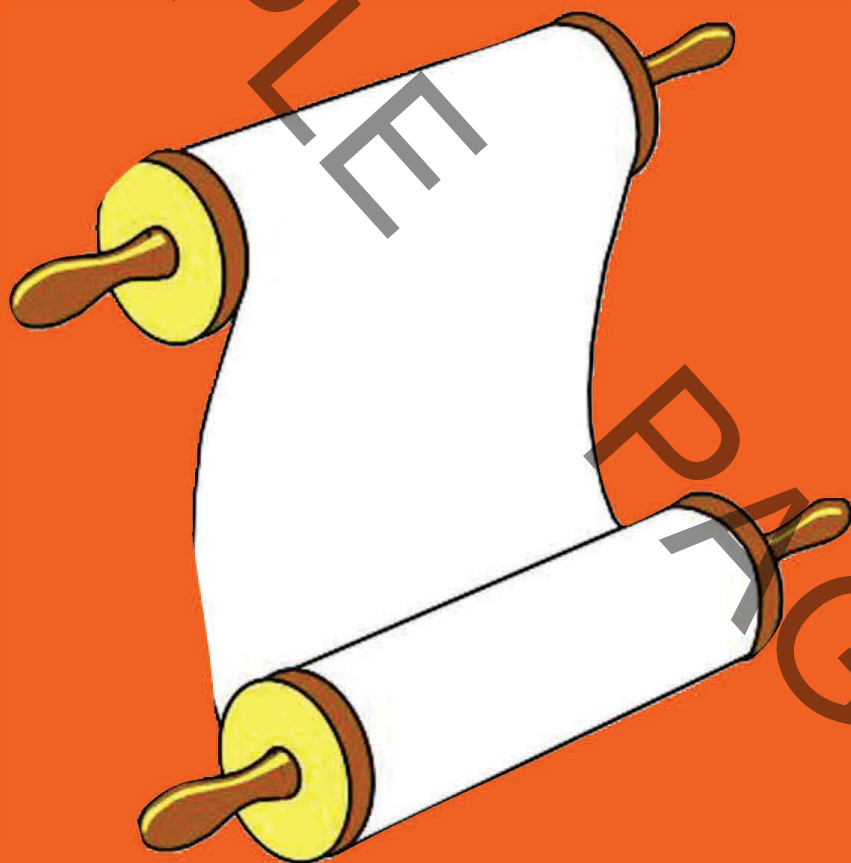


# Colossians

## and Philemon

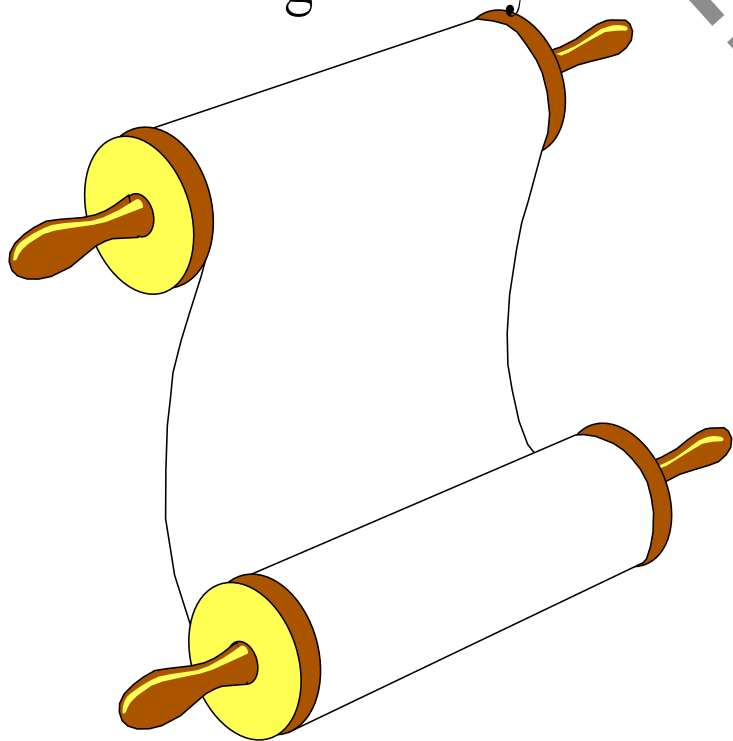
### Preaching Verse by Verse



Pastor D. A. Waite, Th.D., Ph.D.

# Colossians and Philemon

Preaching Verse by Verse



**Pastor D. A. Waite, Th.D., Ph.D.**

PAGES

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# Foreword

● **The Beginning.** This book is the **fifth** in a planned series of books based on expository preaching from various books of the Bible. It is an attempt to bring to the minds of the readers two things: (1) the **meaning** of the words in the verses and (2) the practical **application** of those words to the lives of both saved and lost people. Since the book of Philemon was also written from prison and is only one chapter in length, I have included it in this book with Colossians.

● **Preached Sermons.** These are messages that have been preached to our Bible For Today Baptist Church in Collingswood, New Jersey, broadcast over radio, and placed on our website as follows:

([http://www.BibleForToday.org/audio\\_sermons.htm](http://www.BibleForToday.org/audio_sermons.htm))

This site is for people all over the world to listen to, should they wish. As the messages were originally preached, I took half a chapter during our Sunday morning services, spending about forty-five minutes on each message.

● **Other Verses.** In connection with both the meaning and application of the verses in these two books, there are many verses from other places in the Bible that have been quoted for further elaboration of Paul's discussion. One of the unique features of this study is that all of the various verses of Scripture that are used to illustrate further truth are written out in full for easy reference.

● **A Transcription.** It should be noted that this book is made up largely from the transcription of the tape recordings of the messages as they were preached. These recordings are available in both audio and video formats (BFT#2988/1-4; or BFT #2977VC1-2 and BFT#2996TP; or BFT #2996-VCR). Though there has been some editing, the words are basically the same as the ones I used as I preached the sermons. Though different in emphasis, this was also the method Dr. H. A. Ironside used in his Bible exposition books.

● **The Audience.** The audience intended is the same as the audience that listened to the messages in the first place. These studies are not meant to be overly scholarly, though there is some reference to various Greek words used by Paul. My aim is to help lay people to understand the Words of God. It is my hope that I can get as many as possible of my expositions in print so that my children, grandchildren, and all children in the faith may be able to rejoice with me in the things the Lord has brought to my attention as I have preached from the verses in Colossians and Philemon.

