

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ WE COME BACK TO OUR STUDY OF COLOSSIANS.

▶▶ But before forging ahead, ~ we're going to take a step backward ~ and review what we've learned so far, ~ from 1:1 through 2:5.

▶▶ This will help us keep the big picture in mind, ~ as we slowly go through the details.

▶▶ Doing this review ~ was actually at the prompting of Meg.

▶▶ Detail-oriented . . . .

SO HERE WE GO. ~~ COLOSSIANS SO FAR.

PAUL SEEMS TO HAVE HAD TWO OVERARCHING PURPOSES FOR WRITING.

1<sup>st</sup>, ~ TO REFUTE FALSE DOCTRINE.

▶▶ The believers in Colossae and the surrounding region ~ were being plagued by false teaching.

▷▷ And Paul wrote ~ to defend the faith.

▶▶ Now, ~ Paul does not identify the heresy. ~~ He simply offers a rebuttal.

▷▷ But from what Paul says within the letter, ~ the heresy seems to have been a mixture ~ of Jewish ritual practices, ~ and ~ pagan beliefs and practices. ↯↯ 1/15

▶▶ Some examples.

▷▷ The heresy undermined the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ.

▷▷ It looks like the heresy included strict rules about ~ permissible food and drink, ~~ religious festivals, ~~ and circumcision.

▷▷ All matter is evil. ⇔⇔ Creation. ⇔⇔ God becoming man.

▷▷ And ~ it looks like the heresy included the notion ~ that through self-torture ~ or self-denial ~ a person can attain exalted spirituality. ⇔⇔ Impossible.

▶▶ Paul did not take kindly to false teaching. ⇔⇔ And neither should we.

▷▷ There can be ~ no compromise on our part ~ with false teaching, ~~ any more than a surgeon ~ could compromise ~ with a cancerous tumor in a patient's body.

▷▷ False teaching ~ is to be exposed ~ and rooted out ~ when we hear it.

▶▶ And make no mistake about it, ~ if false teaching ~ is left unopposed, ~ it will end badly ~ for a local church ~ and ~ for individual believers. ⇔⇔ Destructive.

PAUL'S SECOND PURPOSE FOR WRITING ~ WAS TO INSTRUCT BELIEVERS ~ ON HOW ~ to live a godly life. ⇔⇔ 3:1-4:6.

▶▶ But we can also look at this section ~ a little differently.

▷▷ Paul may have also been setting up a contrast ~ between the false way of living ~ taught by the heretics ~ ↴↴

↵↵ and what the Christian life ~ is really supposed to look like. ↴↴ 2/15

▶▶ Sound doctrine >> teaches and leads to godly lives.

▶▶ False teaching >> ungodly living.

▷▷ Jude tells us that they falsely claim that God's grace ~ allows us ~ to live immoral lives.

▶▶ The false teachers ~ were ~ most likely, ~ trying to lead the believers in Colossae and the surrounding region astray, ~ not only in doctrine, ~ but also in practice.

▷▷ The same as false teachers today.

▶▶ Subsequently, ~ we could say, ~ then, ~ that the whole epistle to the Colossian church ~ is a rebuttal of false teaching.

▷▷ And Paul does so ~~ by means ~ of presenting sound doctrine, ~~ by means ~ of exhortations to stay faithful to sound doctrine, ~~ ↴↴

↴↴ and ~~ by showing us ~ what the Christian life is really supposed to look like.

▶▶ The only way ~ to not be taken in by false teaching ~ is to ~ be grounded in ~ and stay faithful to ~ sound doctrine ~ and ~ sound practice.

▷▷ Sound practice meaning ~ the Bible's teaching ~ on godly living.

THE FIRST MAIN SECTION OF COLOSSIANS IS ~ 1: ~ 3-8.

IN THIS PARAGRAPH, ~ PAUL EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR THESE BELIEVERS ~~ AND then ~ expanded on his statement of gratitude.

▶▶ In this paragraph ~ we made ~ seven observations ~ about the true gospel. ↴↴ 3/15

▶▶1<sup>st</sup>, ~ we observed that the gospel is the good news ~ that Jesus has solved the problem of sin and death ~ through his death, ~ burial, ~ and resurrection.

▶▶2<sup>nd</sup>, ~ we noted that Paul set forth the essential nature of the gospel: ⇨⇨ abs. truth.

▶▶3<sup>rd</sup>, ~ we observed that in our unsaved state we do not seek God. ⇨⇨ *God seeks us.*

▶▶4<sup>th</sup>, ~ we noted that ~ the gospel ~ is for everyone in the whole world, ~ not just one nation or ethnic group.

▶▶5<sup>th</sup>, ~ we observed ~ that the gospel ~ is the living and enduring word of God ~ and it bears fruit.

