

OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF COLOSSIANS – COMPLETE IN CHRIST THE SUPREMACY AND SUFFICIENCY OF JESUS CHRIST

INTRODUCTION:

What is the key to Spirituality? To Sanctification and growth to Christian maturity? There are many heretical teachings and misguided perspectives that would undermine our growth towards Christlikeness. The Apostle Paul dealt with the error of the **Judaizers** in the book of Galatians as he taught that Justification was by faith in Jesus Christ alone apart from any works of the law. But what about sanctification? Here in Colossians Paul deals with a different theological error – one that impacts our spirituality as believers. You could call it **incipient Gnosticism** since the full-fledged form of the error did not fully develop until later.

The Common Thread of every false approach to spirituality can be summarized with the same formula: **Christ + Something Else**

- Christ + **works** – Performance based approach – you are burdened with guilt as you must constantly try harder to reform yourself – You fail to rest in the **grace** of God
- Christ + **rituals** – this assigns some magic infusion of grace and power to a wide variety of religious rites and practices – you could include long hours at prayer and consistent private devotions in this category of misplaced dependence
- Christ + **experiences** – Maybe you can reach a higher plane of spirituality by a second baptism of the Holy Spirit or special visions or speaking in tongues or some mountaintop retreat
- Christ + **secret knowledge** – you need to be initiated into this elite group of believers by false teachers who promote their own brand of esoteric doctrines that are available only to an enlightened few
- Christ + **self-denial** – this is especially attractive to the flesh – some type of ascetic denial that sets you apart from the less spiritual
- Christ + **church authority** – put your confidence in your church identity or loyalty to some charismatic spiritual leader
- Christ + **human wisdom and philosophy** – this could include a wide range of speculative rabbit trails and ivory tower contemplations
- Christ + **Self-Improvement** – this mindset may be the most popular error – Christ gets me started on the pathway to spirituality but then spiritual growth depends mainly on my effort

Christ + Something Else will always be the formula of those who would minimize the preeminence and sufficiency of the Person and Work of the only Savior that God has provided.

What was the **situation at Colossae** that Paul was addressing in this prison epistle written about 61 AD from his house arrest in Rome? (**Bill McRae** does a good job here)

Interesting that Colossae was not a major city at all or a strategic business or travel hub. It was a declining city in a triangle with Laodicea and Hierapolis (mentioned in 4:13) – about 100 miles east from Ephesus. Paul was not even responsible for planting the church there – he had apparently never seen these believers in person – he had only heard of their faith and love (**1:4** –

cf. **2:1**). How then had the church started? Probably Epaphras who had heard the gospel in Ephesus (**1:7**) and then traveled back to his home city. Paul's missionary methodology was always to go to the larger more strategic centers like Ephesus and then allow the converts to take the gospel into the more isolated and less populated areas. We might examine our own church planting models in light of such a strategic approach.

Anyway the occasion for the writing of the epistle is that Epaphras had visited Paul while he was in prison in Rome (**4:12**) and brought news of what we will call the **Colossian heresy**. There were some false doctrines spreading in the church that were undermining true spirituality. We can work backwards from identifying the truths that Paul felt compelled to emphasize in his correction to get a better picture of the error he was refuting.

- The heresy must have been detracting from the preeminence of Christ (**Chap. 1**)
- The heresy must have been fueled by Greek philosophy and speculation (**2:8**)
- The heresy must have included some legalistic and ascetic regulations that may have derived from Judaism – special dietary laws, observance of special days and feasts, the rite of circumcision, etc. – all of these areas Paul felt compelled to address (**2:11, 16**)
- The heresy involved the worship of some type of intermediary spiritual beings (**2:18**)
- The heresy must have involved secret knowledge and a sense of spiritual elitism

So those were some of the components of this system of false teaching which later developed into Gnosticism. It included Theological aspects and Ethical aspects. It was a blend of 3 things:

- Jewish legalism
- Greek philosophy
- Oriental mysticism – worship of angels and secretive knowledge

KEY VERSES:

Colossians 1:18 *“that Christ Himself will come to have first place in everything”*

This idea of Preeminence of Christ is the theme of the book – Does Christ have first place in every area of your life?

