

5-2018

## The Chapters of Colossians

Harold Willmington

*Liberty University*, [hwillmington@liberty.edu](mailto:hwillmington@liberty.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/outline\\_chapters\\_bible](https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/outline_chapters_bible)



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "The Chapters of Colossians" (2018). *An Alliterated Outline for the Chapters of the Bible*. 52.

[https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/outline\\_chapters\\_bible/52](https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/outline_chapters_bible/52)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the A Guide to the Systematic Study of the Bible at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in An Alliterated Outline for the Chapters of the Bible by an authorized administrator of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact [scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu](mailto:scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu).

# Colossians

## **SECTION OUTLINE ONE (COLOSSIANS 1)**

Paul opens his letter to the Colossian church with thanksgiving and prayer and a discussion about Christ.

### I. PAUL AND THE CHURCH AT COLOSSE (1:1-14, 24-29)

#### **A. The apostle's praise of this church (1:1-8)**

1. How they received the gospel (1:1-6): Paul commends them in regard to three things.
  - a. Their faith toward the Lord (1:1-4a)
  - b. Their love toward each other (1:4b)
  - c. Their hope toward the future (1:5-6): They are looking forward to the joys of heaven.
2. From whom they received the gospel (1:7-8): Epaphras shared Christ with them and is now ministering with Paul.

#### **B. The apostle's prayer for this church (1:9-14)**

1. That they will grow in the knowledge of God (1:9)
2. That they will please God (1:10a)
3. That they will bear fruit for God (1:10b)
4. That they will be strengthened by God (1:11)
5. That they will be thankful to God (1:12-14)
  - a. For what the Father did (1:12-13)
  - b. For what the Son did (1:14)

#### **C. The apostle's proclamation to the church (1:24-29):** He has been chosen to reveal God's secret plan to them.

1. The particulars (1:24-27): The secret is this: "Christ lives in you, and this is your assurance that you will share in his glory."
2. The purpose (1:28-29): "We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ."

### II. CHRIST AND THE CHURCH AT COLOSSE (1:15-23)

#### **A. Who Christ is (1:15):** He is the visible image of the invisible God.

#### **B. What Christ has done (1:16-23)**

1. In regard to creation (1:16-17, 20)
  - a. He created all things (1:16).
  - b. He sustains all things (1:17).
  - c. He will reconcile all things (1:20).
2. In regard to the church (1:18-19, 21-23): He has been appointed head of the church.

## **SECTION OUTLINE TWO (COLOSSIANS 2)**

Paul refers to two churches, one in Colosse and one in Laodicea.

### I. PAUL'S WISHES FOR THESE TWO CHURCHES (2:1-7)

#### **A. That both be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love (2:1-2a)**

#### **B. That both understand God's secret plan (2:2b-3)**

#### **C. That both guard against theological deception (2:4-5)**

#### **D. That both continue growing in Christ (2:6-7a)**

#### **E. That both rejoice and be thankful (2:7b)**

### II. PAUL'S WARNINGS TO THESE TWO CHURCHES (2:8-23):

The apostle warns against four dangerous and destructive philosophies.

**A. Gnosticism (2:8-10)**

1. The fiction (2:8): The Gnostics diminish Christ to an angel.
2. The facts (2:9-10): Paul says Christ was God incarnate in bodily form.

**B. Legalism (2:11-17)**

1. Paul describes the love of Christ (2:11-15).
  - a. We have been crucified and raised to new life with him (2:11-12).
  - b. He has forgiven our sins (2:13).
  - c. He has blotted out the charges against us (2:14-15).
2. Paul describes the liberty in Christ (2:16-17): Because of this, believers should not criticize each other.
  - a. In matters of diet (2:16a): No one should condemn another believer for what he or she eats or drinks.
  - b. In matters of days (2:16b-17): No one should condemn another believer for not celebrating certain holy days, for these old rules were only shadows.

**C. Mysticism (2:18-19)**

1. The fiction (2:18): Mysticism teaches that God can be known through two methods:
  - a. Through the worship of angels (2:18a)
  - b. Through the seeing of visions (2:18b)
2. The facts (2:19): One can only know God through Christ, who is the head of the body, the church.

**D. Asceticism (2:20-23)**

1. The fiction (2:21-22): Asceticism teaches that one can purify the spirit by punishing the body.
2. The facts (2:20, 23)
  - a. The spirit cannot be purified by punishing the body (2:23).
  - b. The believer's body and spirit have been crucified with Christ (2:20).

**SECTION OUTLINE THREE (COLOSSIANS 3-4:1)**

Paul writes about the principles of holy living and addresses six types of individuals in regard to this matter.

**I. HOLY LIVING: THE PRINCIPLES (3:1-17)**

**A. In regard to the believer's affection (3:1-4)**

1. The place of our affection (3:1-3): We must transfer our affection from earth to heaven.
2. The person of our affection (1:4): We must direct our affection toward Jesus.

**B. In regard to the believer's spiritual apparel (3:5-17)**

1. What to put off (3:5-9): God's anger comes on those who practice:
  - a. Immorality and idolatry (3:5)
  - b. Anger, malice, slander, and filthy language (3:8)
  - c. Lying (3:9)
2. What to put on (3:10-17)
  - a. A new nature (3:10-11)
  - b. Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience (3:12)
  - c. Forgiveness and love (3:13-14)
  - d. God's peace and thankfulness (3:15)
  - e. The words of Christ (3:16-17)

**II. HOLY LIVING: THE PEOPLE (3:18-25; 4:1): Paul addresses six types of individuals.**

**A. Wives (3:18):** Submit to your husbands.

**B. Husbands (3:19):** Love your wives, and never treat them harshly.

**C. Children (3:20):** Obey your parents.

**D. Fathers (3:21):** Don't aggravate your children.

**E. Servants (3:22-25):** Serve your master as you would serve the Lord.

**F. Masters (4:1):** Treat your servants as you would have your heavenly Master treat you.

**SECTION OUTLINE FOUR (COLOSSIANS 4:2-18)**

Paul closes his letter with a challenge to the Colossians, greetings sent from eight fellow believers, and

Paul's own special greetings and encouragements.

I. PAUL'S CHALLENGE (4:2-6)

**A. The Colossians are to be prayerful** (4:2a, 3-4, 18).

1. For themselves (4:2a)

2. For the apostle himself (4:3-4, 18)

**B. The Colossians are to be watchful** (4:2b).

**C. The Colossians are to be thankful** (4:2c).

**D. The Colossians are to be fruitful** (4:5-6).

II. PAUL'S COWORKERS (4:7-14): Eight fellow believers send their greetings to the Colossians.

**A. Tychicus** (4:7-8)

**B. Onesimus** (4:9)

**C. Aristarchus and Mark** (4:10)

**D. Justus** (4:11)

**E. Epaphras** (4:12-13)

**F. Luke and Demas** (4:14)

III. PAUL'S GREETINGS (4:15): Paul sends greetings to the Christian brothers and sisters.

IV. PAUL'S COMMANDS (4:16-17)

**A. To the church at Colosse** (4:16)

1. They are to read this letter (4:16a).

2. They are to give this letter to the Laodicean church to read (4:16b).

3. They are to read the letter Paul wrote to the Laodicean church (4:16c).

**B. To Archippus, a church member at Colosse** (4:17): "Be sure to carry out the work the Lord gave you."

V. PAUL'S BLESSING (4:18): Paul urges the Colossians to "remember my chains" and says, "May the grace of God be with you."