

# COLOSSIANS

## "THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST"

"He is also head of the body the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead;  
so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything."  
Colossians 1:18

Prepared by James T. Bartsch  
March, 2008  
Updated September, 2019

Published Online by [WordExplain.com](http://WordExplain.com)  
Email Contact: [jbartsch@wordexplain.com](mailto:jbartsch@wordexplain.com)

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®,  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman  
Foundation. Used by permission. ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org))

# COLOSSIANS

## "THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST"

"He is also head of the body the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead;  
so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything."  
Colossians 1:18

- A1 THE PROLOGUE TO THE COLOSSIANS 1:1-14
- A2 THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST 1:15-23
- A3 THE PROTECTION FOR THE COLOSSIANS 1:24 - 2:23
- A4 THE PRACTICE FOR THE COLOSSIANS 3:1 - 4:6
- A5 THE PAULINE CONCLUSION 4:7-18

Major Divisions of Colossians  
Based on the ANALYSIS OF COLOSSIANS  
Prepared by James T. Bartsch  
March, 2008  
Updated September, 2019

Published Online by [WordExplain.com](http://WordExplain.com)  
Email Contact: [jbartsch@wordexplain.com](mailto:jbartsch@wordexplain.com)

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE ®,  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman  
Foundation. Used by permission. ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org))

# COLOSSIANS

## "THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST"

"He is also head of the body the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything."

Colossians 1:18

### **A1 THE PROLOGUE TO THE COLOSSIANS 1:1-14**

B1 Paul's Greeting to the Colossians 1:1-2

B2 Paul's Prayer for the Colossians 1:3-14

### **A2 THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST 1:15-23**

B1 Because of His Essence: The Image of God 1:15a

B2 Because of His Activity: The Creator 1:15b-17

B3 Because of His Position: The Head of the Church 1:18a

B4 Because of His Victory over Death: The "First-Born" from the dead 1:18b

B5 Because of His Priority 1:18c

B6 Because of His Fullness 1:19

B7 Because of His Work: The Reconciler 1:20-23

### **A3 THE PROTECTION FOR THE COLOSSIANS 1:24 - 2:23**

B1 The Ministry / Service of Paul 1:24-29

B2 The Warning of Paul 2

### **A4 THE PRACTICE FOR THE COLOSSIANS 3:1 - 4:6**

B1 In Their Attitude 3:1-4

B2 In Their Lifestyle 3:5-17

B3 In Their Relationships 3:18 - 4:6

### **A5 THE PAULINE CONCLUSION 4:7-18**

B1 His Commendation to the Colossians of Tychicus and Onesimus 4:7-9

B2 His Conveying of Greetings 4:10-15

B3 His Closing Instructions 4:16-18

Condensed Outline of Colossians

Based on the ANALYSIS OF COLOSSIANS

Prepared by James T. Bartsch

March, 2008

Updated September, 2019

Published Online by [WordExplain.com](http://WordExplain.com)

Email Contact: [jbartsch@wordexplain.com](mailto:jbartsch@wordexplain.com)

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®,  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman  
Foundation. Used by permission. ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org))

# COLOSSIANS

## "THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST"

"He is also head of the body the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything."  
Colossians 1:18

### **A1 THE PROLOGUE TO THE COLOSSIANS 1:1-14**

#### **B1 Paul's Greeting to the Colossians 1:1-2**

- C1 The writers 1:1
- C2 The addressees 1:2
- C3 The blessing from God our Father

#### **B2 Paul's Prayer for the Colossians 1:3-14**

- C1 His Thanks 1:3-8
- C2 His Request 1:9-11
- C3 His Proposal of Their Thanks 1:12-14

### **A2 THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST 1:15-23**

#### **B1 Because of His Essence: The Image of God 1:15a**

#### **B2 Because of His Activity: The Creator 1:15b-17**

- C1 Creator of all things 1:15b-16
- C2 Sustainer of all things 1:17

#### **B3 Because of His Position: The Head of the Church 1:18a**

#### **B4 Because of His Victory over Death: The "First-Born" from the dead 1:18b**

#### **B5 Because of His Priority 1:18c**

#### **B6 Because of His Fullness 1:19**

#### **B7 Because of His Work: The Reconciler 1:20-23**

- C1 The extent of His reconciliation: All things 1:20
- C2 The means of His reconciliation: The blood of His cross 1:20
- C3 The location of His reconciliation 1:20
- C4 The present example of His reconciliation: The Colossian saints (The bright prospects of His former enemies if they continue in the faith.) 1:21-23

**A3 THE PROTECTION FOR THE COLOSSIANS 1:24 - 2:23**

**B1 The Ministry / Service of Paul: The proclamation of a secret hitherto unrevealed (Christ within the believing Gentiles) 1:24-29**

C1 Paul's joy at his suffering for the Colossians 1:24

C2 Paul's stewardship (dispensation) from God to be a servant ("minister") of the church 1:25-29

