

**This book is a letter that the  
Apostle Paul wrote to the  
Christians at Colossae. We call  
this book  
Colossians**

*Colossians 1:1-2*

*I, Paul, am sending this letter to you, who are God's people in Colossae. We pray that God will bless you.*

<sup>1</sup> I, Paul, am writing this letter to you, and our fellow believer Timothy is with me. I am an apostle who represents Christ Jesus, because that is what God wanted. <sup>2</sup> I am sending this letter to you who are in Colossae city, and who are God's people, and our faithful fellow believers who have a close relationship with Christ. We pray that God our Father will be acting kindly towards you, and that he will cause you to have inner peace.

*We thank God for you very often that you believe in Christ Jesus and that you love all God's people.*

*Colossians 1:3-8*

<sup>3</sup> Very often [HYP] we thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, while we are praying for you, <sup>4</sup> because we have heard that you believe in Christ Jesus, and that you love all God's people.

<sup>5</sup> You do that because you confidently expect to

receive that which God is ◀reserving/keeping safe▶ for you in heaven, which you heard about previously when you heard the true message, that is, the message *about Christ*. <sup>6</sup> *People* proclaimed it [PRS] to you, just like *people* have proclaimed it in many different countries [HYP, IDM]. The true message is changing more and more people's lives, just like it changed your lives because you heard it and you truly experienced that God acts kindly towards us in ways we do not deserve. <sup>7</sup> That is just what Epaphras taught you *would happen*. We love Epaphras. He serves Christ together with us and works for Christ faithfully for your benefit. <sup>8</sup> He told us that you love *all God's people*, just like God's Spirit *has enabled you to* (OR, spiritually).

*We have also been praying very often to God for you. We pray that you will know truly all that he wants you to do, in order that you will conduct yourselves as the Lord's people should.*

*Colossians 1:9-12*

<sup>9</sup> Because of what we heard about you, we have also been praying [LIT] very often to God for you [HYP], ever since we heard this report about you. We pray that you will truly know all that God wants you to do; that is, that you will become very wise, and that you will understand spiritual matters well. <sup>10</sup> We have been praying like that in order that you will conduct yourselves as the Lord's people should conduct themselves, in order that you will please the Lord in every way. Specifically, we have been praying like

that in order that you will be doing every sort of good deed [IDM] and in order that you will be getting to know God truly, more and more. <sup>11</sup> And we pray that *God* will greatly strengthen you *spiritually* with the mighty power that he has shown *to people*, in order that you will always be steadfast and patient *when you experience difficulties*, while *at the same time* you will be rejoicing. <sup>12</sup> And we pray that you will be thanking God our Father, because he has enabled you/us to receive the things that he will give to his people in heaven [SYN].

*God our Father has caused you to be ruled by his Son, who existed before and ranks above everything that has been created.*

*Colossians 1:13-20*

<sup>13</sup> God our Father rescued us *spiritually* so that the evil one no longer rules us [MET, MTY], and he caused us now to be ruled by his Son,, whom he loves. <sup>14</sup> That is, because of our relationship with his Son (OR, because of what the one who is also God did), God has redeemed/bought us; in particular, he has forgiven our sins. <sup>15</sup> God's Son reveals perfectly what God, his Father, is like, whom no one can see. God's Son existed before and ranks above everything that God has created. <sup>16</sup> When God created everything that is on the earth, he did it by having his Son do it. He created everything that *people* can see, and also everything which is in heaven that *people* cannot see. In particular, his Son created all ranks of important spirit beings. *And his*

*Son ranks above everything*, because God by the work of had his Son, and because by his Son all things were created {because *God* had his Son create everything} in order that everything might praise his Son, <sup>17</sup> and because it is his Son who existed before anything else existed, and because God sustains everything by what his Son *does*. <sup>18</sup> And *God's Son ranks above everything*, because it is his Son who *rules over his people* [MET] *as a person's head controls his physical body*, because his Son causes his people to live *spiritually*. *God's Son* is the first one who became alive again, in order that he should become more important than anything and everyone. <sup>19</sup> *God's Son reveals perfectly what God his Father is like*, because his Father chose to live completely in him. <sup>20</sup> *God our Father caused his Son to rule us*, because he decided to reconcile with himself everything that is on earth and that is in heaven by what his Son did, in order that everything might honor his Son; that is, God our Father decided to reconcile everything to himself as a result of his *Son's blood flowing when he died* on the cross.

*An alternative arrangement of the sentences of Colossians 1:13-19*

[The chiasmic material is rearranged below so that the directly related propositional clusters are joined together.]

