

(Note: The following e-mail study-commentary by C J McKnight on the New Testament Book of **Colossians** covers the time it was begun on October 5, 2010 to December 20, 2010.)

Greetings in the lovely name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a joy to once again be able to send you a daily study. My health is much improved and I thank the Lord for it. May this study of Colossians be a blessing to you.

Yours in Christ,
C.Joe McKnight

COLOSSIANS 1

By way of introduction to the book of Colossians we would like to consider the parable told by the Lord Jesus concerning the varied results of the seed which was scattered abroad. Jesus made it very plain that the seed is the Word of God. Luke 8:11 In the parable He categorized humanity into four classifications. The hard of heart. The timid of heart. The foolish of heart and the wise of heart. Mt. 13:4-8

Those whose hearts are hard may at some time or another in their life time respond to the Gospel. Usually it is in a time of great need or sorrow. But once the crisis is past and all is well again they have no time for the Lord. They may even respond mentally to a well presented sermon but soon forget the importance of not only hearing but of following up in obedience to the Word. Their lives may be cluttered with many things even as the shoulders of some modern highways. The impact of the Word is soon removed from their hearts and memories by satanic powers. Luke 8:12

The seed which fell on the rock are those who suddenly become great enthusiasts having received not only the Word but also the joy of the Lord. However they are without the necessary depth of spiritual experience. Their root being on the rock and without soil they succumb to temptation and die spiritually. They fail to gain a foundation of the Word. Never attend Bible Study therefore have no depth nor spiritual comprehension. Luke 8:13

Thorns may be the most dangerous of all. They hear the Word but do not continue under the power of that Word. They go forth, where the thorns of life quickly overcome them. They become overwhelmed with the cares of

this life, job, cars, homes family all may become a thorns piercing their side and keeping them from growing spiritually. Ah yes, the pleasures of this life. There are more distractions offered modern man than at anytime in human history. Pleasure seeking has become a pastime for many, even Christians. However, such are deemed to be fruitless and therefore lose their salvation. Luke 8:14 Persistently there is a great challenge in the Word to seek first the kingdom of God. There is nothing in all the world that can be compared to the blessings which He will display in the lives of those who do His will. We are warned not to love the world nor the things that are in this world, for if we love the world then just think of the consequences; the love of the Father is not in us. 1 John 2:15

COLOSSIANS 2

The final classification is then divided into three separate groups, those whose measure up to thirty fold. The second are seen achieving a better standard. They reach twice as much as the first group. The third are able to attain one hundred fold or perfection. Mt. 13:8 This He emphasized by saying; "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Mt. 13:9 The writings of the Apostle Paul to the Colossians will emphasize the standard necessary to accomplish the goal of one hundred fold. One hundred fold is required to be a member of the Bride of Christ. It is the standard established for the last day church by the Lord and revealed throughout the writings of Paul. We are looking into the very ultimate of salvation when we reach the class of the hundred fold. The Lord will accomplish His mighty work in the church before the coming of the Lord Jesus.

The secret, the key to being one who produces one hundred fold is found in a complete commitment to Christ. A life which is in total submission to the Lord Jesus and His will. That goal will never be reached without the individual being able to say, I am crucified with Christ. Paul said concerning the Colossian church, "For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. 3:3 He was able to discern that there were those among them who had aspired to and had gained that glorious and wonderful fullness of the life of the Lord and were now living accordingly. However he was not deceived into thinking that all in the Colossian church had reached the same spiritual heights in Christ. We will note that to the under achievers there is on occasion a rebuke spoken to them.

If the New Birth produces a different life style how much more will there a a vast difference when the church knows what it is to be crucified with Christ. The victory of the Christian life is not to be found in a struggle where we try to do what is good and right while at the same time grappling with an uncircumcised heart. Righteousness cannot be achieved by the fleshly minded. Victory is found in the words Paul wrote to the Galatians; “they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the AFFECTIONS and LUSTS.” Gal. 5:24 A triumphant Christian life is only to be found when we follow the pattern established for us in the Word of the Lord. The seed that is sown is the Word of the Lord. Acceptance or rejection of the Word will determine ones position with the Lord. Those who are one hundred fold fruitful are living the Word daily. The letter to the Colossians presents a challenge to all who would call themselves Christians.

