

The Book of Colossians

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Colossians 1–4

Do Not to Be Persuaded by Human Philosophies

This is a relatively short study of the book of Colossians (17 pages so far), yet there is commentary on each and every verse.

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If you would like a more in-depth study of these chapters, the links to each chapter are found here: The **Book of Colossians**, a chapter-by-chapter study ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) ([Folder](#)). Each individual chapter study is usually 100–200 pages long.

At the end of each chapter, I have begun to include a summary exegesis. Because people often refer to the shorter commentaries which I have done, I have decided to use these summaries in order to assemble a relatively short commentary (the commentary that you are now reading will be considerably shorter than the chapter studies, being around 20–30 pages total).

One minor change from the chapter summaries presented below is, if there is an extensive examination of any of the translations used, then it will be placed in the [Addendum](#) of this brief commentary.

A Brief Review of Colossians 1

Christology/Paul's Responsibilities

The Bond Slave Version Bible is not copyrighted. It is a computer modernized version of the King James text. This is the version used below.

Greeting

Colossians 1:1 **Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother,**

This letter is send from Paul and Timothy to the church a Colosse. Apparently, neither man has been to Colosse before

Colossians 1:2 **To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

This letter is addressed to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ who are at Colosse. The two sets of people named here should not be seen as the same group. A **saint** is any person who has believed in Jesus Christ; a faithful brother is a believer who has grown spiritually.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

Colossians 1:3 **We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,**

Even though Paul has not met with the church at Colosse, he has heard about them and he is praying for them.

Colossians 1:4 **Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which you have to all the saints,**

V. 4 continues v. 3. Paul and the others began to pray for the believers in Colosse after they heard about their faith in Christ Jesus and the mental attitude love which they had for other believers (which indicates that some spiritual growth has been taking place at this church).

In the book of Acts, Paul finds himself not too far from Colosse. He has believers from Galatia begging him to remain and to teach them all more, yet Paul believes that he needs to get to Jerusalem for one of the religious holidays taking place there. This takes place in **Acts 20** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). .

Colossians 1:5 **For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;...**

This translation is difficult to work with:

Colossians. 1:5 **...Because of the assurance which is reserved for you in the heavens [both eternal life & our inheritance from Christ], which you have heard before in the Word of Truth [doctrine], i.e., the gospel,...** (Benjamin Brodie translation)

Paul and company are giving thanks because the Colossians have the assurance that eternal life and their inheritance from Christ are reserved for them in the heavens, which they have learned through the concentrated teaching of Bible doctrine (which was taking place there, even though Paul had not been there yet).

Colossians 1:6 **Which is come to you, as it is in all the world; and brings forth fruit, as it does also in you, since the day you heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:...**

Both the gospel and the teaching of Bible doctrine has come to the people in Colosse. This teaching has gone throughout the world and it is bringing forth fruit, such as new believers in Colosse and spiritual growth among the new believers there.

Colossians 1:7 **...As you also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;...**

Apparently the missionary and/or teaching taking place in Colosse was begun by Epaphras, an evangelist in the early church.

Colossians 1:8 ...Who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

Paul received one report on the church in Colosse from Epaphras.

Colossians 1:9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;...

Paul and company, from the day that he heard this news from Epaphras, have not ceased to pray for the believers in Colosse. At the top of the list of their things to pray for is the increase of divine knowledge (Bible doctrine) in the souls of the believers in Colosse.

Colossians 1:10 ...That you might walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;...

Once they have the Bible doctrine in their souls, then the believers in Colosse might walk worthy of the Lord, which would result in divine good production and increasing knowledge of God.

Benjamin Brodie's translation of Colossians 1:10 ...So that you might begin to walk [function in the sphere of divine power] worthy [with integrity, dignity, and character] of the Lord with the view of pleasing Him in all things [the supergrace life], being fruitful in every good work [divine production] and constantly receiving growth [spiritual prosperity] by means of the full knowledge from God [maximum doctrine in the soul],...

Colossians 1:11 ...Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, to all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;...

Believers are given strength in their spirits as they grow, which is in accordance with the power of God, learning patience by the faith-rest technique, growing spiritually supercharged by personal suffering, and enjoying a relaxed mental attitude in life.

Colossians 1:12 ...Giving thanks to the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:...

Paul is still talking about his prayers for the believers in Colosse, for whom he gives thanks to the Father, because God has made Paul and the believers in Colosse fellow partakers in the promised inheritance to all saints.

Colossians 1:13 ...Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:...

This same God has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has positionally transferred us into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

Colossians 1:14 ...In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:...

It is in the blood of Christ that we have redemption and forgiveness of sins. Bear in mind that this is not the Lord's literal blood, but it is through His spiritual death on the cross which saved us.

The Preeminence of Christ

Colossians 1:15 ...Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:...

Having mentioned Jesus, Paul is further inspired to give us the outline of doctrine of Christology.

Jesus is the exact image of the invisible God (this would be in His Deity); and Jesus is the firstborn of every creature. Jesus has a position as firstborn, which entitles Him to the double portion and to other great blessings.

Colossians 1:16 ...For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:...

All things were created by means of the Christ, all the things in heaven and all the things which are on earth, whether visible or invisible.

R. B. Thieme, Jr. suggests that these four things are: ...whether human governments or constituted authorities, or angelic rulers and authorities:...

Benjamin Brodie: ...whether they are human governments [thrones] or constituted authorities [dominions] or angelic rulers [principalities] or demon commissioned officers [potentates];...

