

Colossians Translation

- **Greeting [1:1-2]**

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

- **Thanksgiving [1:3-8]**

We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always about you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard beforehand in the word of truth, the gospel which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and causing spiritual growth even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *it* and came to fully know the grace of God in truth; just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, and he also clearly explained your love in the Spirit to us.

- **Prayer [1:9-12]**

For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray on your behalf and to ask that you may be filled up spiritually with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and all spiritual understanding so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, desiring to please *Him* in every way, bearing fruit in every good work and being spiritually matured by the full knowledge of God; empowered with all capability, in accordance with His glorious might, resulting in all steadfastness and joyful patience; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the Light.

- **Rescue and Redemption [1:13-14]**

Who rescued us out of the dominion of spiritual darkness and transferred us to the royal kingdom of the Son He loves in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

- **The Supremacy of Christ [1:15-20]**

He is the visible manifestation of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. With the result that by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and by Him all things came into existence and remain in existence. He is also head of the body, the Church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from physical death, so that He (and only He) might come to have first place in everything. For the Father was pleased to opt for all the fullness of Deity to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

- **Reconciliation through Christ [1:21-23]**

And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in thinking, *engaged* in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His incarnation through spiritual death in order to present you in His sight holy and blameless and beyond reproach – since indeed you persevere in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and are not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a servant.

- **The Mystery of Christ [1:24-27]**

Now I rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the Church, in supplying a necessary part of Christ's afflictions. Of the Church I myself became a servant according to the stewardship from God given to me for your benefit, to make the word of God fully known, *that is*, the mystery which has been sealed up from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been revealed to His saints, to whom God purposed to make known what is the abundance of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the confident expectation of glory.

- **Wisdom and Maturity in Christ [1:28-2:5]**

We proclaim Him, admonishing every person and teaching every person with all wisdom, so that we may present before God every person mature in Christ. To this end also I work very hard, striving according to His operating power, which powerfully operates within me.

For I want you to recognize how great a determined effort I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not met me in person, so that their hearts may be encouraged, having been united in love, and that they obtain all the spiritual wealth that comes from the full conviction of understanding, the outcome being a full knowledge of God's mystery, namely, Christ, in whom are stored up all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

I say this so that no one will deceive you with misleading persuasive arguments. For even though I am physically separated from you, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to be aware of your good discipline and the unwavering strength of your faith in Christ.

- **Our Walk in Christ [2:6-7]**

Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, live out your life abiding in Him, having been firmly rooted *and now* being edified in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, *and* excelling in thanksgiving.

- **Pre-Gnostic Error: Deity of Christ [2:8-10]**

Be careful that no one takes you captive through empty, deceitful philosophy, in accordance with the tradition of men *and* the fundamental principles of the world, rather than in accordance with Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity continually dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head of every ruler and authority;

- **Legalism Error: Reality in Christ [2:11-17]**

and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the disarming of the fleshly body by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried together with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up together with Him through faith in the operating power of God, who raised Him from the dead.

When you were spiritually dead, living in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having graciously forgiven us all our transgressions, having blotted out the certificate of debt consisting of ordinances against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the Cross.

When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He disgraced them in public, having triumphed over them through the Cross.

Therefore do not let anyone judge you in regard to eating and drinking or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day — things which are a *mere* shadow of what was to come; but the reality is Christ.

- **Mysticism Error: Headship of Christ [2:18-19]**

Do not let anyone rob you of your reward by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, going on and on about what he has supposedly seen, conceited without any basis by his fleshly mind, and not focusing on the Head, from whom the entire body, being supported and knit together by the ligaments and tendons, grows spiritually with a spiritual growth which is from God.

- **Asceticism Error: Freedom in Christ [2:20-23]**

Since you have died with Christ to the fundamental principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to ordinances, such as, “Do not handle, do not taste, do not even touch!” (which all refer to things destined to be broken down by being consumed) — in conformity with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in would-be religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, which is of no value in fighting against fleshly gratification.

- **Focus on Things Above [3:1-4]**

Therefore since you were raised up together with Christ, keep striving for things in heaven, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God the Father. Focus your thoughts on the things in heaven, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your eternal life has been secured with Christ by God the Father. When Christ, who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

- **Put on the New Self [3:5-11]**

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to fornication, immorality, sinful passion, lust, evil, and insatiable greed, which amounts to idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, and you also once walked in those sins, when you were living among those sinners. But now you also, put all these things aside: anger, rage, meanness, slander, and filthy words from your mouth.

Stop lying to one another, since you stripped off your old sin nature with its sinful activities, and have put on your new nature which is being renewed to full knowledge in conformity with the image of the One who created your new nature — in Christ there is no Gentile and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is everything, and in all believers.

- **Allow the Heart to be Changed [3:12-17]**

Therefore, being those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved by God, put on a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, considerateness and patience toward others; putting up with one another, and graciously forgiving each other, whoever has a valid reason to complain against anyone; in the same way that the Lord graciously forgave you, you should forgive others also. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the uniting bond of maturity.

Let the peace of Christ guide the decisions in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and prove yourselves to be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell within you in abundance, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom singing psalms, hymns *and* spiritual songs by means of the gratitude in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, expressing thanks through Him to God the Father.

- **Family Life [3:18-21]**

Wives, subject yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and stop being embittered against them. Children, follow all instructions given by your parents, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, stop exasperating your children, so that they will not become discouraged.

- **Work Life [3:22-4:1]**

Slaves, follow all instructions given by your earthly masters, not only when they are watching, as mere people-pleasers, but instead wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, do your work from the heart, as unto the Lord rather than people, recognizing that from the Lord you will receive the reward portion of the inheritance. Serve the Lord Christ. For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of his wrongdoing, and there is no favoritism. Masters, treat your slaves with justice and fairness, recognizing that you too have a Master in heaven.

- **Prayer Life [4:2-4]**

Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with *an attitude of* gratitude; praying at the same time for us as well, that God might open up to us a door for the word, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; and pray that I might make it known boldly as I ought to speak.

- **Public Life [4:5-6]**

Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, yet seasoned with salt, so that you will know in what way you should respond to each person.

- **The Couriers [4:7-9]**

As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother in Christ and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. *For* I have dispatched him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts; and with him Onesimus, *our* faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your *number*. They will inform you about the whole situation here.

- **The Others [4:10-14]**

Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and *also* Barnabas's cousin Mark (about whom you received orders; if he comes to you, welcome him); and *also* Jesus who is called Justus; these are my only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision, and they have proved to be a help and a comfort to me. Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always striving intently on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand firm, mature and fully confident in all the will of God. For I testify for him that he has worked hard for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis. Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and *also* Demas.

- **Reading in Laodicea [4:15-16]**

Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea as well as Nympha and the church that is in her house. When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter *that is coming* from Laodicea.

- **Message to Archippus [4:17]**

Say to Archippus, "Pay attention to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may see it to completion."

- **Salutation [4:18]**

I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.