COLOSSIANS 3

The best of ground under certain circumstances can become dry and hardened. Therefore the warning of the Lord concerning a time of change. It is time to break up the fallow ground it is not enough just to plow the land but the clods must be broken up. Good ground demands attention and preparation for seeding and the ultimate purpose of a crop of that which has been sown. The prophet exhorted that the seed sown be that of righteousness. Hos. 10:12 The sowing of righteousness indicates that there is a reviving of the spirit and a reaction to the Word of the Lord resulting in a movement of holiness. If there is be good ground in the end of the age then righteousness must be the theme of the church. “Reap the fruit of unending love.” NIV. A translation such as that is very fitting for the end of the age in which we are living. The Bride of Christ will know His love in a manner which no other generation of Christians have known.

“The sinners in Zion are afraid.” A manifestation of righteousness from the Lord will expose the sinner and the hypocrite. We are living today in a day of exposure. There is the sound of an abundance of the rain of righteousness. Our God who is a flaming fire (Heb. 12:29) will visit His people with a baptism of fire, purifying those who desire to be made clean and destroying with that flaming fire those who maintain their sinful ways. As in Apostolic days, no man dare join himself with those who gathered in

Solomon's porch because of the mighty of the power of the Lord, so it will be in the last days. Only those who earnestly and sincerely are seeking the Lord dare become a part of the true church. Acts 5:13-14 The true gift of discernment will be manifest just as it was in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. Acts 5 Liars, and wrong doers will be exposed by the Spirit of the Lord and accordingly judged.

The prophet Jeremiah urged the people to properly prepare and plant the land. He also encouraged them to remove the foreskin of their hearts. A prophecy which is most definitely applicable for today. Jer. 4:3-4 The Word when it is obeyed will accomplish it's purpose. It will purify the hearts after the desire and righteousness of the Lord and not our own righteousness. Again, it is the visitation of fire. John said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire. Mt. 3:11 The fire will purify or annihilate. Anticipate a great visitation of fire throughout the church which will purify and sanctify those who seek after righteousness. He has promised that the Lord will circumcise their heart and that of their seed (the youth) and they will learn to love the Lord God, with the whole heart and with all their soul that they might live before the Lord. Deut. 30:6 The life of Christ is lived with enthusiasm and fervor or there is no life.

COLOSSIANS 4

There are a variety of ways by which Paul approached what has to be the most vital action which will produce the one hundred fold fruit bearing Christian. There is, to the flesh, the carnal man, what seems to be a great price to be paid for one to achieve that very highest of spiritual standing. To the church at Colossi he declared them to be complete in Christ. Made to be complete, a finished produce, "given fullness in Christ." Niv. Col. 2:10 The ultimate, full realization of having been made to be, what He is. Once having been fully joined to Him, we are privileged to participate, as the body, with Jesus who is the head, in all principality and power. His might, his strength, His rule becomes that of the full body. Each and every member ruling together with Him in His authority and absolute power. While we believe in a great last day revival, this achievement is not a time matter but a when situation. It was available to the Colossians, most certainly it is available today to those who will seek earnestly after the fullness that He proffers us.

To the Colossians and consequently to the church of today, it is a matter of “the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh.” Col. 3:11 That leaves no place for a people who sin every day in word thought or deed. To make such a confession of weakness is to declare that we are not following the Word of the Lord. Some of that which is to be “put off” is listed for us in Col. 3:8-9 This was the standard presented to them in that day and there is no record where we can find a change being made for this generation of Christians. “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today and for ever.” Heb. 13:8 Again He said; I Am the LORD, I change not.” Mal. 3:6 Therefore it behooves modern day Christianity to search out the foundations established by the Lord for the church of all ages.