**Yours For God's Words,**

Pastor D. A. Waite, Th.D., Ph.D.  
 Bible For Today Baptist Church

# Table of Contents

Publisher's Data..... i

Acknowledgments. .... ii

Foreword..... iii

Table of Contents..... iv

Colossians Chapter One. .... 1

Colossians Chapter Two. .... 49

Colossians Chapter Three..... 89

Colossians Chapter Four..... 125

Philemon..... 161

Index of Words and Phrases..... 193

About the Author..... 223

Order Blank Pages..... 225

Notes. .... 232

# Colossians Chapter One

## Introductory Remarks

Colossians is one of four prison epistles, the others being the books of Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon. Colosse is a city in Asia Minor which is now Turkey. Colosse is about 50 miles east and a little south of the city of Ephesus. Paul is writing from Rome, Italy, clear across the Mediterranean Sea.



## Colossians 1:1

**“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother”**

**“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ”** The author of this book is named in this first verse. It was “*Paul*.” He identifies himself as an “*apostle of Jesus Christ*.” The Greek word for “*apostle*” comes from the verb, APOSTELLO. This means “*to send out or to send forth*.” Paul was commissioned and sent forth by the Lord Jesus Christ. I don’t believe it was Matthias (see Acts 1:15-26) who was the one that God intended to replace the traitor, Judas Iscariot. I believe it was Paul. Peter led the 120 assembled disciples in an election. The Lord Jesus Christ had told them:

● **Luke 24:49**

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but **tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.**

He said to “*tarry*” until they were “*endued with power from on high*.” This would be the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Then, and only then, they were to be missionaries to the entire world.

● **Acts 1:8**

**But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

I believe that Paul was that special “*apostle*” who was “*sent forth with orders*.” That is what that word, “*apostle*,” means. The Lord Jesus Christ is the One Who gave Paul these orders. The Lord Jesus saw Paul, found him, and saved him while he was on the road to Damascus, getting ready to kill Christians. Acts Chapters 9, 22, and 26 tell the story of Paul’s conversion in his own words. The Lord Jesus Christ blinded Paul with a light brighter than the sun.

**“by the will of God”** Paul was an “*apostle*,” not by his own will, but “*by the will of God*.” It is important that every one of us who are saved become servants of the Lord by God’s will, not by our own will.

**“and Timotheus our brother”** “*Timotheus*” (or Timothy) was Paul’s friend, who apparently was visiting Paul when he wrote this letter from his first Roman imprisonment. His name means “*honoring God*.” According to Acts 16:1, Timothy was a resident of Lystra. His father was a Greek. His mother was a Jewess. He was one of Paul’s traveling companions on his missionary journeys. Paul wrote two letters to Timothy, 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy. Timothy was the pastor of the church at Ephesus.

## Colossians 1:2

**“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.”**

**“To the saints”** Notice that Paul is writing “to the saints.” By the word, “saints,” Paul does not refer to those whom the Roman Catholic Church has canonized. This word refers to every person who is born-again and saved by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In our King James Bible, believers are called “saints” many times. We ought to recognize that and understand it.

- **Romans 15:25-26**

But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

“Saints” here were living. They were not dead and canonized by the Roman Catholic Church only after they have died. They are believers. Paul wanted to take a certain contribution to the “poor saints” who were at Jerusalem. You can even be “poor” and be a “saint.” You don’t have to be rich. Anyone who is saved is a “saint.”

- **Romans 15:31**

That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

- **Romans 16:2**

That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

The Greek word for “saints” is HAGIOUS. It means “set apart ones or sanctified ones” for the Lord’s use.

- **Romans 16:15**

Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

The “saints” should live saintly and in a sanctified manner. Saint Nicholas is a figment of the misguided imagination. Saint Christopher on the dashboard of some cars to protect the riders is a Roman Catholic saint. All believers are “saints.” If you are reading this book and you are saved then you are a “saint” according to God’s Word.

**“and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse”**

Paul is writing “to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse.” The believers are not only called “saints,” but they should also be “faithful” in all things as “brethren.” To be “faithful” is important. Are we “faithful” or faithless? The Greek word for “faithful” is used of “persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties.”

**“Grace be unto you, and peace”** “Grace” is from the Greek word, CHARIS. A form of this word is still used in the modern Greek language as a greeting. It means both “hello” as well as “thank you,” and everything else that goes along with it. “Peace” is the Jewish greeting. It is SHALOM.

### God’s Peace

If you are a Christian, “peace” has been defined as “the tranquil state of the soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God, is content with its earthly lot of whatsoever state that is.” That is “peace.”

There is a “peace with God” that people can have.

- **Romans 5:1**

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

There is also the “peace of God” which is possible to have for those who first have received “peace with God.”

- **Philippians 4:6**

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

**“from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”** The only source of “grace” and “peace” is from the Father and the Son. They are the only Ones who can give us true “grace” and true “peace.” Notice the equality of the two Persons of the Godhead here. The Lord Jesus Christ is every bit as much Deity as God the Father is or God the Holy Spirit. There is a unity in the Godhead, and they are coexistent and coeternal and copowerful in all their attributes.

## Colossians 1:3

**“We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you”**

**“We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”** Paul was in continuous thanksgiving for these Christians who were at Colosse. We ought to be thankful for everyone we know who is saved. Be thankful for them that God has touched their hearts and redeemed them from the wicked world and made them His sons or daughters because they are *“in Christ.”*

**“praying always for you”** Though Paul was in prison he was still *“praying always”* for others. He hoped that others were *“praying”* for him I am sure.

## Colossians 1:4

**“Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints”**

**“Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus”** There was a time when Paul did not even know the Colossians. In time, however, he was not the one who led them to Christ. As soon as he heard of their *“faith in Christ Jesus,”* especially, he remembered them daily in prayer. He thanked God for them. That *“since”* is a time factor. There must be a time when you trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, otherwise you are lost. There must also be a place where this event in your life took place. If you have trusted Christ by faith then you have been redeemed by trusting in Him and believing on His Name. If there has never been a time when you trusted the Lord Jesus as Saviour, you have not been born-again. You have not received Him by faith. You are not saved. You don’t have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I urge you to trust the Lord Jesus Christ if that is your need at this moment.