Colossians 2:10 *“In Him you have been made complete”* not Christ + something

Where is your dependence for spirituality?

Warren Wiersbe: “The message of this letter is greatly needed today. I hear too many voices telling me that I need something more than Jesus Christ – some exciting experience, some new doctrine, some addition to my Christian experience. But Paul affirms that what I need is appropriation of what I already have in Christ. *‘And ye are complete in Him.’*”

BIG IDEA

The Key to Spirituality Is Living Out Our Union with the Supreme and Sufficient Christ (Understanding that We Are Complete in Him Alone)

Paul's answer to the Colossian heresy was not primarily to attack the error. His answer was to **exalt Christ**.

When counterfeit money is studied, experts spend most of their time examining the genuine article. Likewise, Paul presents the glory of Christ so clearly that false teaching becomes obvious.

The epistle moves from **Doctrine** to **Practice** in these short 4 chapters – the same pattern we saw in the book of Ephesians – two halves to the book. **Exposition** and then **Exhortation**.

(1:1-14) INTRODUCTION – STABILITY COMES FROM GROWTH PAUL INTRODUCES HIS STABILIZING TEACHING TO THE COLOSSIANS WITH THANKSGIVING, A REMINDER, AND A PRAYER ON THEIR BEHALF

A. (:1-2) GREETING

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, ² To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

B. (:3-5) THANKSGIVING FOR CORE CHRISTIAN COMPETENCIES:

2 Core Competency Activities: Giving Thanks / Prayer

3 Core Competency Character Traits: FAITH / LOVE / HOPE

Ask:

- Is my faith affecting my daily life?
- Is my love for believers growing?
- Is my hope fixed on eternity?

The theme of **thanksgiving** is woven throughout Colossians and serves as one of the practical evidences of spiritual maturity. Paul presents thanksgiving not merely as an occasional response but as a continual attitude that flows from understanding the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ.

- 1) Thanksgiving Is the Proper Response to God's Saving Grace (**1:3-5**)
- 2) Thanksgiving Flows from Understanding Our Spiritual Riches (**1:12-14**)
- 3) Thanksgiving Is a Mark of Spiritual Maturity (**2:6-7**)
- 4) Thanksgiving Guards Against False Teaching (**2:7**)
- 5) Thanksgiving Should Characterize Corporate Worship (**3:15-17**)
- 6) Thanksgiving Strengthens Prayer (**4:2**)

A thankful heart is one of the clearest indicators that a person truly believes the central message of Colossians: **Christ is all, and Christ is enough**.

Thanksgiving in Colossians is the heartbeat of the believer's life—an unending song of gratitude to the One who has delivered us from darkness and brought us into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

C. (:5B-8) REMINDER OF THEIR OBJECTIVE ANCHOR – THE UNIVERSAL AND EFFICACIOUS (PRODUCTIVE) GOSPEL MESSAGE

The Gospel is the objective truth designed for the whole world = Foundational
Core of the gospel = **the grace of God** – Guard against legalism / ritualism / mysticism /
intellectualism / elitism
Epaphras had faithfully communicated the gospel to those at Colossae

D. (:9-14) PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE LEADING TO OBEDIENCE AND MATURITY

*“so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord,
to please Him in all respects”*

Goal = Maturity in Ministry (Fruitfulness) / Knowledge / Power / Worship

Ministry -- *“bearing fruit in every good work”*
Knowledge -- *“increasing in the knowledge of God”*
Power -- *“strengthened with all power”*
Worship -- *“giving thanks to the Father”*

I. (1:15-23) THE SUPREMACY (PREMINENCE) OF CHRIST DISPLAYS THE FULLNESS OF GOD

CHRIST DESERVES THE PREMINENCE BY VIRTUE OF:

- HIS POSITION OF HEADSHIP
- AND HIS WORK OF RECONCILIATION

(WITH RESPECT TO ALL OF CREATION AND TO THE CHURCH)

(:18b) THESIS: *“so that He himself might come to have first place in everything”*

Illustration: As you walk up the stairs in our house to the top floor a portrait of Karen’s Dad hangs on the wall. It is a very impressive painting ... shows him in his full Air Force dress uniform with all of his medals and his distinctive stripes as Chief Master Sergeant ... but not just any Chief Master Sergeant ... for the Air Force has many of these ... but the setting is in his Pentagon office with the flag of the United States of America and that of the Air Force ... you see Dick Kisling for a period of time was **THE Chief Master Sergeant of the entire Air Force** – the one preeminent enlisted man – a position of tremendous respect and importance. He was appointed to that position by virtue of his accomplishments and the respect he had earned throughout his career. I look at that portrait and it makes me proud ... the man who was the head of my wife’s home rose through the ranks to be **first place** among all the enlisted men in the Air Force.

Christ stands in first place in all the things that **really count** – and He occupies that place at the top – the place of supreme authority and respect and power – for a very long time -- until the end comes that is talked about in **1 Cor. 15:25-28** when He turns around and subjects all things under the Father – somewhat of a divine mystery as to how they share the spotlight back and forth

You can refute almost any cult or false teaching by examining how they fail to give Christ His due in terms of His Deity or Sufficiency or Supremacy or Exclusivity—Cults will always come up short in terms of **how they view Christ** And they will always come up short in terms of how they understand and portray the **grace of God**

A. (:15-17) CHRIST DESERVES THE PREEMINENCE BY VIRTUE OF HIS POSITION OF HEADSHIP OVER ALL CREATION
– THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

1. Preeminent by Virtue of His Deity = “*the image of the invisible God*”
2. Preeminent as the Unique Son of God = “*the first-born of all creation*”
3. Preeminent as the Creator of all things – “*all things have been created by Him*”
4. Preeminent as the Goal of Creation -- “*all things have been created ... for Him*”
The world does not revolve around us
5. Preeminent as the Precursor of Creation -- “*He is before all things*”
6. Preeminent as the Sustainer of Creation -- “*in Him all things hold together*”

John MacArthur: “Upholding” the earth or “maintaining.” It's used in the present tense, implying continuous action. Everything in the universe is sustained at this moment by Jesus Christ.

- a) Avoiding chaos -- Our lives depend on the constancy of physical laws.
- b) Maintaining the cosmos -- The reason the universe is a cosmos and not chaos--an ordered and reliable system instead of an erratic and unpredictable muddle--is the upholding power of Jesus Christ.

B. (:18-19) CHRIST DESERVES THE PREEMINENCE BY VIRTUE OF HIS POSITION OF HEADSHIP OVER THE CHURCH
– THE EMBODIMENT OF ALL THE FULNESS OF GOD

1. Preeminent by Virtue of His Deity = “*all the fulness dwells in Him*”

Warren Wiersbe: “The word *filled* is a **key word** in Colossians. It was also a key word in the teachings of the false teachers who had invaded the Colossian church. Paul used it many times. (See **Col. 1:19, 25; 2:2, 9-10; 4:12, 17** [*Complete = ‘filled full’*]). The word carries the idea of being fully equipped. It was used to describe a ship that was ready for a voyage. The believer has in Christ all that he needs for the voyage of life. ‘*And you are complete in Him*’ (**Col. 2:10**). ‘*And of His fullness have all we received*’ (**John 1:16**).”

2. Preeminent by Virtue of His Headship over His Body = the Church
“*He is also head of the body, the church*”

3. Preeminent by Virtue of His Leadership in Resurrection
“He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead”

C. (:20) CHRIST DESERVES THE PREEMINENCE BY VIRTUE OF HIS WORK OF RECONCILIATION – WITH RESPECT TO CREATION

“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.”