Colossians 1:17 ...And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Jesus existed before all things, as He created all things. All things are held together by Him. The universe operates in accordance with specific laws and matter acts as it does according to the commandment of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Jesus is the head of the church (which is all believers); and all things are begun by Him. Jesus is the firstborn from the dead—meaning the first man to be resurrected into a resurrection body. Jesus has preeminence over all things.

Colossians 1:19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;...

All blessing and happiness (= the fullness) dwell in the human soul of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:20 ...And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

Jesus made peace between God and man through the blood of His cross—again, a reference to the Lord's spiritual death on the cross, where He bore our sins, taking upon Himself the punishment which we deserve.

Jesus has the ministry of reconciliation, where man and God are reconciled. Apart from Jesus, we have no pathway to a perfect God. And because Jesus is God, He reconciles all things to Himself as well.

It is not as clear to me what Jesus reconciles to Himself in heaven. Both Thieme Brodie suggest *elect angels*, but are they not already in a state of fellowship with God?

Perhaps the emphasis here is, all things will be placed in a state of reconciliation with God.

Colossians 1:21 *And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has he reconciled...*

Paul points out that the believers in Colosse were formerly enemies of God, in their thinking and by their evil works; but who are now reconciled to God as well.

Colossians 1:22 *...In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:...*

We are all reconciled through Christ's body of flesh through death. He had to take upon Himself in His Own human body our sins; and the penalty due for our sins.

Colossians 1:23 *...If you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;...*

Paul is encouraging the believers in Colosse to continue moving forward, being grounded and settled in Bible doctrine; and to not be moved from their confidence in the gospel message.

The gospel message has to, on the basis of God's character, be proclaimed to every person interested in God at the point of God consciousness. We do not know how all of this took place; but we depend upon God's character to know that this is true.

Paul's Ministry to the Church

Colossians 1:24 *...Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:...*

Paul is not suffering specifically for the local churches in Colosse. He is in a state of human difficulty, having been kept under house arrest at this time in Rome (he is writing to Colosse from Rome).

Paul's suffering is on behalf of all believers with whom he has had contact.

Colossians 1:25 *...Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;...*

Paul was made a minister of the gospel by means of God the Holy Spirit. He was also made a teacher and given the truth (Bible doctrine) to teach.

A dispensation means the management of a household. The household of the Jews was managed in a particular way by specific men under the dispensation of Israel. The church is a different household managed in a different way; and Paul is made a minister to that household.

Colossians 1:26 ...Even the mystery which has been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:...

The doctrine of the Church Age and all of the related doctrines to the Church Age are only being revealed at this time. They are not found in the Old Testament. They were hidden from previous dispensations and previous generations.

Colossians 1:27 ...To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:...

There is great value (riches) in the doctrines of the Church Age (here, called *the glory of this mystery*). This is clearly a new era which brings the gentiles into it in a greater way than before.

Christ in us is one of these new mystery doctrines, and He is the hope (or confidence) in us.

Glory can refer to the essence of God or to the revelation of God.

Colossians 1:28 ...Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:...

Paul's assignment is to help believers in the Church Age (during his generation) move toward spiritual maturity. This comes as a result of teaching every man in all wisdom.

Colossians 1:29 ...Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which works in me mightily.

Paul strives to meet the challenges which God presents to him; which God works within him.

A Brief Review of Colossians 2

Fullness of Life in the Christ/the Draw of the Cosmic System

I used Benjamin Brodie's [translation](#) below.

Colossians 2:1 For I want you to know about the great combat [intercessory prayer struggles] I continually have on your behalf and for those in Laodicea and as many as have not seen me face-to-face in my flesh [other assemblies],...

The key word in the first phrase of v. 1 is *agôn* (ἀγών) [pronounced *ag-OHN*], which means, *an assembly; a place of assembly; the assembly of the Greeks at their games*. Strong's #73 (normally, in the brief study of a chapter, I do not mention the Greek or Hebrew; but my understanding of this verse puts me at odds with nearly every other translation that I am aware of). Although this can refer to the struggle at the games, this word can also refer simply to the assembly of a lot of people. Paul is simply speaking about this great assembly of believers which are everywhere throughout the Roman empire, who were members of his congregation.

I translated the first verse in this way:

Colossians 2:1 For I keep on desiring you (all) to see how great an assembly I keep on having beyond you (all), and of the (ones) in Laodicea and as many [of those] who have not seen my face in [the] flesh;... (Kukis nearly literal translation)

Paul is not bragging here, but he is telling those believers on Colosse, believers whom he has never met before, that are many similar locations throughout the Roman empire, and their forward spiritual movement cannot be undercut.

Maybe Paul know the following and maybe he didn't—but by far the greatest majority of people who would read and study his epistles are people Paul has never seen before. And that continues to this day.

One of the most fascinating things about the New Testament is, Paul and Luke, people who had not traveled with the Lord during His earthly ministry, wrote by far the largest portion of the New Testament. Furthermore, Paul is responsible—by the guidance of God the Holy Spirit—for virtually all the Church Age doctrine.

Colossians 2:2 ...So that the mentality of your souls might be stabilized [during times of great pressure], while you are being taught inside the love complex, namely, every category of wealth [maximum doctrine in the soul] related to the full assurances which come from the source of technical knowledge [complete systematic theology], resulting in a full knowledge of the mystery of God, from the source of Christ,...

Paul, by his teaching of the mystery doctrine—doctrine which the recipients of his letters were urged to take and believe—had the responsibility to help believers throughout the world to grow spiritually and to become stabilized in the devil's world.