There is a work of the Spirit of the Lord wrought in the lives of those who understand the purposes of the Lord in creating “a new man in Christ Jesus.” Each and every spiritual step we take from the new birth, to the ultimate perfection of the church must be fully carried out. Because the Spiritual aspect of water baptism is misunderstood the full work that must be accomplished by this act is not always performed. It is made to be a mere formality instead of a work of grace. To the Lord, water baptism is spiritual circumcision, which is performed in the spirit of the individual being baptized, a work “made without hands and is called the circumcision of Christ.” That which is enacted by the Spirit when one is properly baptized in water. Col. 2:11 How can we live in victory if we do not recognize the teachings of the Scriptures.

COLOSSIANS 5

The importance of the subject with which we are dealing cannot be over emphasized. In water baptism we are buried with Christ. That can only mean one thing and that is that we have been crucified with Him. The totality of the old life, the life of sin is left behind and we are raised together with Him into a complete newness of life. We are now declared risen with Him from the dead. Where we were dead in trespasses and sin, we are now to live the life of Christ in its fullness. Not only are we forgiven but we are cleansed from all unrighteousness for we have died with Him, being buried with Him and now are resurrected with Him. Col. 2:12-13 He has

made every possible provision whereby we live a victorious, conquering life, which is that new life found only in Him.

Every one who is to be a one hundred fold Christian and is spiritually minded, will know that they have been crucified with Christ. The old man, the body of sin is destroyed , “that we should not serve sin..” Rom. 6:6 How straight forward and plain is the Word of the Lord. Everyone who would call themselves by the name of Christ must know that, “they are Christ’s and have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” Gal. 5:24 Can we truly say that concerning our own spiritual experience that we know exactly what the words of Paul mean therefore we are dead to the world. Because we are dead, we no longer live after the former pattern of life. Anyone who is dead will not respond to the call of sin of any kind. How can they, they are dead. The result of being crucified with Christ is “that we should not serve sin.” Rom. 6:6

We know that there is a challenge issued by the Word of the Lord whereby it is possible to live without sin. Jesus taught that “whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin.” John 1:34 Then He promised freedom from sin which is the free gift of the Son of God. “If the Son therefore shall make you free. Ye shall be free indeed.” John 1:36 Therefore no longer the servant of sin but liberated, set free from the bondage of iniquity and sin. “For he that is dead is freed from sin.” Rom. 6:7 Righteousness, His righteousness, the righteousness of the Law is now made manifest in those who will commit their life to the walk of the Spirit and who will abandon following the ways of the flesh. Rom. 8:4 The ability of the Lord to completely transform our life has never diminished. His desire toward His church is that, “now having been made free from sin, and become the servants of God. We have our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.” Rom. 6:22 He is calling today’s church to walk in the light of the Word and fulfill His will.

COLOSSIANS 6

Very definitely when we come to Christ certain elements of our past life in sin are no longer attractive to us. If some, then why not all? Although temptations will never cease as long as we are in this life, we need not yield to them. Temptation is not sin. To act on the temptation is when sin will take over. While Paul considered himself crucified with Christ, he still lived,

but now the life he lived was the life of Christ. A very real and wonderful life in the power and spirit of the Lord. Gal. 2:20 He considered the Colossian's to have reached the same high spiritual standard for he wrote to them that they were dead and their life was hid with Christ in God. Col. 3:3 He reminded them that they had been spiritually dead in the uncircumcision of their flesh, but now, they had been quickened together with Christ and all their iniquities had been forgiven. Col. 2:13 This quickening or resurrection is not only for the future but there is a quickening which accompanies the crucifixion of the flesh, the carnal mind. The life of the one hundred fold is a life that has been quickened together with Christ. Eph. 2:5

The things we seek after in this life witness to the depth of our spiritual experience. Paul writing to the Colossians gave them a very direct and positive word of instruction. If we have been truly crucified with Christ and are now living His life, the goal established will be toward those things which are above or spiritual. Our affections, our driving and all consuming desire, will be on that which is from heaven and not on the things of this world. Col. 3:1-2 We will find, that as we go through the book of Colossians, that Paul challenged them with some straightforward words of exhortation. He also presented them with some glorious and wonderful rewards and demonstrations of the magnificent blessings of the Lord when they met the criteria.

