

Analysis of

COLOSSIANS

"THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST"

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

Colossians 1:18

Expanded Analysis of COLOSSIANS
Prepared by James T. Bartsch June, 1993
Updated June, 2015

Published Online by WordExplain.com
Email Contact: 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)

COLOSSIANS

"THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST"

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

Colossians 1:18

A 1 THE PROLOGUE TO THE COLOSSIANS 1:1-14

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

C 1 The writers 1:1

D 1 Paul,

E 1 His mission: an apostle ["sent one"] of Jesus Christ

E 2 His reason: by the will of God

D 2 Timothy, lit., "the brother": and Timothy our brother,

C 2 The addressees 1:2

D 1 Their characterization: {2} to the saints and faithful brethren

D 2 Their location

E 1 Spiritually: in Christ

E 2 Geographically: *who are* at Colossae:

C 3 The blessing from God our Father

D 1 Grace to you

D 2 and peace from God our Father.

B 2 Paul's Prayer for the Colossians 1:3-14

C 1 His Thanks 1:3-8

D 1 For their faith 1:3, 4a

E 1 His thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus: {3} We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1:3

E 2 His constant prayer for them: praying always for you,

E 3 His having heard of their faith in Christ: {4} since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus 1:4a

D 2 For their love -- His having heard of the love which they have toward all the saints: and the love which you have for all the saints; 1:4b

D 3 For their heavenly hope 1:5-8

E 1 The impact of their hope -- It feeds their faith and their love: {5} because of the hope 1:5

E 2 The focus of their hope -- It is laid up for them in the heavens: laid up for you in heaven,

E 3 The source of their hope 1:5b-8

G 1 The content of their hope -- The word of the truth of the gospel: of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel 1:5b-6a

H 1 Their previous hearing of it: (of which you previously heard) 1:5b

H 2 Its present access to them: {6} which has come to you, 1:6a

H 3 Its action in all the world as well as in them: just as in all the world also

J 1 Bearing fruit: it is constantly bearing fruit

J 2 Growing: and increasing,

G 2 The beginning of their hope 1:6b-8

H 1 The time of its beginning: even as *it has been doing* in you also 1:6

J 1 The day in which they heard the gospel: since the day you heard *of it*

- J 2 (The day in which) they fully knew the grace of God in truth: and understood the grace of God in truth;
- H 2 The agent of its beginning: Epaphras 1:7-8
 - J 1 Paul's beloved fellow-slave: {7} just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, 1:7
 - J 2 His ministry on their behalf as a faithful servant of Christ: who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,
 - J 3 His having shown to Paul their love in the Spirit: {8} and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit. 1:8
- C 2 His Request 1:9-11
 - D 1 Objective: That they might know God's will 1:9
 - E 1 The urgency of his request
 - G 1 Beginning on the day in which he heard [of their response]: {9} For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*,
 - G 2 His ceaseless prayer for them: we have not ceased to pray for you

- E 2 The content of his request -- That they might be filled with the full knowledge of God's will: and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will
 - G 1 In all wisdom: in all spiritual wisdom
 - G 2 In all spiritual understanding: and understanding,
- D 2 Result: So they can walk worthy of the Lord: {10} so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, 1:10
 - E 1 (lit.,) "Pleasing Him in everything: to please *Him* in all respects,"
 - E 2 Bearing fruit in every good work: bearing fruit in every good work
 - E 3 Lit., "Growing in the full knowledge of God": and increasing in the knowledge of God;
- D 3 Application: For their empowerment 1:11
 - E 1 The level of empowerment: Lit., "Being empowered with all power": {11} strengthened with all power,
 - E 2 The standard of empowerment: Lit., "According to the might of His glory": according to His glorious might,
 - E 3 The result of empowerment: Lit., "(Their possessing of) all endurance and long-suffering": for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously
- C 3 His Proposal of Their Thanks 1:12-14
 - D 1 Reward: For their inheritance 1:12
 - E 1 The emotion of their thanks: Joy [from 1:11]: joyously
 - E 2 The process of their thanks: {12} giving thanks
 - E 3 The object of their thanks: to the Father,
 - E 4 The content of their thanks: For God's having fitted them for their share of the destiny of the saints in the realm of the light: who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.
 - D 2 Rescue: For their deliverance 1:13
 - E 1 God's having delivered them out of the authority of the darkness: {13} For He rescued us from the domain of darkness,