**B2 The Warning of Paul 2**

C1 Not Philosophy, But Christ 2:1-10

C2 Not Legalism, But Christ 2:11-23

**A4 THE PRACTICE FOR THE COLOSSIANS: His Strategy for Applied Living 3:1 - 4:6**

**B1 In Their Attitude: Think Heavenly ("As one risen with Christ, set your affection on heavenly things") 3:1-4**

C1 "Keep seeking the things above": Reasons for obeying this command 3:1

C2 "Keep fixing your mind on the things above, not on the things on the earth": Reasons for obeying this command 3:2-4

**B2 In Their Lifestyle: (In everyday living) 3:5-17**

C1 "Put to death your earthly members" (as resurrected ones) 3:5-7

C2 "Put away" (Get rid of) 3:8-11

C3 "Put on" 3:12-17

**B3 In Their Relationships: As a new man, living the resurrected life requires the following relationships 3:18 - 4:6**

C1 In the home 3:18-21

C2 In the work place 3:22 - 4:1

C3 Toward God 4:2-4

C4 Toward unbelievers: A wholesome walk 4:5-6

**A5 THE PAULINE CONCLUSION 4:7-18**

**B1 His Commendation to the Colossians of Tychicus and Onesimus 4:7-9**

C1 Regarding Tychicus 4:7-8

C2 Regarding Onesimus 4:9

**B2 His Conveying of Greetings 4:10-15**

- C1 From fellow prisoner Aristarchus 4:10
- C2 From Barnabas' cousin Mark (whom welcome)
- C3 From Jesus called Justus 4:11
- C4 From Epaphras 4:12-13
- C5 From Luke, the beloved physician 4:14
- C6 From Demas
- C7 To other "brothers" 4:15

**B3 His Closing Instructions 4:16-18**

- C1 For a Pauline letter-exchange with the Laodiceans 4:16
- C2 To tell Archippus to fulfill his ministry from the Lord 4:17
- C3 His personal signature 4:18
- C4 His urging them to remember his imprisonment
- C5 His bequest of grace upon them

Outline of Colossians  
Based on the ANALYSIS OF COLOSSIANS  
Prepared by James T. Bartsch  
March, 2008  
Updated September, 2019

Published Online by [WordExplain.com](http://WordExplain.com)  
Email Contact: [jbartsch@wordexplain.com](mailto:jbartsch@wordexplain.com)

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®,  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman  
Foundation. Used by permission. ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org))

# COLOSSIANS

## "THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST"

Colossians 1:18

### **A1 THE PROLOGUE TO THE COLOSSIANS 1:1-14**

#### **B1 Paul's Greeting to the Colossians 1:1-2**

C1 The writers 1:1

D1 Paul

D2 Timothy, "the brother"

C2 The addressees 1:2

D1 To those in Colosse

D2 Who are saints and faithful brothers in Christ

C3 The blessing from God our Father

D1 Grace to you

D2 And peace

#### **B2 Paul's Prayer for the Colossians 1:3-14**

C1 His Thanks 1:3-8

D1 For their faith 1:3, 4a

D2 For their love: His having heard of the love which they "have toward all the saints" 1:4b

D3 For their heavenly hope 1:5-8

- C2 His Request 1:9-11
  - D1 Objective: That they might know God's will 1:9
  - D2 Result: So they can walk "worthy of the Lord" 1:10
  - D3 Application: For their empowerment 1:11
- C3 His Proposal of Their Thanks 1:12-14
  - D1 For their inheritance 1:12
  - D2 For their deliverance 1:13
  - D3 For their redemption 1:14

**A2 THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST 1:15-23**

**B1 Because of His Essence: The Image of God 1:15a**

**B2 Because of His Activity: The Creator 1:15b-17**

- C1 Creator of all things 1:15b-16
- C2 Sustainer of all things 1:17

**B3 Because of His Position: The Head of the Church 1:18a**

**B4 Because of His Victory over Death: The "First-Born" from the dead 1:18b**

**B5 Because of His Priority 1:18c**

**B6 Because of His Fullness 1:19**

**B7 Because of His Work: The Reconciler 1:20-23**

- C1 The extent of His reconciliation: All things 1:20
- C2 The means of His reconciliation: The blood of His cross 1:20
- C3 The location of His reconciliation 1:20
  - D1 "Things on earth"
  - D2 "Things in heaven"
- C4 The present example of His reconciliation: The Colossian saints (The bright prospects of His former enemies if they continue in the faith.) 1:21-23
  - D1 Their former antagonism 1:21
  - D2 Christ's subsequent reconciliation of them 1:22-23



### A3 THE PROTECTION FOR THE COLOSSIANS 1:24 - 2:23

#### B1 The Ministry / Service of Paul: The proclamation of a secret hitherto unrevealed (Christ within the believing Gentiles) 1:24-29

- C1 Paul's joy at his suffering for the Colossians 1:24
  - D1 His present filling up in his flesh that which is lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions
  - D2 His willingness to do so for the sake of Christ's body, the church
- C2 Paul's stewardship (dispensation) from God to be a servant ("minister") of the church 1:25-29
  - D1 The repository of the stewardship: Paul, it's servant ("minister") 1:25
  - D2 The giver of the stewardship: God
  - D3 The beneficiaries of the stewardship
  - D4 The nature of the stewardship 1:25b-26
  - D5 The Divine motive for the stewardship: God's wish to make known to His saints the wealth of this glorious mystery among the Gentiles 1:27
  - D6 The content of the stewardship: Christ in you, the hope of glory 1:27
  - D7 Paul's discharge of his stewardship 1:28-29