In his introduction of himself he declared his Apostleship for he had received the office by the will and call of the Lord. Col. 1:1 His office and title was not something of pride to him but a certain knowledge of the call and purpose of the Lord. 1 Cor. 1:1 While using the same language to the Romans he identified himself as the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 1:1 Although his calling was one of position and authority, his hearts attitude followed the pattern established by the Lord Jesus was that of a lowly servant. He also declared himself to be an Apostle to the Gentiles but always carried a great burden for his own race. Rom. 11:13

COLOSSIANS 7

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”. Col. 1:2 A common salutation used by the Apostle which is more of a prayer and invocation of grace and peace than just a formal greeting.

The fact that he would speak concerning his constant prayers for them showed beyond the shadow of a doubt his heart felt concern for them. Their spirituality displayed by their love of the brethren was also impressive to him. They had embraced the truth and they were bearing spiritual fruit for the kingdom of God. They also embraced the teaching of the Word brought to them by Epaphras. A people who hunger for the word are a people blessed of the Lord. Col. 1:3-8

Paul's prayers and great desire will lead them into a vastly deeper life in Christ. These things were not only available to them but are still in God's storehouse for our benefit and usage. As a matter of fact, they are vital to any Christian who would have a deeper relationship with the Lord Jesus. What more does a parent want for their child than for that child to be able to grasp their will for them. How much more the Lord. We can and must know the will of the Lord in all things. To be filled with the knowledge of His will is to have the same communication which exists between the Father and the Son of God. Jesus reacted according to that which the Father showed Him. John 5:18 This perfection of communication is directed by the Spirit of the Lord inasmuch as it is spiritual understanding. Without His Spirit there can be no comprehension of the will of the Lord. More importantly the ability to possess "all wisdom." To be exercised of such tremendous wisdom is more than just being filled with the Spirit, it is possessing the gifts of the Spirit where the individual may say, "We have the mind of Christ." 1 Cor. 2:16

This is one of those deeper things that the Apostle refers to in his letter to the Colossians. What a glorious relationship must exist between the Lord and His people for this to be made evident in the church. It is not something that is difficult to achieve. Paul showed to us the way of having this wisdom present with us. "Let the Word of Christ DWELL IN YOU, RICHLY IN ALL WISDOM;" Col. 3:16 Thus making it very obvious that the way to gain the wisdom of the Lord is through the Spirit and the Word. The Word is not just a book but it is His very presence, for Jesus is the Word made flesh. In the pre-creation He was the WORD and was made flesh for the redemption of mankind. The Bible is more than ink on paper, It LIVES.

COLOSSIANS 8

Where there is a lack of wisdom the promise of the Lord is that it will be supplied to those who ask for it, in an abundant supply. Those asking for the wisdom of the Lord are not corrected or dealt with sternly because of their lack but contrary wise are blessed with heavenly wisdom. James 1:5 All who come to Christ are but babes and as such are expected to increase in wisdom and knowledge for the wisdom which He gives is from above, it is heavenly, spiritual and is foreign to human understanding. It is pure, true wisdom. Producing an attitude and nature of peace in all those who receive it. It is likewise the kind of wisdom which makes one to be submissive and not overbearing. Of a peaceable nature and spirit. Productive and fruitful, surely the one hundred fold type of person. Does not show favoritism with family members nor with friends and members of the body of Christ. Without hypocrisy, open heartedly manifesting true Christianity. James 3:17