**“and of the love which ye have to all the saints”** In the Colossian church, there was no separate *“love”* for just some of the *“saints.”* Those who are saved should have a *“love”* for *“all the saints,”* as well. In some churches there does not seem to be *“love.”* There seems to be much that could be termed war, fighting, bickering, division, hatred, and all kinds of things. I am glad that our *Bible For Today Baptist Church* here in Collingswood is a peaceful and a loving church. We want to keep it that way always. Some of you saints may be rich, poor, fat, skinny, or whatever your status is, but if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have a love for you. We want you to *“grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”*

(2 Peter 3:18). We want you to be comfortable in Him and to do His will. Praise God for the *“love”* that we can have one for another in the things of Christ. This is not the case in so many different churches today.

You might ask, *“How can a church exist without love one for another?”* Well, I don’t know how these kinds of churches exist. They take offerings. They pay their preachers. But in their churches, you have some of the saints seated in one section, and some in another section, and they don’t talk to each other. It is a terrible travesty in our churches today. I don’t mean only in modernistic and liberal churches, but I mean in fundamental churches that claim to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. We must keep that true Christian *“love”* burning one for another. The *“love”* for *“all the saints”* should be seen and felt among us.

## Colossians 1:5

**“For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel”**

**“For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven”** Paul was not only praying for the saints, but also *“for the hope”* which was *“laid up”* for them *“in Heaven.”* He is thanking God for this *“hope.”*

- **1 Corinthians 15:19**  
If in this life only we have **hope in Christ**, we are of all men most miserable.

## Hope Beyond the Grave

There is a *“hope”* beyond the grave for those who are saved.

When born-again Christians die, they go to Heaven. That is what Paul is speaking about. That laid up hope is set aside, reserved, in Heaven. Peter talked about this inheritance in Heaven.

- **1 Peter 1:4**  
To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, **reserved in heaven for you.**

Heaven is a special place. Paul said that these Colossians who have faith in Christ and love for the saints have a *“hope”* laid up in Heaven.

- **Acts 23:6**  
But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and

brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: **of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.**

Here, Paul talked about the “*hope of the resurrection.*” He was speaking of that future life with Christ with our resurrected bodies. He used that “*hope*” to divide the group. Some were Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection, and some were Pharisees who did believe in the resurrection. When Paul said that he believed in the resurrection, there was mumbling, there was groping for words, there was fighting and bickering in that “*council*” meeting. He was freed from this council because he believed in the “*hope and the resurrection of the dead.*”

● **Acts 24:15**

**And have hope toward God,** which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

That was the Old Testament hope. That was Job’s hope, was it not?

● **Job 19:26**

And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet **in my flesh shall I see God:**

● **Job 19:25**

For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* **he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:**

That is a wonderful hope.

● **Titus 2:13**

**Looking for that blessed hope,** and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

There is a “*hope*” for believers. One day, the Lord Jesus Christ will be coming back. That is a “*blessed hope.*” This old earth, one day, will pass from those of us who are saved and we will go up yonder to be with Christ which, as Paul wrote, is “*far better*” (Philippians 1:23).

## The Three Bible “Heavens”

There are three “heavens” in the Bible:

- (1) The aerial heaven of the sky.
- (2) The sidereal heaven of the stars.
- (3) The third Heaven of God where God’s throne is (2 Corinthians 12:2).

**“whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.”** There is much that is “*false gospel.*” The Colossian Christians heard the straight and true “*gospel.*” One false gospel says that

salvation is by our works.

## Good Works Can’t Save

We cannot be saved by our own good works.

Another false gospel is that we can be saved by water baptism. We had a baptismal service recently, but that water baptism will not save anyone. The Church of Christ teaches this false gospel. It is after we are saved that we are to be baptized in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another false gospel is that only the “*elect*” can be saved. The gospel can be received and believed by whoever accepts and trusts the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour from sin. All those who receive Christ will be saved. Harold Camping of Family Radio was asked, “*Does God love everybody?*” Mr. Camping said, “*Oh no, he just loves those who are of the elect.*” That is contrary to the truth of John 3:16. Family Radio has a tract called, “*Does God Love You?*” It is printed by the hundreds of thousands of copies in many languages of the world and passed out by Family Radio followers. This is refuted by the Bible’s clear teachings.

● **John 3:16**

**For God so loved the world,** that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God loved the entire world.

## The “Hyper-Calvinist” Heresy

The hyper-Calvinists say that John 3:16 means only that God loved the “*world of the elect.*”

No, that means that God loved the whole world. It is up to everyone in the world to trust the Lord Jesus Christ, believe He died for them, and either receive Him, or reject Him. That is their choice. That is their decision. But the gospel message is to be proclaimed and received by the entire world.

## False “Lordship Salvation” Gospel

Another false gospel is the gospel of “lordship salvation.”

John MacArthur believes in lordship salvation. It is the belief that you must make Christ the Lord of your life, actions, and thoughts. Failing of that, you cannot be saved. That is a salvation by works, and not a salvation by grace.

The gospel is the good news that tells us how we can be delivered by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ from the bad news of going to the Lake of Fire. That is what the gospel is. It is the EUAGGELION. It is the “good news” or “good tidings.” The bad news is that we are lost and bound for Hell. The bad news is that there is no way we can save ourselves.

## The Gospel Is Good News

The good news of the gospel is that the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to die for our sins, the sins of the whole world, so that anyone who trusts Him may be saved and have everlasting life.

That is the good news of the gospel that delivers us from the bad news.

## Colossians 1:6

**“Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since this day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth”**

**“Which is come unto you as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, that as it doth also, in you”** This gospel has come into “*all the world*.” It is wonderful that we can, by the Internet, by the radio, by the television, and by satellite, preach the gospel all over the world. It is amazing. This gospel has come and it bears “*fruit*.” Sometimes this “*fruit*” is manifested in saving those who are lost and delivering them from sin. At other times this “*fruit*” is for the believers who are in need of growth and strength in Christ. In this way, they can be strengthened and edified. That is “*fruit*.”

We are glad that we can send forth the gospel through the missionaries we support, through the radio ministry, through the Internet ([www.BibleForToday.org](http://www.BibleForToday.org)),

and through our own local church ministry. The gospel makes some people mad when it is preached as light is shed on the darkness of this world. This gospel does go out “*in all the world*.” Just imagine the outreach of the shortwave radio station we are on. It might not cover everybody, because it is aimed at certain parts of the world. The Internet can get to all parts of the world who have this capability. Every country of the world has access to the Internet. At various times, our Bible For Today programs can be heard at: [www.TabernacleMinistries.org](http://www.TabernacleMinistries.org). Our own web page carries our messages we preach. It is [www.BibleForToday.org](http://www.BibleForToday.org).