We don't talk about this cosmic scale of reconciliation very much
Everything is brought under submission to His will and made to serve His purposes – even the destiny of the wicked – not advocating for universal salvation here

D. (:21-23) CHRIST DESERVES THE PREEMINENCE BY VIRTUE OF HIS WORK OF RECONCILIATION – WITH RESPECT TO THE CHURCH

1. Need for Reconciliation (Scope = Gentile emphasis)
 - a. Alienated by Position -- *“you were formerly alienated”*
 - b. Alienated by Active Rebellion in Mind -- *“hostile in mind”*
 - c. Alienated by Active Rebellion in Deed -- *“engaged in evil deeds”*
2. Nature of this Reconciliation -- *“He has now reconciled you”*

Illustration: Remember the old slogan: **“You've come a long way baby”** -- I think it was applied to women having the equal oppty with men to kill themselves with smoking the cancer sticks ... Do we appreciate how far away from God each of us was and what a tremendous work of reconciliation Christ accomplished??

3. Means of Accomplishing this Reconciliation -- *“in His fleshly body through death”*
4. Goal of Reconciliation
“in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach”
5. Human Responsibility: Perseverance in the Faith (:23)
“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.”
 - What you once were (:21)
 - Where you now stand (:22)
 - How you must go on (:23)

Application:

A small Christ produces weak Christians.
A great Christ produces strong Christians.

II. (1:24-2:15) THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST MAKES US COMPLETE IN HIM

A. (1:24-29) CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT FOR THE GENTILES --

PAUL'S PASSION FOR PROCLAIMING JESUS CHRIST DROVE HIM TO FULFILL HIS CALLING TO SACRIFICIALLY MINISTER TO THE GENTILES

1. (:24) THE MISERY OF PROCLAIMING JESUS CHRIST TO THE GENTILES – SUFFERING PHYSICALLY FOR THE CAUSE OF CHRIST
2. (:25) THE MINISTRY OF PROCLAIMING JESUS CHRIST TO THE GENTILES – SERVING AS A FAITHFUL STEWARD OF THE GOSPEL
3. (:26-27) THE MYSTERY OF PROCLAIMING JESUS CHRIST TO THE GENTILES – SHARING THE SECRET OF THE INCLUSION OF THE GENTILES ON AN EQUAL BASIS WITH THE JEWS
4. (:28-29) THE MISSION OF PROCLAIMING JESUS CHRIST TO THE GENTILES – STRIVING FOR THE GOAL IN DEPENDENCE UPON THE POWER OF CHRIST

Ray Stedman: Let me summarize this passage, in closing. The apostle points out three stages of change.

- First, the new birth begins a process which is intended to perfect us, spirit, soul and body.
- To advance that process requires pain and commitment on the part of others on our behalf; and when we come to Christ we are to undertake that same pain and commitment on behalf of others.
- Finally, all progress occurs only by coming to understand and to practice the mystery of "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*"

B. (2:1-7) CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT FOR DEPTH AND STABILITY --

PAUL'S PASSION FOR PROTECTING THE SAINTS AGAINST DECEPTION FOCUSED HIS MINISTRY ON ENCOURAGING DEPTH AND STABILITY IN CHRIST

1. (:1-3) DEPTH AND STABILITY COME FROM A TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST

“For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf, and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face, ² that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

Everybody has a fascination around searching for **hidden treasure**. How passionate are we about searching out the depths of the hidden treasures of deeper knowledge of Christ – not to puff up our intellect but to enhance our spiritual growth and stability.

2. (:4-5) DEPTH AND STABILITY PROTECT AGAINST DECEPTION

"I say this in order that no one may delude you with persuasive argument. ⁵ For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ."

World is great at making persuasive arguments:

- cf. **Debate Clubs** in school – teach you to argue both sides of the question – doesn't matter where your personal conviction lies; teaching you rhetoric, logic, power of persuasion
- cf. our **legal system** – adversarial – prosecution against the defense – you might know your client is guilty but you still make the argument on his behalf; we have law schools to teach you how to make an argument

Faith in Christ provides the only solid footing and protection against the persuasive arguments of deceptive false teachers. That is why it is so important to give Christ the preeminence in everything. Any teaching that undermines the preeminence of Christ must be rejected.