A people of spiritual understanding. Fully comprehending the will and purpose of the Lord as it is revealed in His Word. We refer again to the fact that the Apostle declared that the possession of wisdom and understanding was to be in full measure. "all wisdom and understanding." Through the Spirit and the Word He has made it possible that we may have the mind of Christ. 1 Cor. 2:16 We are not the finished product. The Lord has much more that He desires to work out in His church. Rest assured that before He comes He will have a people in the earth who have assimilated His very likeness and being. The people of the one hundred fold will bear His image and nature. The depths of the high calling in Christ have not yet fully dawned on the church of today. The one hundred fold people are to be "partakes of the divine nature." 2 Peter 1:4 He will accomplish His will in a people whom He will make like unto Himself in these last days. There are experiences in Him, that we have never dreamed of yet to be revealed in the church.

As with all things spiritual it soon becomes evident that an individual has reached a certain high plateau of spiritual growth for it is seen in their walk before the Lord and consequently before all. They become fruitful in good works wrought in them by the Spirit of the Lord. The power of the Lord, the anointing of the Holy Spirit rests upon them and they are blest of the Lord while becoming a blessing to others. They have not reached a place of

spiritual stagnation but continue to increase in the knowledge of the Lord. Col. 1:10 That increase is both, in knowing Him more fully and the ability to learn of Him, His wisdom and knowledge.

COLOSSIANS 9

The desire of the Lord is to impart spiritual understanding to His people, that they might fully comprehend all the power of the Spirit, so that He could perform His work in our hearts. The Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal the Son of God to us and to give us a full and complete understanding of who and what Jesus is to be to mankind. Jesus called Him the Spirit of truth and stated that He would take of the things of Christ and show them to the church. John 16:13-15 Not only does He reveal Christ but as He works in our hearts He reproduces the life of Christ in the people of the Lord. He is the vital link between human kind and the Lord. He enables us to be like Christ. Col. 1:10 A people who are fruitful trees manifesting good works and are constantly increasing in their understanding of the Lord and His Word. The beauty of His work in the church is the absolute unity that He will produce among a people who are submitted to Him. The church of maturity will fulfill the desire of the Apostle as expressed in His letter to the church Philippi that they strive together in the Spirit and be of one spirit and one mind for the faith and unity which is found in the Lord Jesus. Phil. 1:27

The words of the Apostle indicate that he expected constant and consistent manifestation in their spiritual walk of the fullness of the power of the glory of the Lord. The very real demonstration of the might and strength of the Lord. This was not just a manifestation of the glory of the Lord which was to be found in the early church. The possibilities expressed by Paul are for the entire church age. As much so in our day as in their day. Perhaps there is a much greater need in the end of the age than in the beginning. Where there is a need for longsuffering and patience it is realized through the power of the Spirit, who is the source of all joy. In trial and tribulations there can be an overwhelming gladness and rejoicing in our hearts, in spite of the circumstances, if He reigns within. Col. 1:11

The mercy and grace demonstrated by the Father will elevate us to become "partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Col. 1:12 This is

a full and absolute inheritance where all receive the measure of inheritance according to their spiritual standing. Remember there are thirty fold, sixty fold and one hundred fold Christians. While all will inherit the glorious kingdom of the Lord there will be those who receive a greater inheritance because of their spirituality. For instance the Bride of Christ. Inasmuch as she is the Bride she will obviously be in much closer association with Christ. Not to worry. None will be disappointed with their inheritance.

COLOSSIANS 10

The inheritance of the saints is one that is restricted to those who are children of God through faith in Christ. It will be distributed to those who have put on Christ. In other words, have a full and profound relationship with the Lord Jesus. Gal. 3:26-28 The inheritance is not distributed on a racial basis for all who are in Christ are made to be one family in Christ Jesus. If they are in Christ, then they are truly Abraham's seed and will receive the fullness of the inheritance prepared for them from the foundation of the world. (Mt. 25:34) That which is to be inherited is the kingdom of God. Except one be born again He cannot even see the kingdom of God, John 3:3, the unsaved are totally unaware that such a kingdom exists.

