



PRECEPT  
UPON  
PRECEPT®

*Colossians  
and  
Philemon*

GAINING A  
TRUE KNOWLEDGE  
OF CHRIST  
SO NO ONE  
DELUDES YOU!

PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT®

*English Standard Version*

COLOSSIANS AND PHILEMON  
GAINING A TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST  
SO NO ONE DELUDES YOU!

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1<sup>st</sup> edition

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## HELPFUL STUDY TOOLS

ARTHUR, KAY; ARTHUR, DAVID; DE LACY, PETE

**How to Study Your Bible**

*Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 1994/2010*

**The New Inductive Study Bible—English Standard Version**

*Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2013*

**Greek Word Study Tools**

## RECOMMENDED COMMENTARIES

KENT, JR., HOMER A.; VAUGHAN, CURTIS; AND RUPPRECHT, ARTHUR A.

**The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon**

*Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.*

WALVOORD, JOHN F.; ZUCK, ROY B., eds.

**The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament**

*Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1983-c1985*

MELICK, JR., RICHARD R.

**The New American Commentary, Vol. 32, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon**

*Nashville, Tennessee: B & H Publishing Group, 1991*

## RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

**Logos Bible Software**

Powerful search engines and up to 4,000 electronic Bible study resources (commentaries, lexicons, Bible dictionaries etc.) make it fast and easy to do simple and complex searches of multiple sources, then pull materials together for orderly presentation—excellent for word and topical studies based on English or original Hebrew and Greek. Available at [www.logos.com](http://www.logos.com).





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**Colossians and Philemon**  
*Lesson 1, Overview of Colossians*

## LESSON ONE

### Overview of Colossians

THIS LESSON INCORPORATES The following located in the Appendix:  
Observation Worksheets of Colossians  
“Sequence of Events in Paul’s Life after His Conversion”  
“The Lord Jesus Christ as Portrayed in Colossians”

**Colossians is filled with rich and abundant treasures of truth—treasures that will keep us from error if we give ourselves to diligent and careful study.**

**As you begin this course, stop and count the cost. If you don’t do it now, you will not be prepared for Satan’s subtle allurements, devices, distractions, deceptions, and discouragements which will slip in to keep you from completing this study.**

**The message of Colossians exposes what is going on in Christianity today and causes you to focus on the source of all life; therefore, the enemy of your soul wants to keep you ignorant of the wonderful mystery revealed in this book.**

### DAY ONE

1. Always begin with prayer, asking God to guide you into His truth (John 16:13). Ask God to open the eyes of your understanding that you might behold wondrous things out of His Word.
2. If you have never done a Precept Upon Precept course before, it’s helpful to read the chapters entitled “The Rule of Context—Context Rules!” and “Getting the Big Picture” in *How to Study Your Bible*.

The purpose of this first lesson is to discover the context of the book of Colossians. Since context rules interpretation and since Scripture must be interpreted in light of its context, the first step in your study of a letter is the **Overview**, a view of the entire book, to discover the context.



3. Like most letters, the place to begin your study is with the **author** because he is usually the first person mentioned.

Read Colossians and mark with a specific color or colored symbol each mention of the author's name and the pronouns that refer specifically to him, such as *I, me, my*. At the beginning of this letter and also in chapter 4 you will notice that the author uses plural pronouns, such as *we* and *us*, so it will be important to mark these also. However, Colossians 1:23 and 4:18 show you from the text exactly who wrote or dictated this epistle (letter).

Use the Observation Worksheets, located in the Appendix, for every assignment. These are what the title implies: worksheets for you to do your work on. They are the text of Colossians printed double-spaced from the English Standard Version. We encourage you to do your work on them, and at a later date you might want to transfer some of your study notes to your Bible.<sup>1</sup>

4. Read all four chapters of Colossians again, using your marked Observation Worksheets. Look at each place you marked the author. List what you learn about him on the page at the end of this lesson titled "Author." Do not include instructions he gives or facts that are true of all believers (such as, God is his Father); include facts that uniquely describe the author. Your list will give you the **5 Ws and an H** about the author: who, what, when, where, why, how.
5. In the space provided for the historical setting on the "Colossians at a Glance" chart, located at the end of this lesson, note what you observed regarding the times in which this letter was written.