3. (:6-7) DEPTH AND STABILITY COME FROM A CONSISTENT WALK OF FAITH IN CHRIST

"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, ⁷ 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."

In seminary we had an assignment where we had to pick one key text that focused on the secret of sanctification and spiritual growth. I picked this text for my position paper. So many people understand that justification is by faith alone = the message of Galatians. But when it comes to sanctification, they switch gears and think it depends all on them. They substitute a works mentality, a performance-oriented lifestyle for living by grace thru faith.

Paul calls us to go back to our **Roots**: At conversion you understood:

- the seriousness of sin
- the bankruptcy of trusting in self
- your need for Christ
- your desire for a changed life
- the simplicity of child-like faith

How did we receive Christ? Repentance and faith

How should we continue on in our Christian walk? **Repentance and faith**
All in dependence on the **Grace of God**.

Christianity is not: "Trust Christ for salvation and yourself for sanctification."

Three guiding principles, each referring to a different aspect of Christian development, but similar in form:

1. *As you received ... so live.* – godly living

2. *As you were rooted ... be built up* – spiritual growth
3. *As you were taught ... be established in truth.* – Christian understanding

Don Hutto -- Six Snapshots of Growth

1. The Image Of A Military Unit - (v.5) "*order and steadfastness*"
2. The Image Of A Pilgrim - (v. 6) "*so walk ye*"
3. The Image Of A Tree - (v. 7) "*rooted*"
4. The Image Of A Building - (v. 7) "*built up*"
5. The Image Of A School - (v. 7) "*taught* "
6. The Image Of A River - (v. 7) "*abounding*"

Once again we have that predominant tone of Thanksgiving.

C. (2:8-15) COMPLETE IN CHRIST --

THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST PROTECTS US AGAINST FALSE TEACHING

1. (:8-9) ALL TRUTH MUST BE MEASURED AGAINST THE STANDARD OF CHRIST = WHO IS GOD INCARNATE
2. (:10) CHRIST IS OUR SUFFICIENCY –
“and in Him you have been made complete”
3. (:11-12) OUR UNION WITH CHRIST IS PORTRAYED BY 2 SPIRITUAL ANALOGIES
 - a. Circumcision – removal of the body of the flesh
 - b. Baptism – united in burial and resurrection
4. (:13-15) THE VICTORY OF CHRIST HAS RESCUED US FROM DEATH, SIN AND ALL ENEMIES

III. (2:16-3:11) TRUE SPIRITUALITY = LIVING OUT OUR UNION WITH CHRIST

A. (2:16-23) FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE AND CONDEMNATION --

UNION WITH CHRIST HAS FREED US FROM THE BONDAGE AND CONDEMNATION OF THE FALSE ISMS

(WHICH CLAIM TO BE THE PATHWAY TO SPIRITUALITY)

1. (:16-17) FREEDOM FROM THE BONDAGE AND CONDEMNATION OF RITUALISM

Def. of **Ritualism**: adherence, insistence, dependence on the observance of prescribed religious acts and observances; almost like religious superstitions – I had better do things a certain way in order for God to be pleased with me; cf. praying with rosary beads
Cf. security of liturgical approach;

2. (:18-19) FREEDOM FROM THE BONDAGE AND CONDEMNATION OF MYSTICISM

Def. of **Mysticism**: Mysticism: the belief that a person can have an immediate experience with the spiritual world, completely apart from the Word of God or the Holy Spirit

Cf. the New Age Movement -- At the heart of it is this claim to seek the true Oneness of things. We are told that we are all part of the universe of created matter, and that we are united in Oneness with God. The claim is that this is the way to escape from being centered in oneself, and so move into the fullness of knowledge of the universe.

