

Christ In You

The Letter of Paul to the Colossians

Michael R. Mobley

1st Edition 5/2014
2nd Edition 6/2015

Introduction

1. Colossians is the cornerstone of the Gospel's four-corner foundation:

- Colossians – Christ is Lord
- Ephesians – Church is the Redeemed
- Philippians – Christian Service
- Galatians – Justified by Grace

2. Romans is the framework of the Gospel's four corner foundation:

- (1-3) The Wrath of God
- (4-5) The Faith in God
- (6-8) The Grace of God
- (9-11) The Will of God
- (12-16) The Life of Grace

3. *This Is the Christ -- The Son of God (Colossians)*

We are in Christ our Lord and Savior (chapter 1)

Not philosophy but Christ (chapter 2)

Not carnal but Christ (chapter 3)

Serve Christ not the world (chapter 4)

Study outline:

- Introduction
- Transformed by faith (1:3-14)
- The Supremacy of Jesus, The Christ (1:15-20)
- Faith under fire (1:21-2:5)
- Truth under fire (2:6-23)
- The Spiritual Integrity of a Holy Life (3:1-17)
- Responsible Christian Life (3:18-4:18)

4. Purposes in writing:

- exalts Christ and the holy living that results in him
- warn against returning to former beliefs
- refute heresy

5. Paul is writing to a young church that had become a target heretical attack which led to Epaphras' visit to Paul in Rome that resulted in Paul's letter. (c.f. 1 Peter 5:6-10)

What is the nature of the heresy (chapter 2)?

- ceremonialism or legalism – strict rules about diet, religious holidays, circumcision
- asceticism – required abstinence from material or physical things
- angel worship
- seeds of Gnosticism by humanizing Christ and defying his deity
- reliance on human philosophy and traditions

Transformed By Faith

Colossians 1:3-14

1. Paul is serving God (1:1)
2. Paul identifies the church in Colossae (1:2)
 - The holy brothers in Christ
 - The faithful brothers in Christ
3. Paul gives a blessing his brothers and sisters in Christ who are faithful saints (1:2)
 - Grace from God our Father
 - Peace from God our Father
4. As Paul, we should be thankful for all of God's people; we should give thanks to God/ for all our brothers and sisters (1:3-8).
 - A thankful spirit toward God is essential for our faith and practice no matter what we have been through or have lost.
 - Paul gives his thanks to God
 - Thanksgiving is in the nature of trust
 - He was thankful for their transformation to Christianity!
 - Then, how did they come to know Christ and attain faith?
5. This transformation will allow the believer to walk worthy of the Lord (1:9-12)
 - What does it mean to "walk worthy of the Lord"? How do we do that?
 - He prays they will receive the things essential to walk worthy of the Lord (1:9)
 - Paul then describes the impact of that attainment (1:10-12)
6. The transformation by faith places you into the Kingdom of Christ (1:13-14)
 - Outside the kingdom of Christ is the wilderness of darkness and death
 - Paul describes the work of God that places us into Christ's kingdom
 - How are we transferred or delivered into the kingdom of God's beloved Son?

The Supremacy of Christ

Colossians 1:15-20

1. Jesus Christ was the presentation of God to man in human form; Jesus Christ was the visible human form of the invisible spirit form of God (1:15).
 - He was "God in the flesh"
 - *Image of the invisible God.*
 - This is how the Son of God became the Gospel, how he became our Savior, our rescuer, our redeemer
 - Consider Philippians 2:5-8 with Matthew 1:18-23
2. Jesus Christ is the firstborn of all creation (1:15).

- The Son of God was not created, he is not a part of the creation; but he became one of the creation for our redemption
 - The concept of firstborn of creation is the idea of rank and authority and power
3. Christ is the Lord and Master of all creation (1:16-17).
 - All things were created *by* him; all things were created *through* him and *for* him; he is *before* all things and *in* him all things hold together.
 - *Jesus has authority over all of creation*
 4. Jesus Christ is the *head of the body*, of the church (1:18).
 - All things originate with and from and for him
 - All things are ruled and lead by him
 - All authority and power, all right and rule, all love and law, in the church is Christ and no one or no where else has that right. The will of the church is only and all Christ's and all who attempt to wrestle it from him will be destroyed, and they must repent or be lost forever
 5. Jesus Christ is *the preeminent one* (1:18).
 - Christ is the great I AM
 - He is the beginning of it all and his word settles it all forever and will end it all!
 - He is the firstborn from the dead because he was God as a man and so he will raise us from the dead for our eternal destiny
 - Christ is the way the truth and the life; the world of man has nothing to offer!!
 6. Why is Jesus Christ made to be the preeminent one? (1:19-20)
 - *In Christ dwelt all of the fullness of God (compare Ephesians 4:1-10)*
 - *Through Christ God made peace with all things by reconciling all things to himself by the blood of Christ on the cross. – (Ephesians 1:3-11)*
 - Consider 1 John 1:1-10