E 2 God's having transferred them into the kingdom of the Son of His love: and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,¹

D 3 Redemption: For their redemption 1:14

E 1 The source of their redemption -- In Christ: {14} in whom

E 2 The fact of their redemption: we have redemption,

E 3 The nature of their redemption: the forgiveness of sins.

A 2 THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST 1:15-23

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

And He is the image of the invisible God,

B 2 Because of His Activity: The Creator 1:15b-17

C 1 Creator of all things 1:15b-16

D 1 His priority and importance over creation: the first-born of all creation. 1:15b

D 2 The totality of His creation: For by Him all things were created, 1:16

E 1 In all locations of significance: *both* in the heavens and on earth,

E 2 In all modes of existence: visible and invisible

E 3 In all areas of authority

G 1 Whether thrones

G 2 Or dominions

G 3 Or rulers

G 4 Or authorities

¹ 1:13 - transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son: Jesus' kingdom has not yet begun. His rule as the Son of David necessarily must occur on Earth from Mount [Zion](#), Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-4; Zechariah 14:9-11; 16-21). His kingdom will not begin until He returns to this earth (Luke 19:11-12; Rev. 19:11-20:6). Jesus is presently seated at the right hand of the Father not as King, but as Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5:5-10; Heb. 6:19-20; 7:1-28; 8:1-6; 9:11-15; 10:12-14, 19-23). While He serves as priest, He is presently waiting until He can receive His kingdom (Psa. 110:1-3; Luke 19:11-12; Heb. 10:12-13). From God's point of view, His Son's reign upon earth, though still future, is so certain that He has already proleptically transferred us believers into His future kingdom. The same phenomenon can be observed in Romans 8:29-30, where we read that all of us believers in Jesus have been not only foreknown, predestined, called, and justified, but also proleptically glorified, even though in the present time our bodies are decaying and dying.

D 3 The exclusiveness of His creation: --all things have been created through Him

D 4 The purpose of His creation: and for Him.

C 2 Sustainer of all things 1:17

D 1 His transcendence² over creation: He is before all things,

D 2 His sustenance of creation: and in Him all things hold together.³

B 3 Because of His Position: The Head of the Church 1:18a

He is also head of the body, the church;

B 4 Because of His Victory over Death: The "First-Born" from the dead 1:18b

C 1 The initiator of victory over death: and He is the beginning,

C 2 The prominent one because of His victory over death: the first-born from the dead,

C 3 The purpose of His victory over death: so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.⁴

B 5 Because of His Fullness 1:19

For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,⁵

² 1:17 subtitle - transcendence: In other words, He exists independently of His creation. He existed prior to His creation, and is above it, not depending upon it for His existence. Rather than it being the cause of *His* existence, He is the cause of *its* existence! *It* depends on *Him*, not He on it!

³ 1:17 - all things hold together: In other words, Jesus Christ is the glue, the energy, the heavy matter, the bonding agent, the intelligence that keeps all creation together. Without His sustaining power, the universe would ignite in a stupendous nuclear explosion, then ultimately collapse into oblivion. Presumably it is Christ's withdrawal of His sustaining energy that explodes and collapses the entire physical universe with a gargantuan roar and a raging inferno as described in 2 Peter 3:10-13!

