Christ in you, the hope of glory

A Study in Colossians

Family Camp 2018

Outline

- Class 1: Refocusing on Christ → *Writing concerning the reward*
  - Goal & Background
- Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward*
  - Colossians 1
- Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7) → *Threats to obtaining the reward*
  - Colossians 2:1-19
- Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1) → *True Pursuit of the reward*
  - Colossians 2:20 – 3:17
- Class 5: Rewarded by Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward*
  - Colossians 3:18 – 4:18

When was the letter written?

Paul was a prisoner at the writing of Colossians

- 'remember my bonds' (Col 4:18)
- 'Aristarchus my fellowprisoner' (Col 4:10)

3 imprisonments of Paul

- **Caesarea** (2 yrs) – Acts 23:23-24, 33-35; 24:27
- **Rome** (2 yrs) – Acts 28:14, 20, 30
- **Rome** – 2 Tim 4:6-18

Colossians appears to have been written during Paul's 1st imprisonment in Rome

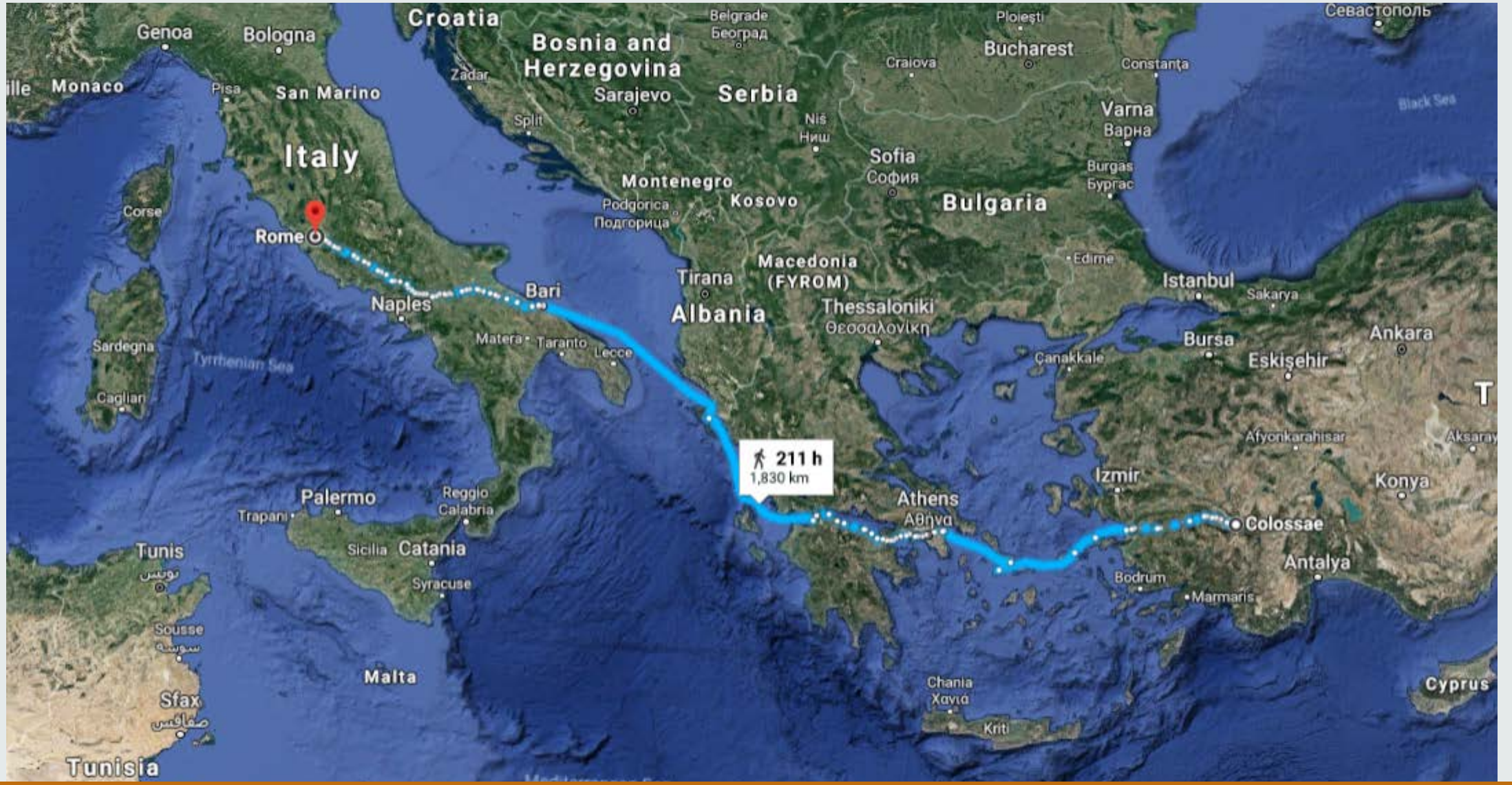
Why was the letter written?

Epaphras visited Paul in Rome with concerns

- Member of Colossian ecclesia — Col 4:12
- Founding member – 'as ye learned of Epaphras…' — Col 1:7
- Loved his brethren
  - Spoke positively of them to Paul — Col 1:8
  - Fervently prayed for them — Col 4:12
  - Desired for them to be in the kingdom — Col 4:12
  - Great zeal for Colossae & local ecclesias — Col 4:13
  - Traveled a great distance to Rome on their behalf
- Respected by Paul – 'our dear fellowservant' — Col 1:7
- Imprisoned while in Rome and unable to return — Philemon 23

Paul's desire to write to the Colossian ecclesia initiated by a visit from Epaphras

A journey to Rome?



> 1800 km to Rome! Likely a month of travel, 1-way, b/c of love for brethren…

Background Elements

- Ecclesial background
  - How learn the truth, strengths, opportunities, issues
- City of Colossae
  - Surroundings, life in the city, specific challenges
- Ecclesial membership
  - Who and their state
- Individual issues
  - Dynamics between individual members
- Ecclesial Ecosystem
  - Sister ecclesias, their proximity, and degree of inter-ecclesial fellowship

Gaining a picture of the whole prior to dealing with the specific

Ecclesial Background – 3rd missionary journey

Acts 18: 23 – 3rd missionary journey begins

… he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples

Nothing recorded in Galatia/Phrygia

Acts 19:1 - *Paul… came to Ephesus*

- 3 months in Synagogue (Acts 19:8)
- 2 yrs in School of Tyrannus (19:9-10)
  - When Epaphras learned truth (19:10)?

…this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks (v.10)

Ecclesial Background – 3rd missionary journey (2)

Events during 3 years in Ephesus

- Special miracles by Paul 19:11-12
- Sons of Sceva shown as frauds 19:13-17
- Burn books worth 50,000 silver 19:18-20
- Demetrius initiates riot 19:23-41
- Paul departs for Macedonia 20:1