Colossians 2:3 ...In Whom [Jesus Christ] all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are stored up [Bible doctrine is the mind of Christ].

All of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are stored up in the mind of Christ; but God gave Paul the job of teaching this Church Age doctrine.

Paul is also claiming ultimate authority for his writings by saying this.

Colossians 2:4 I am telling you this so that no one may delude you with distorted doctrines by means of plausible but false discourse [subtle, persuasive speech].

During any period of time, in any geographic location, there are false teachings just waiting to get out and to infect believers and unbelievers. Paul says, "Don't be deluded by these doctrines."

Colossians 2:5 For, as is the case, I am in fact absent [from you] in the flesh, nevertheless, I am continually with you by means of the Spirit [non-resident pastor-teacher], constantly filled with inner happiness [from doctrine] even while inspecting your steadiness in ranks [in the Christian life] and the solid front [fortification] of your doctrine in Christ [battle lines in the angelic conflict].

Paul tells the Colossians, "Even though I am not there, I am with you in word and Spirit. Your growth and stability will come from the accurate teaching that I will provide.

Colossians 2:6 Therefore, in the same manner in which you received Christ Jesus the Lord [by the grace of God in the Spirit], keep on walking in it [the sphere of divine power],...

“Receive my doctrine just as you received Christ Jesus; and keep walking in it.” The believers in Colosse heard the gospel message and they believed in Jesus Christ. Paul says, “In the same way, believe that I am teaching you in this epistle.”

Colossians 2:7 ...**Having been rooted** [in spiritual self-esteem] **and firmly anchored** [in spiritual autonomy] **and having been constantly built-up** [construction of an edification complex in the soul] **in it** [spiritual maturity in the sphere of power], **and having been continually established by means of doctrine** [passing momentum & evidence testing], **just as you were instructed** [by a qualified pastor-teacher], **keep on overflowing** [abounding] **with thanksgiving** [part of ultra-supergrace life]....

The believers in Colosse have been rooted in the Lord Jesus Christ (they have believed in Him) and they are firmly anchored in Him, meaning that they have received basic Bible doctrine. They are to continue growing in their souls as Paul instructs them, overflowing with gratitude to God.

God provides the way for all believers to live; God guides all believers.

Colossians 2:8 ...**Constantly be on guard** [beware] **so that there is not anyone who can capture** [by pseudo-love fanaticism] **and enslave you** [in reversionism] **through human speculation** [human viewpoint philosophy & psychology], **even through empty deceit** [inane fallacies] **according to the rudimentary teachings** [beggarly elements] **from the cosmic system and not according to the standards of Christ.**

Paul warns the Colosse believers to not be captured or enslaved by false teaching, by human speculation, or empty deceit according to the fundamental teaching of the cosmic system. They must adhere to the standards of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:9 **For in Him dwells permanently** [in hypostatic union] **all the fullness** [divine essence] **of the Godhead** [deity of Christ] **bodily** [humanity of Christ];...

In Jesus, the complete essence of God exists, so why would believers be carried away by anyone else?

Colossians 2:10 ...**Furthermore, you are in Him** [positional truth], **being completely filled full** [by the baptism of the Holy Spirit], **Who** [Jesus Christ] **is the Head** [sovereign ruler] **over every principality** [angelic realm] **and authority** [earthly sphere],...

As believers, we are in Christ; and by the baptism and then filling of the Holy Spirit, we are completely filled, knowing that Jesus is the sovereign ruler over everyone, whether on earth or in heaven.

Colossians 2:11 ...**In Whom you were circumcised by means of a circumcision not made with hands** [spiritual, not ritual circumcision], **by the renunciation of the body of the flesh** [essence of the old sin nature], **by means of the circumcision of Christ** [identification with Christ on the cross],...

The circumcision of the Colossian believers is not a physical circumcision made by hands, but it is from being born again and from renouncing out sin nature (which produces sin, good and evil).

Colossians 2:12 ...**Having been buried with Him** [union with Christ] **by means of identification** [baptism of the Holy Spirit], **by means of which you have also been raised up with Him through faith** [promise of resurrection life] **by means of the sovereign** [operational] **power of God, Who raised Him out from the deaths** [both spiritual and physical].

Being buried with Jesus Christ is retroactive positional truth; being raised up with Christ is current positional truth. All of this is accomplished by the power of God, Who raised Jesus out from deaths (Jesus suffered two deaths on the cross; spiritual death where God the Father poured out our sins upon Him; and physical death, when Jesus chose to breathe His last).

Colossians 2:13 **And as for you, being dead in transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh** [the old sin nature], **He** [God the Father], **having graciously forgiven us all our transgressions, has given to you life together with Him** [divine life imparted to the believer at the moment of regeneration],...

Just as Christ was dead and then buried, our experience was similar. We were dead in our transgression and in the uncircumcision of our flesh (which circumcision represents being born again). God has forgiven us our transgressions and He has given us eternal life with Him (Jesus).

Every place where we come up short, God has made provision for that.

Colossians 2:14 **...Having cancelled the IOU written against us, which kept on being hostile to us** [because of the old sin nature], **and He** [the Father] **removed it** [the IOU] **permanently from our midst, by nailing it to the cross,**...

There is a legal, handwritten document against us which continues to be hostile to us. This document represents the barrier between man and God, and Jesus removed this from us, nailing it to the cross.

This does not mean that there is an actual, physical document that was handwritten with all charges against us. That is metaphoric, just as nailing it to the cross is metaphoric.