⁴ 1:18 - first place in everything: The most difficult and baffling wrench Satan could possibly throw into the engine of God's plan, the spanner in the works, the boulder in the combine, is death. Through tempting man to sin and thus plunging man into death, Satan had wrecked God's universe and man's role as king over the only important planet in the universe, Earth. In taking His own Son into the abyss of humanity, and further, into the cataclysm of death, God in Christ achieved victory over death when it seemed that victory had been defeated in death! Having been put to death, but having been raised from among the dead ones, Jesus Christ achieved victory over death. His resurrection was the key that unlocked death for all of us humans! In conquering death, Christ gained the victory over death that the human race so desperately needed. Jesus Christ was the first to achieve victory over death. He did so that He might come to have first place in absolutely everything! -- even man's greatest and most final enemy -- DEATH!

⁵ 1:19 - fullness to dwell in Him: Jesus Christ is God's fullest expression of power, of victory, of success, of prominence, of dependability, of submission. In this, the ultimate man, all of God's ESSENCE and DEITY resides! He is the supreme embodiment of God and the supreme embodiment of MAN. He is ULTIMATE GOD and ULTIMATE MAN wrapped up in one supreme package -- the GOD-MAN JESUS, the CHRIST!

B 6 Because of His Work: The Reconciler 1:20-23

- C 1 The extent of His reconciliation: All things 1:20
and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself,
- C 2 The means of His reconciliation: The blood of His cross 1:20
having made peace through the blood of His cross;
- C 3 The location of His reconciliation 1:20
 - D 1 Things on earth: through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth
 - D 2 Things in heaven: or things in heaven.
- C 4 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
 - D 1 Their former antagonism 1:21
 - E 1 Alienated: And although you were formerly alienated
 - E 2 and hostile in mind,
 - E 3 engaged in evil deeds,
 - D 2 Christ's subsequent reconciliation of them 1:22-23
 - E 1 The means of their reconciliation: The death of Christ's fleshly body 1:22a
 - G 1 The disadvantage of His reconciliation: yet He has now reconciled⁶ you in His fleshly body
 - G 2 The mortal struggle of His reconciliation: through death,
 - E 2 The purpose of their reconciliation: That Christ might present them to Himself 1:22b-23
in order to present you before Him
 - G 1 Their character in their presentation 1:22b
 - H 1 holy
 - H 2 and blameless

⁶ 1:22 - reconciled: *apokatalasso* = "to transfer from a certain state to another which is quite different; hence, to reconcile, restore to favor" -- *The Analytical Greek Lexicon*

H 3 and beyond reproach --

G 2 The condition of their presentation: If in fact (*ei ge* + indicative) they continue (*epimeneite*) in the faith (and it is assumed they will): if indeed you continue in the faith⁷ 1:23

H 1 firmly established

H 2 and steadfast,

H 3 and not moved away from the hope of the gospel

J 1 Which they had heard: that you have heard,

J 2 which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven,

J 3 and of which I, Paul, was made a minister. (servant)

A 3 THE PROTECTION FOR THE COLOSSIANS 1:24 - 2:23

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

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

D 1 His attitude -- joy in sufferings: {24} Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake,

D 2 His motive -- His willingness to do so for the sake of Christ's body, the church: and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church,

D 3 His effect -- His present filling up in his flesh that which is lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions: in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

⁷ 1:23 - if indeed you continue in the faith: John MacArthur, *Saved Without a Doubt*, pp. 149-151, says that this verse, along with John 8:31; 1 Cor. 15:1-2; Hebrews 2:1, 3:14, 4:4, 6:11-12, 10:39, 12:14; 1 John 2:19 indicates that perseverance to the end is a result of salvation. He indicates that genuine faith will persevere. "When a professing believer doesn't endure, he or she has failed the test of genuine faith (1 John 2:19) [p. 150]." "How many people do you know who followed Christ for a while, had some trouble in their lives, and then went away from Him? (cf. John 6:66) Although they may have made a profession of faith in Christ, they cannot be identified as those who love Him because their lives are not characterized by an enduring obedience. In contrast, all true believers will persevere." (There follows a citation of the Westminster Confession of Faith.) [p. 151]

