

The Epistle of Paul to the Colossians

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and the brother Timothy, ²to the holy ones and faithful brothers in Christ *who are* at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

³We always give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ when we pray for you, ⁴for we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love that you have for all the holy ones ⁵because of the hope that is being stored up for you in the heavens. You have already heard about this *hope* in the word of truth, which is the Good News ⁶that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it is also *doing that* among you from the day you heard *it* and understood the grace of God in truth, ⁷as you learned *it* from Epaphras our beloved fellow-servant. He is a faithful servant of Christ on your behalf, ⁸who also made known to us your love in the spirit.

⁹For this reason, we also from the day we heard *it* do not cease praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to

him: bearing fruit in every good work and growing in the clear knowledge of God; ¹¹empowered with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and longsuffering; ¹²giving thanks with joy to the Father, who has qualified you for your part of the allotment of the holy ones in the *kingdom of light*. ¹³He rescued us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶For by him all things were created in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulerships or authorities, through him and for him all things have been created, ¹⁷and he is before all things, and in him all things are held together. ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the congregation; he is *its* beginning, *the* firstborn out from among the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹For in him all the Fullness was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him *pleased 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.

²¹And you were once alienated and enemies in your mind, *doing* evil works. ²²But now, in his

body of flesh, he has reconciled *you* by *his* death, to present you holy and without blemish and blameless before him, ²³if indeed you continue in the faith, established and steadfast, and not being moved away from the hope of the Good News that you heard, which was preached to all creation under heaven, *and* of which I myself, Paul, became a servant.

²⁴Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and I fill up in my flesh that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ. *I do this* for the sake of his body, which is the Church, ²⁵of which I was made a servant, in accord with the administration of God that was given to me for you to complete the word of God, ²⁶the Sacred Secret, which has been hidden for ages and generations, but now has been revealed to his holy ones. ²⁷God wanted to make known to them what is the riches of the glory of this Sacred Secret among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸We proclaim him, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone, with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹And I am toiling for that *goal*, struggling in accord with his working, which powerfully works in me.

2 And indeed, I want you to know how greatly I am

struggling for you, and for those at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in *the* flesh, ²that their hearts may be encouraged, having been instructed *and knit together* in love and in all *the* riches of the full assurance of understanding, *and* in the knowledge of the Sacred Secret of the Christ of God, ³in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. ⁴I say this so that no one deludes you with persuasive arguments. ⁵For although I am absent in the flesh, nevertheless I am with you in the spirit, rejoicing and seeing your good order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

⁶Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in him, ⁷having been firmly rooted and *now* being built up in him, and being established in your faith just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive through empty, deceitful, philosophy, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary forces of the world, and not according to Christ, ⁹for in him dwells, in a bodily manner, all the fullness of what God is, ¹⁰and you have been given that fullness *by being in union with* him, the one who is the head of all rule and authority. ¹¹And through *union with* him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands,

consisting of the removal of the body of flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,¹² when you were buried with him in *your* baptism, and you were also raised together with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him out from among *the* dead.¹³ And you, being dead due to the transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, *even* you He made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,¹⁴ having wiped clean the handwritten document *that was* against us, which by means of its regulations was hostile to us, and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross.¹⁵ He stripped *naked* the rulers and the authorities, *and* He (through him), made a public spectacle of them, leading them *as captives* in a Triumph procession.

¹⁶Therefore, let no one judge you with respect to food and drink, or with respect to a feast day or a new moon or a Sabbath day.¹⁷ These are *only* a shadow of the things to come, but the body *that casts the shadow* is Christ's.

¹⁸Let no one disqualify you for the prize by delighting in *false* humility and *the* worshipping of angels, taking his stand on what he has seen, puffed up without reason by his fleshly mind,¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the entire body, being supported and held together by the ligaments and those things that tie it together,

grows with a growth that is from God.

²⁰Since you died with Christ to the elementary forces of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, are you being pestered by regulations²¹ (“Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”²² All these things are made to perish by being used up) *that are* in accord with the commandments and doctrines of men?²³ *Regulations* of this kind have, to be sure, a reputation for wisdom due to their self-imposed ritual and *false* humility and harsh treatment of the body, but *they are* of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

3 Since, then, you were raised with Christ, keep on seeking the things that are above, where Christ is seated on the right hand of God.

²Keep thinking about the things that are above, not the things that are on the earth,³ for you died, and your life has been hidden with Christ in God.⁴ When Christ—your life—appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵Therefore, put to death the parts of you that are earthly: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire, and *especially* covetousness (which is idolatry).⁶ Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.⁷ In these things you too once walked, when you were

living in them, ⁸but now put away—even you—all these things: wrath, anger, malice, defaming speech, dirty talk out of your mouth. ⁹Never lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with its practices, ¹⁰and have put on the new *man* who is being renewed to a *true* knowledge *that is* in accord with the image of the one who created it. ¹¹In this *renewal* there is not “Greek and Jew,” “circumcision and uncircumcision,” “uncivilized,” “Scythian *savages*,” “slave,” “freeman;” but the all, and in all, is Christ!

¹²Therefore, as God’s holy and beloved chosen *ones*, clothe yourselves with bowels of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³bearing with one another and forgiving each other whatever complaint anyone has against another. Just as the Lord forgave you, so you also *must forgive*. ¹⁴And above all these things *put on* love, which is the bond of perfection. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ be the umpire in your hearts, for indeed you were called as one body to this *peace*; and always be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another with all wisdom, with psalms, hymns, *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or in deed, *do* everything in the name

of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

¹⁸Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

²⁰Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is pleasing in the Lord. ²¹Fathers, do not provoke your children, so that they will not become discouraged. ²²Slaves, obey your earthly masters in all things, not only to win their approval when their eye is on you, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord.

²³Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,

²⁴because you know that from the Lord you will receive an inheritance as your repayment. You are serving the Lord Christ. ²⁵For the one who does wrong will be paid back for what he did wrong, and there is no respect of persons.

4 Masters, treat your slaves righteously and fairly, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

²Continue steadfastly in prayer, staying alert in it with thanksgiving, ³at the same time praying for us also, that God will open to us a door for the word, to speak the sacred secret of Christ (because of which I am imprisoned) ⁴that I may make it clear, *speaking* as I should speak.

⁵Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of your opportunities. ⁶Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, so that you come to know how you must respond to each one.

⁷Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in the Lord, will make known to you all the things about me. ⁸I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about us, and that he may encourage your hearts. ⁹*He is* with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will make known to you all the things *happening* here.

¹⁰Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner, greets you, and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you received commands. If he comes to you, welcome him), ¹¹and Jesus, who is called Justus. These alone of the circumcision *are my* fellow-workers for the kingdom of God who have been a comfort to me.

¹²Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you. He is always struggling for you in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. ¹³Indeed, I can testify about him, that he works very hard for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis.

¹⁴Luke, the beloved physician, greets you, and *so does* Demas. ¹⁵Greet the brothers who are

in Laodicea, and Nympha, and the congregation that is in her house.

¹⁶And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read among the congregation of the Laodiceans, and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. ¹⁷And say to Archippus, “See to it that you complete the service that you have received in the Lord.”

¹⁸I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you.