## The “Fruit” of Paul’s Labor

The Colossian Christians were “*fruit*” from Paul’s labor. We praise the Lord for that “*fruit*.”

**“since this day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth”** They were fruit-bearers from the very day they “*heard*” and “*knew the grace of God in truth*.” The Lord Jesus said in John 15:5, “*I am the vine ye are the branches*.” He wants us to go and bear “*fruit*” like the Colossians did.

## Colossians 1:7

**“As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ.”**

Evidently, Epaphras took Paul’s message to the Colossians. He probably took the letter from the prison in Rome to the church at Colosse. Paul loved Epaphras. He was a “*faithful minister of Christ*.” It is very important to be “*faithful*.” The Lord will tell us Christians at the judgment seat of Christ whether or not we are “*faithful*.”

- **Matthew 25:21**

His lord said unto him, Well done, thou **good and faithful servant**: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

I hope that everyone of us who is saved will have service for the Lord which will result in His telling us: “*Well done, thou good and faithful servant*.”

- **Luke 16:10**

**He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much**: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Epaphras was a dear and “*faithful*” servant and “*minister of Christ*.”

- **1 Corinthians 4:2**  
Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

Stewardship demands faithfulness. There are many in the New Testament who were called “faithful.”

- **1 Corinthians 4:17**  
For this cause have I sent unto you **you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord**, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.
- **Ephesians 6:21**  
But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and **faithful minister in the Lord**, shall make known to you all things:
- **Colossians 4:7**  
All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and **a faithful minister and fellowservant** in the Lord:
- **2 Timothy 2:2**  
And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same **commit thou to faithful men**, who shall be able to teach others also.

It is important that we have “faithful” people. People who are faithful can be trusted and depended upon in all the activities in which they engage.

### Are You “Faithful”?

The Greek word for “faithful” is used “of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the executions of commands, or the discharge of official duties.”

We who are saved must be faithful in reading of the Scriptures, faithful in our prayers, and faithful to the Lord in all areas of our lives. This man showed that these people were faithful. Epaphras was a dear and “faithful minister of Christ” for the Colossian believers.

The Greek word for “minister” is DIAKONOS. It is the word from which

we get “*deacon*.” It is also used for anyone who is a “servant” of the Lord. It means “anyone who executes the commands of another.”

If we’re saved, our Lord Jesus Christ is our Master. We are His servants. We are to serve Him faithfully. We are to follow His commands and His orders. We are not to invent commands. Many people invent commands that are not in Scripture. God wants us to follow the commands that are in Scripture. There are enough commands in Scripture that we don’t have to follow any others. Though not direct commands, there are many applications in Scripture that we

can make and follow as well. Certainly, as Epaphras was a “faithful minister of Christ,” so should we be.

## Colossians 1:8

**“Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.”**

There is the second time in this first chapter of Colossians that Paul mentions “love.” He mentioned that their “love” was “to all the saints.” Here, he says that they have “love in the Spirit.” These Colossian Christians had a loving disposition. That is an important trait.

One of the parts of the “fruit of the Spirit” is “love.” They had love in their hearts. That is the thing that breaks down hardness and coolness; am I right? It is like the sun that melts the ice.

### The Warmth of Love

Love is something that warms like the sun.

There is a story about the three environmental elements, the cold, the wind, and the sun. They wanted to try to take a man’s coat off. The cold tried to freeze the coat off, but the man clung closer than ever to his coat. The wind tried to blow the coat off, but again, the man held tightly to his coat. Then the sun tried. The sun made the man so warm that he voluntarily removed his coat.

That is exactly what the Lord does with the love we have for the Lord Jesus Christ. This “love” is manifested in our hearts and in our lives by God the Holy Spirit as He fills us. People see the evidences of that Divine love. They feel the warmth. People can feel the coldness in a church. They can also feel the warmth of a church when it is present. You can sense that the Spirit of God is there. It is that love which makes friends, breaks down barriers, and causes people to come to Christ.

## 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 ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding”**

Paul kept on praying and desiring continuously (present tense, continuous action in the Greek language) that they might be filled to the brim with the knowledge of God’s will. If you know God’s will, do you do it? I hope you do. Knowing and doing are two separate things. There are a number of passages about the “*will of God*.”

- **Mark 3:35**

For **whosoever shall do the will of God**, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

We are closely related to the Lord Jesus Christ if we do the “*will of God*.”

- **Romans 8:27**

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he **maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God**.

- **Romans 12:2**

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and **perfect, will of God**.

- **Romans 15:32**

That **I may come unto you with joy by the will of God**, and may with you be refreshed.

Paul wanted to be in the will of God when he comes to a certain place to minister to them.

- **2 Corinthians 1:1**

Paul, **an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God**, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia:

- **Galatians 1:4**

Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, **according to the will of God** and our Father:

### Deliverance From The Evil World

It is God’s will for believers to be delivered from this “*present*

*evil world.*” We are not to be all bound-up in it and captured by its allurements.

- **Ephesians 6:6**

Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, **doing the will of God from the heart**;

- **Colossians 4:12**

Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, **that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God**.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:3**

**For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:**

That is the “*will of God*.” “*Fornication*” usually refers to sexual relations on the part of a single person. The wicked sin of fornication abounds in all the nations of the world, even among professing Christians, both young and old. The “*will of God*” is to abstain from this sin of the flesh and to be sanctified.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:18**

**In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**

It is God’s will to “*give thanks*.” I am glad we sing “*Thank you Jesus for all you’ve done*” each Sunday in our church. That is one of our themes. We thank Him for His love, His tenderness, His Word, His answers to prayer, and His blood shed at Calvary.

- **Hebrews 10:36**

For ye have need of patience, that, **after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise**.

When God promises to do something, we are to be patient. He will do it if it is the “*will of God*.”

- **1 Peter 3:17**

For it is **better, if the will of God be so**, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

- **1 Peter 4:2**

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, **but to the will of God**.

- **1 John 2:17**

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but **he that**

**doeth the will of God abideth for ever.**

Paul wanted these Colossian Christians to stand perfect and complete in all the full “*knowledge*” of God’s will.