- C 2 Paul's stewardship (dispensation) from God to be a servant ("minister") of the church 1:25-29
 - D 1 The repository of the stewardship -- Paul, it's servant ("minister"): {25} *Of this church* I was made a minister 1:25
 - D 2 The giver of the stewardship -- God: according to the stewardship from God
 - D 3 The beneficiaries of the stewardship: bestowed on me for your benefit,
 - E 1 The church in general 1:24, 25
 - E 2 The Colossians in particular 1:25
 - D 4 The nature of the stewardship 1:25b-26
 - E 1 The proclamation of the word of God, namely: so that I might fully carry out the *preaching of* the word of God, 1:25b
 - E 2 The mystery hidden from the ages and generations: {26} *that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, 1:26a
 - E 3 The mystery now revealed to God's saints: but has now been manifested to His saints, 1:26b
 - D 5 The Divine motive for the stewardship -- God's wish to make known to His saints the wealth of this glorious mystery among the Gentiles: {27} to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, 1:27a
 - D 6 The content of the stewardship: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 1:27b
 - D 7 Paul's discharge of his stewardship 1:28-29
 - E 1 His policy -- To proclaim Christ: {28} We proclaim Him, 1:28a
 - G 1 Warning every person: admonishing every man
 - G 2 Teaching every person (with all wisdom): and teaching every man with all wisdom,
 - E 2 His objective -- To present every believer perfect in Christ: so that we may present every man complete in Christ. 1:28b-29

- E 3 His effort 1:29
 - G 1 His laboring: {29} For this purpose also I labor,
 - G 2 His struggling (lit., "agonizing"): striving
- E 4 His power -- Christ's powerful working (lit., "energizing") within him: according to His power, which mightily works within me. 1:29

B 2 The Warning of Paul 2

- C 1 Not Philosophy, But Christ 2:1-10
 - D 1 His struggle that they might truly know God's mystery, the **wisdom-filled** Christ 2:1-3
 - E 1 His great struggle on behalf of believers: Col 2:1 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face, 2:1
 - G 1 The Colossians
 - G 2 The Laodiceans
 - G 3 Any who had never seen him personally
 - E 2 His strong desire that their hearts might be encouraged 2:2-3 that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and *attaining* to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, *resulting* in a true knowledge of God's mystery, *that is*, Christ *Himself*,
 - G 1 By being joined together in love 2:2
 - G 2 By the complete wealth of assurance in their understanding
 - G 3 By their full knowledge of the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures 2:2, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
 - H 1 Of wisdom 2:3
 - H 2 Of knowledge

- D 2 His warning against **enticing words** 2:4-7
- E 1 The purpose of his communication: that no one would beguile them with persuasive speech: I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument. 2:4
- E 2 The intensity of his interest in them: For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ. 2:5
- G 1 His absence in body
- G 2 His presence with them in spirit
- G 3 His attitude
- H 1 Rejoicing
- H 2 Observing
- J 1 Their orderliness
- J 2 The firmness of their faith in Christ
- E 3 His exhortation to them 2:6-7
- G 1 The comparison: Lit., "As you received the Christ--Jesus the Lord, walk in him!": Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk in Him, 2:6
- G 2 The accompaniments: having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and* overflowing with gratitude. 2:7
- H 1 Having been rooted [in him]
- H 2 Being built up in him
- H 3 Being confirmed in the faith as you were taught
- H 4 Abounding in thanksgiving
- D 3 His warning against **human philosophy** 2:8-10
- E 1 The warning: See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. 2:8
- G 1 The description: Look out lest anyone abduct-and-rob you

- G 2 The methods (of abduction)
 - H 1 Through philosophy
 - H 2 Through empty deceit
 - H 3 According to human tradition
 - H 4 According to the basic principles of the world rather than through Christ
- E 2 The completeness of Christ: For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 2:9