Colossians 2:15 **...Having disarmed the archons** [chief demon warmakers] **and** [demon] **commissioned officers, displaying the** [angelic] **captives publicly, having celebrated a triumphal procession over them by means of Him** [Jesus Christ],...

The triumphal procession takes place in Hades, where all demons, incarcerated and temporarily free learn that Jesus has overcome the sin of man.

Colossians 2:16 **...Consequently, stop allowing anyone** [self-righteous, legalistic believers] **to sit in judgment over you in the act of eating or in drinking** [adult beverages] **or with respect to feasts or new moons** [monthly festivals] **or Sabbaths** [worship days],...

Given the monumental achievement of the Lord, Colosse believers are not to allow legalistic believers to sit in judgment over them with regards to whatever they eat or drink, or what they celebrate or do not celebrate.

This is true today. There is one branch of cults who believe that we ought to be observing the Sabbath (which is Saturday, not Sunday); and there is another branch of cults which flips out because some Christians celebrate Christmas. These things are no one else's business. And even though the Bible tells us to *live every day alike*, this does not cut out birthdays and Thanksgiving; it simply means that every day should involve taking in some Bible doctrine.

Colossians 2:17 **...Which** [three previously mentioned holy days] **keep on being a shadow of those things which are about to come, but the substance** [reality] **is from Christ.**

These things previously mentioned are shadow images of what is to come. For the most part, Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross fulfill what those images represent.

The general principle is this: when the antitype comes on the scene, it is no longer necessary to promote the type in anyway. The Passover is a wonderful shadow of the Lord dying for our sins; but once Jesus has actually died for our sins, we do not continue celebrating the Passover (and, as an aside, Jews today do *not* celebrate the Passover; if any Jew from the past watched what they do today, they would not recognize it).

Colossians 2:18 **Let no one declare you ineligible for your reward, taking pleasure in self-effacement** [the false humility of asceticism] **and in the worship of angels** [demon religion], **taking a stand on those things he has seen** [dreams, trances, hallucinations], **being inflated with arrogance to no avail** [without cause] **under the influence of the thinking from the source of his flesh** [old sin nature],...

The person who grows spiritually here on earth has eternal rewards awaiting him. Paul warns the Colossians not to set these things aside to practice false beliefs.

Colossians 2:19 **...And not being occupied with the Head** [authority of Jesus Christ], **from Whom all the body** [of believers] **through joints and ligaments** [daily doctrine builds strength], **being provided gratuitously** [doctrine should be free] **and being continually taught** [by well-trained pastors & teachers], **keeps on growing with the growth from God.**

The key to our faith is Jesus Christ, Who is the head. We are the body of Christ, under His authority. There is the nourishment of the body, which takes place by the well-qualified pastor-teachers. Jesus Christ has seen to it that there would be provision for the body, for the growth of believers throughout the world, even to those who Paul would not meet (like the Colossians and the Laodicians, the examples which he gave at the beginning of this chapter).

Colossians 2:20 **If you have died together with Christ** [retroactive positional truth] **to the ultimate source of the basic principles** [rudimentary elements] **of the cosmic system, then why, as though living like a person in the cosmic system, are you submitting to legalism?**

The believer who has died together with Jesus Christ has also died to the basic principles of the cosmic system. Those basic principles change from year to year, and from place to place. The believer in Jesus Christ is not to submit to the teachings of the cosmic system.

Today, we might say that the believer in Jesus Christ should not submit to the taboos of wokeism.

Colossians 2:21 **For instance** [an example of three legalistic taboos]: **You shall not have sex** [celibacy], **neither shall you eat certain foods** [vegetarianism], **nor shall you touch anything with hostility** [pacifism],...

Benjamin also provides specifically what these words might mean, but this is more about whatever taboos happen to be supported by the cosmic system at any given time in any given place. The Colossians were exposed to one set of taboos there; we in American culture have a whole different set of taboos taking place in our own era.

Colossians 2:22 **...All of which** [taboos] **are destructive to the adherent** [ruins their spiritual life], **according to the ordinances and teachings of men** [not from God],...

These taboos, or prohibitions of society are destructive to the spiritual life of the believer. They exist due to the ordinances and teachings of man.

Colossians 2:23 ...Which classification of things [taboos] currently exist, on the one hand, having a reputation [appearance] of wisdom by means of a self-made system of religion [superstition] and by means of an emotionally subjective false humility [self-effacement] and by means of a severe non-indulgence of the body [extreme asceticism], but on the other hand, which are not of any value against gratification of the flesh [taboos are unable to control the old sin nature].

What is developed is a false religion, a false system of beliefs, a false humility. In that era, they believed in an extreme asceticism. Today, in the United States, it is almost the exact opposite, where very few boundaries exist with regards to sexual behavior. However, the false religion then and false thinking now is of no value when it comes to the control of the sin nature. The sin nature lusts to sin, to do good and to do evil; and there is nothing in the world system to curb that.

The Christian has the rebound technique and the acquisition of Bible doctrine which are the only true tools which combat against the sin nature.

A Brief Review of Colossians 3

Benjamin Brodie's translation is used below:

Colossians 3:1 If therefore, you have been raised together with Christ [positional truth], then keep on endeavoring to obtain and possess the above things [Bible doctrine circulating in the soul brings us into the immediate presence of God], where the Christ is sitting [session] at the right hand of God [the Father].

At the end of Colossians 2, Paul spoke about retroactive positional truth (identification with Christ in His death and burial). Being raised together (which includes resurrection, ascension and session) with Christ is current positional truth.