As you complete your study this week, you will fill in information on this chart. Then, whenever you need to see the book of Colossians at a glance, you will have this chart for a reference. If you have *The New Inductive Study Bible*, you will probably want to complete the "Colossians at a Glance" chart at the end of Colossians.

6. Now let's look at "where" and "when."
  - a. Where was Paul when he wrote this letter?

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<sup>1</sup> *The New Inductive Study Bible* is ideal for this. It is the best study Bible on the market because it doesn't tell you what the text means. Rather, it gives you instructions for studying each book of the Bible in addition to many other valuable study aids.



- b. Look at the chart, “Sequence of Events in Paul’s Life after His Conversion” in the Appendix and find Colossians under the “Event” column.
  - 1) When did Paul write Colossians? Record this on “Colossians at a Glance” under “Date.”
  - 2) What city was he in? Locate this city on the map at the end of this lesson.

*Well, that is our first day of study. Don’t try to do all five days of your homework in one day unless that is the only way you can get it done. Give yourself time to meditate on what you have taken in. Think on and pray over what you are studying. It will make a big difference. And remember to stay in communication with the Father, asking God to open the eyes of your understanding that you might see the truths in Colossians.*

## DAY TWO

Today our focus will be on the **recipients** of this letter that Paul wrote. As you look at their description, you might see a description of yourself and/or of people who are close to you. Therefore, as you begin, ask God to show you the relevance of Colossians to believers today.

1. Using your Observation Worksheets, read all of Colossians and mark each mention of the recipients with a different color or colored symbol from the one you used for the author. Also be sure to mark pronouns that refer specifically to them, such as *you*, *your*, *who*, and mark any synonyms for them, like *brothers*.
2. Read Colossians again.

This time, look at each place you marked references to the recipients. On the page titled “Recipients” at the end of this lesson, list what you learn about the recipients—facts that uniquely describe them. Remember to use words directly from the text, be brief, and record the verse from which you took your information. Do not include instructions to them or facts that are true of all believers.



3. Evaluate what you learned about the author and recipients.
  - a. Did you see anything about the Colossians that gives you more insight into the historical setting, the times in which this letter was written? Record it under “Historical Setting” on your “Colossians at a Glance” chart.
  - b. What important words are repeated in Colossians?
  - c. Why was there a need for Paul to write to the believers in Colossae? In other words, what was his **purpose** in writing?
4. According to Colossians 1:6-8 and 4:12-13, who did the Colossians hear the gospel from?
5. Read Colossians 1:2 and 4:13-16.
  - a. Where else was this letter to be read?
  - b. Locate on the map the places named in these verses.

## DAY THREE

As you read the book of Colossians and observed the facts about the author and recipients, you probably were awed at the truths about Christ that fill this book. Did it ignite a longing to understand more about Him? Well, today you are going to take a closer look at these wonderful truths about our Lord Jesus Christ. As you do your study, turn it into an act of worship to the Father for the Son.



1. *Christ* is used throughout the book. He holds a place of prominence in understanding this book; therefore, *Christ* is a **key word**.

Key words unlock the meaning of the text. A key word might be a noun, a descriptive word, or an action word. As you observe key words and phrases, they help you identify the author's repeated emphasis, the theme of the book, and how he will accomplish his purpose in conveying his message.

It will be helpful to make a **Key Word Bookmark** for Colossians. There's a card on the back of your Precept book with suggestions how to mark frequently used words such as *Christ*. Write *Christ* on the blank side and mark it the way you want to mark it on your Observation Worksheets. You'll add other key words as you continue your study.

Now read the entire book of Colossians.