In Him all the fullness of the Godhead resides in bodily form
- E 3 The completeness of the believer in Christ: and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; 2:10
 - G 1 Their fullness as existing in Him
 - G 2 The reason for their fullness: He is the head of all rule and authority
- C 2 Not Legalism, But Christ 2:11-23
 - D 1 Their position in Christ because of the Cross 2:11-13
 - E 1 Circumcised in Christ: *{11}* and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 2:11
 - E 2 Buried with Christ: *{12}* having been buried with Him in baptism,⁸ 2:12a
 - E 3 Resurrected with Christ: in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 2:12b
 - E 4 Regenerated with Christ: *{13}* When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, 2:13a
 - E 5 Forgiven: having forgiven us all our transgressions, 2:13b
 - D 2 The power of Christ on the Cross 2:14-15

⁸ Col. 2:12 - having been buried with him in baptism: Literally, “having been buried with Him in the baptism” This particular baptism is [Spirit baptism](#), not [water baptism](#), although [water baptism](#) symbolizes that which only [Spirit baptism](#) can accomplish. [Water baptism](#) is a “ritual” baptism, not a “real” baptism. That is, [water baptism](#) can no more accomplish our identification with Christ in His burial than physical circumcision can cut off “the domination of our sinful nature (flesh), the slavery to sin that characterizes the unregenerate person (cf. Rom. 7:24-25)” (so [Thomas Constable](#)). Only [Spirit baptism](#) can accomplish our identification with Christ (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 2:20).

- E 1 His abolishment of the indictment of the **Law**: {14} having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 2:14
- E 2 His triumph over [evil] principalities and powers: {15} When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him. 2:15
- D 3 The required practice of the Colossians because of the Cross 2:16-23
 - E 1 Do not live by trying to keep the Law: (Let no one judge the way you observe Jewish religious rituals) 2:16-17
 - G 1 The examples: {16} Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to
 - H 1 food
 - H 2 or drink
 - H 3 or in respect to a festival
 - H 4 or a new moon
 - H 5 or a Sabbath day-- 2:16
 - G 2 The reason: These are a shadow of things to come: {17} things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come; 2:17a
 - G 3 The reality: The real essence is Christ: but the substance belongs to Christ. 2:17b
 - E 2 Do not live by using a "superior" knowledge: (Let no one defraud you of your reward) 2:18-19
 - G 1 Through ignorant, self-abasing, but proud worship of angels: {18} Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize
 - H 1 by delighting
 - J 1 in self-abasement
 - J 2 and the worship of the angels,
 - H 2 taking his stand on *visions* he has seen,
 - H 3 inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, 2:18
 - G 2 Through failure to hold fast to the nourishment and support provided by the Head [Christ] and the body

- [the Church]: {19} and not holding fast to the head,
- H 1 from whom the entire body,
 - J 1 being supplied
 - J 2 and held together by the joints and ligaments,
 - H 2 grows with a growth which is from God. 2:19
- E 3 Do not live as an ascetic: (Do not subject yourself to regulations) 2:20-23
- G 1 The principle precluding asceticism 2:20
 - H 1 The fact of their having "died with Christ to the elementary **principles** of the world": {20} If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world,
 - H 2 The contradiction of their then submitting themselves to **decrees**: why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,
 - G 2 Examples of asceticism 2:21
 - H 1 Handle not: {21} "Do not handle,
 - H 2 Taste not: do not taste,
 - H 3 Touch not: do not touch!"
 - G 3 The analysis of asceticism 2:22
 - H 1 The taboos deal with things perishable, non-eternal: {22} (which all *refer to* things destined to perish with use)
 - H 2 The taboos are man-made, not God-made: -- in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?
 - G 4 The failure of asceticism 2:23
 - H 1 It has only the appearance, not the substance of wisdom: {23} These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom
 - H 2 It is really pride, exalting self

- J 1 in self-made religion
- J 2 and self-abasement
- J 3 and severe treatment of the body,

H 3 It fails to extinguish "fleshly indulgence":
but are of no value against fleshly
indulgence.