Since we have been raised up with Christ (positionally speaking), we are to endeavor to obtain and possess *the above things*. By taking in Bible doctrine, and staying in the Spirit via rebound, we grow spiritually. By growing spiritually, we are more likely able to produce divine good (because we have training); and this allows to obtain the above things (blessings in time) and possess those above things (corresponding blessings in eternity).

Colossians 3:2 Keep on thinking objectively about [concentrate on] the above things [Bible doctrine as divine viewpoint], not the things [human viewpoint] upon the earth [cosmic thinking],...

The believers is to concentrate on the above things, meaning they are to take in Bible doctrine and produce divine good (when the time is right). We are not to concentrate on cosmic thinking.

Colossians 3:3 ...For you have died [separated from your former life], and the function of your life has been hidden together with Christ by means of the God [the veil which now shrouds your higher life from others will one day be withdrawn].

In harmony with the Lord's death, burial and resurrection, we died to our former life.

My paraphrase of Colossians 3:2–3 **Do not concern yourselves with the things upon the earth, for you all died in Christ and your lives have been encapsulated in Christ by the God.** Our lives, as believers, are encapsulated in Christ by God. This is the grace pipeline from God's justice to His righteousness, which is in us. Through that grace pipeline, blessing flows, unhindered by the world. God blesses us through this pipeline.

Obviously, there is no literal pipeline, like oil might be pumped through. However, it acts the same way.

Colossians 3:4 **On the occasion [at the rapture] when the Christ, our life, shall appear [when the Groom returns for His bride], at that time you also shall be made manifest with Him in the sphere of glory.**

One generation of believers will be here on earth and Christ will appear; and we will be made manifest with Him, in His sphere of glory. That is, we are raptured and join Him in the clouds.

Colossians 3:5 **Start rendering impotent [put to death], therefore, the members [of the old sin nature], the things upon the earth [specifically]: heterosexual immorality [fornication], homosexuality [perverted sex], abnormal passion [pathos], evil [demonically inspired] lusts and the frantic search for happiness [avarice], which category of things keeps on being [a form of] idolatry,...**

Because of retroactive positional truth, we are to put to death a variety of sexual sins, evil lusts, and a frantic search for happiness. All believers have a sin nature; all believers have a lust pattern. There is the innate desire to produce sin, good and evil. Our lust pattern is different from the lust patterns of others, so there are some sins that we find tempting, and certain types of good and evil that we gravitate toward.

Paul tells the believers in Colosse to set these things aside.

Colossians 3:6 **...Because of which things the wrath of God [divine discipline] comes upon the sons of disobedience [sexual reversionists],...**

If we do not set such things aside, then we face the discipline of God. We may face this individually; or, if a large enough percentage of a nation is so disposed, we might even face national disaster (such as the stages of discipline which are found in Leviticus 26).

Illustration: What is most disconcerting to me is the idea that a child is considered to be the authority on their own gender; and that there are some schools which encourage gender-altering, either through drugs and/or surgery. Adults who think that they are the wrong gender are confused enough, and should not be considered competent enough for choosing any sort of elective surgery. But many children, as impressionable as children are, just think that this is part of their normal existence (that is, deciding if they are a boy or a girl). That's insanity and God will stop it. Neither China nor Russia would allow any such thing to take place in places that they rule over, and we may find them ruling over us, because we are unable to handle our freedom.

Colossians 3:7 **...In the sphere of which things [reversionism] you also walked as a pattern of life [modus operandi] when you once functioned in them [residence and function in Satan's cosmic system].**

Paul is saying, "You Colossians used to acts like this, committing all sorts of acts of perversion.

Colossians 3:8 **But now** [as believers] **you should also begin to lay aside all these** [other categories of reversionism]: **vicious anger, emotional tantrums, using an inconsequential person to hurt someone you love, slandering, and foul language from your mouth.**

The believer needs to lay aside such behaviors, as well as mental attitude sins and verbal sins.

Colossians 3:9 **Stop lying to one another of the same kind** [particularly to fellow Christians], **having disarmed the old man** [old sin nature] **together with his modus operandi** [cosmic activity],...

Do not like to other believers (or unbelievers), as you are able to disarm the sin nature (this is through rebound).

Colossians 3:10 **...And having put on the new in point of time** [clothed the soul of the new man with an edifying doctrinal structure], **being renewed** [because the doctrine you once knew was destroyed by reversionistic lifestyle] **by the full knowledge** [metabolized Bible doctrine] **which is according to the image of the One** [Jesus Christ] **Who created him** [the believer],...

Putting on the new man is using the rebound technique and taking in Bible doctrine. Believers are renewed by metabolized doctrine, which matches the Person of Jesus Christ in thought and deed.

Colossians 3:11 **...In which place** [union with Christ] **there no longer exists Greek or Jew** [no racial inferiority], **circumcision or uncircumcision** [rituals and religious background is irrelevant], **Barbarian, Scythian** [cultural background is irrelevant], **slavery, state of freedom** [social status is irrelevant], **but Christ is all things** [the grace source of all we have] **and the cause of all things** [divine sovereignty and omnipotence].

When people are in Christ, there is no distinguishing between Jew and Greek, Barbarian or Scythian; slave or free. The overall principle is, we are in Christ and He is in us. Everything else is superficial.

Colossians 3:12 **Keep on clothing yourself** [dressing your soul with doctrine], **therefore, as chosen ones of God** [elect in eternity past], **(having been loved in the past with the result that you will be loved forever), with affections of grace compassion** [capacity for love & life], **a gracious disposition** [inner happiness & kindness], **a relaxed mental attitude** [grace orientation], **an inwrought meekness of the soul** [genuine humility], **longsuffering steadfastness** [patience from mastery of the details of life],...