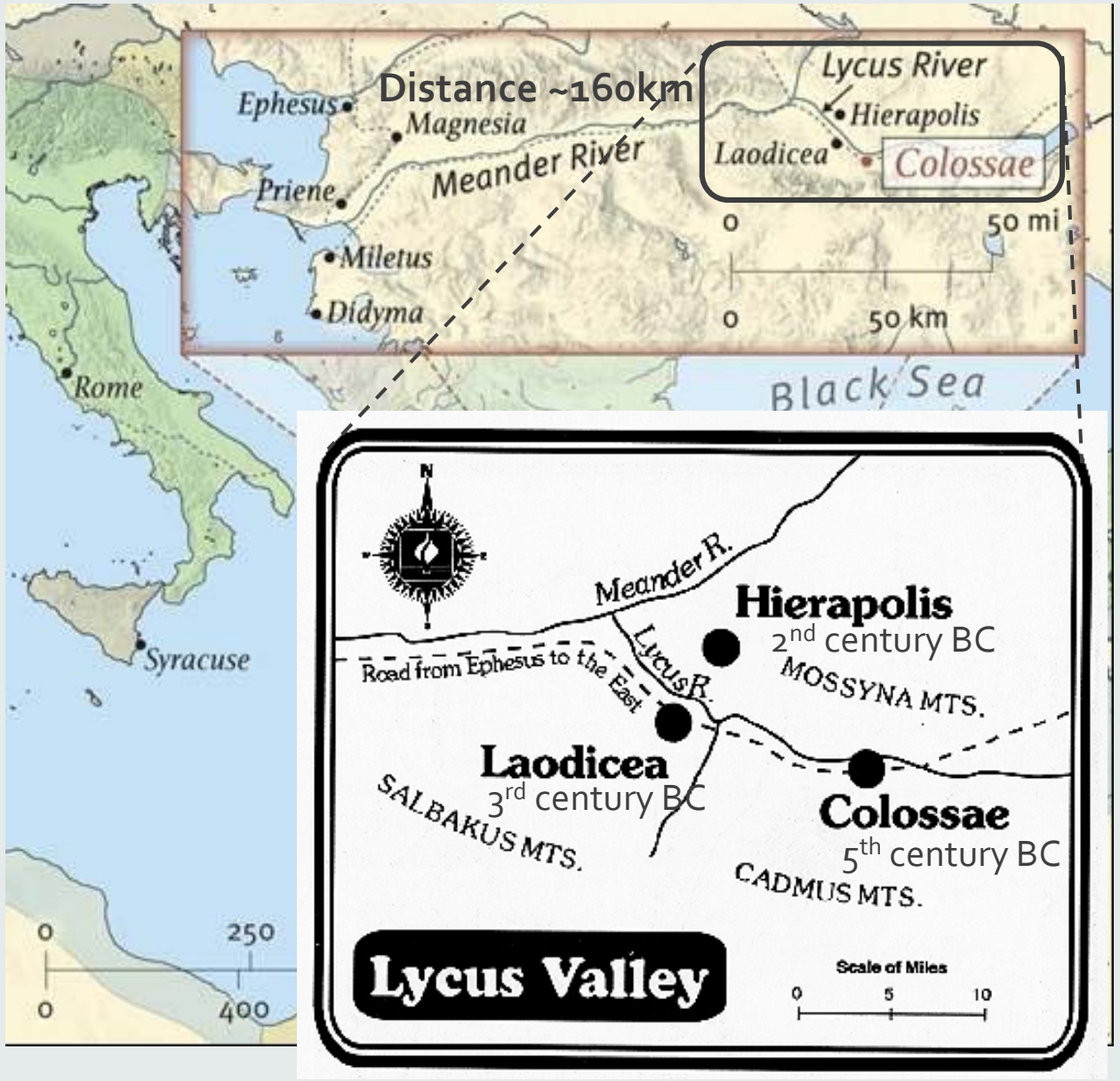
Returning to Jerusalem

- Last visit w/ Ephesus elders 20:16-27
- Warning against false doctrine 20:28-31
  - Galatian impact Gal 1:6-8
  - Colossian impact Col 2:8, 18
- Sorrowful departure 20:32-38

City of Colossae – region of the Lycus Valley

3 primary cities/ecclesias in Lycus Valley

- Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis Col 4:13
- Area was very wealthy
- Thriving wool trade
  - Laodicea – glossy black wool
  - Colossae – dark red (*colossinum)* wool
  - Hierapolis – brilliant scarlet & purple wools
    - hot springs & spas
      - Medicinal benefits
      - Bleaching wools & affixing color
- Region prone to earthquakes Col 1:23
  - AD17 & AD60-64 destroyed region 2x
- ~50,000 Jews in region ~BC62
  - Antiochus the Great moved 2,000 families (~BC200)
- Fertile land produced 'wines of Phrygia' (Barclay)
  - Paul's theme of fruit in Col 1?



City of Colossae – Specific Challenges

Mix of Gentiles and Jews created certain challenges

Gentiles

Gnosticism (Gk. *Gnosis* = *'knowledge')*

- Teaching that knowledge was a liberating element from bondage of the world
- Secret knowledge only available to select group of elites → exclusivity and hierarchy

Paul combats through usage of 'knowledge', 'wisdom', 'mystery' – class 2

Worship of angels & other deities Col 2:18

- Belief that a lesser, imperfect god, created heavens and earth
- Son of this god, 'Jesus Christ', was therefore insufficient in status

Paul combats through 'in Christ' and 'all/every' to establish supremacy

Jews

Judaism Col 2:8-16

- Insistence on keeping Jewish rites – circumcision, food restrictions, feasts, etc.

Asceticism (Gk. *Askesis* = 'training') Col 2:20-23

- Belief in ability to reach higher spiritual state through rigorous self-discipline & denial

Paul combats both elements in Col 2-3 – classes 3/4

Paul would need to address these elements in his letter

Ecclesial Membership

Epaphras

- faithful minister who brought news to Paul in Rome (1:7-8) & labored for the Colossians (4:12-13)

Onesimus

- runaway slave who was converted (Col 4:9; Ph 10, 15-16)

Philemon

- Slave owner of Onesimus. Ecclesia met in his house (Ph 1,2)

Apphia

- faithful sister, maybe wife of Philemon (Ph 2)

Archippus

- fellowsoldier. Likely the son of Philemon & Apphia (Col 4:17; Ph 2)

Tychicus

- Paul's companion in Rome. Travelled twice to Ephesus (Eph 6:21-22; 2 Tim 4:12), to Colossae (Col 4:7-8) and Crete (Tit 3:12). Probably carried letters

Elements to address and Paul's approach

After talking with Epaphras & Onesimus, Paul would have understood:

Inter-ecclesial ecosystem – Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis

- Relevant topics to region & opportunities to strengthen/exhort

Wrote circular letter to entire region (Col 4:16) ***Letter to the Ephesians***

Ecclesia of Colossae

- Relevant issues facing the Colossian ecclesia

Wrote letter to Colossian Ecclesia ***Letter to the Colossians***

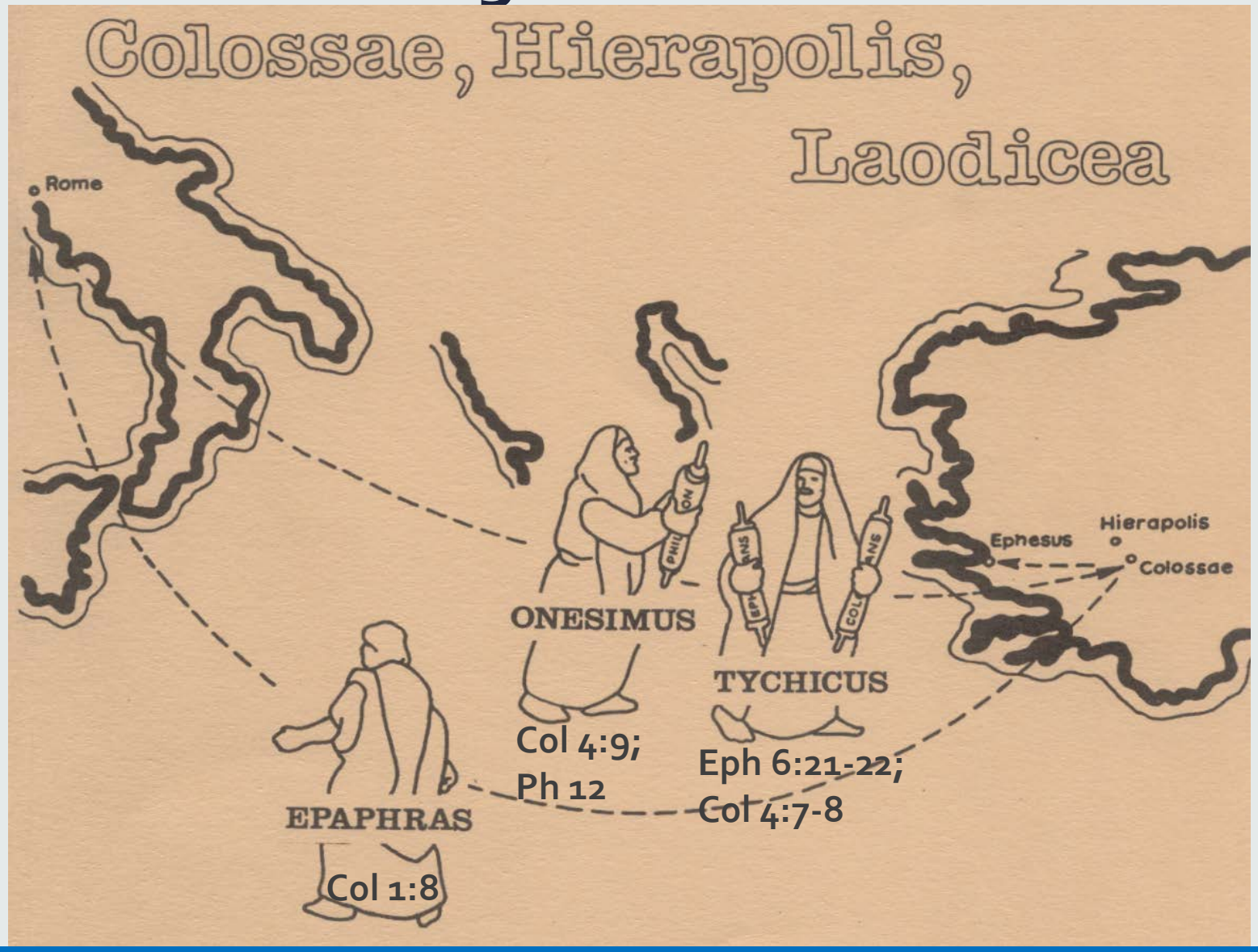
Individual issues w/in Colossian Ecclesia

- Breach between Philemon and Onesimus needing to healed

Wrote a personal letter appealing for reconciliation ***Letter to Philemon***

Taking the time to fully understand an issue is vital (Prov 18:13; 25:11)

Delivery of letters to the region



Method of delivery, not just the message, required for effective communication

Exhortational Summary

When faced with a challenging situation:

- Commit the matter to God in continual prayer — Col 1:3, 9
- Take the time to understand fully – from all perspectives — Col 1:8
- Presume positive intent of our brothers & sisters — Col 1:4-6
- Express personal desire for brothers & sisters to be in kingdom — Col 1:28
- Be specific & avoid generalities — Col 2-3
- Be encouraging & uplifting… even when the message is difficult
- Consider delivery method – time, place, audience, tone, who delivers…

Must be intentional in how we communicate to help others to the kingdom

Class 1 Summary

- Colossians written during Paul's 1st imprisonment in Rome (~AD62-64)
- Theme centers around giving Christ '1st place' in our lives
- Catalyst for writing was independent visits of Epaphras and Onesimus
- Wrote 3 separate letters to address the different opportunities
  - Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon
- We must be intentional in how we communicate if we are to help others to the kingdom

Outline

- Class 1: Goal & Background
- **Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward***
  - **Colossians 1**
- Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7) → *Threats to obtaining the reward*
  - Colossians 2:1-19
- Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1) → *True Pursuit of the reward*
  - Colossians 2:20 – 3:17
- Class 5: Rewarded in Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward*
  - Colossians 3:18 – 4:18

Similarities in the message – Colossians & Ephesians

	COLOSSIANS	EPHESIANS
The Word of Truth	1:5	1:13
Spiritually Filled	1:9; 2:10	1:23; 3:19; 5:18
The Walk of Separateness	1:10; 2:6; 4:5	2:10; 4:1; 5:2,8; 5:15
In the Light	1:12	5:8,9
Once in Darkness	1:13	4:18; 5:8
Sins Forgiven	1:14	1:7
Christ the Head of the Ecclesia	1:18	1:22; 4:15; 5:23
Christ's Body, the Ecclesia	1:18,24	1:23; 4:12; 5:23; 5:30, etc.
The Fulness	1:19; 2:9	1:23; 3:19
Reconciled Thru Death of Christ	1:20,21	2:13-16; 1:10
Once Alienated from God	1:21	2:12; 4:18
On a Foundation	1:23	3:17
Paul a Minister	1:25	3:7
Ages and Generations	1:26	3:21
Mystery Revealed	1:26,27; 2:2; 4:3	1:9; 3:3,7,10; 4:9; 6:19
Riches	1:27; 2:2	1:7,18; 2:7; 3:8; 3:16
Rooted in Christ	2:7	3:17
Built up as a Structure	2:7	2:20
Do Not be Deceived	2:8	4:14
Filled with Fulness	2:10	3:19
Supreme over Angelic Powers	2:10	1:21
Now Risen with Christ	2:12; 3:1	2:6
Made Alive with Christ	2:13	2:5
Once Dead in Sins	2:13	2:1,5
Growth, Articulation of Body	2:19	4:16
Similar Classes of Sins Reproved	3:5-8	4:25; 5:3-5
Similar Classes of Sins Reproved	3:12-14	4:2-3,32
Wrath of God Coming	3:6	5:6
The Walk of Sin	3:7	2:2; 4:17
The Old Man and the New Man	3:9,10	4:22-24
The One Body	3:15	4:4
Spiritual Songs	3:16,17	5:19,20
Duties of Home Enforced	3:18; 4:1	5:21-22; 6:6-9
Prayer and Intercession	4:2	6:18
Prayer for Paul's Preaching	4:3	6:19
Redeeming our Opportunities	4:5	5:16
Character, Commission of Tychicus	4:7	6:21

Class 2 – Redeemed in Christ

The magnitude of the Reward

Colossians 1

Outline

- Class 1: Goal & Background
- **Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward***
  - **Colossians 1**
- Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7) → *Threats to obtaining the reward*
  - Colossians 2:1-19
- Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1) → *True Pursuit of the reward*
  - Colossians 2:20 – 3:17
- Class 5: Rewarded in Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward*
  - Colossians 3:18 – 4:18

Supremacy of Christ – Repeating themes

Paul repeats certain words to emphasize key elements of the message

'In Christ' (in/by/for/of/with *and* Christ/him/whom)

- 1:1, 2, 4, 14, 16, 16, 16, 17, 19, 20, 20, 27, 28, 29; 2:3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 12, 13,15, 17, 20; 3:1, 3, 4, 17

Elements of learning & knowledge

- Knowledge – *epignosis, epignosko, gnosis* 1:6, 9, 10; 2:2, 3; 3:10
- Wisdom – *Sophia* = broad and full intelligence 1:9, 28; 2:3, 23; 3:16; 4:5
- Understanding – *synesis* = a mental putting together 1:9; 2:2
- Teach – *didasko* 1:28; 2:7; 3:16
- Mystery – *mysterion* = hidden thing 1;26-27; 2:2-3; 4:3-4
- Truth – *aletheia* 1:5, 6
- Learn – *manthano* 1:7, 7