13 God our Father rescued us *spiritually* so that we are no longer ruled by the evil one, and God our Father caused us now to be ruled by his Son (OR, the man who is also God) whom he loves.

14a That is, by means of what his Son did, we have been redeemed by God, our Father. 14b In particular, our sins have been forgiven by God, our Father. 20 God, our Father, has done this because he decided to reconcile to himself, by means of his Son, everything that is on earth and that is in heaven, in order that his Son might be honored; that is, God, our Father decided to reconcile everything to himself by means of God's Son's blood *flowing out when he died* on the cross. 15b God cannot be seen by anyone, 15a but his Son reveals perfectly what God—his Father—is like, 19a because it is in his Son that the Father chose 19b that he himself would dwell completely. 15c God's Son ranks above everything 15d that has been created, 16 because it was by means of God's Son that God created everything that is on the earth and that can be seen by people, and also everything that is in heaven and that cannot be seen by people. In particular, all types of important spirit beings were created by means of him, since everything has been created by God by means of God's Son. And his Son ranks above everything, because everything has been created by God, in order that God's Son might be honored by everything, 17 and because it is he who existed before anything else existed, and since everything is sustained by God by means of God's Son. 18 And God's Son ranks above everything because it is he who *rules over all believers, just like a person's head controls his physical body, because he causes all believers to live spiritually*. His Son is the first

one who rose from among those who have died, in order that he should become more important than everything and everyone.

*As for you, God our Father has now reconciled you to himself.*

*Colossians 1:21-23*

<sup>21</sup> As for you, *although* formerly God considered you his enemies (OR, *God considered you as alienated from him*) and *although* you were formerly hostile to God because you thought evil thoughts and because you did evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> nevertheless, God our Father has now reconciled you *with himself*. He did that as a result of his Son dying physically. He did it in order that you should be completely holy when he brings you into his presence. <sup>23</sup> He wants you to continue [DOU] to believe the message about Christ; specifically, he wants you to continue to be stable/steadfast and to continue to confidently expect to receive that which you heard about when you heard that message. That message has been proclaimed {They have proclaimed that message} to people in very many places [HYP]; and I, Paul, also become someone who tells it to people.

*I am completing what Christ appointed me to do, that I should suffer physically for the benefit of the church. And I proclaim the previously unrevealed message about Christ to every class of persons.*

*Colossians 1:24-29*

<sup>24</sup> At the present time I am rejoicing that I am suffering for your benefit; that is, I am

completing what Christ *decided* that I should suffer physically for the benefit of all believers, *who are as dear to him as his own body*.<sup>25</sup> I myself became someone who serves God's people, because I was appointed {*God appointed me*} to be responsible to *help you who are non-Jews*. I became one who serves God's people in order that I should make known to you non-Jews the whole message from/about God.<sup>26</sup> *We did not know this message previously; that is, God concealed it from the people who lived in all the previous ages, but he has now revealed it to his people.*<sup>27</sup> That is, God decided to reveal to them this message, which declares that he will greatly bless the non-Jews. Specifically, this message declares that Christ, *by his Spirit*, will live in you who are non-Jews, with the result that you confidently expect that you will experience how glorious *God is*.<sup>28</sup> We tell about Christ *to every class of persons*; we warn them, and specifically, we teach everyone very wisely. We do this in order that every person who ◀has a close relationship with/is united to▶ Christ may be ◀all that God wants them to be/perfect▶ when we present them to Christ.<sup>29</sup> In order that I might *achieve/accomplish this*, I am also working very hard, depending on Christ to empowering me very greatly.

## 2

*I am exerting myself very greatly on your behalf in order that you might truly know the*

*message about Christ, in order that no one might delude you.*

*Colossians 2:1-5*

<sup>1</sup> In particular, I want you to realize that I am ◀exerting myself very greatly/working very hard▶ on your behalf, on behalf of those who are in Laodicea *city*, and on behalf of all those others who have not seen me personally. <sup>2</sup> I am doing this in order that they and you [SYN] might be strengthened *spiritually* as you are united in loving *one another*. And I am doing this in order that they and you might fully and thoroughly [DOU] understand the message that God has now revealed; that is, in order that they and you might truly know the message from God our Father and about Christ, <sup>3</sup> who alone is able to cause them and you to understand thoroughly [DOU] *this very important message*. <sup>4</sup> I am telling you this in order that no one may deceive you by persuasive arguments; <sup>5</sup> because, even though I am absent from you physically, I am very concerned about you. At the same time, I am rejoicing because I know that you are united *with each other* and that you believe firmly in Christ.