▷▷I.e., ~ it produces salvation in all who call upon Jesus for salvation.

▶▶6<sup>th</sup>, ~ we noted ~ that the gospel ~ is going out into all the world without restriction.

▶▶And 7<sup>th</sup>, ~ we observed ~ that Paul emphasized and reminded us ~ that God's grace ~ is at ~ the center ~ of the gospel message.

▷▷The false teachers ~ were denying the doctrine ~ of salvation by grace alone, ~ and were teaching ~ some kind of salvation by ~ human works or human merit.

▷▷So Paul reinforced the truth ~ of the doctrine of salvation by grace alone.

### THE NEXT MAIN SECTION IS 1:9-14.

### IN THIS PARAGRAPH, ~ PAUL TALKED ABOUT PRAYER FOR THESE BELIEVERS.

▶▶He informed them ~ that he and his missionary team were continually praying for them, ~ what they were praying for, ~ and why they were praying this particular prayer. ⇩⇩ 4/15

▶▶ The reason was ~ that ~ Paul wanted believers, ~ all believers, ~ to live a life ~ that was pleasing to God.

▶▶ And then he listed ~ four characteristics of a life that is pleasing to the Lord.

▷▷ 1<sup>st</sup>, ~ Paul made the point that ~ good works ~ in the life of the believer ~ please God.

↳↳ Remember, ~ Good works ~ follow ~ becoming a new creation in Christ.

↳↳ Good works are not the means of earning salvation.

→→ They are ~ a natural result ~ and proof of ~ salvation.

↳↳ TPID, ~ genuine saving faith in Christ ~ results in ~ and is proven by ~ good works.

▷▷ The 2<sup>nd</sup> characteristic.

↳↳ The Lord is pleased ~ when believers ~ continue to grow in their knowledge about him.

→→ Not an some ego trip . . . .

↳↳ Lack of knowledge about Jesus ~ opens us up ~ to being taken in by false teachers, ~ to stagnating in our spiritual growth, ~ ¶¶

→→ and ~ to falling victim to Satan, ~ our sin nature, ~ and this evil world.

▷▷ In brief, ~ if we are not continually growing in our knowledge about the Lord, ~ we will be destroyed spiritually. ¶¶ 5/15

▷▷ The 3<sup>rd</sup> characteristic.

↳↳ A life ~ that is fully pleasing to Jesus ~ is one ~ in which there is total dependence ~ on his power ~ rather than our own ~ in order to endure and to be patient.

▷▷ And the 4<sup>th</sup> characteristic.

↳↳ Joyfully and continually giving thanks to the Father is pleasing to him.

↳↳ When we, ~ believers, ~ continually ~ consider ~ all that God has done for us, ~ what he has rescued us from, ~ ¶

→→ what he has promised for this and the life to come, ~ how could we not ~ joyfully and continually ~ give our heavenly Father thanks?

▶▶ Then building on the 4<sup>th</sup> characteristic, ~ Paul gave us four reasons ~ for joyfully and continually ~ giving thanks to our Heavenly Father.

▷▷ 1<sup>st</sup>, ~ He has qualified/enabled believers ~ to share in the inheritance that he has reserved for his people.

▷▷ 2<sup>nd</sup>, ~ for ~ rescuing us from the domain of darkness ~ and transferring us ~ to the kingdom ~ of his beloved Son.

▷▷ 3<sup>rd</sup>, ~ for ~ "redemption."

↳↳ Before we were saved, ~ we were ~ hopelessly and helplessly enslaved ~ to sin. ⇔⇔  
So, ~ we were in need of redemption, ~ but could not redeem ourselves.

↳↳ We needed a redeemer, ~ i.e., ~ someone to pay the required price to set us free.

→→ Jesus paid the required price to effect our release. ¶ 6/15

▷▷ And 4<sup>th</sup> reason to give thanks. ⇨⇨ "the forgiveness of sins."

IN 1:15-20, ~ PAUL DISCUSSED THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS.

THE FALSE TEACHERS, ~ AS ALL FALSE TEACHERS DO, ~ WERE ATTACKING and distorting the Person and work of Jesus.

▶▶ And in this paragraph, ~ Col. ~ 1: ~ 15-20, ~ Paul lays out the truth about the Person and work of Jesus.

HE PRESENTS ~ TEN ~ PROFOUND AND SWEEPING ASSERTIONS ~ about Jesus' Person and work.

▶▶ 1<sup>st</sup>, ~ Jesus is ~ the image of the invisible God

▷▷ I.e., ~ Jesus made visible the invisible nature of God.

▷▷ By his person, ~ words, ~ and actions ~ Jesus has revealed the Father to us.