Completeness of Christ's Gospel

- All/every – 1:4, 6, 9, 10, 10, 11, 11, 15, 16, 16, 17, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 28, 28, 28, 28; 2:2, 3, 9, 10, 13, 19, 22; 3:8, 11, 11, 14, 16, 17, 17, 20, 22, 23; 4:7, 9, 12
- Complete/fulfil – 1:9, 25; 2:1; 4:12, 17

Being a united body in Christ, based on true knowledge, is the complete purpose of life

Supremacy of Christ – Repeating themes

Paul repeats certain words to emphasize key elements of the message

'In Christ' (in/by/for/of/with *and* Christ/him/whom)

- Our salvation is through Jesus Christ
  - Don't turn to ritual and law

Elements of learning & knowledge

- Jesus Christ is pre-eminent
  - Don't lean on the wisdom of this world

Completeness of Christ's Gospel

- There is one body – Jews & Gentiles united in Christ
  - Gospel call is to all and God expects unity of the body

Chapter 1 – Laying the right foundation

Outline

- Fruitfulness vv. 1-12
- Christ the Firstborn vv. 13-20
- Benefit and universal offer to all people vv.21-29

Paul's Strategy

Starts with encouragement

- Paul prays for them always (v.3)
- He heard of their faith and love (v.4)
- Reminds them of their hope (v.5)
- Paul is encouraged that they are bearing fruit like other believers (v.6)
- Epaphras informed Paul of their love (vv.7-8)

Introductory reminder of desired future state (v.2)

Paul's desire for them expressed

- Introduction (1:2) – God's grace and peace
- Conclusion (4:18) – God's grace

Common way for NT writers to begin their letters – why?

- Rom 1:7; 16:20; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; Phil 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Th 1:1; 2 Th 1:2; 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Tit 1:4; Philemon 3; 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Pet 1:2; 2 John 1:3; Rev 1:4

- **Grace – the way God treats us**: His undeserved kindness, mercy and faithfulness toward us – without which we would be hopelessly lost

- **Peace – the result**: God has joined us to him as His family members, uniting us through Christ to bring peace

"these things have I spoken unto you that ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." *Jn 16:33*

Faith, Hope, Love (vv.4-5)

Faith in Christ Jesus – foundation

Our connection to God

Love to all the saints – motivation

Our connection to other believers (3:14)

Hope laid up for you in heaven – destination

Our confident expectation of being incorporated into God's glory (1:27)

*For we through the Spirit wait for the **hope** of righteousness by **faith**. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but **faith** which worketh (energeo – energized) by **love**.* *Gal 5:5-6*

Bearing fruit (vv.5-10) – good ground from parable of the sower

Colossians

- Heard…word of… truth of… gospel (v.5)

Parable of the Sower

- Heareth… word of the kingdom (Mt 13:19)

Karpophoreo – bearing fruit (same Gk)

- Bringeth forth fruit (v.6), fruitful (v.10)
- Beareth fruit (Mt 13:23; Mk 4:20)

Auxano – increase (same Gk)

- Fruitful… every good work… increasing (v.10)
- Good ground… yield fruit… increased (Mk 4:8)

Same Process

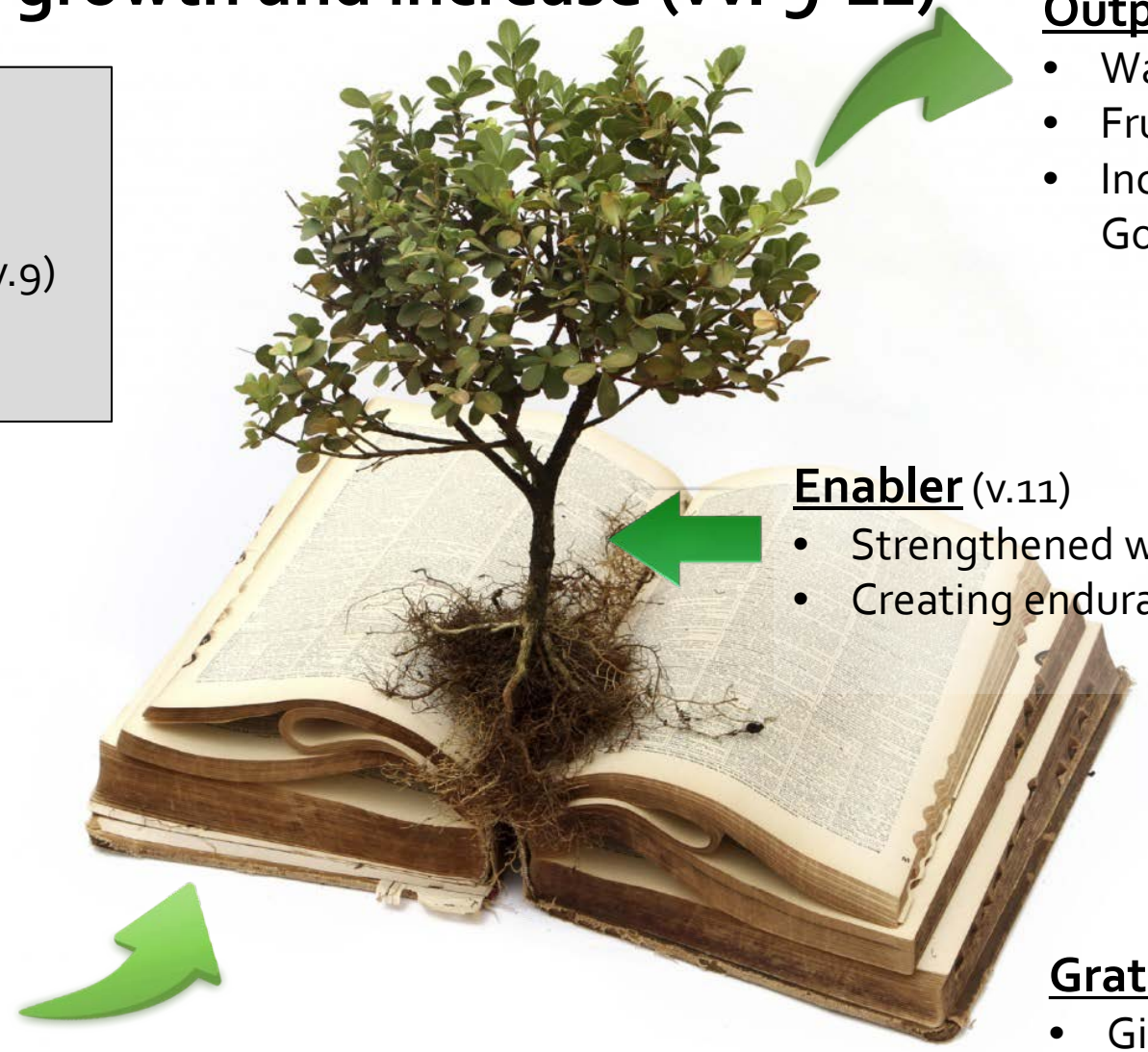
- Day ye HEARD of it, and KNEW the grace of God in truth, BRING FORTH FRUIT (v.6)
- HEAR the word, UNDERSTAND it, which also BEARS FRUIT, and BRINGS FORTH (Mt 13:23; Mk 4:20)

Colossians fulfilling Christ's words… 'given to a nation bringing forth fruits thereof'!! (Mt 21:43)

Danger: Abandon the 'truth' (Col 1:5-6), become uprooted from Christ (Col 2:7), have fruit they had produced stolen away and lose their reward (Col 2:8, 18). He does not want them to be like the stony ground! (Mk 4:16-17)

Paul's prayers for growth and increase (vv. 9-12)

Paul's Continual Prayers!
- give thanks (v.3)
- praying always (v.3)
- do not cease to pray (v.9)
- desire (v.9)
- giving thanks (v.12)