Faith Under Fire

Colossians 1:21-2:5

Consider Romans 1:18-30 when looking at all of Chapter 2

1. The core truth is Christ Himself.
 - The theme of the entire book of Colossians is that Christ is the truth.
 - The answer for the believer to any and all and every philosophy or teaching or belief system is the person and work of Christ.
 - The issue is not the specific doctrine of each of today's false truths; the issue is that we know and believe Christ.
2. Christ is the great reconciler (1:21-23).
 - The condition of man before believes Christ
 - The condition of the reconciled people
 - The living faith of the reconciled people

3. Christ is the great and glorious mystery (1:24-29).
 - The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Good News of our redemption, is a glorious wonder to us who have heard and believe and still a mystery to those you yet have not heard or heard.
 - Once it was hidden to every man, but now it is revealed to anyone who will believe Christ
 - *So, faith gives us the capacity to be true disciples of Christ!*
 - Christ is the revelation of that great and glorious mystery – and that mystery is Christ in you the hope of glory: the mystery of that godpr id that Christ lives in his holy people and he is our on ly hope for glory!
4. A faith firmly established in Christ (2:1-5).
 - Paul is writing to warn the church at Colossae of false teachers promoting human reasoning or human philosophy, a letter surely to be shared with the church at Laodicea. What became of the church in Laodicea (verses 4-5)?
 - Paul is writing to encouraged the desired fruit of gospel preaching. (verses 1-3).
 - Paul describes that secret truth:
 - Paul’s reason for telling them about this secret, this truth: (verses 4-5)

Truth Under Fire

Colossians 2:6-23

How will the church fortify itself against these forces?

1. Continue to follow Christ (2:6-15)
 - Because you believe (6)
 - Depend on Him only (7)
 - Beware and remember: (10-12)
 - Only Christ saved you by a spiritual circumcision (11-12)
 - Only Christ paid your debt to God (13-15)
2. Do not follow the rules man has made (2:16-23)
 - The core truth is Christ Himself.
 - The issue is not the specific doctrine of each of today’s false truths; the issue is that we know and believe Christ.
 - Let no one make any rules for you (16-19)
 - You do not belong to them (20-23)
3. Discipleship of Christ requires, demands, a vigilant devotion to Christ Himself.
 - It will produce the necessary will and discipline to determine and follow Christ’s teachings only without compromise! (Matthew 16:24-28)
 - Paul reveals his great concern for those at Colosse and others he has not seen, expressing his desire that their hearts be knit together in love, and that they may

have the assurance that comes from an understanding of the mystery of God as revealed through Christ.

- Consider 2 Peter

Spiritual Integrity of Holy Living

Colossians 3:1-17

Your are in Christ (1-11)

Your new life in Christ (12-17)

Your new life at home and work (18-24)

1. You are in Christ, so seek only him (1-4).

From your baptism (verse 1) to your resurrection (verse 4) is the living transformation of the disciple's life (verse 2-3). It is the life of living the Christian way. Old self died and a new one raises with Christ. As you think about what Paul is saying here, he is talking about right thinking or thinking like a Christian.

- The Christian solution to sin and seeking the truth is to seek the things that are above the earth
- Why? Because you are now in Christ and Christ is working in you for your redemption:
- First think like a Christian

2. You are in Christ, so wear Him (5-11).

- What we transform from and what we are to do. Put on the clothes of the spiritual Christian life. Stop wearing and living in the old life. Get rid of the evil and get it out of your life. Then wear the new life and live in it.
- So, put away what is earthly in you (5-9).
- Then, put on Christ (10-11).

3. You are in Christ, so let Him live in you (12-17)

What we to transform into and what we are to do (verses 12-17). Put on Christ and live under his Lordship. Put on the Lordship of Christ. It is a life of love and compassion, peace and harmony, and humility and obedience.

- Christian, do not forget who you are – you are the children of divine grace (Ephesians 2:1-10)
- These are the Christ-like qualities that we seek to wear (become and live) in our relationship with one another because we have put on Christ (12-14):
Peace and harmony with one another is in the spirit and life, character and nature of love and compassion (1 Corinthians 13:1-7).
- These are our Christ-like qualities in our relationship with Christ (15-17):
Peace and harmony with God is in the spirit and life, character and nature, of humility and obedience (James 4:1-10).

4. You are in Christ, so let him live in your relationships (18-24).
 - The nature of personal relationships when wearing these clothes.
 - The culture of our world cannot be the culture within the church. Some churches have compromised so much to the world culture that they are indistinguishable from it.
 - Now, reflect on the meaning of this for the church in today's culture.

Responsible Christian Life

Colossians 3:18-4:18

1. Responsible Christian living in your personal relationships (3:18-4:1)
 - Your new life in your personal relationships at home and work
 - See notes on 3:18-23
2. Further instruction (4:2-6)
 - Pray and watch with a thanksgiving spirit
 - Walk in wisdom toward the unbeliever and redeem the time
 - Season your speech with grace, like salt
 - In all three principles consider Ephesians 5 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17
3. Lessons from examples of faithful service in Christ (4:7-18)
 - Service
 - Faithfulness
 - Our fellowship of service (Philippians 2):
From what Paul asks in prayer for these faithful servants – As you labor faithfully, pray for the comfort of your fellow laborers, and do not hesitate to seek our comfort that you will continue to serve as well.