▶▶ 2<sup>nd</sup>, ~ Jesus is ~ the firstborn over all creation.

▷▷ I.e., ~ Jesus ~ is supreme over all creation.

▶▶ 3<sup>rd</sup>, ~ by him all things were created.

▷▷ And this is why ~ he is supreme over all creation.

▶▶ 4<sup>th</sup>, ~ Jesus ~ is before all things.

▷▷ Eternality. ↯↯ 7/15

▶▶5<sup>th</sup>, ~ by him all things hold together.

▷▷Not only is Jesus the Creator of all things, ~ all things continue to exist because of him.

▷▷Jesus keeps the cosmos ~ from becoming a chaos.

▷▷Without him, ~~ electrons ~ would not continue to circle nuclei, ~~ gravity ~ would cease to work, ~~ the planets ~ would not stay in their orbits.

▷▷Jesus is the one ~ who makes the sun shine.

↳↳He is the one ~ who causes the earth to rotate on its axis and orbit the sun.

↳↳Jesus is the one ~ who continues to grant life to our bodies.

↳↳Our very creation and continued existence depends on Jesus.

▶▶6<sup>th</sup>, ~ Jesus is ~ the head of the body, the church.

▷▷This simply means that Jesus ~ is supreme over the church.

▷▷No believer ~ is the head of the church. ⇔⇔ This position ~ is reserved exclusively ~ for Jesus.

▷▷Pastors and elders are under-shepherds.

▶▶7<sup>th</sup>, ~ Jesus is ~ the beginning.

▷▷Boiled down, ~ this means ~ that Jesus brought the church into existence. 📖 8/15



▷▷ The church is the work of God ~ and not the work of human beings.

↳↳ And that's why the church can never be destroyed, ~~ because its existence does not depend on us ~ but on God.

▶▶ 8<sup>th</sup>, ~ Jesus is ~ the firstborn from the dead.

▷▷ Jesus ~ was the first in time ~ to emerge from the realm of the dead with a glorified resurrection body, ~ never to die again.

↳↳ Guarantees . . . .

▷▷ Plus, ~ by virtue of his resurrection, ~ Jesus has been elevated in rank ~ to a position ~ higher ~ than any of the other resurrected dead will experience.

↳↳ The author of Heb. tells us ~ that after making purification for sins, ~ Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

▶▶ 9<sup>th</sup>, ~ In Jesus ~ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

▷▷ Boiled down ~~ the point Paul is making ~ is this: ~~ Jesus ~ is God in human flesh.

↳↳ TPID, ~~ God the Son, ~ in his full and complete deity, ~ stepped onto the historical scene ~ as a human being.

↳↳ In the beginning was the Word, ~ and the Word was with God, ~ and the Word was God. ~~ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

▷▷ The Bible teaches ~ that Jesus is fully God and fully man ~ in one Person and will be so forever

↳↳ He has two distinct natures. ~~ He is not half man and half God. 📖 9/15

↪↪ Jesus' two natures are not mixed together, ~ nor are they combined into a new God-man nature.

↪↪ His divine nature ~ was not changed ~ when he took on a human nature.

↪↪ God, ~ in all his fullness, ~ became human.

↪↪ He just allowed his humanity to cover his deity.

→→ Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, ~ Hail the incarnate Deity!

▶▶ And now for the 10<sup>th</sup> sweeping and profound assertion about the person and work of Jesus.

▷▷ Jesus ~ is the one who reconciles all creation through his death.

▷▷ God the Father ~ chose to send his Son ~ for the designated purpose of reconciling all creation, ~~ and in particular fallen humanity, ~ to himself.

↪↪ Focus on the humanity aspect in our review.

▷▷ Because Jesus is God, ~ He was able to do ~ what no mere man could ever do: ~~ reconcile lost sinners to the Father.

▷▷ Obviously, ~ the means by which this was accomplished ~ was Christ's sacrificial death on the cross.

▷▷ He made "peace ~ by the blood of his cross."

↪↪ Substitutionary sacrifice. ↵↵ 10/15

▷▷ Now, ~ it is extremely important to understand ~ that reconciliation ~ is not equivalent ~ to salvation.

▷▷ Rather, ~ reconciliation ~ refers ~ to the removal of the barrier ~ between God and humanity ~ through Christ's sacrificial work ~ ¶¶

↳↳ so that ~ God can deal with sinners ~ in a new way.

▷▷ Reconciliation has both ~ an objective ~ and ~ a subjective ~ side.

↳↳ Objectively, ~ from God's side, ~ the barrier between humans and God created by sin ~ has been removed by Jesus' sacrificial death, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ so that ~ the way is open ~ for sinners to come to Him.

↳↳ But reconciliation does not eliminate the need of individuals to respond in faith to this work of God.

