

“An Introduction to Christological Colossians”

Colossians 1:1-8

Background:

Once called a “great city” now dwarfed by nearby Laodicea & Hieropolis

Church beginnings:

Founded by Epaphras / Epaphroditus (1:7, 4:12) around AD 53-56 while Paul in Ephesus. Archippus was one of its leaders (4:17, Philemon 2). It's a Gentile group (1:21,27) but with a Jewish element (2:16,18).

When / Why the letter:

Written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome (60-62) after hearing of crisis from Epaphras (1:8). Tychicus and Onesimus deliver it (4:7-9).

Gratitude-filled greeting (1:1-8)

1,2 Greeting:

*Paul's prestigious rank / source of rank given (*will of God*, 1:9, 4:12)

*Colossians' special position given (saints = 1 Pt. 1:15,16, 2:9)

3-8 Gratitude:

*Type of prayer--“giving thanks” is thematic (1:12, 3:7, 3:15,17, 4:2)

*Persistence of prayer--1:9, I Sam. 12:23.

*Reason for prayer--love again in 1:8, see triad in I Thess. 1:3.

*Digression in prayer—about the expansion and effect of the Gospel

--The penetration is worldwide (all = hyperbolic, 1:23, Rom. 1:8)

--The tremendous impact of the Gospel is organic (like sower parable)

--Paul is not at all about hit-and-run evangelism. . . nor should we be!

COLOSSIANS

Person
of Christ

Doctrine

1:1-2:7

Problem
of Heresy

Deception

2:8-23

Practice
of New Self

Duty

3:1-4:18