#### B2 The Warning of Paul 2

- C1 Not Philosophy, But Christ 2:1-10
  - D1 His struggle that they might truly know God's mystery, the **wisdom-filled** Christ 2:1-3
  - D2 His warning against **enticing words** 2:4-7
  - D3 His warning against **human philosophy** 2:8-10
- C2 Not Legalism, But Christ 2:11-23
  - D1 Their position in Christ because of the Cross 2:11-13
  - D2 The power of Christ on the Cross 2:14-15
    - E1 His abolishment of the indictment of the **Law** 2:14
    - E2 His triumph over [evil] principalities and powers 2:15
  - D3 The required practice of the Colossians because of the Cross 2:16-23

**A4 THE PRACTICE FOR THE COLOSSIANS: His Strategy for Applied Living 3:1 - 4:6**

**B1 In Their Attitude: Think Heavenly ("As one risen with Christ, set your affection on heavenly things") 3:1-4**

C1 "Keep seeking the things above": Reasons for obeying this command 3:1

D1 The believers' post-death condition: If (as is true) "you were all raised up with Christ"

D2 Christ's heavenly location: Christ is "seated at the right hand of God"

C2 "Keep fixing your mind on the things above, not on the things on the earth": Reasons for obeying this command 3:2-4

D1 The believers' past death with Christ: You (all) died [with Christ] 3:3

D2 God's present hiding of the believers' life with Christ: "Your life is hidden with Christ in God"

D3 God's future glorious exhibition of believers alongside Christ 3:4

**B2 In Their Lifestyle: (In everyday living) 3:5-17**

C1 Put to death your earthly members (as resurrected ones) 3:5-7

D1 The death list 3:5

D2 The motivation: It's because of these things God's wrath is coming 3:6

D3 The need: The Colossians used to walk in these things when they lived in them 3:7

C2 Put away (Get rid of) 3:8-11

D1 Targets of the command 3:8-9a

D2 Accompaniments of the command 3:9b-11

C3 "Put on" 3:12-17

D1 The status of the believers 3:12

D2 The qualities with which they are to clothe themselves 3:12b-15

D3 Their preoccupation: with the Word of Christ 3:16

D4 Their life agenda 3:17

**B3 In Their Relationships: As a new man, living the resurrected life requires the following relationships 3:18 - 4:6**

- C1 In the home 3:18-21
  - D1 Submissive wives 3:18
  - D2 Loving husbands 3:19
  - D3 Obedient children 3:20
  - D4 Understanding fathers 3:21
  - D5 In the work place 3:22 - 4:1
  - D6 Obedient slaves 3:22
  - D7 Fair-minded masters (lords) 4:1
- C2 Toward God 4:2-4
  - D1 The importance of prayer 4:2
  - D2 The request for prayer 4:3-4
- C3 Toward unbelievers: A wholesome walk 4:5-6
  - D1 The appropriate lifestyle 4:5
  - D2 The appropriate conversation 4:6

**A5 THE PAULINE CONCLUSION 4:7-18**

**B1 His Commendation to the Colossians of Tychicus and Onesimus 4:7-9**

- C1 Regarding Tychicus 4:7-8
  - D1 His qualifications 4:7
  - D2 His function 4:7, 8
- C2 Regarding Onesimus 4:9
  - D1 He is a "faithful and beloved brother"
  - D2 He is one of them

**B2 His Conveying of Greetings 4:10-15**

- C1 From fellow prisoner Aristarchus 4:10
- C2 From Barnabas' cousin Mark (whom welcome)

- C3 From Jesus called Justus 4:11
  - D1 These three are Jewish
  - D2 These are the only fellow-workers for God's kingdom who proved to be a comfort to Paul
- C4 From Epaphras 4:12-13
  - D1 One of them 4:12
  - D2 A slave of Christ
  - D3 A continual wrestler in prayer for them
  - D4 Possessed of concern for them, and for believers in Laodicea and Hierapolis 4:13
- C5 From Luke, the beloved physician 4:14
- C6 From Demas
- C7 To other brothers 4:15
  - D1 Those in Laodicea
  - D2 To "Nympha and the church that is in her house"

**B3 His Closing Instructions 4:16-18**

- C1 For a Pauline letter-exchange with the Laodiceans 4:16
- C2 To tell Archippus to fulfill his ministry from the Lord 4:17
- C3 His personal signature 4:18
- C4 His urging them to remember his imprisonment
- C5 His bequest of grace upon them

Expanded Outline of Colossians  
Based on the ANALYSIS OF COLOSSIANS  
Prepared by James T. Bartsch  
March, 2008  
Updated September, 2019

Published Online by [WordExplain.com](http://WordExplain.com)  
Email Contact: [jbartsch@wordexplain.com](mailto:jbartsch@wordexplain.com)

Scripture taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®,  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman  
Foundation. Used by permission. ([www.Lockman.org](http://www.Lockman.org))