Introduction to Colossians

Colosse was a small town, located about 120 miles east of Ephesus, in ancient Phrygia, part of the Roman territory of Asia Minor, in what is present day Turkey.

The people of Colosse worshipped many gods. Like our society, where people adopt all kinds of beliefs from various religions, books, movies, etc., the people of Colosse borrowed ideas and forms of worship from many sources and from one another. Many people were superstitious and wary of evil spirits, and fear controlled their lives.

It is likely that the church in Colosse was founded by Paul’s friend and co-worker, Epaphras. Paul apparently had not been to Colosse himself, but he had indirect contact with the Colossians through his friends Epaphras, Philemon and Onesimus, who were from Colosse, and through his messenger Tychicus. In fact, Epaphras and Onesimus both visited Paul in prison and ministered to his needs.

Paul prayed regularly for the Colossian believers. He wrote in Colossians 1:9 “From the day we heard about you, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.” So, despite having not personally met most of the Colossian believers, Paul cared deeply for them and felt pastoral toward them.

Word had reached Paul, who was in prison in Rome, around AD 60-62, that the Colossian church was coming under the influence of various false teachers, and he was very concerned. His letter to the Colossians was his response. He wrote this letter around the same time that he wrote Philippians, Ephesians, and Philemon.

The Christians in Colossae were being tempted to exchange the many blessings and great privileges that were theirs in Christ, for the practice of pagan forms of worship. Paul wrote this letter to remind the Colossians of the tremendous riches and royal privileges that were theirs in Christ, who is King overall. He also warned them of the serious consequences of trading these blessings for the meager benefits that idolatry pretended to offer.

Colossians emphasizes the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Jesus is to take center stage, be our North Star, our focal point, and the essence of our lives! Colossians also speaks of the fullness and freedom that are ours, in relationship with Jesus.

“Jesus is Lord” was the church’s first confession and to this day, it remains the abiding test of authentic Christianity. It is my hope and prayer that as we grow in our understanding of who Jesus is, through this study, each of us will make Him our Lord and King.

With Aloha

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