

## Colossians 1:1-8

New English Translation Bible 2019

Fifth century or earlier manuscript variants: [inserted] [~replaced] [–omitted]

### Working Outline of Colossians 1:1-8

- I. Greeting
- II. My co-workers and I write to strengthen you. 1.3–4.6
  - A. We thank and pray to God for you. 1.3-12
    - 1. We thank God for you. 1.3-8
    - 2. We pray to God for you. 1.9-12

### Learning objectives

- Participants will know when, where, and to whom Paul wrote this epistle.
- Participants will understand Paul's partnerships in planting churches in new fields.
- Participants will pray for others in the way that Paul prayed for others.

### Book of Acts, chapter 19, 55-57 CE

<sup>9</sup> [Paul] took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. <sup>10</sup> This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. ... <sup>20</sup> So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.

Query: Where was Colossae in relation to Ephesus?

Reply: About 100 miles to the east of Ephesus, near the Lycus River, 9 mi. southeast of Laodicea.



## Colossians 1:1-8

### Written where, when? Three views:

- At Rome (Italy): Whilst Paul was under house arrest, about the years 60 to 62 CE. (Generally held view.)
- At Caesarea (Judea): Whilst Paul was held by the Roman governor, about the years 57 to 60 CE.
- At Ephesus (Asia): Whilst Paul was under house arrest, about the year 57 CE.

*Query:* Which view best fits the movements of Timothy and of Epaphras, as well as the needs of young churches in Asia Minor.)

### Greeting

**<sup>1</sup> Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,  
<sup>2</sup> To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ [Jesus] in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father [and (our) Lord Jesus Christ].**

*Query 1:* How does Paul describe ...

- Himself
- Timothy
- the Colossians

*Query 2:* How are all these similar?

*Query 3:* How are all these distinct?

### Christian workers named in Colossians

**Paul:** Apostle of Jesus, 1.1, 23, 4.1

**Timothy:** Church Apostle, 1.1

**Epaphras:** Apostolic co-worker, 1.7 4.12, Philemon 23

**Archippus:** Local minister, 4.17

**Onesimus:** Church messenger, 4.9, Philemon 1

**Tychicus:** Travelling minister, 4.7

**Nympha:** Local woman church leader, 4.15

**Demas:** Apostolic co-worker, 4.14

**Luke:** Church Apostle, 4.14

### Gifted women named in the New Testament

***“He Himself gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers.” Ephesians 4:11***

- Junia: an apostle, Rom 16:7
- Philip’s daughters: prophets, Acts 21:9
- Euodia and Syntyche: evangelists, Phil 4:2-3
- Nympha: shepherd, Col 4:15
- Priscilla: teacher, Acts 18:26

## Colossians 1:1-8

### Implications for church multiplication

Paul kept a record of:

- Where churches were being planted
- Who were reliable workers and their skills
- Who was “coaching” whom
- Doctrinal and practical learning needs
- Where his epistles were going and being recopied

Jerusalem ► Antioch

Antioch ► Ephesus

Ephesus ► Colossae

Colossae ► Laodicea

Laodicea ► Hierapolis

### We thank God for you

**3 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus [–Christ], praying always for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints, ...**

*Query:* Name two essential traits of true Christians.

*Query:* What did Jesus say about these traits?

*Query:* As society turns more perverted, profligate, anti-Christian, what ought we to “think” as we drive by a church building where they interpret the Bible a little differently?

### Why we thank God for you

**5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel 6 which has come to you, ...**

*Query:* What is it that Christians hope for?

*Query:* What more, besides forgiveness, should we explain about the gospel?

*Query:* By what means did the gospel come to the Colossians, since Paul never went there?

### What is it that Christians hope for?

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| a. Welcome into heaven                   | g. The righteous vindicated   |
| b. Rewards for service and for suffering | h. The wicked banished        |
| c. Resurrection from death               | i. Righteous society on earth |
| d. Strong, new, glorified body           | j. New heaven and new earth   |
| e. Fellowship with Jesus                 | k. All our questions answered |
| f. Judge angels                          | What more?                    |

## Colossians 1:1-8

### Why we thank God for you

***(6) ... just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and multiplying, just as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard and understood the grace of God in truth;***

...

*Query:* What did Paul mean by 'all the world'?

*Query:* What fruit does the gospel bear?

*Query:* What is wrong if there be no fruit?

*Query:* What did Paul mean by 'multiplying'?

*Query:* What quality of God makes the gospel work?

### Stop! Let us ask God to cause his gospel to bear fruit and to multiply in city and region through:

Prayers	Compassion
Conversations	Answered prayers
Church services	Miraculous encounters
Home groups	Healing
Missionaries	Dreams & visions
Bible studies	Holy Spirit conviction
Bible distribution	Online messages
Food bank	Inference from creation
Social media	Desperation
Online videos	Fear of judgment
Pray walks	Desire to know God

***... 7 just as you learned it from Epaphras, [y]our beloved fellow slave, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, 8 who also informed us of your love in the Spirit.***

*Query:* Who was Epaphras?

*Query:* How does Paul endorse Epaphras?

*Query:* Whom or what did they love?

*Query:* What does it mean to love 'in the Spirit'?

### Epaphras

- Gentile convert to Christianity
- Likely heard the gospel in Ephesus
- May have been a prisoner with Paul (Philemon 23)
- Apparently from Colossae (4:12)
- Evangelized Colossae (1:6-7)
- Accompanied Timothy to see Paul in prison
- Endorsed by Paul as a faithful minister (1:7, 4:12)
- Could have carried this epistle to Colossae (4:16)