Output (v.10)
- Walk worthy
- Fruitful in every good work
- Increasing in knowledge of God

Enabler (v.11)
- Strengthened w/ God's power & might
- Creating endurance, joyful patience in us (Phil 4:13; Lk 8:15)

Input (v.9) – fill with:
- Knowledge of His will
- Wisdom
- Spiritual understanding

Gratitude (v.12)
- Giving thanks unto the Father
- Partakers of saints' inheritance

Christ the Redeemer (vv. 14)

Redemption from death to life is only possible through Jesus

- Christ is the pathway: 'In whom, by him, for him' (v. 14, 16, 16, 16, 17, 19, 20, 20) – 8x
- Christ has pre-eminence: 'every, all' (v. 15, 16, 16, 17, 17, 18, 19, 20) – 8x

Redemption (*v.14*) = 'to let one go free on paying a price' (Thayer)

- **Buy** the servants from master – pay current master

- Or -

- **Take** servants from master – defeat current master to spoil possessions
  - Christ's approach (Mt 12:29; Isa 49:24-26; Col 2:15)
  - Pattern of Israel from Egypt (Ex 6:6; Deut 7:8)

Historical context: slavery and redemption well-known in the Roman world – even affecting the ecclesia

Forgiveness of sins (v.14)

- Severs contract with sin and delivers from death (Rom 6:23)
- Translates us from status of death to life (Col 1:22; Eph 1:7; Rom 3:25-26)

Christ has redeemed us through his sacrifice in forgiving our sins

Christ the Firstborn (vv. 15 – 20)

Image (*eikon*) of invisible God, firstborn (*protokos*) of every creature

- Image – Christ fulfilled design intent of Father — 2 Cor 4:4; 2 Cor 3:18
- Firstborn – 1st achieve design intent & rise to eternal life — 1 Cor 15:20,23; Col 1:18

Scope:	'All things' in heaven and on earth	Col 1:16, 23
What:	New creation in Christ	Col 3:10; 2 Cor 5:17-18; Gal 6:15
Who:	Those 'in Christ Jesus'	Col 1:23, 28; 2 Cor 5:17-18
When:	Created at time of death/resurrection	Col 1:20; 1 Cor 15:17, 20
How:	Life, death, and resurrection of Jesus	Rom 5:10; Col 1:20-22; Col 1:18
Why:	**Pre-eminence of Christ in all things** Praise of God's glory	Col 1:18 Eph 1:12

Christ must take 'first place' in our lives in everything (Heb 12:23)

Benefit and Universal offer (vv. 21 – 29)

And you…

Alienated, but now reconciled (v. 21-22)

Paul demonstrates our personal change in status through Christ

Initial State: Alienated and enemies by wicked works

- 'to be shut out from one's fellowship and intimacy' (Thayer)
- Scriptural root causes:
  - Wicked works — Col 1:21
  - Genuine ignorance of promises — Eph 2:12
  - Willful ignorance — Eph 4:18

Current State: Reconciled to be holy, unblameable & unreproveable

- 'bring back to a state of harmony' (Thayer)
- Scriptural process:
  - Christ's sacrifice providing forgiveness — Col 1:22
  - Knowledge and baptism (i.e. 'in Christ') — Eph 2:12
  - Continued, faithful obedience — Col 1:23
    - Put off 'old man' and put on 'new man' — Eph 4:21-25; Col 3:9-10

Note: Reconcile comes from root *(G2644 – katallasso)*, meaning to exchange as coins for others of equivalent value

God gives us an equivalent value of righteousness b/c of Christ… complete outcast → righteous!

Continuing in the faith (v. 23)

'grounded' – used of a solid foundation in parables (Mt 7:25; Lk 6:48)

How do we get it?

Actions:

- Rock: Come to Christ, hear his words, and <u>do</u> them (Lk 6:47)
  - Prepare our minds, study, practice in our lives
- Sand: Come to Christ, hear his words, and <u>don't do</u> them (Lk 6:49)

Attitude:

- Rooted and grounded in love (Eph 3:17)

'Settled' – steadfast & immovable

- Elements of constancy & consistency

Historical context: Region prone to earthquakes. Large quake destroyed Lycus Valley cities ~AD60-64.

Right actions and attitude are required in response from us

Continuing in the faith (v. 23) – how can we be 'moved away'?

If we're no longer hearing/believing the word of God

- Not applying selves to study, attendance, daily Bible readings
- Substituting other inputs (e.g. entertainment, media, school/work studies)

Not doing God's word in our lives

- Prioritizing other things in life, failing to think of needs of others

Doing with the wrong motivation

- Lacking love & joy in our service (Rev 2:4)

Inconsistent in our worship

- Offering distracted worship… not stedfast/immovable in service

Consistently hearing and doing, from the heart, is how we continue in the faith

Does Jesus take 1st place in our lives?

Paul's strategy for properly placing Jesus as 1st

1) **Recognize superiority of Christ above all** vv. 15,16,16,17,17,18,19,20
   - Establishes *perspective* on all elements of life

2) **Grasp the significance of the price paid** vv. 20a, 22a
   - Establishes *value* of the offer made to us

3) **Appreciate magnitude of what has been done for us personally**
   - you… alienated → reconciled v.21
   - present you → holy, unblameable, unreproveable v.22
   - If ye → continue in the faith v.23
   - For you → minister v.25
   - Christ in you → the hope of glory v.27
   - Every man → present perfect in Christ Jesus v.28
   - Creates *thankfulness* and a desire to show it in our lives

1st Place: Proper perspective, correct value, true thankfulness

Summary – class 2

- Christ must be 1st place in our lives, above all else
- Seek to bear fruit to God (i.e. good ground) in all things
- Continual prayer, for others, is a hallmark of a true disciple
- Identify the positive elements of our brothers/sisters & communicate them!
- In God's eyes, we are already in the kingdom… translated from darkness
- Must commit to being 'in Christ' through baptism to enjoy benefits
- Continue in the faith by hearing and doing with the right attitude
- Prioritization through perspective, value, and appreciation

Outline

- Class 1: Goal & Background
- Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward*
  - Colossians 1
- **Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7)** → ***Threats to obtaining the reward***
  - **Colossians 2:1-19**
- Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1) → *True Pursuit of the reward*
  - Colossians 2:20 – 3:17
- Class 5: Rewarded in Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward*
  - Colossians 3:18 – 4:18

Class 3 – Rooted in Christ

Threats to obtaining the Reward

Colossians 2

Outline

- Class 1: Goal & Background
- Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward*
  - Colossians 1
- **Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7)** → ***Threats to obtaining the reward***
  - **Colossians 2:1-19**
- Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1) → *True Pursuit of the reward*
  - Colossians 2:20 – 3:17
- Class 5: Rewarded in Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward*
  - Colossians 3:18 – 4:18

Paul's Groundwork – ch.1 recap (through v.23)

Paul has laid the foundation for why Christ is superior to all else

1) 'Knowledge, wisdom, & understanding' of Gospel supersedes all vv.9-11
2) Being 'in Christ' redeemed them from death to life vv.12-14
3) Christ is pre-eminent over 'all things'… firstborn of a new creation vv. 15-20
4) Benefits extended to them personally if they 'continued in the faith' vv.21-23
5) Opportunity is available to all – 'every man' vv.24-29

Mystery? (vv. 26-27)

Paul reveals the primary goal of God's plan with Jesus Christ

- Always used in NT (27x) to discuss things that were once hidden, but now revealed
- 2 Elements of the Mystery:
  1) Messiah must suffer before glorification — 1 Pet 1:10-12
     - Forgiveness/salvation are only 'in Christ' — Eph 1:7-10
  2) Gospel would be open to the Gentiles – not just Jews — Eph 3:3-10; Col 1:26-29
     - Called the 'fellowship of the Mystery' – **Paul's focus here**
- Problem: Though revealed, many did not understand it — Mt 13:11
- Mission: Apostles needed to make it plain to everyone — Rom 16:25-26; Eph 6:19-20
- Purpose: **Christ in you, the hope of glory!!**

Purpose of gospel is to enable a transformation by developing Christ in us!

