

Bible study notes- Book of Colossians.

April 7th, 2021

Introduction

- This book was written by Paul.
- Some other key people we will see in this letter would be Timothy, Tychicus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Mark and Epaphras.
- Tychicus and Onesimus brought the letter to the Church in Colossae while Paul was in prison (Col 4:7-9).
- There are only four chapters in this letter.

Date and Setting

- This book was written approximately AD 60.
- It was written in Rome, during Paul's imprisonment there.
- Paul had never actually visited Colossae. Evidently, the church had been founded by Epaphras and other converts from Paul's missionary travels. But the church had since been infiltrated by religious relativism, with some believers attempting to combine elements of paganism and secular philosophy with Christian doctrine. Paul confronts these false teachings and affirms the sufficiency of Christ.

Audience

- This letter was written for the church in Colossae, a city in Asia Minor.
- Paul also wanted this letter to be read to the church in Laodicea.
- This letter was addressed to primarily gentiles because not that many Jews lived there.

Purpose

- This letter was written to combat errors in the church and to show that believers have everything they need in Christ.
- What Christ has done (Col 1-2:23).
- What Christians should do (Col 3:1-4:18).
- This letter can be looked at as two parts (1) doctrinal section (2) how to live as believers.

Main themes

- Christ as God (Col 1:15-16).
- Christ as head of the church (Col 1:18).
- Union with Christ (Col 2:6; Col 3:5-10).
- Heresy (Col 3:16-17; 4:5-6)

Chapter 1.

V. 1:1

Apostle means “chosen and sent out as a missionary or ambassador,” Paul was sent out by God to preach the gospel. By the will of God means that he had been appointed; his mission and ministry were not just a matter of his own personal aspirations.

V. 2&3

Paul would usually add Christian elements to his greetings, reminding his readers of his call by God to spread the gospel, emphasizing that the authority for his words came from God and giving thanks for God’s blessings.

The church in Colossae had been founded by Epaphras (1:7), one of Paul’s converts

V. 4&5

When Paul speaks of hope, he means more than having an optimistic attitude about the future. He is referring to the confident trust in the reality of heaven.

We are free to live for Christ and love others.

V. 6

Becoming a Christian means beginning a whole new relationship with God, not just turning over a new leaf or determining to do right.

They no longer seek to serve themselves, but they bear fruit for God.

What new fruit have you seen in your life lately?

V. 7

Epaphras had founded the church in Colossae while Paul was living in Ephesus (Acts 19:10).

While he was in Rome, he told Paul about the heresy that was happening back in Colossae.

V. 8

The Bible speaks of love as an action and attitude, not just an emotion.

Is love lacking in your life?

V. 9-14

Paul’s prayer for the Colossians had two dimensions:

(1) that they might be filled with the knowledge

of God’s will through all Spiritual wisdom and understanding.

(2) that they would bear fruit in every good work, growing in knowledge of God.

Paul wanted the Colossians to be wise, but he also wanted them to use their knowledge. God does not keep himself hidden; he makes himself available.

Paul had never met the Colossian people, but he prayed for them.

How do we pray for people we never met?

Paul gives us some tips:

- (1) they will understand God's will.
- (2) gain spiritual wisdom.
- (3) honor and please God.
- (4) bear good fruit.
- (5) grow in knowledge of God.
- (6) be strengthened with God's glorious power.
- (7) have great endurance and patience.
- (8) be filled with joy.
- (9) give thanks always.

V. 12-14

- (1) He has qualified us to share in his inheritance (2Cor 5:21).
- (2) he has rescued us from Satan's domain of darkness and made us his children (Col 2:15).
- (3) he has brought us into his eternal kingdom (Eph. 1:5-6).
- (4) he has redeemed us, buying our freedom from sin and judgement with his blood (Heb. 9:12).
- (5) he has forgiven all our sins (Eph. 1:7).

V. 13

Darkness stands for evil, the dominion of Satan, and all those who reject God.

We have been rescued from a rebel kingdom to serve the rightful king.

V. 15-23

(1) They said that God would not have come to earth as Jesus, a true human being in bodily form, because they believed that only what is spiritual is good and all matter, including the body, is evil.

(1A) Paul stated that Christ is the image, the exact likeness of God and is himself God, and yet he died on the cross as a human being.

(2) They believed that God did not create the world because he would not have created evil.

(2A) Paul proclaimed that Jesus Christ, who is God in flesh is the creator of heaven and earth.

(3) They said that Christ was not the unique Son of God but rather one of many intermediaries between God and people.

(3A) Paul explained that Christ existed before anything else and is the firstborn of those resurrected.

(4) They refused to see Christ as the source of salvation, insisting that people could find God only through special and secret knowledge.

(4A) Paul openly proclaimed the way of salvation to be through Christ alone. We see Paul continuing to bring the argument back to Christ.

V. 15-16

This is one of the strongest statements about the divine nature of Christ in the Bible. Jesus is not only equal with God, but he is also God, as the visible image of the invisible God, he is the representation of God.

We must oppose the belief that Jesus was merely a prophet, a good teacher, or one of many ways to a relationship with God.

V. 17

God not only created the world, but also sustains it. In him, everything is held together, protected, and prevented from disintegrating into chaos.

Do you ever feel like your world is falling apart?

V. 18

Because Christ is spiritually supreme in the universe, surely we should give him first place in all our thoughts and activities.

V. 19

Christ has always been God and will always be God.

Don't diminish any aspect of Christ, either his humanity or his divinity.

V. 20

Christ's death provided a way for all people to come to God.

We can have peace with God and be reconciled to him by accepting Christ who died in our place.

V. 21-22

No one can be good enough to save themselves.

We must totally depend on God's grace.

Whether we have been murderers or honest and hard-working citizens.

Jesus is the only way to salvation.

V. 23

We must remain "established and firm" in the truth of the gospel and never let go of our confidence in Jesus to forgive our sins, to make us right with God and to empower us to live the way he desires.

No matter what you have done or what you have been like, God offers forgiveness to you.

Thank God for GRACE!

V. 24

When we suffer, Christ feels our pain with us.

This suffering can be endured joyfully because it changes lives and brings people into God's kingdom.

V. 26-27

Paul called God's plan a mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, not in the sense that only few would understand it, but because it had been hidden until Christ came.

Through Christ it was made open to all.

V. 28-29

Paul wanted each believer to mature spiritually.

We must tap into the wisdom and power of God's spirit working in us.

Christ message is for everyone.

An effective presentation of the gospel includes warning and teaching.

As Christ works in you, tell others about him, warning, and teaching in love.

Who in your circle of relationships needs to hear this message?

Sources :

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