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THE CITY OF COLOSSAE

1. It was a city of Phrygia on the Lycus River.
2. Three cities mentioned in the Colossian letter:
 1. Colossae the city of the church to which this letter is especially directed.
 2. Laodicea, the city where the church was directed to read the Colossian letter and the Colossians were directed to read the letter directed to the Laodiceans. Col. 4:16
 1. Laodicea was located just west of Colossae and even at this time had overshadowed Colossae in importance.
 3. Hierapolis located just north of Colossae
 1. There must have been some Christians in Hierapolis for we read, Col. 4:13; "For I bear him record, that he hath a zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis."
3. How the church came to be in Colossae. No one knows for sure but some possibilities may be considered:
 1. There were some in Jerusalem at Pentecost from Phrygia. Acts 2:10
 1. It could be that some of these were converted in Jerusalem; went back home and established the church in Colossae.
 2. Paul passed through this country on his second and third missionary journeys.
 1. Acts 16:6; "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia..." This was his second journey.
 2. Acts 18:23; "And after he had spent some time there, (Antioch) he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order strengthening all the disciples."
 3. Why Paul perhaps did not establish the church in Colossae. Col. 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."
 3. Some think that Epaphras may have established the church in Colossae. Col. 1:7; "As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ."
Col. 4:12, 13; "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring 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."
 1. One writer called these three towns, Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis, Epaphras' territory.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LETTER

1. It is not difficult to discover from certain portions of the letter why it was written. The error has been called "the Colossian heresy." Exactly what the error was we may not determine definitely but we offer some thoughts:
 1. It seems to have been an admixture of Jewish, Greek and Oriental religions, a sort of a higher cult parading itself under the name of "philosophy." Col. 2:8
 2. It called for the worship of angels as intermediaries between God and man, Col. 2:18. Why?
 1. The essentially holy cannot touch the essentially evil so there can be no communion between the two. Hence the intermediaries.

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CHAPTER ONE ANALYZED

1. Address and Greetings Col. 1:1-2
 1. Paul and Timothy greet the brethren and address them as follows:
 1. "Saints and faithful brethren in Christ." Verse 2
 2. All true Christians are saints by their very calling as persons set aside, devoted to God through Christ.
 2. "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Verse 2
 1. All Divine blessings are matters of Grace to us as dependent creatures, but especially as fallen and sinful man.
 1. It is the grace of God that brings salvation, Titus 2:11; Eph.2:5
 2. Grace is the outflow of God's love and his kindness toward us. Titus 3:4; "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared."

Col.
2. Paul's Thanksgiving for the spiritual progress of the Colossians. 1:3-8
 1. The three subjects of the Apostle's Thanksgiving.
 1. Their faith in Christ Jesus. Verse 4
 1. It was not merely faith resting upon him but faith that centered in Christ. Eph.
 2. It is in this sense that Christ "dwells in the heart by faith." 3:17
 2. Their love to all the saints. Verse 4. What about the nature of this love and what would it include?
 1. It would include loving the fellowship of the saints. Acts 2:42
 2. It would include "Distributing to the necessity of the saints." Romans 12:13
 3. It would include "doing good to all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith." Gal. 6:10
 3. It would include "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Heb. 10:5
 3. Their hope of heaven. Col. 1:5; "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven."
 1. This hope is Divine in its origin, unlike the false hopes of men.
 2. Consider the security of this "Hope."
 1. It is secure because it is laid up in heaven.
 2. It is secure because it is laid up in heaven and heaven is where God dwells.
3. The effects of the gospel at Colossae and in all the world. Col. 1:6-8
 1. It "bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth. Verse 6
 1. It multiplies itself in that it "Bringeth forth fruit."
 2. So we sum it all up:
 1. Their faith was Christ-centered.
 2. Their love was practical.
 3. Their hope was secure in heaven.

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PAUL'S INTERCESSION FOR THE COLOSSIANS

Col. 1:9-14; Paul prays:

1. That their knowledge might increase, Verse 9* Consider the design of this knowledge; It is twofold:
 1. The knowledge of God's will is to influence conduct, While its true end is obedience.
 1. "That we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." Verse 10
 2. We must so serve God that we may please him. Heb. 12:28:
Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."
 3. He that seeks not to please him in all things seeks not to please him in anything. James 2:10; "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."
 2. Knowledge is designed to give us full acquaintance with the law of God.
 1. An increasing knowledge of God's will means that we have a greater knowledge of God himself. This knowledge means;
 1. That we are being "Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power." Col. 1:11
 2. Knowledge of God's will teaches us that, "religion is not a system for speculation, but for the regulation of life itself."
 3. We should make clear again that the end of all knoweldge is conduct.
 1. Jesus said, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." John 13:17
2. Three signs of the full, consistent Christian character. Verse 10-12 ^{Begin here} ₄₋₂₇₋₆₉
 1. Fruitfulness. Verse 10
 1. "Bearing fruit in every good work."
 1. While bearing fruit, we ourselves shall be growing and increasing.
 2. John 15:8; "Herein is my Father glorified. that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples."
 2. Patience. "Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious Verse power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness. 11
 1. "Patience and longsuffering" speak to us of endurance and self-restraint.
 1. His all-powerful and everlasting arms are ever beneath us to prop up our poor feeble patience. Deut. 33:27; "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and he shall thrust out the enemy before thee; and shall say, Destroy them."
 2. Here Moses did not express some speculative doctrine, but simply a fact of his experience. Moses had known better than most men:
 1. The extremes of wealth and poverty, fulness and want.
 2. He had known the extremes of power and weakness.
 3. Moses knew the two sublimest affirmation in the inspired word concerning God: "God is light," "God is love." which
 3. Thankfulness. (Verse 12) "Giving thanks unto the Father " hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Three things invovled in thankfulness:
 1. 1. "Knowing" 2. "Feeling." 3. "Doing." John 13:17