## God’s Will and God’s Words

As many have said, “*the full knowledge of God’s will is to be found in the full knowledge of God’s Words.*”

There is no getting around it. God’s will is to be found from Genesis through Revelation in one way or another. We must stand in that full “*knowledge of God’s Words*” so that we can know the “*will of God.*”

This was Paul’s prayer for these Christians. They probably were baby Christians. They did not know much about the Old Testament. (The New Testament had not yet been written.) Paul prayed unto the Lord that they may be filled with the “*knowledge of the Lord in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.*”

We must receive the Word of God in wisdom. It is not enough to have a head knowledge of the Lord. We must use that knowledge with a proper and “*spiritual understanding*” of how to use the Scriptures, when to use the Scriptures, why to use the Scriptures, and in what way to use the Scriptures.

## Colossians 1:10

**“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God”**

**“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing”** Paul is praying for a number of things. One prayer Paul makes for the Colossian believers is that they “*might walk worthy of the Lord.*” How do you “*walk worthy*”? If you are saved, you follow the prescriptions of the Scripture, the Word of God. That is the only place that tells us how to be “*worthy*” of the Lord. He prays that they would “*walk worthy.*” If Paul is praying that they would “*walk worthy,*” could not the possible implication be that they might be walking unworthily?

That is so true in the lives of many Christians. I trust it is not true in our church here. I trust that each of us would “*walk worthy.*” If we walk unworthily, that is a bad testimony for the Lord. He will not be pleased. The

“*worthy*” walk is one that is suitable and conformable to the directives of God’s Words.

**“being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God”** There are a few verses on “*worthiness*” and “*being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.*” That is what Paul prayed. It is being “*worthy*” in God’s eyes, not in the eyes of men and women of this world. There are many people who are very “*worthy*” in the view of the world, but not in the God’s eyes. They are lost and have never trusted Christ.

- **Genesis 32:10**

**I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.**

Everyone of us can say that with Jacob, and mean it. There is not one of us who is “*worthy.*” The Lord Jesus Christ has made us “*worthy*” if we are saved by faith in Him. If He has redeemed us, He has made us worthy, but we must have humility, realizing that we are “*not worthy*” in and of ourselves.

- **Ephesians 4:1**

**I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,**

- **1 Thessalonians 2:12**

**That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.**

This is repeated many times in the Bible.

- **Revelation 3:4**

**Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.**

Those that are walking with the Lord in white are “*worthy*” because Christ has given us a robe of righteousness, and made us “*worthy.*” Not that we are “*worthy*” in ourselves. The Greek word for “*worthy*” is AXIOS. It means “*befitting, congruous, corresponding to a thing.*” The thing to which it should be “*corresponding*” is the Word of God.

- **Revelation 4:11**

**Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.**

This is speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- **Revelation 5:12**

**Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain**

to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

## Our Worthy Saviour

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only One Who is “worthy.”

Paul wanted these Christians in Colosse “to walk worthy” of the Lord in all things. That was his desire and his prayer.

## Consider Him

He alone is worthy of our trusting  
Touched is He with every grief and pain  
He rebukes with perfect, Holy knowledge  
He tries off’ that we might patience gain.  
He alone can make earthly ties grow fainter  
Only He can make world-lure fade away  
He alone--none but Christ consider  
As we journey on this pilgrim way.  
By Gertrude Grace Sanborn

Somebody might say that they know enough about the Lord and they don’t need to increase in “knowledge.” Then why did Paul ask them to increase? You say, well I’ve read the Bible once. Some of you might say that you have read a little of the Bible, but not the whole Bible. The Bible is the source of our “knowledge” about the Lord.

Noah Amatucci was baptized recently. He read his Bible through from Genesis through Revelation last year. He is reading it again this year. He was 17 years of age at the time. May God continue to encourage him to read that Bible from Genesis through Revelation every year of his life. May everyone

of us do the same. You can see a film or a video, but that is not going to do as much for you as reading the Word of God.

The “*increasing in the knowledge of God*” comes about by getting into His Word, and asking Him to lead you, guide you, and give you understanding and spiritual discernment. That is “*increasing in the knowledge of God.*” There is no end to this “increase” because God is infinite. Our knowledge is not infinite because we are finite. Therefore, we must continue to increase in the knowledge and power of God.

## Colossians 1:11

**“Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness”**

**“Strengthened with all might”** Paul prays that they would not only “walk worthy,” but also that they would be “*strengthened with all might.*” Many unsaved people are weak. There are some weak Christians as well.

- **Ephesians 3:16**

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be **strengthened with might by his Spirit** in the inner man;

- **2 Timothy 4:17**

Notwithstanding **the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me**; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

- **Philippians 4:13**

I can do all things through **Christ which strengtheneth me.**

**“according to his glorious power”** Paul wanted the source of God’s strength to be “*according to His glorious power*” rather than our own. You can go to all the physical fitness places in the world. Your muscles can bulge, and everything else can be fit as a fiddle, but that is not the type of strength that Paul is talking about here. I think he is talking about the Holy Spirit of God Who indwells the body of every single born-again Christian.

**“unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness”**

Now notice the goal of the strength of God’s power. Three things are involved.

## The Meaning of Patience

“*Patience*” is involved here. What is “*patience*”?

That is “*putting up with things.*”

You’ve heard of the “*patience*” of Job (James 5:11). He had “*patience*” when his goods went, his servants went, his children went--he was still patient. Job put up with the loss of all possessions and people.

## The Meaning of Longsuffering

What is “*longsuffering*”? The Greek word for it is MAKROTHUMIA. It means “*putting up with people.*”

I think that is even more difficult than putting up with “*things.*” People are so different. All of us are different. It is disturbing to you when you think you have mastered what someone believes, and you think they see eye-to-eye with you on things, to have them suddenly go off on some unexpected track. There is nothing you can do but have Biblical “*longsuffering*” and try to recover your close friendship.

As I mentioned before, MAKROTHUMIA is the Greek word translated “*longsuffering.*” It comes from two Greek words: MAKROS which means “*far, or a long way off,*” and THUMOS which means “*hot or boiling.*” So that word literally means that “*the boiling point is still a far way off.*” That is what “*longsuffering*” means. Do you boil over at the first sign of a difference of opinion with someone? If so, you don’t have “*longsuffering.*” Do you boil over the second time they may assault you or say mean and ugly things about you? If so, you don’t have “*longsuffering.*” What about the third time? Do you wait until the third time before you boil over? If you don’t react, even after this third test, then your “*boiling point is still a long way off.*” You indeed have been blessed with that element of the “*fruit of the Spirit*” known as “*longsuffering*” (Galatians 5:22).