The ‘great conflict’ – threats to obtaining the reward (2:1-4)

Must distinguish between light/darkness to avoid being ‘beguiled’ (1:21-3:4)

Promise: Benefits available if remain ‘in Christ’

- 1:27, 28; 2:3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 12, 13, 15, 17, 20; 3:1, 3, 4

Danger: Allowing ‘any man’ to get between them and Christ

- Beguile you with words — 2:4
- Enslave you with philosophy, traditions, empty lies, circumcision — 2:8
- Judge you as pertaining to meaningless rituals — 2:16
- Beguile you with false doctrine, justification by works, and asceticism — 2:18-23

Required Action: Put that kind of ‘old man’ thinking to death! (3:9)

Beguiled with enticing words (v.4)

Connection to Genesis 3 cannot be missed

- Serpent 'beguiled' Eve — Gen 3:13
- Enticing words… grasp for equality w/ God and not die — Gen 3:4-5
- Pursuit of 'knowledge' contrary to things of God — Gen 2:17; 3:5-6

Contrast benefits of Gospel (Col 2:2) with state post-sin in Eden

- Hearts comforted
  - Hearts filled with fear (Gen 3:8, 10) and enmity (Gen 3:15)
- Loving unity – 'driven' together
  - Driven out of garden – separated from God by sin/death (Gen 3:23-24)
- Absolute confidence that they possess the truth
  - Fully assured of consequence of sin (Gen 3:17-19) and need for redeemer (Gen 3:15, 20)

Historical context – many Gnostics worshipped snakes as creatures who liberated man/woman by giving them the knowledge God had withheld.

Connections to Eden

Concept	Colossians	Genesis
Fruit	1:6,10	1:28; 3:2-3
Desire to be filled w/ knowledge	1:9,10	3:6
God has made us	1:12	1:26-27
Light/darkness	1:12-13	1:2
Forgiveness of sins	1:14	3:21
Image of God	1:15; 3:10	1:26
Created	1:16; 3:10	1:1
Beginning	1:18	1:1
Beguiling with enticing words	2:4, 18	3:4-5, 13
Absent in flesh, with you in Spirit	2:5	3:8
Deceit, Lie	2:8; 9	2 Cor 11:3
Hid	3:3	3:8,10
Evil Desires	3:5	3:6
Children of disobedience vs obedience	3:6,20	3:17
put off old man	3:9	3:7, 21
put on (clothing oneself)	3:10, 12	3:21
Wives submit to husband	3:18	3:16

*filled with knowledge against His will

*new beginning with Christ vs Adam

*voice of God… *ruach* of the day

This was nothing new… Colossians were in danger of going down same path to death as in the Garden

Maintaining rank and remaining steadfast (vv. 5-7)

Despite issues, Paul starts with a positive message

1) Is in it with them & wants them to succeed (v.5)
   - 'I am with you, joying'

Do others feel like we are 'with them' in their struggles? Are we merely a spectator?

Do our actions, words, & attitude demonstrate to others that we want them to succeed?

2) Recognizes their efforts (v.5)
   - 'beholding your order and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ'

In our minds, what are the defining characteristics of our brothers and sisters? Positive, negative?

3) Encourages them to continue (vv. 6-7)
   - 'as ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and stablished…'

Are others energized to continue and edified after their interactions with us?

Don't let yourself be carried away captive! (2:8-15)

Philosophy = *philosophia* – 'love (pursuit) of wisdom'

Vain deceit = empty lies

Tradition of men – see usage in Mk 7:6-13

Rudiments of the world = base elements of the Jewish world (*kosmos)*

- Circumcision – outward show of need to spiritually cut off works of flesh (v. 11)
- Unclean foods – instruction to personal holiness (vv. 16, 21)
- Holy days – create framework to enable godly living and devotion (v. 16)
- Voluntary fastings – teach self-control and focus the mind (vv. 21-23)

Overemphasizing this life and reducing worship of God to rituals will enslave us

Circumcision – the danger of a 'yes and' approach (2:11-15)

Serving Christ and making provision to serve ourselves is unacceptable.

Removal:

- 'putting off' = 'stripping off' → Complete removal (v.11)
- 'buried' → Permanent disposal (v.12)
- 'dead' → Finality (v.13)
- 'blotting out', 'nailing it to his cross' → Destroying it (v.14)
- 'spoiled', 'triumphing over' → Defeating it (v.15)

Result:

- 'complete' → Filled (v.10)
- 'risen', 'quickened' → Brought back to life (v.12, 13)
- 'forgiven' → Extends grace *from root word charis* (v.13)
- 'took it out of the way' → Removes barriers inhibiting our walk (v.14)

Christ's example is complete… we must also pursue completely if we desire same result

Summary

- Developing Christ in us is the purpose of our lives
- God's promise is available to all people
- When difficulties must be addressed, start with the positive
- Don't let 'any man' come between you and Christ
- God needs all of our hearts dedicated, not just an external portion cut off
- Define success correctly – transformation, not meeting the metrics
- Absence of 'bad' does not produce fruit – must proactively 'do good'

Outline

- Class 1: Goal & Background
- Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward*
  - Colossians 1
- Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7) → *Threats to obtaining the reward*
  - Colossians 2:1-19
- **Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1)** → ***True Pursuit of the reward***
  - **Colossians 2:20 – 3:17**
- Class 5: Rewarded in Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward*
  - Colossians 3:18 – 4:18

Class 4 – Risen with Christ

True Pursuit of the Reward

Colossians 2:20 – 3:17

Outline

- Class 1: Goal & Background
- Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward*
  - Colossians 1
- Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7) → *Threats to obtaining the reward*
  - Colossians 2:1-19
- **Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1)** → ***True Pursuit of the reward***
  - **Colossians 2:20 – 3:17**
- Class 5: Rewarded in Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward*
  - Colossians 3:18 – 4:18

Rooted in Christ vs Rooted in Self – ch. 2 key points

Each of Paul's examples from Ch.2 were incomplete types of Christ

- Circumcision – *External action without internal change*
  - Complete Fulfillment: Christ put off 'body of the flesh' (v.11)
  - Internal Change: Triumphed over principalities and powers 'in himself' (v.15)
- Rituals – *Doing the motions but missing the meaning*
  - Complete Image: Rituals were an imperfect foreshadow, body itself seen with Christ (v.17)
- Asceticism – *Rigorous self-denial leading to prideful self-promotion*
  - Connection to Head: Pride disconnects the body from the head, must increase w/ godly increase (v.19)

Paul has effectively identified the points of deficiency… Now what?

Rising with Christ… the pathway to true discipleship

Paul re-echoes the 3 steps of discipleship identified by Jesus (Matt 16:23-24)

Issue

- Savoring the things of men, not the things of God — Col 2:4-19
  - Man's definition of service is merely external and ineffectual in creating real change

Solution

1) Let him deny himself — Col 2:20-23
   - Confusing asceticism with true self-denial… 'no value in stopping indulgence of flesh'
2) Take up his cross — Col 3:1-9
   - Truly put the flesh to death (e.g. 'mortify', 'put off', etc)
3) Follow me — Col 3:10-17
   - Need to 'put on' character of Christ

Paul defines what it means to rise with Christ in ch. 3

Let him deny himself (Col 2:20-23)

Doctrines of men can look deceptively similar to righteous deeds (Mk 7:6-9)

- Shew of wisdom – looks wise to a casual onlooker
- Will worship – 'self-made religion' (ESV)
- Humility – only in outward appearance… look to be very pious to others
- Neglecting of the body – asceticism… extreme self-denial looks very disciplined

These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh
(ESV) Col 2:23

Their whole approach to worshipping God was a complete miss!