*Conduct yourselves as those who are united to Christ Jesus our Lord should conduct themselves.*

*Colossians 2:6-7*

<sup>6</sup> In a way that is ◀consistent/in harmony▶ with *the message that you received* about Christ Jesus, who is our Lord, conduct yourselves as you should, since you have a close relationship with him. <sup>7</sup> Specifically, continue believing and



practicing [MET, DOU] what you were first taught about Christ. Continue to do this more and more; continue to firmly believe all the true teaching, just like *Epaphras* taught it to you. And continue thanking *God, our Father*, very much *for all that he has done for you*.

*Make sure that no one makes you become his disciples by teaching you a false religious philosophy, since you are spiritually complete because you are united to Christ.*

*Colossians 2:8-15*

<sup>8</sup> Make sure that no one forces you (*pl*) to become his disciples [MET] by his teaching you a religious philosophy/doctrine that is worthless and false. Such a philosophy is false because it teaches what mere human beings think, because it teaches people elementary regulations/rules *that are concerned merely with what is external/physical*, and because it teaches what is contrary to *the true teaching about Christ*. <sup>9</sup> It is in Christ's body that God lives completely. <sup>10</sup> And you are spiritually complete because you have a close relationship with Christ, who rules over every other ruler. <sup>11</sup> Specifically, because of your close relationship with Christ, it is as though [MET] you were circumcised {Christ circumcised you} *spiritually*. This does not mean that someone circumcised you physically [MTY], but it means that Christ completely removed your self-directed nature. <sup>12</sup> And specifically, when you were baptized, *it was as though* [MET] you *had died and* were buried with Christ, and *it*

*was as though* [MET] God caused you to live again with Christ as a result of your believing that God acted powerfully; specifically, by your believing that God caused Christ to become alive again. <sup>13</sup> And specifically, you *who are non-Jews*, because of your sins, you were *spiritually* dead *before you trusted in Christ*. You were uncircumcised *spiritually*; that is, your self-directed nature controlled you. Nevertheless, it was you whom God caused to become alive *spiritually because of their close relationship* [MET] with Christ. And specifically, God forgave us all our sins. <sup>14</sup> *It is just as though* he canceled ◀*the charges* against us/the sins *that we had committed*▶ for which God will punish us. And *it was just as though* [MET] it was *the charges on* that document/paper that he canceled by nailing them to the cross *when they nailed Christ on the cross*. <sup>15</sup> And specifically, God defeated the *evil* spirit beings that rule, and he demonstrated/showed that publicly; that is, he triumphed over them as a result of what *Christ did*.

*Disregard those who condemn you because you do not obey certain regulations and because you do not worship God as they insist that you should.*

*Colossians 2:16-19*

<sup>16</sup> So disregard anyone who says that God will punish you because you eat *certain foods* and because you drink *certain drinks* or because *you do not celebrate* special *yearly* festivals or celebrate the time when the new moon *appears* or weekly ◀*Sabbaths/Jewish days of rest*▶. <sup>17</sup> *Disregard such people* because those *regulations/rules* about

*food and drink and festivals are only like a shadow [MET] that is cast by something that is approaching; that is, they merely represent the real spiritual blessings that Christ has given to you.* <sup>18</sup> Disregard those who say that God will punish you because *you do not worship God in the way that they say that you should*; that is, they insist that you should humiliate yourselves and that you should worship the angels. *Disregard such people* since they base their authority on things that they have never seen, and since they are proud without reason because their self-directed nature *controls* what they think, <sup>19</sup> and since they do not teach the true teaching about Christ [MET]. *Christ is the one who causes all of his people to develop/grow spiritually as God plans that they should develop/grow, just like [MET] a person's head directs how his body grows, as it is held together by its joints and ligaments.*

*Do not submit to elementary regulations, which are concerned merely with what is external.*  
*Colossians 2:20-23*

<sup>20</sup> *It is as though [MET] you died with Christ. So you no longer have to obey elementary regulations/rules that are concerned merely with what is external/physical, just like a dead person no longer has to do anything.* So, do not submit to regulations/rules <sup>21</sup> such as 'Do not handle *certain things*', 'Do not taste *certain things*', 'Do not touch *certain things*', as if you still had to obey such regulations/rules. <sup>22</sup> All those things

are intended to cease to exist when we use them. *And do not obey such regulations/rules*, because they are what mere human teachers command and teach. <sup>23</sup> *Do not obey such regulations/rules*; they only cause people to do what their self-directed nature wants to do. *Those regulations* seem to be wise because they *urge people to worship* as mere human teachers have decided. *They urge* that *people* should humiliate themselves, and that *people* should treat their bodies harshly. But those regulations/rules do not help *people* at all to not do the sinful things that their self-directed nature wants to do.