We are weak. In the flesh, sometimes our boiling points are not “*far off.*” They are very much skin-deep and at the surface. Paul prays that these Colossian Christians, back in the first century of the Christian church, would have this trait of being “*Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all . . . longsuffering . . .*”

Just think of the “*longsuffering*” that Moses needed. Those 600,000 men plus women and children (perhaps two or three million in all) who came out of Egypt, Moses had to deal with for forty years in the wilderness. He finally

failed the Lord and got angry (Numbers 20:12). Because of this, the Lord wouldn’t let him come into the promised land at that time. We note, however, in the New Testament, he was on the Mount of Transfiguration with Elijah and the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 17:1-3). Moses did get to go to that land of promise after the Lord Jesus Christ was born.

## A Scarce Commodity

“*Longsuffering*” is a very important, yet scarce commodity today.

Paul said that he wanted the Colossian believers to have “*longsuffering with joyfulness.*” Some individuals put up with people, but they do not do so with “*joyfulness.*” Sometimes they seem to have a “*martyr’s complex*” about their sufferings, enduring it all with a sad countenance. Paul said he wanted the Christians at Colosse to have “*patience and longsuffering with joyfulness*”--all three.

Let people slap you, or say anything they want about you. Let your money go, your kindred go, your house burn down. Let all four tires go flat. But take all these things with “*joyfulness.*” “*Joy*” is another part of the “*fruit of the Spirit*” (Galatians 5:22). You say that is impossible. Yes, it is impossible in your flesh alone. It is not impossible if you have the power of God in your life and the Holy Spirit of God giving you His victory and giving you the “*fruit of the Spirit*” (Galatians 5:22-23). It is not impossible. If it were impossible Paul would never pray that this would be the case for the Colossian Christians that did not have even a tenth as much as we have in our country today. Nor did they have the New Testament like we have.

## Colossians 1:12

“**Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light**” Paul said he was thankful to God Father Who “*hath made us meet.*” He is the One who made believers “*meet, fit, or suited*” to be “*partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*”

## God Equips the Saved Ones

If we are saved, God has equipped us.

We have not made ourselves “*meet*.” If we could do it ourselves, that would be salvation by works. We could not, by ourselves, make ourselves fit and meet for the Master. God Himself, through our faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, has made us “*partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*.” There is no command that God has ever given the believers that He has not also equipped us to obey by the power of the Spirit of God within us. The Lord Jesus said, “*I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness*” (John 8:12b).

## Colossians 1:13

**“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son”**

**“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness”**

That “*power of darkness*” is Satan’s power from which the believer has been “*delivered*.” There are many verses on deliverance.

- **2 Corinthians 1:10**

**Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us**

Paul was delivered by the Lord Jesus Christ in all three tenses: past, present, and future.

- **Galatians 1:4**

Who gave himself for our sins, **that he might deliver us from this present evil world**, according to the will of God and our Father

- **1 Thessalonians 1:10**

And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, **which delivered us from the wrath to come**.

We who are born-again don't have the “*wrath*” of either the Great Tribulation or of Hell facing us. Christ has delivered us and rescued us from these “*wraths*.”

- **2 Timothy 3:11**

Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: **but out of them all the Lord delivered me**.

Here, Paul talked about the Lord’s deliverances from his “*persecutions*” and

“*afflictions*” that came upon him.

- **2 Timothy 4:17-18**

Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and **I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work**, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

- **Hebrews 2:14-15**

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that **through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage**.

In this verse it is stated that the Lord Jesus Christ has delivered us from the “*power of death*.” If we have trusted Christ and are saved, then darkness, the Devil, and evil do not have any more power over us. If these do have power about us, God’s power within us (God the Holy Spirit) is greater than that “*power*” that is outside us. As 1 John 4:4 says: “*Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world*.” The Spirit of God has transposed us.

**“and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear**

**Son”** Not only has God delivered us from the “*power of darkness*,” and has made us inheritors with the “*saints in light*,” but He has also “*translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son*.” God has given us a change of relationship. He has brought us “*into the kingdom of His dear Son*.” If He only took us out of darkness, we would only have “*half a loaf*.” That is all! That was the trouble with the man who had an evil spirit (Luke 11:24-26). The spirit left, but when he found the man’s “*house*” empty, he returned with “*seven other spirits more evil than himself*.” This last estate was “*worse than the first*.”

Just to have the evil go from us and be “*delivered*” from it is not enough. We must have God to “*transform us into the image of His dear Son*.” It is not enough to quit sinning. It is not enough to stop evil. Every person who is in the coffin today, tomorrow--whenever they are laid out in the coffin (and they are dying at a huge rate every day)--has stopped sinning. They no longer commit evil.

An absence of sin or an absence of evil is not enough. Being delivered from the “*power of darkness*” is not enough. We must be “*translated into the Kingdom of His dear Son*.” We must be saved by God’s grace. We must be given a righteousness of God through faith. That is what He has done if we’ve trusted Him and are saved.

## Colossians 1:14

**“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins”**

This verse is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ as He “*translates*” those who are saved from the power of darkness and into the kingdom of His dear Son. He is the beloved Son whom His Father loved and yet sent Him into this world to die for all sinners. He so loved the world that He gave us His only begotten Son (John 3:16). He loved His Son, but He also loved the world with the result that He gave us His Son who was “*made to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*” (2 Corinthians 5:21). He loved the world, He loved His Son; but He gave His Son because he loved the world equally as much as He loved His Son so that the World, and those who are out in the world, might trust Him, be saved, redeemed, and set free from sin.

It is in the Lord Jesus Christ “*in Whom we have redemption through His blood.*” The Greek word for “*redemption*” is APOLUTROSIS. It means “*liberation , procured by the payment of a ransom.*”

### Free and Redeemed

**If you have Christ as your Saviour, your sins have been placed on Him and sent away. You are free and redeemed “through his blood.”**

The “*payment*” for a Christian’s “*liberation*” was the “*blood*” of the Saviour in His death on Calvary’s cross. That is what “*redemption*” is, “*payment of a ransom.*”

By the way, the words, “*through his blood*” are not found in the *New International Version*. They are not in the *New American Standard Version*. They are not in the *Revised Standard Version* or the *New Revised Standard Version*. They are not in Manuscripts “B” (Vatican) and “Aleph” (Sinai). They are not in the Westcott and Hort false Greek texts (like the Nestle- Aland or the United Bible Society texts). These words are out of there because those heretical Gnostics removed them. They did not like the doctrine of “*redemption through His blood.*” But the Bible says that “*without the shedding of the blood*” of the Lord Jesus Christ, there is no redemption (Hebrews 9:22b).

