

COLOSSIANS

Conversational Version

Salutation

1:1Paul, apostle of Christ^{Messiah} Jesus by God's will, and brother Timothy **2**to the saints in Colossae and faithful disciples in Christ. Grace and peace from God our Father. **Col 1:1-2**

Gratitude for Their Faithfulness

3We thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and always pray for you. **4**We've heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for the saints **5**because of the hope that's stored up for you in heaven. That hope you heard about in the true gospel message **6**that's in you like it is in the whole world. It's been growing and producing fruit *everywhere* like it has among you since you heard it and came to know the truth about God's grace. **7**You learned *it* from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant. He's Christ's faithful minister for you, **8**and he's made your love in the Spirit clear to us. **Col 1:3-8**

Prayer for Their Progress

9That's why, from the time we heard it, we kept praying that you'd be fully aware of his will in the wisdom and understanding of spiritual things. **10**That way you'll live worthy of the Lord in *your* desire to please *him*; you'll grow in every good deed and bear fruit because you know him. **11**In proportion to his glorious power, he'll greatly enable you to endure with joy, **12**and you'll thank him for qualifying you to share in the inheritance of the saints *who live* in light. **13**He has delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son. **14**We have redemption in his Son, the forgiveness of sins.

15He's the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn over all creation **16**because
he created everything in the sky and on earth,
visible and invisible—
thrones, dominions, powers, authorities.
Everything has been created by him and for him.

17He was before everything,
and everything finds its proper place in relation to him.

18He's the head of the body, the church.
He's the beginning, the firstborn from the dead
so he could have first place in everything.

19The Father saw fit to put everything under his responsibility
20and to reconcile everything to himself through him.
He made peace through the blood Christ^{Messiah} shed on the cross—

peace with things on earth and in heaven.

Col 1:9-20

21At one time you were enemies in mind and deed. **22**Now he has reconciled *you* in his physical body through death to bring you into his presence holy, blameless, without fault.

23That's the case if you stay in the faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope you heard about in the good news that's been presented in all creation under the sky. I've become a minister of it.

Col 1:21-23

Ministry for the Mystery

24I feel good about my hardships for you; I'm completing in my flesh what I can add to Christ's^{Messiah's} sufferings for his body the church. **25**I became a minister of the church as a stewardship God gave me for you, to fully make known his message. **26**That message was not revealed to past generations, but he has revealed it now to his saints. **27**He wanted to show them the value of this glorious mystery among the Gentiles: Christ among you^{pl}, the hope for glory.

28We present him, and instruct and warn everybody as wisely as we can so we can present each person complete in Christ. **29**That's why I strive in proportion to his power at work in me. **2:1**I want you to know how much I am striving for you, for the ones in Laodicea, and for whoever has never met me. **2**I urge you to bond together in love and to gain the valuable confidence that comes from knowing and understanding God's revealed mystery: Christ. **3**All the hidden treasures of knowledge and wisdom lie in him. **4**I say that so nobody will lead you astray with persuasive arguments. **5**Though I'm absent in body, I'm present in spirit, happy to see your orderly living and steadfast faith in Christ.

Col 1:24-2:5

Urging Continued Faithfulness

6So, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, keep on living in him. **7**Be rooted and built up in him, firm in faith, like you were taught. **8**Make sure nobody takes you captive with empty philosophy that deceives, after human traditions, according to the world's underlying assumptions rather than after Christ. **9**He fully constitutes deity bodily. **10**In him you have everything you need; he's the head of all rule and authority. **11**In him you were also 'circumcised' without hands. It's not a circumcision that removes flesh from the body; it's Christ's 'circumcision.' **12**You were buried with him in baptism, and raised with *him* by faith in God, who raised him from the dead. **13**You were 'dead' in sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, but he 'made you alive' with him and pardoned your sins. **14**He canceled the certificate of debt made up of regulations that worked against us, took it out of the way, and nailed it to his cross. **15**He disarmed rulers and authorities and displayed them openly for what they were by overcoming them *in the cross and resurrection*.