Take up his cross (Col 3:1-9)

The cross must come before the crown. Glorification is in the future…

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Col 3:3-4

The goal of the present life is not for <u>us</u> to *appear* righteous to others. Our goal is to show that <u>God</u> *is* righteous.

Take up his cross (Col 3:1-9)

This means striving to put to death the root cause of sin in our lives

- Mortify = 'put to death'
- Members = limbs of the human body (Matt 5:29)
  - Fornication – *Porneia* = illicit sexual intercourse
  - Uncleanness = a state of being separated from God resulting from ungodliness
  - Inordinate affection – *pathos* = Lusts that have developed into passionate desires
  - Evil concupiscence = evil lusts/desires… the source of sin
  - Covetousness = a greedy desire to have more (Thayer)… idolatry!

External and Internal 'members' identified. But why this order?

Take up his cross – from root to fruit (3:5)

Colossians were very focused on 'external' elements. Paul trying to get them to look deeper…

Externally visible

Externally hidden
but
Visible to God

Covetousness

Evil Lusts

Passion (developed lusts)

Fornication

Uncleanness

It all starts with desiring something we don't have, which leads us down a path away from God

By the time sin becomes externally visible, a raging infection is rampant in the body

Take up his cross - Putting off the old man (3:8-9)

Children of disobedience (i.e. 'unbelief' cp. Heb 4:6, 11)

- Anger – vengeful wrath meted out against another
- Wrath – anger boiled over into unrestrained rage (Lk 4:28; Acts 19:28)
- Malice – ill-will; the desire to harm or hurt
- Blasphemy – speech injurious to another's good name
- Filthy communication – foul speaking; dirty jokes, crass innuendo
- Lie – speaking things that are not true

Our emotions, motives, and language must all be transformed

Follow me (3:10-17) – building the body

We must grow (*renew*) the new man/woman in knowledge

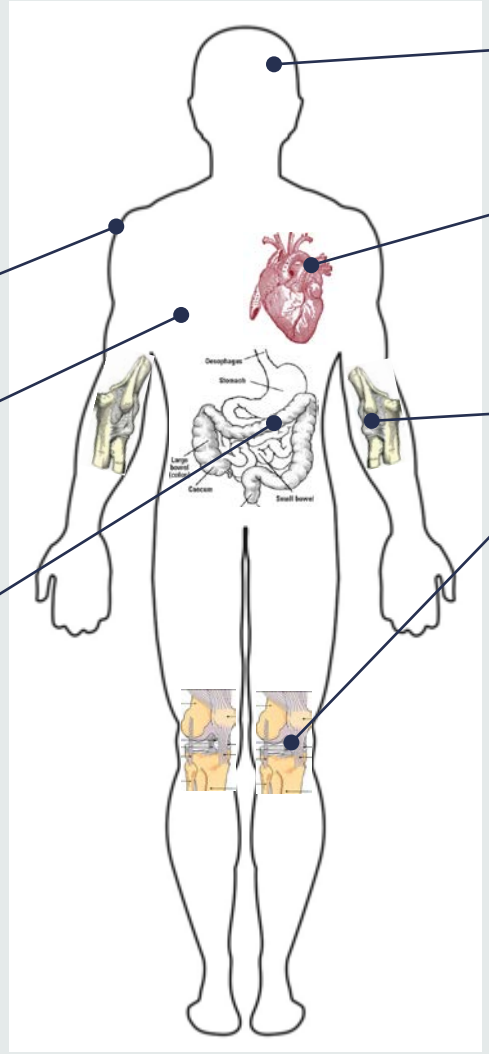
Though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor 4:16)

Developing the image of God (v.10)

<u>One body</u> = our calling as believers (3:15)

<u>Inside us</u> = word of God dwells (3:16)

<u>Bowels</u> = mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forbearance, forgiveness (3:12)



<u>Head</u> = Christ (1:18; 2:19)

<u>Heart</u> = Peace of God rules (3:15)
= filled w/ thankfulness (3:16)

'bond'
<u>Joints & ligaments</u> = love (2:19; 3:14)

Rather, speaking the truth **in love**, we are to **grow up** in every way into him who is the **head, into Christ**: from whom the **whole body**, joined and **held together by every joint** with which it is equipped, <u>when each part is working properly</u>, makes the **body grow** so that it builds itself up **in love**.

Eph 4:15-16 ESV

Follow me (3:10-17) – learning to be thankful

Thankfulness is a state of being… it is learned over time (1 Tim 6:5-12)

1) Define success correctly (v.6)
   - Godliness with contentment… not gain *and* godliness
2) See this life for what it is - transience (v.7)
   - We brought nothing in and can carry nothing out
3) Set expectations correctly (v.8)
   - Be content with basic necessities of life (food, clothing) in all circumstances
4) Pursue God's character and flee from pursuits of this life (v.9-11)
   - Follow righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness
5) Keep pressing forward with confidence in God and Christ (v.12)
   - Define ourselves based on relationship with Christ, not worldly position/possession

Thankfulness is the antidote to covetousness…

we won't want more if we're thankful for what we have

Summary

- To transform, we must deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus
- If we focus on external appearance, we will completely miss the mark
- Our goal must be to show God is righteous, not us
- Must dig deep to put to death internal desires
- One body of Christ is only possible when all members grow together in God
- Strive to eliminate covetousness by developing thankfulness
- Jesus must take 1st place in all we do – giving thanks to God

Outline

- Class 1: Refocusing on Christ → *Writing concerning the reward*
  - Goal & Background
- Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward*
  - Colossians 1
- Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7) → *Threats to obtaining the reward*
  - Colossians 2:1-19
- Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1) → *True Pursuit of the reward*
  - Colossians 2:20 – 3:17
- **Class 5: Rewarded by Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward***
  - **Colossians 3:18 – 4:18**

Class 5 – Rewarded by Christ

Counsel in living for the reward

Colossians 3:18 – 4:18

Outline

- Class 1: Refocusing on Christ → *Writing concerning the reward*
  - Goal & Background
- Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward*
  - Colossians 1
- Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7) → *Threats to obtaining the reward*
  - Colossians 2:1-19
- Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1) → *True Pursuit of the reward*
  - Colossians 2:20 – 3:17
- **Class 5: Rewarded by Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward***
  - **Colossians 3:18 – 4:18**

Practical counsel for everyday relationships

3 key relationships are considered by the apostle

Relationship	Role 1	Role 2
Wife/Husband (3:18-19)	Wife **Submit** to husband *in the Lord*	Husband **Love** wife – self-sacrifice. Do not treat harshly
Child/Parent (3:20-21)	Child **Obey** parents in all things… Well pleasing *unto the Lord*	Father **Do not provoke** children Lest they be discouraged
Servant/Master (3:22-4:1)	Servants **Obey** masters Singleness of heart Work as *unto the Lord*, not unto men	Master Give what is **just and equal**. *Master in heaven*

Paul selects 3 practical examples to help make the abstract real

Practical counsel for everyday relationships – wife/husband

Each person in the relationship is given key specific instruction

Wives

Submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord (v.18)

- Submit – *hupotasso* = to be subject to, obey
  - Requires vulnerability and humility