### 3

*Be constantly wanting what is associated with heaven.*

*Colossians 3:1-4*

<sup>1</sup> You now are alive *spiritually*, and *it is as though you were given new life* {*God caused you to become alive*} when he caused Christ to become alive again. So be constantly wanting what is associated with heaven [MTY], where Christ is. There God has given him supreme authority and the highest honor. <sup>2</sup> Be constantly wanting the blessings that God has prepared for you in heaven [MTY]. Do not be constantly wanting *to do the evil deeds that people on earth do* [MTY], <sup>3</sup> because you have *ceased to behave as you formerly did*. *You are like people who have died*. You now live *spiritually* together with Christ in *the presence of God*; and *people* cannot see that *you have a new life*. <sup>4</sup> When Christ, who

causes you to live *spiritually*, is publicly revealed, then God will also reveal you publicly together with Christ, *and you together with Christ will be glorious*.

*Do not do what is evil.*  
*Colossians 3:5-11*

<sup>5</sup> *Get rid of your evil practices/deeds [MET, MTY] as though they were enemies whom you were killing (OR, Stop doing evil things [MET, MTY], just as dead people do not do what is evil). Specifically, do not practice sexual immorality. Do not commit unnatural sexual acts. Do not desire to act like that, and do not desire to do anything that is evil. Do not desire to have more things than you need, because, if you do that, you are ◀worshipping material things instead of worshipping God/making material things to become your god▶.* <sup>6</sup> *Do not behave like that since God will punish [MTY] those who disobey him, because of their sins.* <sup>7</sup> *You also formerly did those things when you were disobeying God.* <sup>8</sup> *Now, however, as for you, do not do any of these evil deeds: Do not get angry in any way [DOU]. Do not act maliciously. Do not ◀slander/talk evil about▶ people. Do not talk abusively to people.* <sup>9</sup> *Do not lie to one another. Do not do those things, because you have ◀disposed of/stopped obeying▶ your former evil nature and stopped doing what you did when you had that former evil nature,* <sup>10</sup> *and because you have received a new nature. God is causing your new nature to become more and more like his own nature. He created your new nature in order that you*

*might get to know God truly.* <sup>11</sup> As a result of that, it is not *important whether anyone is a non-Jew or a Jew, or whether anyone is circumcised or not, or whether anyone is a foreigner, or even uncivilized, or whether anyone is a slave or not a slave.* But *what is important is Christ, who is supremely important in every way.*

*Do what is good; in particular, love one another.*

*Colossians 3:12-14*

<sup>12</sup> Because God has chosen you to be his people; and because he loves you, be compassionate to one another. Be kind to one another. Be humble. Be meek (OR, be considerate toward one another), be patient with one another, <sup>13</sup> and tolerate one another's flaws. Forgive one another, if one of you has a grudge/complaint against another. Just like the Lord *Jesus freely/willingly* forgave you, you too *must freely/willingly forgive one another.* <sup>14</sup> And what is more important than all of these is that you love one another, because by doing that you will be perfectly united together.

*Continue to be at peace with one another; be constantly thanking God, and continue getting to know thoroughly the message about Christ.*

*Colossians 3:15-16*

<sup>15</sup> Because God chose you to live peacefully *with one another* in your local congregations, let that peace which Christ gives control your ◀inner beings/heart▶, and be constantly thanking God. <sup>16</sup> And continue to let the message about

Christ govern/direct all you think and do, as you very wisely teach and warn one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (OR, songs that God's Spirit *gives you*), while you sincerely and thankfully sing to God.

*Do everything in the manner that those who are the people of the Lord Jesus should do.*

*Colossians 3:17*

<sup>17</sup> Whatever you say, and whatever you do, do all of this in the manner that those who are representatives [MTY] of the Lord Jesus *should do*, while you constantly thank God, our Father, as you ask the Lord Jesus to take your prayers to God.

*Wives, be subject to your husbands; husbands, love your wives.*

*Colossians 3:18-19*

<sup>18</sup> You women, be subject to your husbands, since that is what you should do because you have a close relationship with the Lord *Jesus*.

<sup>19</sup> You men, love your wives; and, do not be harsh with them.

*Children, obey your parents in every circumstance; parents, do not over-correct your children.*

*Colossians 3:20-21*

<sup>20</sup> You children, obey your parents in every circumstance, because the Lord *God* is pleased when you do that. <sup>21</sup> You parents (OR, you fathers), do not correct your children more than you need to, in order that they do not become discouraged.