Col 2:6-15

Concerns Irrelevant for Christians

¹⁶So don't let anybody judge you about food, drink, or participating in festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths. ¹⁷They're just shadows of realities to come; but the body belongs to Christ. ¹⁸And don't let anybody cheat you by promoting pious self-denial and angel worship—taking a stand on insights they claim to have, proud for no reason in their nature-dominated thinking—¹⁹instead of holding onto the Head. From him the whole body, held up and held together by ligaments and tendons, grows in a way that God brings about.

²⁰If with Christ you've died to the world's underlying assumptions, why subject yourselves to rules and regulations as if you're living in the world—²¹*things like, "Don't use, don't taste, don't touch"*? ²²Such human rules and regulations deal with things that wear out from use. ²³They look wise with their self-imposed piety, self-denial, and severity to the body; but they don't help manage the physical body.

Col 2:16-23

Oriented to What's Above

3:1So since you've resurrected with Christ, strive for things above, where Christ sits on God's right *hand*. **2**Fix your attention on things above, not things on earth. **3**You've died, and your life is hidden away with Christ in God. **4**When Christ, your life, appears, you'll appear with him in glory.

Col 3:1-4

5So put to death *your* earthly members, *which foster* immorality, uncleanness, passion, sinful desires, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. **6**Because of things like that, God's displeasure comes [on disobedient people]^{ms}. **7**At one time you lived that way too. **8**Now set it aside: anger, rage, hateful feelings, slander, filthy talk. **9**Don't lie to one other, because you've taken off the old self and its behaviors, **10**and put on the new *self* that's made new unto knowing the One who created that new self in his image. **11**In that image there's no Greek or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision; barbarian, Scythian; slave or free; Christ *includes us* all and *is* in *us* all.

Col 3:5-11

Emphasizing the Major Virtues

12So, as God's chosen people, holy and loved, dress in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience. **13**Bear with one another; be gracious to each other. If you have a complaint against someone, be gracious to them like the Lord was to you. **14**Above all, *dress in* love, the perfect bond for holding you^{pl} together. **15**Let the peace that comes from Christ prevail in your hearts—peace is what he called you to in one body—and be grateful. **16**Let Christ's word live in you richly. Teach and encourage each other with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing to God with gratitude in your hearts. **17**Whatever you do or say, *do it in the name of the Lord Jesus* and be thankful to God the Father through him.

Col 3:12-17

Family Virtues

18Wives defer to *your* husbands in a way that's appropriate in the Lord.

19Husbands, love *your* wives; don't be harsh toward them.

20Children, obey *your* parents because that pleases the Lord.

21Dads, don't make your children resentful, so they won't get discouraged.

22Servants, obey *your* physical masters. Don't try to create impressions to please them, but *obey* sincerely, fearing the Lord. **23**Whatever you're doing, do it voluntarily as to the Lord rather than to other people. **24**You know the Lord will reward you, so serve him. **25**The ones that do unjustly will get paid back impartially for what they've done.

4:1Masters, be just and fair with your servants. Remember, you have a Master too—in heaven.

Col 3:18-4:1

General Virtues

2Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving. **3**Pray for us, too, that God will open a door for us to speak the revealed mystery: Christ. I'm in prison because of that message. **4***Pray* that I'll make that message public like I should. **5**Live wisely toward outsiders and make good use of *every* chance *you get to influence them*. **6**Always speak graciously with salt so you'll know how to answer each person.

Col 4:2-6

Extensive Greetings

7Tychicus, our dear brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you about my situation. **8**That's why I've sent him so he can comfort you. **9**I've also sent Onesimus, faithful and dear brother, who's one of you. They'll tell you about things here.

10Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, along with Mark, Barnabas' cousin (Welcome him if he comes.), **11**and Jesus, called Justus—men from the Circumcision. *At present* they're the only co-workers I have. They've been an encouragement to me.

Col 4:7-11

12Epaphras, *who's* one of you, greets you. He strives for you in prayers that you'll stand complete and confident in God's will. **13**I can vouch for his deep concern for you and the ones in Laodicea and Hierapolis. **14**Luke, the dearly loved doctor, and Demas send their regards. **15**Hello to the Christians in Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church that meets in her house. **16**When you've read *this* letter, have it read in the church in Laodicea; and you read my *letter* to Laodicea. **17**Tell Archippus to concentrate on fulfilling the ministry he's received in the Lord.

18I, Paul, sign this greeting with my own hand. Remember my bonds.

Grace *be* with you.

Col 4:12-18