The believer, as a chosen one of God, is to clothe himself with the proper mental attitude, with grace compassion, and relaxed mental attitude, inner happiness, genuine humility and patience with others.

Colossians 3:13 **...Putting up with one another of the same kind** [mental separation from obnoxious believers] **and graciously forgiving others** [unbelievers]. **If anyone has a complaint against anyone else, even as the Lord graciously forgave you, in this way also you** [forgive];...

People are people and sometimes problems arise in interactions. Be willing to forgive others in things they might do. The idea is not to respond with getting even.

Colossians 3:14 **...And upon** [above & between] **all these** [floors of the edification complex], **impersonal** [virtue] **love, which is the binding agent** [cement] **of maturity** [leads to supergrace status].

Key to spiritual growth and maturity is impersonal love, also known as virtue love. The love here is agapê love, which requires the filling of the Spirit. This is also the proper way to interact with other believers—with a relaxed mental attitude.

Advancement in the spiritual life shuts down without the filling of the Spirit (which is here represented by having and exercising agapê love).

Colossians 3:15 **And the [spiritual] prosperity from Christ, let that continually umpire [control] the mentality of your soul, into which [supergrace status] you were called [the purpose of your election] into one body [the corporate church]; therefore, keep on becoming thankful ones [gratitude: capacity for life].**

The word translated *prosperity* here also means *peace*; and we have peace with God through Jesus Christ. That *peace* that we have from God should *decide, determine; direct* us—more specifically, that peace and our understanding of it should *decide, determine; direct* our right lobes into which *peace* we were called (the relative pronoun can only refer back to *peace*).

I think that, in this case, my translation is better:

Colossians 3:15 **Let the [reconciliatory] peace of the Christ direct your hearts, on account of which (peace) you (all) were indeed called into one body; therefore, you (all) should become thankful.** (Kukis nearly literal translation)

We should be guided and directed by the peace of God, the peace which was made between us and God. We should let all the ramifications of this peace direct our thinking (our hearts), because it was on account of the reconciliatory peace that we were all called into one body (the body of the church).

We should be thankful for this and not engaged in petty battles with others.

Colossians 3:16a **Let the doctrine from Christ keep on dwelling inside you abundantly [doctrine must saturate your inner life] in the sphere of all wisdom [doctrine on the launching pad]. You [pastors & teachers], be teaching with authority and be applying doctrine to yourself and other believers [pastors aren't exempt from application] by means of psalms [David's experiential theology],...**

In order for the word or doctrine of Christ to keep on dwelling inside of the believers in Colosse, it must be taught to them first. At this point in the local church, this was done by Apostles, prophets and pastor-teachers (the only permanent gift of the three). This is #1 on the list of things that is supposed to be done in the local church.

This was to be done in the sphere of all wisdom, which would refer back to the wisdom literature of the Old Testament, which is still accurate and applicable.

People would not have anything close to a full Bible. Some may have a few psalms, which they are here invited to read.

Colossians 3:16b **...hymns, odes [stories & poems], and [congregational] singing by means of grace in the mentality of your soul [songs that originate from thinking, not emotional subjectivity] to God,...**

I would suggest that hymns may be similar to hymns which are sung today in churches; or these might even be built upon the psalms. An ode might be about David or Moses, and possibly sung, or possibly spoken with a refrain. Where appropriate, the congregation as a whole might sing.

Even though people sing with their voices, the emphasis here is on the mentality of the soul with a focus toward God.

Colossians 3:17 **...And whatever you habitually do in the sphere of words [conversation] or deeds [behavior], do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus [self-motivation from occupation with Christ], continually giving thanks to God the Father [expression of gratitude in spiritual autonomy] through Him [Jesus Christ].**

I believe that what they habitually do in the sphere or words and deeds refers to what takes place outside of the meetings of the local church. Our relationship with God through Jesus Christ is not something that only takes place within an auditorium surrounded by other believers, but this takes place outside of the church as well. Given the 7 verses which follow, it seems clear that we are talking about what takes place outside of the local church.

This is combined with an attitude of gratitude.

Colossians 3:18 **Wives, always submit to the authority of your husbands, as it should be protocol to do in the Lord.**

Vv. 18–25 are clearly outside the realm of the local church.

V. 18 was once the norm of life in the United States. My mother once confided to me that, in her marriage, my dad was the boss (not something which she said very often). I am aware of her saying this once. And although I believe that both of my parents were saved, our home was not a Christian home, per se; but certainly one which fit into the mold of divine establishment and divine institutions. Most homes, at that point in time, were either clearly Christian or simply divine establishment in nature. Although there were certainly families around which were outside these realms, such homes and families were in the minority.

Today, there may be more Christian and/or divine establishment homes in the United States; but they are no longer the majority. There are a huge number of homes where the mother is the only parent in the home. Many of those have the welfare state as their husband.

Colossians 3:19 **Husbands, always love your wives [impersonal love as a problem solving device] and stop being bitter against them.**

Husbands, despite having the authority in the home, were not to be drill sergeants or wife beaters. In the era during which I was a child, such fathers existed, but fewer per capita than exist today.

Colossians 3:20 **Children, always obey your parents in everything, for this [authority orientation] is pleasing to the Lord.**

In the home, the child is to be obedient to the parents.

