

Bible Survey, part 11

The New Testament – Colossians

“Complete in Christ”

Enhanced CD contains:

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- **Sermon Notes** – content of the PowerPoint slides in Word document

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“For I want you to know how greatly I strive in prayer for you, and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not personally seen my face.” Colossians 2:1

The churches at Colossae and Laodicea were **actually established** by a man named “**Epaphras**.”

“All over the world, the Gospel is bearing fruit, just as it has been doing among you from the day you first heard it . . . from **Epaphras**, our dear brother . . .” Colossians 1:6-7

“**Honey Bee Strategy**”:

- Paul would “**pollinate**” people passing through Ephesus with the Gospel . . .
- Then, like “**spiritual honey bees**,” they would take the Gospel back home with them . . .
- And “**pollinate**” their home towns for Christ

“**The Prison Epistles**”

- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- Philemon

Paul wrote all four of these letters from “prison” in Rome (A.D. 61-62) while he was awaiting trial before Emperor Nero.

Paul’s letters to the churches:

1st section = theological issues

2nd section = practical Christian-life issues

In Colossians 4:12, we learn that Epaphras had come to Rome to visit Paul in jail and reported to Paul about **false teaching** that had crept into the churches of Colossae and Laodicea.

This false teaching concerned the “Person of Christ.”

People were teaching that Jesus was a “created being” – and not “God Himself in the flesh.”

This (of course) is a problem because – if Jesus is **not** the (1) **sinless**, (2) **incarnate**, (3) **Second Person of the Godhead** – then His death on the cross is worthless for our redemption and salvation.

Paul writes to correct this serious heresy – and in doing so – gives us (Colossians chapters 1 & 2) the **most comprehensive single passage** in all the Bible – on the Person of Christ.

#1 – Jesus = **God Himself wrapped in human flesh**

“He (Jesus Christ) is the (visible) image of the invisible God . . .” Colossians 1:15

“God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him (Jesus Christ).” Colossians 1:19

“For in Christ, all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.” Colossians 2:9

“He (Jesus) is the radiance of God’s glory and the **exact representation** of God’s ‘*hupostasis*’ [‘essence/nature/intrinsic being’] . . .” Hebrews 1:3

“ . . . He who has seen Me has seen the Father . . .” John 14:9

“I and the Father are one.” John 10:30



Nicene Creed:

“We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, being of **one substance** with the Father.”

“one substance” = (Greek) “*homo*” (same) + “*ousios*” (essence)

The Nicene Creed was intended to affirm that **God the Son** and **God the Father** are of the **EXACT SAME substance/essence/nature/ and intrinsic being** as one another.

Dan Brown: The deity of Christ was **INVENTED** at the Council of Nicea.

Truth: The deity of Christ was merely **CODIFIED** at the Council of Nicea.

As we can all see – the deity of Christ is what true Christianity believed in A.D. 62 – **when Paul wrote about it to the Colossians!**

#2 – Jesus = **the Creator of the universe**

“For by Him (Jesus), all things were created, both in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible . . . all things were created by Him and for Him.” Colossians 1:16

“By Him (Jesus) all things were made; and without Him nothing was made that has been made.” John 1:3

Here we have another **powerful affirmation of the deity of Christ.**

“In the beginning, God made the heavens and the earth.” Genesis 1:1

“For by Jesus, all things were created . . .” Colossians 1:16

So – if “**God**” did this – and “**Jesus**” did this – then **who can Jesus be but God?**

#3 – Jesus = **the Owner of the universe**

“. . . all things were created by Him **and for Him.**” Colossians 1:16

“In these last days, God has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed **heir of all things . . .**” Hebrews 1:2

Right now – our world is in open rebellion against Jesus’ ownership of the universe – but this is just a temporary situation!

[On that day] “. . . every knee will bow . . . and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:10-11

#4 – Jesus = **the Upholder of the universe He created**

“. . . in Him (Jesus) all things **hold together . . .**” Colossians 1:17

“. . . He (Jesus) **upholds** the universe by the word of His power.” Hebrews 1:3

“. . . by the word of His power.”

Jesus is so powerful – that He doesn’t even need to lift His pinkie to hold the universe together – all he has to do is **say the word!**

#5 – Jesus = **the Redeemer of mankind**

“In whom (Jesus), we have **redemption**, the forgiveness of sins.” Colossians 1:14

“. . . He (Jesus) made peace [between us and God] **by the blood of His cross.**” Colossians 1:20

“In Him (Jesus), we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins, **through His blood . . .**” Ephesians 1:7

“You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your empty way of life . . . But with the **precious blood of Christ.**” 1 Peter 1:18-19

Jesus’ blood doesn’t redeem everybody – only those who place their **full trust in it** for their redemption.

In the book of Colossians, Paul gives us the **most concise and powerful summary** of the person of Christ anywhere in the Bible.

#1 – **God Himself wrapped in human flesh**

#2 – The **Creator** of the universe

#3 – The **Owner** of the universe

#4 – The **Upholder** of the universe

#5 – The **Redeemer** of those members of mankind who will put their full trust in His shed blood for their redemption

So What?

[as a follower of Jesus Christ] “In Him (Jesus), you have been made **complete**.” Colossians 2:10

“... He circumcised us with a circumcision not made with hands.” Colossians 2:11

“He reconciled us to God ... having made peace between us and God through the blood of His cross.” Colossians 1:20

“When we were dead in our sins, He made us [spiritually] alive ...” Colossians 2:13a

“... and forgave us all our sins.” Colossians 2:13b

“And canceled the debt we owed [a holy God] ... by nailing it to the cross.” Colossians 2:14

“... raised us up [to eternal life].” Colossians 2:12

“... [Put] Christ in us, the hope of glory [indwelling Holy Spirit].” Colossians 1:27

[By the indwelling Holy Spirit] “... we are **sealed** for the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30

“**Sealed**” = [Greek] “branding an animal”

By putting the Holy Spirit inside of us – God has “**branded**” us **spiritually** – so that every angel and demon and Satan himself **KNOWS** – that we belong to God for all eternity!

[as a follower of Jesus Christ] “In Him (Jesus), you have been made **complete**.” Colossians 2:10

- In God’s family (Colossians 2:1)
- Reconciled with God (Colossians 1:20)
- Peace between us and God (Colossians 1:20)
- Spiritually alive to God (Colossians 2:13)
- Sins are forgiven (Colossians 2:13)
- Debt against us is canceled (Colossians 2:14)
- Have eternal life (Colossians 2:12)
- Christ lives inside us (Colossians 1:27)
- Branded as God’s property for all eternity (Ephesians 4:30)

When it comes to our redemption in Jesus Christ, there are no “**missing pieces**” and **nothing we need to do** to “supplement” what Jesus has already done for us!

We are complete in Christ! (Colossians 2:10)

“Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant that has been founded on better promises [than any other plan of salvation in the universe].” Hebrews 8:6

“... we have lost our first love.” (Revelation 2:4)

Prone to wander, Lord I feel it
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here’s my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for Thy courts above.