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

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

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

D 1 The believers' post-death condition: If (as is true) you were all raised up with Christ -- {1} Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above,

D 2 Christ's heavenly location: Christ is sitting at the right hand of God -- where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

C 2 Keep fixing your mind on the things above, not on the things on the earth: Reasons for obeying this command: {2} Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3:2-4

D 1 The believers' past death with Christ: You (all) died [with Christ] -- {3} For you have died 3:3

D 2 God's present hiding of the believers' life with Christ: Your life has been hidden with Christ in God -- and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

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

E 1 The time of the exhibition: Whenever Christ is exhibited -- 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed,

E 2 The correlation with Christ: He is "our life"

E 3 The certainty of the exhibition: Then you (all) also will be exhibited with him -- then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

E 4 The glory of the exhibition: "In glory"

B 2 In Their Lifestyle: (In everyday living) 3:5-17

C 1 Put to death your earthly members (as resurrected ones) -- {5} Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead 3:5-7

D 1 The death list 3:5

E 1 Fornication -- to immorality,

E 2 Uncleanliness -- impurity,

E 3 Passion -- passion,

E 4 Evil desire -- evil desire,

E 5 Greed (= idolatry) -- and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

D 2 The motivation: It's because of these things God's wrath is coming - - {6} For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, 3:6

D 3 The need: The Colossians used to walk in these things when they lived in them -- {7} and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 3:7

C 2 Put away (Get rid of) -- {8} But now you also, put them all aside: 3:8-11

D 1 Targets of the command 3:8-9a

E 1 Wrath -- anger, 3:8

E 2 Anger -- wrath,

E 3 Ill will -- malice,

E 4 Slander -- slander,

E 5 Filthy language -- *and* abusive speech from your mouth.

E 6 Deceit (Stop lying to one another) -- {9} Do not lie to one another, 3:9a

D 2 Accompaniments of the command 3:9b-11

E 1 Having put off the old man with his practices -- since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, 3:9b

E 2 Having put on the new man -- {10} and have put on the new self 3:10-11

G 1 The character of the new man: He is being renewed in full knowledge according to [Christ], who created him -- who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him-- 3:10

G 2 The equality of the new man 3:11

H 1 Neither Greek nor Jew -- {11} *a renewal* in which there is no *distinction between* Greek and Jew,

H 2 Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision -- circumcised and uncircumcised,

H 3 Neither barbarian nor Scythian -- barbarian, Scythian,

H 4 Neither slave nor freeman -- slave and freeman,

H 5 Christ is all and in all -- but Christ is all, and in all.

C 3 Put on 3:12-17

D 1 The status of the believers 3:12

E 1 God's chosen people -- {12} So, as those who have been chosen of God,

E 2 Holy -- holy

E 3 Objects of God's love -- and beloved,

D 2 The qualities with which they are to clothe themselves -- put on a heart of 3:12b-15

E 1 Compassion -- compassion, 3:12b

E 2 Kindness -- kindness,

E 3 Humility, gentleness -- humility, gentleness

E 4 Patience -- and patience;

E 5 Bearing with one another -- {13} bearing with one another, 3:13

E 6 Forgiving yourselves -- and forgiving each other,

G 1 The circumstance: If anyone has a complaint against anyone -- whoever has a complaint against anyone;

G 2 The standard: Forgive as the Lord forgave you -- just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

- E 7 Love 3:14
 - G 1 Its importance: Over all these things -- {14}
Beyond all these things *put on* love,
 - G 2 Its function: Love binds all these virtues together in completeness -- which is the perfect bond of unity.
- E 8 Peace 3:15
 - G 1 The command: "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" -- {15} Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
 - G 2 The reason: "Since, as members of one body, you were called to peace" (NIV) -- to which indeed you were called in one body;
- E 9 Thankfulness -- and be thankful.
- D 3 Their preoccupation: with the Word of Christ 3:16
 - E 1 Saturation: "Let the word of Christ richly indwell you" -- {16} Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you,
 - E 2 Edificational overflow: Wisely teaching and cautioning yourselves -- with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another
 - E 3 Musical overflow:
 - G 1 Styles: Lit., with "psalms, hymns, spiritual songs" -- with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs,
 - G 2 Attitude
 - H 1 Perspective: Lit., "with grace" (understanding they are the fortunate beneficiaries of God's grace)
 - H 2 Sincerity: Lit., "singing in (or 'with') your hearts" -- singing with thankfulness in your hearts
 - H 3 Motive: to God.