In so much of our education today, there are teachers attempting to undermine the authority of the parents. One of the ways that they do this is they flatter teen students, telling them that they are much smarter than their parents are (or were). The proof which is offered up is, the teen students believe the propaganda which is being taught to them at school, which is different than what their parents believe. The children are made to think that they are more advanced than their parents, more adapted to the world as it really is, more literate. About 95% of the time, the exact opposite is what is true; and too many of these children are just lapping up the propaganda that they are being fed.

Colossians 3:21 **Fathers, do not embitter** [provoke indignation] **your children, so that they may not become discouraged** [from too much system testing].

Fathers (this can be addressed to fathers or parents) have a very important part to play in the growth of the child. He teaches his children to be questioning, suspicious, authority orientated, obedient and well-mannered.

Although there is nothing wrong with a father spanking his child, that should be the most powerful statement that the father makes. Therefore, this should not necessarily happen daily or even weekly. But, it has to be used to drive the most important points of life home, and those points must be a part of what the child hears before being spanked.

Colossians 3:22 **Labor, always obey management according to the flesh** [excludes spiritual matters] **in everything** [on the job], **not with eye service as men-pleasers** [not as brown-nosing, patronizing politicians], **but with a virtuous mentality of the soul** [from doctrinal thinking], **always respecting the Lord.**

In the time that Colossians was written, labor and management was really slaves and slave owners. Even though there is slavery still in the United States, all of that is illegal; and what is said here does not apply when people are breaking the law.

The proper application is, those who are workers need to obey their bosses, not simply working so they seem hard-working, but genuinely doing a good job for their employers.

It should be pointed out that none of the groups of people named in these final verses of Colossians 3 are perfect or better than anyone else. These are simply their roles to play in life.

Colossians 3:23 **Whatever you do, keep functioning from your soul** [in spiritual autonomy] **as to the Lord and not to man,...**

Now, even though Paul is specifically addressing the slaves, at this point, this does not mean that everyone else ought to check out. Paul's teaching provides important information for all of those reading or hearing this letter being read.

The believer, in no matter what state he finds himself, he should be functioning from day-to-day based upon the doctrine in his soul. R. B. Thieme, Jr. called this concepts spiritual autonomy. This means that a believer functions on the basis of his own understanding of the Word of God. A pastor may teach a believer all of the basic principles that he can, but it is not up to the pastor to follow that believer around and make sure that he is doing that.

Colossians 3:24 **Since you** [growing Christians] **know that you will receive the reward of your inheritance** [wages for work done, not a free gift] **from the Lord** [your ultimate reward comes from the Lord, not the human organization you work for]: **Always be serving the Lord Christ,...**

The reward promised here is not just for slaves, but it is promised to all believers. This might be particularly important to Christians who are slaves as this promises them great rewards and benefits in heaven. This is obviously true for all of us.

We take our life such as it is; remain in fellowship for as long as possible; and then learn and apply Bible doctrine. We can only do this for ourselves. We are dependent upon the provisions of God to reach the point of spiritual maturity; but production at that point becomes clearly qualified a divine good.

Colossians 3:25 **...For anyone who habitually does wrong** [injury or injustice] **will receive the consequences of his wrongdoing** [self-induced misery & divine discipline], **since there is no partiality** [under the law of volitional responsibility].

At the same time, the believer who continually does what is wrong (and stays out of fellowship, this person suffers from both self-induced misery and divine discipline.

When it comes to applying His justice, that is no partiality with God. If we are deserving of punishment, God is not going to look at us and say, "Now, that Charlie Brown is an okay dude. No discipline today." That won't happen because there is no partiality with God.

Colossians 4:1 **Management, always pay from your own resources just** [fair] **and equitable** [no favoritism] **wages to your employees, knowing that you also have management in heaven.**

Originally, this is Paul addressing slave owners, and telling them to be just and fair in their treatment of slaves. However, this applies to managers and owners and employers today. God oversees them from heaven.

A Brief Review of Colossians 4

Benjamin Brodie's translation is used below:

Colossians 4:1 is placed with Colossians 3, where it belongs.

Colossians 4:2 **Be continually devoted to** [vigilant in] **prayer, constantly being alert by means of the same** [prayer] **in the sphere of thanksgiving** [gratitude].

Paul encourages the Colossians to continue to be engaged in prayer, constantly at the alert, and for them to always include thanksgiving with their prayers.

Colossians 4:3 **At the same time** [simultaneously] **be continually praying also for us** [teamwork], **so that God might open a door for doctrine to us, for the purpose of communicating the mystery** [Church Age doctrine] **of Christ, because of which I also have been chained** [to soldiers of the Praetorian Guard],...

Paul asks for the Colossians to also pray for him and he reminds them of his situation, being under house arrest.

Nevertheless, Paul continues to teach Church Age doctrine, referred to as the *mystery* here.

Colossians 4:4 ...In order that I might reveal by teaching the same [mystery doctrine], as it is necessary for me [my responsibility] to communicate.

Paul, as his position in the Church Age dictates, must teach the doctrine of the mystery. We learn this doctrine only through his epistles. This is not taught by Peter or by any of the other Apostles. It is not even found in the book of Hebrews. Even to this day, there are many churches which do not understand this doctrine.

Simply put, there are specific doctrines and guidelines for the Church Age. The Church Age is a dispensation unlike any other. It is called a mystery because the Church Age is not found in any prophecy from the Old Testament. It is a completely new thing and very separate from the Jewish Age (also known as, the Age of Israel).

Colossians 4:5 Keep on walking in the sphere of wisdom towards the ones on the outside [unbelievers], continually redeeming [logging] the time,...