- a. Mark on your Observation Worksheets the key word *Christ* and other synonyms (names) and pronouns which refer to the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - b. In the Appendix you will find two pages titled, "The Lord Jesus Christ as Portrayed in Colossians." Record everything you learn about Jesus Christ. It's helpful to include the chapter and verse number for each truth you list.
2. Record the key word *Christ* on your "Colossians at a Glance" chart.

## DAY FOUR

Today you are going to see even more exciting truths in Colossians. You've observed that the saints at Colossae were described as growing and grounded, but they were warned about certain things. As you study today, think about these warnings and how we might apply them in our own times. God's Word is always relevant to today.

1. Using your Observation Worksheets, read Colossians.
  - a. Mark in a distinct way the warnings.
  - b. Then evaluate each warning in light of the truths you have already discovered about Christ.



2. List the warnings in the following space.

3. Record additional insights or information on your “Colossians at a Glance” chart.
4. Finally, we need to know a little about the city of Colossae and those living there. It will help us appreciate Paul’s letter even more.

Read commentaries, Bible dictionaries, or other study helps which will give more background information on Colossae. Record on a separate sheet of paper what you learn about the city, the people, and the setting of this book. Don’t read anything that has to do with the interpretation of any part of Colossians. You’ll have opportunity to do this later after you’ve thoroughly studied the text for yourself.

DAY  
FIVE

1. Our first task today is to identify the **main theme** of the book of Colossians.
- a. To do this, answer these questions: What is the emphasis of the book? Does it emphasize who Christ is, what we have/are in Him, the warnings, or something else?



- b. Using words from the text, record the theme at the top of your “Colossians at a Glance” chart as the book theme. You may want to do this in pencil so you can adjust it later if you’d like.
2. The next step is to identify the theme of each chapter.

Remember to ask: What is the emphasis of the chapter? Does it emphasize who Christ is, what we have/are in Him, the warnings, or something else?

Keep the emphasis in mind as you identify the theme of each chapter. Then, using words from the text, record these themes on the “Colossians at a Glance” chart. Again, you may want to use pencil.

3. When studying inductively, it is often helpful to see the author’s plan/structure of his message by looking for any segments in the book—groupings of chapters that deal with the same topic or use the same kind of writing. If you observe any segment divisions in Colossians at this point, record them in the segment division columns on the “Colossians at a Glance” chart. Use a horizontal line to divide segments. You might not see any segments this early in your study, but you’ll have opportunity to think about this again later.

For more information about segments, read the section “Identify Clearly Defined Segments” of “Getting the Big Picture” in *How to Study Your Bible*.

4. Fill in any other information necessary to complete the “Colossians at a Glance” chart.
5. How has God spoken to you through your study this week? Record it in the following space.

*Well, you are on your way. As you study, we pray you will be “filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding” (Colossians 1:9).*



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***Colossians and Philemon***