D 4 Their life agenda 3:17

E 1 Their scope: whatever they do -- 17 Whatever you do

G 1 In word -- in word

G 2 In work -- or deed,

E 2 Their aim: do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus -- *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus,

E 3 Their attitude: Lit., "giving thanks to God the Father through Him" -- giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

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

C 1 In the home 3:18-21

D 1 Submissive wives 3:18

E 1 The command: 18 Wives, be subject⁹ to your husbands,

E 2 The reason: As is befitting in the Lord -- as is fitting in the Lord.

D 2 Loving husbands 3:19

E 1 The command to love their wives sacrificially: 19 Husbands, love your wives

E 2 The command not to be bitter against their wives: and do not be embittered against them.

⁹ 3:18 - be subject: Means to bring something under the firm control of someone - 'to subject to, to bring under control.' Examples. The following six verses are all the NT occurrences of Imperative Passives ("Be brought under the control of ...") (These are RSV quotes):

Romans 13:1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God.

1Cor 14:34 women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says.

Col 3:18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

1Peter 2:13 For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme,

1Peter 5:5 In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

- D 3 Obedient children 3:20
 - E 1 The command: Obey your parents 20 Children, be obedient to your parents
 - E 2 The jurisdiction: in all things,
 - E 3 The reason: for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.
- D 4 Understanding fathers 3:21
 - E 1 The command: Don't stir up your children 21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children,
 - E 2 The reason: Lest they be broken-spirited -- so that they will not lose heart.
- C 2 In the work place 3:22 - 4:1
 - D 1 Obedient slaves 3:22
 - E 1 The command: Obey your lords (masters)-in-the-human-realm 22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth,
 - E 2 The jurisdiction: "In all things"
 - E 3 The motivation
 - G 1 Not with mere "eye-slaving" [i.e., working just for show when the master is looking] not with external service,
 - G 2 Not as being men-pleasers: as those who *merely* please men,
 - G 3 With sincerity: but with sincerity of heart,
 - G 4 With fear: fearing the Lord.¹⁰
 - G 5 The jurisdiction: Everything 3:23 23 Whatever you do,
 - G 6 The enthusiasm: Work from your heart (lit., soul) do your work heartily,
 - G 7 The object: Work as for *the* (emphasis mine) Lord (Master), not for men -- as for the Lord rather than for men,

¹⁰ 3:22 - fearing the Lord: Note that F1 and F3 are paired as opposites, while F2 and F4 are paired as opposites.

- G 8 The pay 3:24
 - H 1 Lit., "Knowing that from Lord (Master) you will receive the reward of the inheritance" 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance.
 - H 2 [Knowing] that it is the Lord (Master) MESSIAH for whom you [really] slave It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.
- G 9 The issue of justice 3:25
 - H 1 The one doing injustice will be repaid the injustice he has done 3:25 25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences ¹¹ of the wrong which he has done,
 - H 2 With God there is no favoritism: and that without partiality.¹²
- D 2 Fair-minded masters (lords) 4:1
 - E 1 The command to provide for their slaves: Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, 4:1
 - G 1 Justice
 - G 2 Equality
 - E 2 The motivation: They must know that they also have a master (lord) -- in heaven: knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.
- C 3 Toward God 4:2-4
 - D 1 The importance of prayer 4:2
 - E 1 The imperative to continue in prayer: {2} Devote yourselves to prayer,
 - E 2 The necessity of watching (for answers) with thankfulness: keeping alert in it with *an attitude of* thanksgiving;

¹¹ 3:25 - consequences: Note that this repayment for injustice applies to the slave. It also serves as a bridge applying to unjust masters, about whom Paul next speaks.

¹² 3:25 - without partiality: Note that God gives no preferential treatment in the area of justice to slave-owners over their slaves.