Wisdom is the assimilation and application of Bible doctrine to life. *Walking* is often a term used to represent living the spiritual life (or, in the Church Age, the Christian life).

As believers, our interactions with those on the outside (unbelievers) should be honorable and honest.

Redeeming the time means that we take in Bible doctrine on a regular basis, purchasing our time here on earth. The more you learn and the more you stay with the plan of God, the longer your life will be.

Colossians 4:6 ...Your word always in the sphere of grace [divine viewpoint], having been seasoned with salt [palatable to the hearer], so that you may know [having studied beforehand] how each one [questions from every quarter] should be answered by you.

Your word refers to the speaking and thinking of the Colossians, and Paul encourages them to remain in the sphere of grace. Grace orientation means that we understand Who and What God is, and who and what we are. Grace is all that God is free to do for us on the basis of the cross.

Believers are to add both flavor and preservation to those in their geographical areas.

When interacting with others, we should always have in our minds a reason for the confidence which is within us.

Colossians 4:7 All things pertaining to me [my current circumstances] Tychicus shall declare to you, a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord [Paul's 3-fold introduction and commendation],...

Tychicus is one of the men bringing this letter to the Colossians. He will further inform the Colossians as to Paul's specific circumstances. He is under house arrest and there are certainly details related to that which Tychicus knows about. He will provide this information to the Colossians.

Colossians 4:8 ...Whom I have sent face-to-face to you for this same purpose, in order that you might come to know our situation [things concerning us], and that he might encourage the mentality of your soul [comfort your thinking],...

Paul has sent Tychicus to the Colossians to encourage them and to teach them.

Colossians 4:9 ...Along with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is from among you [from Colossae]. They will report to you the entire situation here.

Paul is also sending Onesimus along with Tychicus. There are no private details about Onesimus released in this missive, but he is a runaway slave. He belonged to a Philemon, who is also a member of the church. Now, Paul could have written, "You all need to put some pressure on Philemon and get him to free Onesimus." But Paul does not do that. Paul will personally tell Philemon what he thinks Philemon should do, but he does not break this confidence.

Onesimus, a slave, is treated just like anyone else. Paul calls him a beloved brother, meaning that he is a part of the royal family of God.

Colossians 4:10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, salutes you, also Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received orders: if he comes face-to-face to you, welcome him),

Two of the people with Paul are Aristarchus and Mark. They are among those with Paul who send their greetings to the Colossians.

Both Aristarchus and Mark are mentioned several times in the book of Acts. You may recall that there was a dust up between Paul and Mark in the book of Acts, and that seems to be smoothed over.

Colossians 4:11 Also Jesus, who is called the just [Paul's lawyer]. These, who are out from the circumcision [Jews], are my only co-workers with reference to the Kingdom of God, who are of such a character [super-abounding grace believers] as to have become a comfort to me [refreshment from friends].

Brodie has apparently deduced that Jesus (also called Justus) is Paul's lawyer. I am not to this point yet, but it is logical that Paul will have a lawyer at this point.

There are Jewish believers whom Paul is associated in Rome, and they are a comfort to him.

Colossians 4:12 Epaphrus, who is from among you [from Colossae], a slave of Christ Jesus, salutes you, who is always struggling on your behalf by means of his prayers [he is their absent pastor-teacher who is visiting Paul in prison], in order that the mature ones [super-abounding grace believers] may hold their ground [stand firm while he is away] and be completely filled up [saturated] with all things [every category of doctrine] pertaining to the will of God;...

Epaphras is mentioned twice in Colossians and once in Philemon. He is apparently a teacher in Colosse who is staying with or near Paul at this time. Epaphras continues to pray for his brothers in Colosse.

Colossians 4:13 ...For I solemnly testify with reference to this same one [Epaphrus], that he continues to have great distress on your behalf and for those in Laodicea [who are constantly in trouble] and those in Hierapolis [the local hot springs medical center].

Epaphras continues to pray for the Colossians with great fervor. He also has contacts in Laodicea and Hierapolis, concerning whom he prays.

Colossians 4:14 **Luke, the [my] beloved physician, and Demas, also salute you.**

Luke and Demas are also with Paul and they both greet the Colossians.

Colossians 4:15 **Salute the brethren in Laodicea, especially Nymphas and the assembly of believers at her house [home church].**

The Colossians apparently had dealings with the believers in Laodicea, and Paul conveys his greetings to them, and specifically to the person providing the home for them to meet in Laodicea. There are disagreements as to whether this is a male or a female.

Colossians 4:16 **And when this letter [Epistle to the Colossians] has been read and taught in your presence, do it thoroughly [verse-by-verse exegesis], so that it may also be read and taught in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you [Colossian believers] likewise read and teach the one from the Laodiceans [Epistle to the Ephesians].**

Paul encourages the believers in Colosse to thoroughly teach this letter and to share this letter with the Laodiceans. This would involve copying the letter and sending them this copy. The Laodiceans also have a letter from Paul, and the Colossians are encouraged to get a copy of that letter.

It is possible that this is a reference to the book of Ephesians. I think it is simply another letter which Paul wrote to the Laodiceans, one which has been lost to history.

Colossians 4:17 **Also tell Archippus: Pay attention to the ministry which you received from the Lord, in order that you might fulfill it [complete in every detail].**

Paul encourages Archippus to stick with and excel at his ministry, given to him by God.

Colossians 4:18 **This salutation is by my hand: Paul. Keep remembering my chains. Grace be with you.**

Paul writes these final few sentences with his own hand, confirming that this is a letter actually from him.

Addendum