*Lesson 1, Overview of Colossians*



AUTHOR



## RECIPIENTS



## COLOSSIANS AT A GLANCE

**Book Theme:**

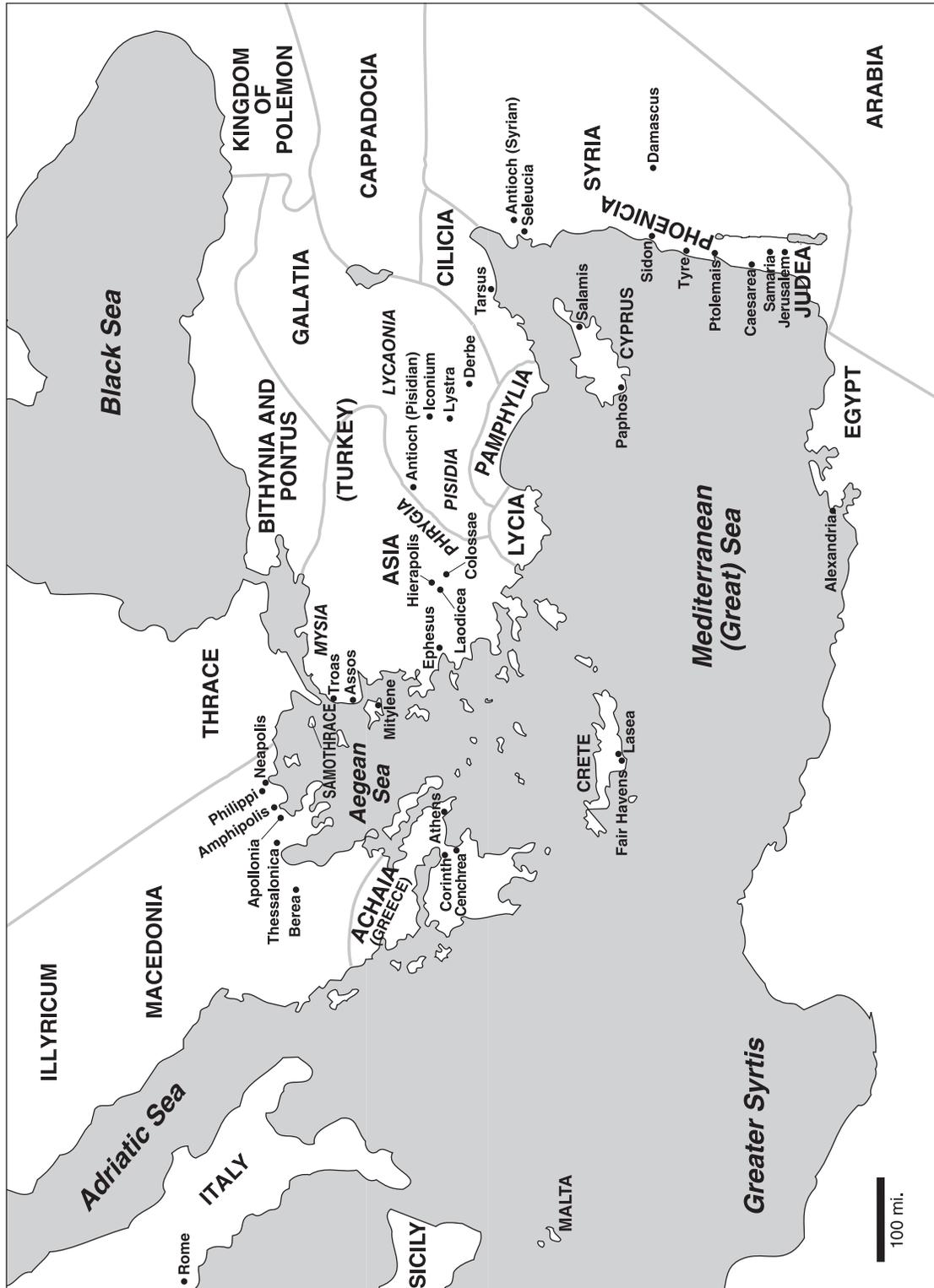
	Chapter Themes	Segment Divisions		
<b>Author:</b>	1			
<b>Date:</b>				
<b>Key Words:</b>	2			
<b>Purpose:</b>	3			
<b>Historical Setting:</b>	4			





*Colossians and Philemon*

Lesson 1, Map







## COLOSSIANS 1

### Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme \_\_\_\_\_

**PAUL**, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

**2** To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae:

**Grace** to you and peace from God our Father.

**3** We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you,

**4** since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints,

**5** because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel,

**6** which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth,

**7** just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf

**8** and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

**9** And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,



- 10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.
- 11 May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy,
- 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.
- 13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,
- 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
- 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.
- 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
- 18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.
- 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
- 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.
- 21 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds,
- 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,



- 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.
- 24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,
- 25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known,
- 26 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.
- 27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
- 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.
- 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.





## COLOSSIANS 2

### Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme \_\_\_\_\_

- FOR** I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face,
- 2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ,
  - 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
  - 4 I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.
  - 5 For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.
  - 6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,
  - 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.
  - 8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.
  - 9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,
  - 10 and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.
  - 11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,
  - 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.