**“Even the forgiveness of sins”**

## Redemption and Forgiveness

Those of us who have “*redemption*” also have God’s “*forgiveness of sins.*”

The Greek word for “*forgiveness*” is APHESIS. This comes from two Greek words, APO (“*from or away from*”) and HIEMI (“*to send.*”). God’s “*redemption*” through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ means “*to send away*” our sins.

The “*scapegoat*” which was sent into the wilderness on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16) illustrates this picture of redemption as a “*sending away*” of sins.

- **Leviticus 16:10**

**But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.**

On the day of atonement, Aaron offered one goat as a sacrifice. On the live goat, he confessed the sins of Israel and let it go into the wilderness.

- **Leviticus 16:21-22**

**<sup>21</sup> And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: <sup>22</sup> And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.**

This is what “*redemption*” means literally. It is the “*sending away*” of our sins. The Lord Jesus Christ’s death on the cross was the sacrifice for the sins of the world. His shed blood was the ransom that was paid to a holy and offended God to gain that redemption for those who receive it by genuine faith in Christ. The blood of Christ is the payment and ransom for the sins of the whole world. It is not only the ransom for the elect. It is the ransom for the whole world.

### Release From Bondage

**When we receive God’s “*forgiveness,*” we have a “*release from*”**

*bondage or imprisonment.*

That is what the Greek word, APHESIS, means. Further, it means “*forgiveness or pardon, of sins (letting them go as if they had never been committed), remission of the penalty.*” That is what “*forgiveness*” is. It is a tremendous gift that God has given to us. Those of us who are saved should praise God that we have been delivered from the power of darkness. We ought to thank God that we have been translated or taken out of that “*darkness*” and put into the “*kingdom of His dear Son.*” We are now “Christ’s Ones” or Christians, because we have faith in Christ and have been regenerated by God.

## Colossians 1:15

**“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature”**

This word, “*Who,*” is referring back to the Lord Jesus Christ. He was and is “*the image of the invisible God.*” How can you be “*invisible*” and have an image? With the Triune God, this is not a problem, though it is to us who are mortals. How could God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, Who were “*invisible,*” become visible? How could the Trinity permit us humans to see God? How could we, who are ordinary people--sinners, lost, and undone, come to know intimately the “*invisible God*”? That is why God the Father had to send His Son, Who was the “*image,*” the absolute perfection of the image of the “*invisible God.*” God “*was made flesh, and dwelt among us*” (John 1:14). It is also true that “*God was manifest in the flesh.*” This is a wonderful truth.

● **1 Timothy 3:16**

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: **God was manifest in the flesh,** justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

The other versions like the *New International Version* (NIV), *Today’s New International Version* (TNIV), *New American Standard Version* (NASV), *Revised Standard Version* (RSV), *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV) and others don’t have this verse correctly translated. Their false Greek critical texts, on which these versions are based, omit the word, “*God.*” It is essential to make the “*invisible God*” to become “*visible*” that the living and eternal “*God*” would be “*manifest.*” This “*manifestation*” makes Him “*visible.*” By His incarnation, the Lord Jesus Christ became the “*image,*” the exact likeness of all that God was. If you want to see who God the Father is, and who God the Holy

Spirit is, then look at the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the “*image of the invisible God.*”

By the term, “*firstborn,*” Paul is not teaching that Jesus was a creature or a created being. The Greek term, PROTOTOKOS, translated “*firstborn,*” is from two smaller Greek words. The first part is PROTO which means “*first.*” The second part is TOKOS which is from the verb, TIKTO, which means “*to be born.*” “*Firstborn*” could be taken as being chronologically the “*firstborn.*” This is not what is meant here.

## The Lord Jesus Was Not Created

**The Lord Jesus Christ was not a created Being, but was eternal. He had no beginning. There was never a time when he wasn’t here.**

It is the second sense which is to be understood here by the word, “*firstborn.*” It is “*right of the firstborn*” as mentioned repeatedly in the Old Testament. The “*firstborn*” have greater blessings and rights. This is the sense used here in Colossians.

● **1 Chronicles 5:1**

Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (**for he was the firstborn;** but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.

The “*firstborn*” of Israel was Reuben, but because of his sin God passed him over for the privileges of that birthright. Usually, the “*firstborn*” had a double blessing. He received double possessions and inheritance from his father. God passed Reuben over for this double blessing and gave it to the “*sons of Joseph,*” Ephraim and Manasseh.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of all the “*firstborn*” because of this title. He is the “*firstborn*” and the privileges and honor resulting from it. That is the idea of the title of the “*firstborn.*” It does not mean that the Lord Jesus Christ was a created Being. He was not a creature. The Jehovah Witnesses falsely teach this. They believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was made or created.

This was also what the Gnostics believed and taught. The Gnostics were the ones who corrupted the false Westcott and Hort Greek New Testament upon which the false versions were based. The Jehovah Witness's Bible is changed for instance in the Gospel of John.

- **John 1:1**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

They say "*the Word was a God*" instead of "*the Word was God*." They believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was a created being and not "*the image of the invisible God*."

## 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"**

**"For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible"** As one of the gospel song writers wrote: "*The great Creator became my Saviour*." The Lord Jesus Christ, in this passage of Scripture, is said to be the Creator of "*all things that are in Heaven*" and all things "*that are in earth*." The Heavenly things would include all the holy angels. It would include each and every one of the billions of stars. It would include all the planets. That is quite a feat. The earthly things would include all the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and the insects and animals of the earth. This includes both the things that are "*visible*" and can be seen, as well as the things that are "*invisible*" and can't be seen such as the atom. The atom is what everything is made of. The atoms are "*invisible*," to the naked eye, but Christ created them as well as all things "*visible*."

**"whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers all things were created by him, and for him"** Those are all words signifying the various authority systems, wherever they may be. It includes Satan's realm of authority which Satan presently controls as well as the authority systems of men on earth.

- **Ephesians 6:12**

**For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**

One day all these authority systems will be made subject to the Lord Jesus

Christ. Not only have "*all things*" been created by the Lord Jesus, but they were also created "*for Him*." He was to be the beneficiary of all of these things that He "*created*."

