

# COLOSSIANS

**Author: Paul**

**Date: A.D. 60**

This is known as one of the prison epistles because the Apostle Paul wrote this letter from prison in Rome (as he did Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon). In this, Paul stresses the preeminence of Jesus Christ and the completeness or sufficiency of the salvation He provides.

Colossae was a city in Asia Minor (today Turkey) about 100 miles east of Ephesus. Paul writes this epistle to oppose some false teaching that was taking hold in the church at Colossae. The exact nature of the heresy is unknown, but it apparently was a religious system that combined elements from Greek philosophy (later known as Gnosticism), Jewish legalism, and eastern mysticism. This heresy emphasized special knowledge ("gnosis" in Greek) and denied Christ as God and Savior. It involved a low view of the physical body and probably of nature as a whole. It stressed the strict importance of keeping certain laws and rituals along with the worship of angels and a preoccupation with mystical experiences. Paul writes to combat all these false heresies by emphasizing the sufficiency of Christ who is the Creator God. Colossians is perhaps the most Christ-centered book in the Bible.

Paul also addresses Christian conduct and character. The new life in Christ is to be manifested in the personal relationships of the Christian. Paul provides specific instructions for husbands, wives, children, servants and masters.

**Theme:** The theme is the preeminence and sufficiency of Christ in all things.

**Key Verse:** "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power" (2:9, 10).

## OUTLINE

- I. Introduction – Greeting, Thanksgiving, Prayer (1:1-14)
- II. The Preeminence of Christ (1:15 – 2:3)
  - A. Christ Is Preeminent in Creation (1:15-18)
  - B. Christ Is Preeminent in Salvation (1:19-23)
  - C. Christ Is Preeminent in the Church (1:24-29)
- III. The Sufficiency of Christ (2:1-23)
  - A. Beware of Empty Philosophies (2:1-10)
  - B. Beware of Religious Legalism (2:11-23)
- IV. The Position and Practice of the Believer (3:1 – 4:6)
  - A. The Old Self and the New Self (3:1-17)
  - B. Personal Relationships and Instructions (3:18 – 4:6)
- V. Final Greetings and Conclusion (4:7-19)