- 13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,
- 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.
- 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.
- 16** Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.
- 17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.
- 18 Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind,
- 19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.
- 20** If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations—
- 21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”
- 22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings?
- 23 These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.



## COLOSSIANS 3

### Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme \_\_\_\_\_

- I**F then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.
  - 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
  - 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.
  - 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
  - 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming.
  - 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them.
  - 8 But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.
  - 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices
  - 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.
  - 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.
  - 12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,



- 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.
- 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
- 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.
- 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.
- 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
- 18** Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
- 19 Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.
- 20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
- 21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.
- 22 Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.
- 23 Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,
- 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.
- 25 For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.



## COLOSSIANS 4

### Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme \_\_\_\_\_

**MASTERS**, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

- 2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.
- 3 At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison—
- 4 that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.
- 5 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time.
- 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.
- 7 Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord.
- 8 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts,
- 9 and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.
- 10 Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him),



- 11 and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.
- 12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.
- 13 For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.
- 14 Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas.
- 15 Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.
- 16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.
- 17 And say to Archippus, “See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.”
- 18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.



**Colossians and Philemon**

*Sequence of Events in Paul's Life after His Conversion*

**SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IN PAUL'S LIFE AFTER HIS CONVERSION\***

\* There are differing opinions on these dates. For consistency this chart will be the basis for dates pertaining to Paul's life.

Scripture	Year A.D.	Event
Acts 9:1-25	33-34	Conversion, time in Damascus
	35-47	Some silent years, except we know that Paul:
Galatians 1:17		1. Spent time in Arabia and Damascus
Acts 9:26; Galatians 1:18		2. Made first visit to Jerusalem
Acts 9:30-11:26; Galatians 1:21		3. Went to Tarsus, Syria-Cilicia area
Acts 11:26		4. Was with Barnabas in Antioch
Acts 11:27-30		5. With Barnabas took relief to brethren in Judea; Paul's second visit to Jerusalem
Acts 12:23	44	Herod Agrippa I dies
Acts 12:25-13:3		6. Returned to Antioch; was sent out with Barnabas by church at Antioch
Acts 13:4-14:26	47-48	<b>First missionary journey:</b> <i>Galatians</i> written (?) Proconsul Sergius Paulus at Paphos
Acts 15:1-35	49	Apostolic Council at Jerusalem—Paul visits Jerusalem <i>Galatians</i> written (?)
Acts 15:36-18:22	49-51	<b>Second missionary journey:</b> <i>1 and 2 Thessalonians</i> written— 1½ years in Corinth, Acts 18:11
	51-52	Gallio known to be proconsul in Corinth
Acts 18:23-21:17	52-56	<b>Third missionary journey:</b> <i>1 and 2 Corinthians and Romans</i> written— 1 Cor. from Ephesus, 2 Cor. from Macedonia, Romans from Corinth
Acts 21:17-23:35	56	Paul goes to Jerusalem and is arrested; held in Caesarea
Acts 24-26	57-59	Appearance before Felix and Drusilla; before Festus—appeals to Caesar; before Agrippa
Acts 27-28:15	59-60	Paul goes from Caesarea to Rome
Acts 28:16-31	60-62	First Roman imprisonment: <i>Ephesians, Philemon, Colossians, and Philippians</i> written—2 years in prison
	62	Paul's release; possible trip to Spain
	62	Paul in Macedonia: <i>1 Timothy</i> written
	62	Paul goes to Crete <i>Titus</i> written
	63-64	Paul taken to Rome and imprisoned: <i>2 Timothy</i> written
	64	Paul is absent from the body and present with the Lord (Others put Paul's conversion about A.D. 35, his death at A.D. 68.)





## THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AS PORTRAYED IN COLOSSIANS



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***Colossians and Philemon***  
*The Lord Jesus Christ as Portrayed in Colossians*