 4:7-18 Conclusion

Key Verses:

1:13-14; 1:15-20; 1:25-28; 2:8-10; 2:13-17; 3:1-4