- D 2 The request for prayer 4:3-4
 - E 1 Paul's request that they corporately pray for the Apostolic team (at least Paul and Timothy) 4:3a
 - G 1 That God would open to them a door for the(ir) message: {3} praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word,
 - G 2 That they might speak the mystery concerning Christ: so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ,
 - E 2 Paul's urgency 4:3b-4
 - G 1 He has been bound in prison on account of this mystery: for which I have also been imprisoned; 4:3b
 - G 2 He wants to reveal his message as it is necessary for him to speak it: {4} that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak. 4:4
- C 4 Toward unbelievers: A wholesome walk 4:5-6
 - D 1 The appropriate lifestyle 4:5
 - E 1 The command to walk with wisdom before "the outsiders": {5} Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders,
 - E 2 The importance of using time efficiently in relation to them: making the most of the opportunity.
 - D 2 The appropriate conversation 4:6
 - E 1 Your speech must always be gracious: {6} Let your speech always be with grace,
 - E 2 It must be seasoned with salt [to make the speech tasteful, attractive, and intriguing]: *as though* seasoned with salt,
 - E 3 Thus you must ponder how to answer each one [who questions you about your lifestyle]: so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

A 5 THE PAULINE CONCLUSION 4:7-18

B 1 His Commendation to the Colossians of Tychicus and Onesimus 4:7-9

C 1 Regarding Tychicus 4:7-8

D 1 His qualifications 4:7a

E 1 A beloved brother: {7} As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother

E 2 A faithful servant: and faithful servant

E 3 A fellow slave in the Lord: and fellow bond-servant in the Lord,

D 2 His function 4:7, 8

E 1 To inform the Colossians of the circumstances of Paul and his team: will bring you information. {8} *For* I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances 4:7b, 8

E 2 To comfort their hearts: and that he may encourage your hearts; 4:8

C 2 Regarding Onesimus 4:9

D 1 He is a faithful and beloved brother: {9} and with him Onesimus, *our* faithful and beloved brother,

D 2 He is one of them: who is one of your *number*. They will inform you about the whole situation here.

B 2 His Conveying of Greetings 4:10-15

C 1 From fellow prisoner Aristarchus: {10} Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; 4:10

C 2 From Barnabas' cousin Mark (whom welcome): and *also* Barnabas' cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him);

C 3 From Jesus called Justus: 4:11

D 1 These three are Jewish: {11} and *also* Jesus who is called Justus;

D 2 These are the only fellow-workers for God's kingdom who proved to be a comfort to Paul: these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me.

- C 4 From Epaphras 4:12-13
 - D 1 One of them: {12} Epaphras, who is one of your number, 4:12
 - D 2 A slave of Christ: a bondservant of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings,
 - D 3 A continual wrestler in prayer for them: always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers,
 - E 1 That they might stand complete: that you may stand perfect
 - E 2 That they might have been filled to the full in all God's will: and fully assured in all the will of God.
 - D 4 Possessed of concern for them, and for believers in Laodicea and Hierapolis: {13} For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis. 4:13
- C 5 From Luke, the beloved physician: {14} Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, 4:14
- C 6 From Demas: and *also* Demas.
- C 7 To other "brothers" 4:15
 - D 1 Those in Laodicea: {15} Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea
 - D 2 To Nympha and the church in her house: and also Nympha and the church that is in her house.

B 3 His Closing Instructions 4:16-18

- C 1 For a Pauline letter-exchange with the Laodiceans 4:16
 - D 1 {16} When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans;
 - D 2 and you, for your part read my letter *that is coming* from Laodicea.
- C 2 To tell Archippus to fulfill his ministry from the Lord: {17} Say to Archippus, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it." 4:17
- C 3 His personal signature: {18} I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. 4:18
- C 4 His urging them to remember his imprisonment: Remember my imprisonment.
- C 5 His bequest of grace upon them: Grace be with you.

Expanded Analysis of COLOSSIANS

Prepared by James T. Bartsch June, 1993

Updated June, 2015

Published Online by WordExplain.com

Email Contact: 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)