↳↳ On the subjective side, ~ people must accept the reconciliation that God has offered.

⇒⇒ Not universal salvation.

PAUL'S MENTION OF RECONCILIATION ~ LEADS HIM INTO A VERY BRIEF EXPANSION of the topic, ~ 1:21-23.

IN THIS BRIEF PARAGRAPH, ~ PAUL IS REMINDING EACH BELIEVER ~ OF THEIR OWN personal reconciliation to God.

▷▷ He reviewed for us ~ our own personal ~ spiritual experience and situation.

HE FIRST REVIEWED OUR STATUS PRIOR TO SALVATION. ¶¶ 11/15

▶▶ We were ~ separated from God ~ and were ~ hostile toward him in thought and attitude.

▶▶ And our hostility toward him ~ was shown ~ or proven ~ by ~ our evil behavior.

BUT ~ FOR BELIEVERS, ~ THAT HAS ALL CHANGED.

▶▶ We have accepted ~ the reconciliation ~ that God has provided.

▶▶ We are now ~ holy and blameless and above reproach before him.

▶▶ Paul was not speaking here ~ about the believer's progressive sanctification, ~ but about his or her status in Christ.

▷▷ More on Progressive Sanctification in a moment.

▶▶ I.e., ~ in God's sight, ~ believers are ~ holy ~ and blameless ~ and above reproach."

RECALL FROM OUR STUDY OF PHILIPPIANS, ~ WE DISCUSSED SANCTIFICATION.

▶▶ We noted that ~ sanctification ~ is God's work ~ in causing us ~ ↴↴

▷▷ to progressively become more and more like Jesus.

▶▶ More specifically, ~ that is progressive sanctification.

▶▶ And ~ as we said there, ~ God's work in us is ongoing, ~ long-term, ~ and will be completed.

WHAT PAUL HAS IN VIEW HERE IN COLOSSIANS ~ HOWEVER, ~ IS OUR POSITIONAL sanctification, ~ or ~ our justification. ↴↴ 12/15

▶▶ When one puts their faith in Jesus Christ, ~ instantly, ~ at that very moment ~ they become ~ "holy and blameless and above reproach" ~ in God's sight.

▶▶ This is what we are ~ in reality before God.

▶▶ And Jesus' work of reconciliation ~ makes us this way.

MY . . . , ~ RIGHT NOW, ~ WHEN THE FATHER LOOKS AT US, ~ he doesn't see us ~ in our prior status.

▶▶ He sees us ~ clothed ~ in the righteousness ~ of his beloved Son.

▶▶ We talked about much of this in Philipians.

▷▷ And we should never stop talking about it.

▶▶ "those whom he justified ~ he also glorified, ~ Paul writes in Romans.

▷▷ Past tense. ⇔⇔ Yes.

▷▷ And very important to understand.

↪↪ In the Father's eyes, ~ we are already glorified.

▷▷ Tapestry . . . . .

▶▶ When the Father looks at us, ~ he sees his ~ glorified, ~ beloved children, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ who are clothed ~ in the righteousness ~ of his beloved Son. ¶¶ 13/15

▶▶ My fellow believers, ~ every morning ~ let's look into the mirror ~ and remind ourselves of this.

▷▷ And then ~ let's live out our day ~ accordingly.

▷▷ I.e., ~ we are to live lives ~ that are ~ "holy and blameless and above reproach."

↪↪ TPID, ~ we are to live lives that are glorifying and pleasing to the Lord.

### A QUICK NOTE HERE IN PASSING ~ REGARDING PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION.

▶▶ The process of spiritual growth ~ involves becoming in practice ~ what we are in reality before God.

### AND THAT BRINGS US ~ TO THE SECTION WE JUST FINISHED, ~ 1:24-2:5.

### PAUL'S ACCOUNT OF HIS APOSTOLIC MINISTRY ~ TO THE CHURCH.

▶▶ Since we just finished this, ~ a lot of it ~ may still be fresh in people's minds, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ so I'll just give the overall picture.

▶▶ As we are well aware of, ~ his account ~ can be split into three parts.

▷▷ The first part ~ was Paul's ministry of suffering on believers' behalf, ~ 1:24.

▷▷ The second part ~ was the character of his ministry, ~ 1:25-29.

▷▷ And the third part, ~ which is found in 2:1-5, ~ Paul's pastoral concern ~ for believers. ¶¶ 14/15

CONCLUSION.

AND THAT ~ BRINGS US UP TO SPEED.

▶▶ Keep reading Colossians

▶▶ And let us all ~ keep growing ~ in the grace and knowledge ~ of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

▶▶ To him ~ be the glory ~ both ~ now ~ and ~ to the day of eternity.

LET'S PRAY . . . . 15/15