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PAUL'S INTERCESSION FOR THE COLOSSIANS, Continued: Col. 1:9-143. The Great Deliverance and Translation. Verses 13, 14. Three things involved in this:1. Deliverance from (darkness) Tryanny. Consider the meaning of darkness:

1. It is the darkness of ignorance apart from "the light of life of John 8:12; "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness,
2. It is the darkness organized for the ruin of men. 2 Cor. 4:3, 4; "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4-In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
 1. It is an arbitrary, usurped power over men because men are willing for it to so be.
3. It is the darkness of sin itself. Romans 13:12; "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."
4. It is the darkness of misery. Isaiah 8:22; "And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness."

2. Settlement in liberty and honor. "Translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Verse 13. What this deliverance means:

1. You cannot deliver anything from one place to another without removing it from where it was. This deliverance implies:
 1. Separation from the world, from sin, and from the devil. 2 Cor. 6:17; "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."
 2. This separation implies the assumption of entirely new relations. Romans 12:2; "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
3. Translation through the blood of Christ. (Verse 14) "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
 1. Revelation 7:14; "... These are they that have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."
 2. Matthew 26:28; Christ said, "For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

THE SUPREME DIGNITY AND PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST. Col. 1:15-291. In Deity, equality with God Verses 15, 19

1. He is the image of God. Verse 15
 1. He is not a mere likeness of the Father, like the head of a sovereign stamped on a coin, or as a son bears the features of his father.
 2. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how say thou then show us the Father." John 14:9
2. In him all fulness dwells. Verse 19
 1. He has all authority. Matt. 28:18
 2. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Col. 2:9

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THE SUPREME DIGNITY AND PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST, Continued:(Col. 1:15-29)2. In CREATION, Creator of the universe. Verse 161. He is cause, Head and goal of the created universe. Four truths revealed respecting him. They are:

1. He is the Firstborn of all creation. Verse 15. (Of the Hebrew family)
 1. He occupies the relation of priority as is accorded the firstborn.
 2. In the New Testament the term "Firstborn" is applied five times to Christ: Col. 1:15, 18; Romans 8:29; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 1:5.
2. He is the means of all creation. Verse 16
 1. He is the Creator, not of "the rest" of the universe but of "all things." Verse 16
 2. We are expressly taught that "All things were made by him: and without him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3
3. He is the object of all creation. Verse 16
 1. "All things were created by him and for him."
4. He is the upholder of all creation. Verse 17
 1. "In him all things consist." All things hold together.

3. In PROVIDENCE, sustainer of the universe. Verse 174. In the CHURCH, he is the head of the body the church. Verse 181. In Ephesians 1:22,23 we see what the body is to the Head.

1. Christ the Head: the church is the body to the Head.
2. So, in Ephesians emphasis is placed on the Church as the body to the Head.

2. In Colossians 1:18 we see what the Head is to the body.

1. Here we have emphasis placed on Christ as its Head: The head of the body the church.

5. In REDEMPTION, he is the only Redeemer, and His redemption has wide coverage. Verses 20-231. The world not only needs education of the right sort, it needs improvement and development. But it has a sorer need:

1. The world needs forgiveness, reconciliation to God, complete renewal and restoration.

2. Reconciliation, Redemption, only in Christ. Col. 1:21; "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled."6. The GOSPEL MYSTERY, the mystery is Christ in you. Verses 24-29 Some thoughts to consider:1. "Christ in you the hope of glory." Verse 27

1. The resurrection of Christ establishes this hope, 1 Cor. 15:19;
"And if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."
2. He is the Hope of glory because he has carried the anchor of our hope within the vail, and fastened it to two immutable things:
 1. His promise. That in Abraham all the families of the earth would be blest. Gen. 12:1-3
 2. His oath. That he will ultimately bring them, the faithful, "To an inheritance incurruptable, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." 1 Pet. 1:4

2. The mission of gospel preaching. Verses 28, 29 The duties of gospel preachers:

1. The duty of preachers: is to preach Christ.
2. The manner of preaching: Warning, admonishing every man. Christ
3. The design of preaching: That we may present every man perfect in
4. The spirit of the preacher: He must labor and strive.

THE SUPREME DIGNITY AND PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST, Continued: (Col. 1:12-19)

2. In CREATION, Creator of the universe, Verse 16

- 1. He is the Father, Head and soul of the created universe. Four truths revealed respecting him. They are:
 - 1. He is the Father of all creation. Verse 16.
 - 2. He is the Father of all creation as recorded in the Hebrew Law.
 - 3. In the New Testament the term "Father" is applied five times to Christ: Col. 1:15, 18; Romans 8:29; Heb. 1:5; Rev. 1:5.
 - 4. He is the Father of all creation. Verse 16.
 - 5. He is the Creator, not of "the rest" of the universe but of "all things." Verse 16.
 - 6. We are expressly taught that "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Job 1:9.
 - 7. He is the object of all creation. Verse 16.
 - 8. "All things were created by him and for him."
 - 9. He is the upholder of all creation. Verse 17.
 - 10. "In him all things consist." All things hold together.

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 - 2. So, in Ephesians emphasis is placed on the Church as the body to the head.
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- 1. The world not only needs education of the right sort, it needs far-advanced and development. But it has a deeper need:
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 - 1. The duty of preachers: is to preach Christ.
 - 2. The manner of preaching: varying, adapting every day.
 - 3. The design of preaching: that we may present every man perfect in the will of the preacher; he must labor and strive.