3. (:20-23) FREEDOM FROM THE BONDAGE AND CONDEMNATION OF LEGALISM

Def. of **Legalism**: Treating prescribed standards of conduct as regulations to be kept by our own power in order to earn God's favor – Moralism that is not on the basis of by grace thru faith

Summary: (2:23)

Contrast Between Appearance of Wisdom and Real Spiritual Value

1) Appearance of Wisdom

“These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom”

a) Worthless Religion -- *“in self-made religion”* – Self originated

b) Worthless Humility -- *“and self-abasement”* – Self afflicted

c) Worthless Asceticism -- *“and severe treatment of the body”* – Self destroyed

2) Real Spiritual Value

“but are of no value against fleshly indulgence”

Summary Chart of How not to achieve True Spirituality:

FALSE ISM:	RITUALISM	MYSTICISM	LEGALISM
DEFINITION:	Dependence on observance of specific religious rites	Dependence on inner personal experience with the spirit world disconnected from the Word of God & Holy Spirit	Dependence on conformity to an external code of conduct in contradiction to the grace of God
ASPECTS:	Dietary Laws Religious Observances (Annual, monthly, weekly) Self Made Religion	Physical Self-Denial (False Humility) Spiritual Meditation Experience Oriented Self Made Religion	Emphasis on External Restrictions / "Do Not" The Letter kills / Spirit gives Life Human Laws vs. Divine Self Made Religion
WARNING:	<i>"let no one act as your judge"</i>	<i>"Let no one keep defrauding you"</i>	<i>"do not submit yourself to decrees"</i>
BONDAGE:	Insignificance / you can't grasp the substance	Introspection / you can't seem to connect	Insecurity / you can never do enough (or False Security)
HARMFUL LEADERSHIP:	Domineering <i>"let no one act as your judge"</i>	Inflated Pride <i>"inflated ... by his fleshly mind"</i>	False Wisdom <i>"the appearance of wisdom"</i>
CONDEMNED:	Worthless for Spiritual Victory	Worthless for Spiritual Victory	Worthless for Spiritual Victory
PROTECTION:	Substance over Shadow <i>"the substance belongs to Christ"</i>	Abide in Christ <i>"holding fast to the Head"</i>	Live the Resurrection Life <i>"If you have died with Christ"</i>
SPIRITUALITY TEST/REWARD:	Experiencing the Reality of Christ	Corporate Spiritual Growth	Victory over "Fleshly Indulgence"

B. (3:1-11) FOCUS AND FOLLOW THROUGH -- THE KEY TO SPIRITUALITY IS LIVING OUT OUR UNION WITH CHRIST

1. (:1-4) FOCUS ON OUR UNION WITH CHRIST – 2 EXHORTATIONS
"Seek ..." / *"Set ..."*
2. (:5-11) FOLLOW THROUGH BY PUTTING OFF ALL THE SINFUL PRACTICES ASSOCIATED WITH THE OLD MAN

IV. (3:12-4:6) UNION WITH CHRIST MANIFESTS ITSELF IN GODLY RELATIONSHIPS AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

A. (3:12-17) GODLY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CHURCH: THE PERFECT BOND OF UNITY -- THE KEY TO HARMONY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST IS:

- BEING CHRISTLIKE IN OUR CHARACTER AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS ONE ANOTHER
- BEING PRODUCTIVE IN MINISTERING THE WORD TO ONE ANOTHER
- BEING MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE TO PLEASE HIM IN EVERYTHING
- (AND BEING THANKFUL THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PROCESS)

1. (:12-14) PUT ON CHRISTLIKE ATTRIBUTES (ESPECIALLY LOVE)
IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS IN THE BODY OF CHRIST
2. (:15) PRACTICE CHRISTLIKE ATTITUDES (PEACE AND THANKFULNESS)
IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS IN THE BODY OF CHRIST
3. (:16) PASTOR ONE ANOTHER WITH THE RESOURCES OF THE WORD OF
CHRIST
4. (:17) PERFORM EVERYTHING WE DO FROM THE MOTIVATION OF
PLEASING CHRIST

