

# the Epistle to the Colossians

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AND OTHERS

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## Colossians

### The Deity and Preeminence of the Savior

#### CHAPTER ONE

##### THE THANKSGIVING FOR THIS DIVINE PREEMINENCE

It was the source of Paul's praying  
"We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord  
Jesus Christ, praying always for you" (1:3).

It was the source of Paul's preaching  
"The hope of the gospel . . . whereof I Paul am made  
a minister" (1:23).

"Whom we preach, warning every man in all  
wisdom" (1:28).

### The Danger and Perversion of the Serpent

#### CHAPTER TWO

##### THE NATURE OF THESE PERVERSIONS

- Enticing words 4
- Philosophy 8
- Traditions 8
- Legalism 16, 17
- Mysticism 18
- Idolatry 18
- Asceticism 20, 21

### The Duty and Performance of the Saints

#### CHAPTERS THREE AND FOUR

- In relation to the Son of God (3:1-4)
- In relation to the Word of God (3:16)
- In relation to the work of God (3:17)
  1. What to put off (3:5-9)
  2. What to put on (3:10-12, 14)



##### THE THEOLOGY OF THIS DIVINE PREEMINENCE

Christ's relationship to the Father  
"Who is the image of the invisible God, the  
firstborn of every creature" (1:15).

Christ's relationship to the universe  
He was its past Creator (1:16).  
He is its present sustainer (1:17).  
He shall be its future reconciler (1:20-22).

Christ's relationship to the church  
"And he is the head of the body, the church" (1:18).

##### THE ANSWER TO THESE PERVERSIONS

- Know who Jesus is (2:3, 9)
- Know what he has done for you (2:13-15)
- Know who you are (2:10-12)
- Know what you are to do for him (2:6, 7)

- In relation to the peace of God (3:15)
- In relation to our talks with God (4:2-4)
- In relation to our testimony for God
  1. Before the unsaved (4:5, 6)
  2. In the home (3:18-21)
  3. On the job (3:22-25)
  4. In the church (3:13)
- In relation to the ministers of God (4:7-18)

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# the Epistle to the Colossians

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### REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS BLOCK:

1. **Read all the material** for this block.
2. **Look up and read all the verses** in the material as you read through the material.
3. **Fill in the answers** to your **STUDY QUESTIONS** ahead of time so you will be better prepared for the EXAM during the final hour.
4. **T-H-I-N-K** as you read this material. **It will be a blessing to you.**  
**It will also change your life.**

# The Epistle to the Colossians

## INTRODUCTION:

1. Colossians is one of the epistles Paul wrote during his first Roman imprisonment. The others are Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon.
2. The church at Colosse was probably started during Paul's third missionary journey. Although he personally never visited the city (see Col. 2:1) he did spend two years teaching the Word of God in Ephesus at the house of Tyrannus (see Acts 19:9, 10). Colosse was only ninety miles east of Ephesus. It is therefore suggested that one of his students during this time was a man from Colosse named Epaphras. After graduating from the two-year T.B.I. (Tyrannus Bible Institute), Epaphras may have gone back to evangelize the entire Lycus Valley. This valley, some ten miles long, contained three important cities: Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse. Laodicea was only twelve miles from Colosse. It is therefore possible that Paul's zealous young student started both the church in Colosse and the one in Laodicea! (See also Col. 4:16 and Rev. 3:14-22.)
3. The Colossian church was composed mainly of Gentile membership (see Col. 2:13).
4. Paul intended to visit it upon his release from prison (Philemon vs. 1-22).
5. The church in Colosse may have met in the home of Philemon, for he lived at Colosse with one of his slaves, Onesimus (Col. 4:9 and the book of Philemon).
6. Some time after its beginning, the church at Colosse was infected by a deadly virus known as Judaistic Gnosticism. This represented the worst of both the Jewish and Greek world of thought. The "J-G virus" consisted of the following:
  - a. Salvation could be obtained only through knowledge. This meant only those with superior intellects could hope to achieve salvation.
  - b. Faith (belief without materialistic proof) was

silly and useless.

c. Matter itself was evil. The J-G virus taught that the world was created by a series of angelic emanations. In other words, God (the original source) created an angel who in turn created another angel, who created yet a third, etc., etc. Finally, the last of these angels created the world as we know it today. While this philosophy admitted to the transcendence of God (that he is above everything), it denied his immanence (that he is also in everything). This view immediately ruled out the incarnation of Christ, special divine creation, prayer, faith, miracles, the Second Coming, and the accuracy of the Bible.

d. The goal of man was either morbid asceticism (avoiding all joys of life, and abusing the body for the spirit's sake) or that of unrestrained licentiousness (if it feels good, do it). The first was known as stoicism, and the last view Epicureanism. Scofield once observed: "Pure Christianity lives between two dangers ever present: the danger that it will evaporate into a philosophy ... and the danger that it will freeze into a form "

In conclusion, it may be added that the J-G virus error included dietary and Sabbath observations, circumcision rites, worship of angels, and the practice of asceticism. (See Col. 2:11, 16; 2:18; 2:21-23.)

7. Epaphras was apparently unable to deal properly with this vicious strain and thus makes the dangerous and wearisome 1000-mile trip from Colosse to Rome to seek Paul's advice.
8. When he left Colosse, Archippus assumed the pastorate (Col. 4:17). Archippus may have been the son of Philemon (vs. 1:2).
9. Upon reaching Rome and informing Paul, Epaphras was evidently also imprisoned (Philemon vs. 23). This was doubtless because of bold preaching.
10. Paul writes the Colossian epistle to deal with the disease and sends it back by one of his trusted top lieutenants named Tychicus