

The Letters to the Churches- The Supremacy of Christ... *Colossians*

The writer of this book to the Colossians is also Paul the Apostle. He is writing to this church but tells them to spread the letter around to others (4:16).

The theme of Colossians is the glory of the person and work of Christ who is the head of the church. The key verses are 1:15-18. The preeminence of Christ is clearly shown in this letter.

The relation of this book to the book of Ephesians is that in Ephesians the church is presented as the body of Christ and in Colossians Christ is presented as the head of the body or head of the church.

We will follow the following outline for this book.

Introduction- 1:1-8**I- Paul's Prayer for the Church- 1:9-14****II- The Supremacy of Christ- 1:15-1:29****III- Christ is the Answer to False****Doctrine- 2:1-23****IV- Application to life- 3:1-4:18****Introduction- 1:1-8**

In the introduction section we see the affection of Paul for the church. He used the customary wording for Paul, ***"Grace be unto you and peace."***

I- Paul's Prayer for the Church- 1:9-14

The next section contains the prayer of Paul for the church. He prays that they might 1) ***"be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding"*** 2) ***"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing"*** 3) be ***"strengthened with all might..."***

He then gave thanks to God for His deliverance. (1:12-14).

II- The Supremacy of Christ- 1:15-1:29

Who is Christ? The writer of Hebrews tells us concerning Christ, ***"Who being in the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person..."***

We see a clear picture of who He is here also. He is the image of God (1:15); head of the church (1:17); fully God (1:19); the redeemer (1:20-23).

There is a mystery concerning the inclusion of the Gentiles in the church. The mystery is, ***"Christ in you the hope of glory."***

III- Christ is the Answer to False**Doctrine- 2:1-23**

The reason that the need was so great at the time of this writing for the hearers to understand just who Jesus is was because there was false doctrines and beliefs in the culture. This book is especially needful today as well because the time, "They ain't changed much." The big falsehood then and now are legalism and mysticism. The religious are legalist if carried to far and the society is mystical and humanistic at its best.

Paul addressed the false doctrine by showing the truth about Jesus being God and head of the church.

Paul told them that the reason he wanted them to understand the truth about the mystery of Christ in them is to prevent them from being lead astray. In 2:4 he states, ***"lest any man should beguile you with enticing words."***

He tells them that salvation is only the beginning of the journey not the end. (2:7).

The two false doctrines we have mentioned are addressed next. In 2:14-17 he warns them about being caught

up in legalism. Those who are legalist want to bring us into bondage of the law and a set of do's and don'ts for spirituality. I remind us we are free in Christ, free to do what is right.

The next falsehood addressed is especially timely today with the fascination of men with angels. He tells them to not get caught up in the worship of angels. Man can make himself believe almost anything with a mystical experience. We must however always lay our experience beside the revealed Word of God. Not to see if the Word is true by our experience but if our experience is true by the Word.

IV- Application to Life- 3:1-4:18

Remember that Paul after he gave a doctrine section always gave us application of that doctrine.

"If ye then be risen with Christ..." begins the second section. He told us to get our heart and mind fixed on things above.

There are many verses in this section that give us guidelines for living.

Put on the new man is the topic of **3:8-17**. We are to put off the old man and put on Christ. Notice the things we should leave behind in **3:8-9**. Now notice the things we should put on in **3:12-17**.

The fact that Christ is the head of the Church should also impact our relationships with one another. Wives, husbands, children, servants and master are all given instructions in **3:18-4:1**.

The walk we are to have with the lost world is addressed in **4:2-6**. We are to remember to redeem the time we have for the purpose of God.

The major portion of the last chapter talks about the helpers Paul had in his work. **4:7-18**.

Application to Life's Steps

- 1- Christ is the complete and only thing that man needs for his spiritual condition.
- 2- A right understanding of who Christ is can keep us from falling prey to false doctrines.
- 3- Our relationship to Christ should affect our walk in life.
- 4- The modern thoughts of man is not as new as modern man would like to believe.
- 5- Our walk should show the lost world Christ.

Retracing Our Steps:

- 1- Who wrote the book of Colossians?

- 2- Who is the head of the Church?

- 3- What pictures does this book give us of who Christ is? _____

- 4- What false doctrines are addressed in this book? _____

- 5- Who is the answer to all false doctrines? A right understanding of whom? _____
- 6- What is the new man to put on as far as conduct? _____

