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ST. PAUL'S Epistle to the COLOSSIANS

Translation by John Wesley

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CHAPTER 1

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus, a brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse, grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus

We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (praying always for you, Hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of your love to all the saints). For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which ye heard before in the word of truth of the gospel, Which is come to you, as also it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it hath done likewise among you, from the day ye heard it, and knew the grace of God in truth: As ye likewise learned of Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ for you: Who also declared to us your love in the Spirit. For this cause from the day we heard it, we do not cease to pray also for you, and to desire that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye may walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness: Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to partake of the inheritance of the saints in light; Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his beloved Son. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the first begotten of every creature. For through him were created all things that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of his body the church; who is the beginning, the first begotten from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in him: And by him to reconcile all things to himself, shaving made peace by him through the blood of the cross, whether things on earth, or things in haven. And

you that were once alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, he hath now reconciled, By the body of his flesh, through death, to present you holy, and spotless, and unreprouable in his sight; If ye continue in the faith, grounded, and settled, and are not removed from the hope of the gospel which ye have heard, which is preached to every creature that is under heaven, whereof I Paul am made a minister. Now I rejoyce in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ for his body, which is the church: Of which I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God, which is given to me for you, fully to preach the word of God: The mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations; but now is manifested to his saints: To whom among the Gentiles it was the will of God to make known, what is the riches of this glorious mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; Whom we preach, admonishing every man, and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect through Christ Jesus. For which also I labor, striving according to his mighty working, who worketh in me mightily.

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CHAPTER 2

For I would have you know how great a conflict I have you know how great a conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many have not seen my face in the flesh; That their hearts may be comforted, being knit together in love, even unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding unto the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, both the Father and Christ. In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, that no man may beguile you with enticing words. For though I am absent from you in the flesh, yet I am present with you in spirit, rejoicing to behold your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him: Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Beware lest any man make a prey of you through philosophy and empty deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are filled by him, who is the head of all principality and power. By whom also ye have been circumcised with a circumcision not performed with hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, by which ye are also risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses. Having blotted out by his decrees the handwriting against us, which was contrary to us; and having nailed it to his cross, he took it out of the way. And having spoiled the principalities and powers, he exposed them openly, triumphing over them in him.

Let none therefore judge you in meat, or drink, or in respect of a feast day, or of the new moon, or of Sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Let none defraud you of your reward by a voluntary humility and worship of angels, intruding into the things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the head, from which all the body being nourished and knit together, by the joints and ligaments, increaseth with the increase of God. Therefore if ye are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as

living in the world, receive ye ordinances, (Touch not, taste not, handle not: All which are to perish in the using,) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things, (Though they have indeed a show of wisdom, in voluntary worship and humility, and not sparing the body,) yet are not of any value, but are to the satisfying of the flesh.

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CHAPTER 3

If ye then are risen with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on the things above, not the things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In which ye also once walked when ye lived in them. But now put ye likewise all these things off, anger, wrath, ill nature, evil speaking, filthy discourse out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds, And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision; barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free; but Christ is all, and in all. Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a complaint against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these put on love, which is the bond of perfection: And the peace of God shall rule in your hearts, to which also ye have been called in one body: and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart unto the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father through him.

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands (as is fit) in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service as men pleasers, but in singleness of heart fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye receive the Lord Christ. But he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong he hath done; and there is no respect of persons.

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CHAPTER 4

Masters, render unto your servants that which is just and equitable, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

Continue in prayer, and watch therein with thanks giving: Withal, praying likewise for us, that God would open to us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ: for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every one.

All my concerns will Tychicus declare to you, a beloved brother and a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord: Whom I have sent to you for this very thing, that he might know your state and comfort your hearts; With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you: they will make known to you all things that are done here.

Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye have received directions: if he come to you, receive him:) And Jesus called Justus, who are of the circumcision: these are the only fellow workers unto the kingdom of God, who have been a comfort to me. Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect, and filled with all the will of God. For I bear him witness, that he hath a great zeal for you, and for them in Laodicea, and for them in Hierapolis. Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, salute you. Salute the brethren at Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the Church in his house. And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause it to be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea. And say to Archippus, Take heed that thou fulfil the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord. The salutation of Paul by my own hand, Be mindful of my bonds. Grace be with you.

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