- **Ephesians 2:10**

**For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus** unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

- **Colossians 3:10**

And have put on **the new man**, which is renewed in knowledge **after the image of him that created him:**

### Created For the Lord Jesus Christ

If you have been "*created*" in Christ Jesus as a "*new creature*" (2 Corinthians 5:17), you have been "*created*" for Him as well, just like the Heavenly things and the earthly things.

If we are "*born again*" (John 3:3), we have a new nature that has been created "*by*" the Lord Jesus Christ and "*for*" His purposes as well. We have been "*created*" for His purpose and for His glory to be used as He sees fit. We are not created for our own purpose but for His. In this way, we have been made "*partakers of the divine nature*" (2 Peter 1:4). This new nature, that is thus "*created*," is one of the "*invisible*" things made by the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are a number of verses about the Lord Jesus Christ as the Creator.

- **John 1:3**

**All things were made by him;** and without him was not any thing made that was made.

This is a clear reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. If He were just a man, as the modernists and liberals believe, how could He create "*all things*"? It would be impossible!

### Modernist and Liberal Denials

The modernists and liberals all around the world deny that He was the Creator. They deny His Deity. They teach that He could not be the Creator because He was only a human being like the rest of us. They even deny the Virgin Birth of Christ.

They don't believe in the miraculous birth of the Lord Jesus. They teach that He had a human father, Joseph, and a human mother, Mary. No. He was a born of a virgin without any human father. He is "*the Son of God.*" By the miracle of His incarnation, the Lord Jesus Christ was "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16--**Textus Receptus Greek and KJB English reading**).

- **John 1:10**

He was in the world, and **the world was made by him**, and the world knew him not.

- **Ephesians 3:9**

And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, **who created all things by Jesus Christ**

If you have the right Bible it reads correctly. If you have a *New International Version*, you won't find "*by Jesus Christ*" because the "B" and "Aleph" manuscripts from which it was taken, leave off the fact that He was part of the creative power of God. The *New American Standard Version* and *The Revised Standard Version* also leave out this phrase. If you have a *New International Version* you won't understand the gospel song, "*When Christ rent the veil in two.*" Do you know why? Because in the *New International Version* there is no "*veil*" that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. They make it just a "*curtain.*" The "*veil*" is gone. Many of our hymns have no meaning anymore because of these false perversions of Scripture.

- **Revelation 4:11**

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: **for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.**

- **Revelation 10:6**

And swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, **who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein**, that there should be time no longer.

Our Saviour, along with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, was truly the Creator.

## Colossians 1:17

**"And he is before all things, and by him all things consist"**

**"And he is before all things"** When it is stated of the Lord Jesus Christ that "*He is before all things,*" this speaks of His eternal preexistence. That is one of the things that Bishop B. F. Westcott denied. You can find this perversion in his commentary on *The Gospel of John* (pp. 2, 13, 248). I make reference to this in my book on the *Theological Heresies of Westcott and Hort* [BFT #595 @ \$7 + \$3 S&H].

The Lord Jesus was "*before all things,*" because He was the creator of "*all things.*" There is no question about that. This is a very important doctrine of Scripture. He was primary. John the Baptist testified of this.

- **John 1:15**

John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, **He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.**

Even though John the Baptist was born physically before the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus was "*before*" Him by virtue of His eternal preexistence.

- **1 John 1:1-2**

**That which was from the beginning**, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

He was in the beginning.

- **John 8:56-58**

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Before Abraham was, I am.**

The Lord Jesus Christ was arguing with the self-righteous and hypocritical Pharisees. The eternal Son of God and God the Son was "*before Abraham*" and before everything in Heaven or in earth.

**"and by him all things consist."** That Greek word translated

“consist,” SUNISTAO, means “to bring or band together.”

## Jesus Holds the World Together

The whole universe would fly apart if it weren't for the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not only the Creator of all things, but He is also the One Who holds these created things together.

Another meaning of SUNISTAO is “to preserve.” The created things are not only held together by Him, but they are also “preserved” by Him. One of the important things that have been “preserved” by the Lord Jesus Christ are His Hebrew and Greek Words that make up our Bible. This is one more verse to be used to support the Bible preservation of the original Hebrew and Greek Words.

## 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”**

**“And he is the head of the body, the church”** The “church” is here called “the body.” We are a local church, and as such, a part of “the body.” Can you be a local church if you don't have a special church building? The building you meet in is not the essence of a local church. The Greek term for “church” is ECCLESIA. It comes from two Greek words, EK (“out or from”) and KALEO (“to call or summon”). It means “called out ones.”

## The Essence of a Local Church

The essence of a local church is a group of saved people who have been “called out” of the world and unto the Lord Jesus Christ, their Saviour.

This “called out” group of persons assembles together in some place for the purpose of listening to sound Bible preaching, of praying, of singing praises

to the Lord, of remembering Christ's two ordinances, and of sending missionaries to the ends of the earth. Christ is the head of our local church. Your pastor is the under-shepherd seeking to care for those who attend.

**“Who is the beginning the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence”** Again, Paul repeats the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ is “the beginning,” the preexistent One from all eternity past. This is the reason that He should have “preeminence” in “all things.” The Greek word for “preeminence” is used only here in the New Testament. It is PROTEUO. It means “to be first, hold the first place.” He should “hold the first place” in the lives of those whom He came to save. Though the Lord wants us to take care of ourselves since our bodies are the “temple” of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20), we should never put ourselves before the Saviour. The Person we should think about pleasing, more than any others, including ourselves, is the Lord Jesus Christ. At every time, in every place, in every way, the Lord Jesus Christ should have the “preeminence” in our lives and in our activities. That is what John the Baptist had decided for himself.

### ● John 3:30

**He must increase, but I must decrease.**

John's wish should be the hearts and minds of every born-again believer. We should not be pompous and puffed up, thinking we're the most important person in the world. The Lord Jesus Christ is the most important Person in the world. “He must increase” and we “must decrease.”

### ● 3 John 9

**I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.**

## Diotrephes and His Relatives

Diotrephes sounds like people we have met in many Baptist churches. He would be considered a “church boss.” He had a selfish “preeminence” in the church. That is the wrong “preeminence.” Not a single person in the Lord Jesus Christ's local church should be “preeminent,” but only He Himself. This includes strict obedience to His Words which He gave us in the Bible. This is putting the “preeminence” of the Lord Jesus Christ into action and practice.