*Slaves, obey your masters in every circumstance sincerely and wholeheartedly; masters, provide for your slaves justly and fairly.*

*Colossians 3:22—4:1*

<sup>22</sup> You slaves, obey your earthly masters in every circumstance. Do not obey your masters only when they are watching [MTY] you, like those who *merely* want to impress their masters favorably. Instead, obey your masters sincerely. Do this because you reverence the Lord *Jesus* (OR, *God*). <sup>23</sup> Whatever *work* you do, work wholeheartedly. Work wholeheartedly, like those who are working for the Lord *Jesus*. Do not work like those who are working *merely* for *their* masters, <sup>24</sup> because you know that it is the Lord who will *properly/justly* repay you. That is, you will receive what God has promised. *Remember that* it is Christ who is the real master whom you are serving. <sup>25</sup> But *God* will judge everyone impartially. He will punish you according to what you have done that is wrong.

## 4

<sup>1</sup> You masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, because you know that you have a master who is in heaven *who will say whether he approves of what you have done.*

*Pray to God persistently. And pray that God will give me opportunities to declare the message about Christ.*

*Colossians 4:2-4*

<sup>2</sup> Pray to God persistently, and as you pray, be alert and be thanking God. <sup>3</sup> Since I am



in prison [MTY] because *I declared the message about Christ* that God has now revealed, pray also for me that God will give me opportunities [MTY] to speak, in order that I might declare it. <sup>4</sup> That is, pray for me that *God will enable me to make his message known publicly*. I need to do this because I know that I should declare it.

*Always speak wisely and graciously to those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus.*

*Colossians 4:5-6*

<sup>5</sup> Act wisely towards those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus [MTY]; use every opportunity to do that. <sup>6</sup> In particular, always speak graciously and in a pleasant way *to those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus*. As a result, you will come to know in what manner you should answer each one of them.

*Tychicus will tell you all that has been happening to me.*

*Colossians 4:7-9*

<sup>7</sup> Tychicus will tell you all that has been happening to me. He is a fellow believer whom I/we (*exc*) love and who helps me faithfully and who serves the Lord *Jesus* together with me. <sup>8</sup> The reason that I am sending Tychicus to you *with this letter* is that he might know how you are and in order that he might strengthen you *spiritually*. (OR, in order that you might know about us (*exc*) and in order that he might comfort you.) <sup>9</sup> I am sending him to you with Onesimus, who is a faithful fellow believer whom I/we (*inc*)

love and who is your fellow townsman. They will tell you all about what has been happening here.

*My fellow workers here greet you.*

*Colossians 4:10-14*

<sup>10</sup> Aristarchus, who is in prison with me, and Mark, who is Barnabas' cousin, ◀say that they are thinking fondly about you/send you their greetings▶. I have instructed you about Mark, so if he comes to you, welcome him.

<sup>11</sup> Jesus, who is also called Justus, also ◀says that he is thinking fondly about you/greets you/sends you his greetings▶. These three men are the only Jewish *believers* who are working with me in order that people would submit to God as their king, and they have all comforted me. <sup>12</sup> Epaphras, who is your fellow townsman and who serves Christ Jesus, ◀says that he is thinking fondly about you/greets you/sends you his greetings▶.

Epaphras prays earnestly for you very often, that you might be spiritually mature and that you might know fully all that God wills for you.

<sup>13</sup> I can assure you that he prays this because he is deeply concerned for you, for those who live in Laodicea *city*, and for those who live in Hierapolis *city*. <sup>14</sup> Luke, the doctor, whom I/we (*exc*) love, and Demas ◀say that they are thinking fondly about you/send you their greetings▶.

*Obey these instructions.*

*Colossians 4:15-17*

<sup>15</sup> Tell the fellow believers who live in Laodicea city and Nympha\* and the congregation that meets in her house that we ◀are thinking fondly about them/send them our greetings▶. <sup>16</sup> After someone reads this letter publicly to you, cause someone to also read it to the congregation that is in Laodicea city. And as for the letter that I wrote to the congregation that is in Laodicea city, make sure that it is also read among you {you should also read that letter} publicly. <sup>17</sup> Say to Archippus, “Make sure that you complete the task that God appointed you to do, because you have a close relationship with the Lord Jesus.”

*I, Paul, am penning this myself in order that you may know that this letter was sent by me. Remember to pray about the fact that I am in prison.*

*Colossians 4:18*

<sup>18</sup> I, Paul, ◀am thinking fondly about you/send you my greetings▶. Having taken the pen from my scribe, I am now writing this myself in order that you may know that I have truly sent this letter. Remember to pray about the fact that I am in prison [MTY]. I pray that our Lord Jesus Christ would continue to act graciously towards you all.

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\* **4:15** meets in his house. [Nympha is a name for a woman.]

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