**B. (3:18-21) GODLY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FAMILY –
(HOW TO BLOW UP YOUR HOME!)
UNION WITH CHRIST MANIFESTS ITSELF IN GODLY FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS OF
ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. (:18) WIVES ARE CHARGED WITH SUBMISSION
2. (:19) HUSBANDS ARE CHARGED WITH SACRIFICIAL LOVE
3. (:20) CHILDREN ARE CHARGED WITH OBEDIENCE
4. (:21) FATHERS ARE WARNED AGAINST ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

**C. (3:22 – 4:1) GODLY RELATIONSHIPS IN THE WORKPLACE --
UNION WITH CHRIST MANIFESTS ITSELF IN GODLY WORK RELATIONSHIPS OF
ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. (3:22-25) ACCOUNTABILITY OF EMPLOYEES

Illustration: Every workplace becomes an opportunity to accomplish great things for God.
Three bricklayers were asked what they were doing.

- One said: "I'm laying bricks."
- Another said: "I'm building a wall."
- The third replied: "I'm building a cathedral."

The same work can have vastly different meaning depending on perspective.
Christ transforms our perspective.

2. (4:1) ACCOUNTABILITY OF EMPLOYERS – TO MASTER IN HEAVEN

**D. (4:2-6) EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION --
UNION WITH CHRIST MANIFESTS ITSELF IN:**

1. (:2-3A) CONSISTENT PRAYER

2. (:3-4) MISSIONARY FOCUS
3. (:5) OPPORTUNISTIC TESTIMONY
4. (:6) GRACIOUS SPEECH

**(4:7-18) CLOSING GREETINGS
UNION WITH CHRIST MANIFESTS ITSELF IN PRECIOUS BONDS OF
FELLOWSHIP WITH THOSE WHO LABOR WITH US IN THE GOSPEL MINISTRY**

A. (:7-9) **INFORMATION:** MISSIONARIES MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO KEEP THEIR SUPPORTERS FULLY INFORMED

B. (:10-14) **INTIMACY:** THE INTIMACY OF PARTNERSHIP IN THE GOSPEL IS EXPRESSED VIA PERSONAL GREETINGS

C. (:15-17) **INVOLVEMENT:** THE RECIPIENTS OF THIS MISSIONARY REPORT MUST SHARE WITH OTHERS ITS GREETINGS AND EXHORTATIONS

D. (:18) **SIGNATURE AND CLOSING**

WHY STUDY THIS BOOK?

- We are reminded to continue on to maturity the same way we entered into our Christian walk = by Repentance + Faith.
 - We are encouraged to live in the freedom from the shackles of sin and bondage that our union with Christ empowers us for.
 - We are instructed regarding the person of God by focusing on the one who is the image of the invisible God.
 - We are warned against turning to worldly philosophy, or mysticism, or asceticism, or legalism to try to gain spirituality.
 - We are guided in practical ways to live out our union with Christ in our relationships with others
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1. "Jesus Paid It All"

*"Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."*

Connection to Colossians

The believer does not contribute to his salvation. Christ's work is complete and sufficient. Nothing can be added to the finished work of the cross.

2. "Rock of Ages" (Augustus Toplady)

*"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace."*

Connection to Colossians

This hymn rejects every form of legalism and self-righteousness. The believer comes to Christ empty-handed and finds in Him everything needed.

3. "Complete in Thee" (Aaron R. Wolfe)

This hymn may be the closest hymn ever written to the theme of Colossians.

*"Complete in Thee! no work of mine
May take, dear Lord, the place of Thine;
Thy blood hath pardon bought for me,
And I am now complete in Thee."*

Later:

*"Complete in Thee! each want supplied,
And no good thing to me denied."*

Connection to Colossians

This hymn is essentially a poetic exposition of **Colossians 2:10**.

4. "In Christ Alone" – This modern hymn by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend powerfully declares that all hope, strength, and righteousness are found in Christ alone. It affirms that salvation is fully accomplished through His death and resurrection, leaving nothing for us to add.

*In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song
This cornerstone, this solid ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My comforter, my all in all
Here, in the love of Christ, I stand*