

# The Letter to the Colossians

## \*. **Who wrote the letter?**

Paul is stated as the author in the opening words of the letter. This letter is different in many ways from Paul's other letters. The differences are perhaps due to the fact that he had never visited the church in Colossae before (so the letter is more formal), and he was dealing with a heresy/situation with which he had not dealt before (so there is a different vocabulary used).

## \*. **When was it written?**

This letter was written about 60-62 AD while Paul was in prison in Rome (as described in Acts 28). Apparently, he wrote this letter as well as the letters to the Philippians, Ephesians, and Philemon during this same time period.

## \*. **Why was it written?**

Colossae was a major city located in the Lycus River Valley which served as a gateway into the interior of Asia Minor. Realizing the importance of the city's location, a church was planted in this city. Though Paul had not visited the church (and hence was not the founder of the church), it is thought that the church was founded by Epaphras who was commissioned to do so by the church in Ephesus.

After the church had been established, Epaphras, the pastor of the church, encountered an unusual heresy within the church. Needing advice, he seeks out Paul while Paul was in prison in Rome. Paul writes this letter to encourage them to deal with the heresy and to keep their eyes upon Jesus.

## \*. **What was the false teaching?**

The heresy was a combination of Christianity, Judaism, and paganism that included angel worship, philosophy, and asceticism among other tenets.

## \*. **What is the main topic?**

The all-sufficient Christ.

## **Col. 1:9-23**

<sup>9</sup> For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; <sup>11</sup> strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously <sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. <sup>13</sup> For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. <sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup> For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, <sup>20</sup> and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven. <sup>21</sup> And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged* in evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— <sup>23</sup> if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

## **Col. 2:6-7**

<sup>6</sup> Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk in Him, <sup>7</sup> having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and* overflowing with gratitude.

## **Col. 3:1-4**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.