Husbands

Love your wives, and be not bitter against them (v.19)

- Love – *agapao* = self-sacrificing love
- Bitter – *pikraino* = 'do not be harsh with them' ESV

Godly subjection and self-sacrificing love are the key elements for making two → one flesh

Practical counsel for everyday relationships – child/father

Each person in the relationship is given key specific instruction

Child

Obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord (v.20)

- Obey – *hypakouo* = to listen attentively (Strong), one who on a knock at the door comes to listen who it is (Thayer)

Fathers

Provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged (v.21)

- Provoke – root *eris* = strife/contention/debate
- Discouraged – *athymeo* = spiritless, broken in spirit

Attentive listening and loving correction are keys for raising 'in the Lord'

Practical counsel for everyday relationships – servant/master

Each person in the relationship is given key specific instruction

Servants

Obey in all things your masters according to the flesh… (v.22-25)

- Listen attentively – 'obey' (v.22)… same as to children
- Even when they're not watching – 'Not with eyeservice' (v.22)
- Wholeheartedly – 'singleness of heart' (v.22)
- Conscious of God – 'fearing God' (v.22)
- Enthusiastically & energetically – 'heartily, as to the Lord' (v.23)

Masters

Give unto your servants that which is just and equal (4:1)

- Just and equal – consistently rule with righteousness and fairness

Practical counsel for everyday relationships – servant/master

The poor uses entreaties, but the rich answers roughly

Prov 18:23

Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men, even when they exercise influence and not authority, still more when you superadd the tendency or the certainty of corruption by authority… and the end learns to justify the means

(Letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton, April 5, 1887)

Practical counsel for everyday relationships – servant/master

Each person in the relationship is given key specific instruction

Servants

Obey in all things your masters according to the flesh… (v.22-25)

- Listen attentively – 'obey' (v.22)… same as to children
- Even when they're not watching – 'Not with eyeservice' (v.22)
- Wholeheartedly – 'singleness of heart' (v.22)
- Conscious of God – 'fearing God' (v.22)
- Enthusiastically & energetically – 'heartily, as to the Lord' (v.23)

Masters

Give unto your servants that which is just and equal (4:1)

- Just and equal – consistently rule with righteousness and fairness

Work wholeheartedly unto Christ and implement God's standard consistently

Practical counsel for everyday relationships – Eph vs Col

Ephesians

Eph 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.
22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband

Colossians

Col 3:18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them

This is the summary of the section. Interestingly, these are the only 2 points called out in Colossians

Practical counsel for everyday relationships

Ephesians

Eph 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.
2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first
commandment with promise;) 3 That it may be well with thee,
and thou mayest live long on the earth. 4 And, ye fathers,
provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the
nurture and admonition of the Lord

Eph 6:5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters
according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of
your heart, as unto Christ; 6 Not with eyeservice, as
menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of
God from the heart; 7 With good will doing service, as to the
Lord, and not to men: 8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing
any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether
he be bond or free. 9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto
them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is
in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Colossians

Col 3:20 - Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is
well pleasing unto the Lord.

21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be
discouraged.

Col 3:22 Servants, obey in all things your masters according
to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in
singleness of heart, fearing God: 23 And whatsoever ye
do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;
24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward
of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he
that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he
hath done: and there is no respect of persons. 4:1
Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and
equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

The Servant/Master relationship appears to have particular relevance to Colossae

Practical counsel for everyday relationships – *application*

Role	Col	Eph	Believers
Wives	3:18	5:22	Eph 5:27
Husbands	3:19	5:25	
Children	3:20	6:1	Jn 13:33; Heb 12:5
Fathers	3:21	6:4	
Servants	3:22	6:5	Eph 6:6; Phil 1:1; Col 3:24
Masters	4:1	6:9	

We must properly demonstrate all of these principles in our relationship with God

Concluding Counsel – closing message of Paul

Paul's final words of advice are great reminders

- Persevere in prayer (v.2)
- Remain watchful (v.2)
- Be thankful (v.2)
- Pray for others and for opportunities to preach (v.3)
- Be a living example of Christ to others (v.5)
- Make the best use of time – 'buy it up as a rare commodity' (v.5)
- Always speak graciously (v.6)
- Infuse God's principles into our speech, proportioned to preserve life (v.6)

These are necessary elements in developing Christ in us!

Suggestions moving forward… what next?

Set Direction

- Mission Statement – create/revisit
  - Where are we trying to go… define purpose
- Core Values
  - Define key elements/behaviors that are imperative to achieving the mission
- Align
  - List activities of our lives & time spent. Identify what aligns & what doesn't
- Adjust
  - Remove things that don't align with Mission.
  - Refine things that do align to ensure Christ is 1st place in everything

Stay on course

- Be Thankful – list out what we are thankful for, gratitudes
- Recognize efforts – where have we seen positive behaviors in others

Continue to look for ways to put Christ in 1st place… Christ in you

Outline

- Class 1: Refocusing on Christ → *Writing concerning the reward*
  - Christ must take 1st place in our lives, must be intentional in how we communicate
- Class 2: Redeemed in Christ (1:14) → *Magnitude of the reward*
  - Seek to bear fruit in all things, we have redemption through Christ – the firstborn
- Class 3: Rooted in Christ (2:7) → *Threats to obtaining the reward*
  - Don't allow any man between us and Christ, maintain meaning and not reduce to ritual
- Class 4: Risen with Christ (3:1) → *True Pursuit of the reward*
  - Internal transformation is key… put to death the old and put on the new
- Class 5: Rewarded by Christ (3:24) → *Counsel in living for the reward*
  - Transformation needs to govern our daily life… marriage, family, work. Christ 1st place in all!

Philemon

Counsel for reconciling brethren

Reconciling Brethren – a matter of life and death

22 But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause
shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother,
Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, thou fool,
shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar,
and there remember that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 leave there
thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother,
and then come and offer thy gift.

Matt 5:22-24

Reconciling Brethren – a matter of life and death

9He that saith he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10He that loveth his brother abides in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

1 Jn 2:9-10

20If a man say, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? 21And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also

1 Jn 4:20-21

Reconciling Brethren – Paul's overall approach

Outline

- Start with the positive vv. 1-7
- Constructively appeal vv. 8-21
- Conclude with blessing of God vv. 22-25

Start with the positive – Key Points

Start with the positive (vv. 1-7)

- Loving greetings – connects — vv.1-2
  - Term of equality
  - Greets family by name with endearing terms
- Express positive intent to each other — vv.3-4
  - Pray for God's grace, peace, and gives thanks for them
  - Tells each other we want them to succeed… and mean it!
- Recognize and commend for attitude/spirit of service — vv.5-6
  - Acknowledge efforts and impact of their work
  - Express desire for their efforts to continue
- Presume positive intent of other's motivation — v.7
  - Communicate areas where you see positive intent

Paul's appeal (v.16-21)

Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord? If thou count me therefore a partaker, receive him as myself.

If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I Paul have written it with **mine own hand**, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides…

Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord. Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

Constructively Appeal – Key Points

Constructively Appeal (vv. 8-21)

▪ Loving appeal vs. bold demand	vv.8-9
▪ Address issue directly, don't downplay	vv.10-11a
▪ Cite evidence of what has/will change	vv.11b-13
▪ Give space to think/decide, don't force a decision	v.14
▪ Refocus mind on providence of God	vv.15-16
▪ Personally invest in success of others	vv.17-19
▪ Give each other a positive reputation to live up to	vv.20-21

Conclude with Blessing of God (vv. 22-25)

- Pray for God's grace to be with them

Begin with positive, constructively appeal, and finish with positive… pursue peace!