The inheritance is that of a spiritual seed and is not granted to the natural seed. The promise given to Abraham was four hundred and thirty years before the Law. The promise precedes the Law and is still in effect for the promised seed was Christ Jesus. Gal. 3:16 The promise, the covenant given Abraham was confirmed in Jesus. The promise is eternal while the Law was added because of the sin of the people of God and was fulfilled and nullified when Christ shed His blood for our redemption. Therefore the inheritance is not after the Law but of the promise. Gal. 3:17-18 Unless the natural takes on the life of the spiritual man there is no inheritance available for them. Ye must be born again. It all begins with the new birth. Without it none shall inherit the kingdom of God.

Whether we are referring to the Kingdom of God on earth or the eternal kingdom of God in a new heavens and new earth, sinners are excluded from the kingdom. To be a citizen of either, the person must be born again.

1 Cor. 6:9 The list given by the Apostle pretty well covers the sin's of mankind. But, that is what we were, now the heirs of the kingdom have been sanctified, cleansed, washed in the blood of Christ and have been made holy. They are justified, the sin matter has been fully settled, they are no longer guilty of past sins but now stand just and righteous in the sight of the Lord. A work accomplished because His name is the name of salvation and justification. It is a work accomplished in the heart and inner most being of every and all who will come to God, by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord has standards which must be met by all who would inherit anything at all from Him. 1 Cor. 6:11-13 The Spirit is He who bears witness in our hearts that we stand before the Lord in His righteousness. Seeing that we are children of the Most High we have the assurance that there is an eternal inheritance awaiting us. There may be a price that is paid, for some will suffer with and for Him, but their inheritance is settled and sure. Rom. 8:16-17

COLOSSIANS 11

Redemption is necessary when a person or item of some sort is held captive by an evil force or group. A ransom is most often required for the return and freedom of that which is held captive. All the sons of Adam and his descendents are born under the curse of sin. Ps. 51:5 Therefore the sentence of death was passed from generation to generation, upon all men. Rom. 5:12 All have gone astray. All have become wicked. There is not even one who may claim to be righteous. Rom. 3:12 All need the redemption that has been made possible and paid for by the shedding of the blood of Christ.

The blood of a child originates from the genes of the Father. Thus, the blood flowing in the veins of the Lord Jesus was the very blood of God. The only way of redemption is through the shed blood of the Son of God. No one may be saved by works of righteousness. The washing, the cleansing of His blood is the only way. Titus 3:5 Christ willingly shed His most precious blood that He might redeem mankind from iniquity and purify a people unto Himself. Titus 2:14 That means a people who live above the ravages of sin and iniquity. They are to be a holy people unto the Lord. The final goal of the Lord Jesus is to complete the purchase of a people who

are called the church of God. Acts 20:28 Not an organization but an organism which will be the Bride of Christ.

Among other things Jesus is the image of the invisible God. Col. 1:15 In this instance the image is not of wood, stone or some other material but the Son of God, who is the exact likeness of His Father. Because of that, He could say that if any man has seen me He has seen the Father. John 14:9 He was and is not the Father, but the Father was in Him and He was in the Father. John 14:10-11 It must be remembered that God is a Spirit. John 4:24 Consequently of a vastly different composition from mankind. The only physical body that God has is the resurrected body of the Lord Jesus. The fullness of the Godhead dwells in the Lord Jesus. Col. 2:9 Jesus persistently honored the Father and declared that all the works that He wrought were delivered Him of His Father. Luke 10:22 He spoke the words of the Father. John 8:28 The works which He performed were according to that which was shown Him of His Father. John 10:32 So intense is the relationship of the Godhead that Jesus was able to say, "I and my Father are one." John 10:30 A unity, a harmony that makes it difficult for some to understand the composition of the Godhead. However, if we take the volume of the scriptures we are able to see the absolute unity and at the same time we may discern the particular office which is delegated to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. 1 John 5:7

COLOSSIANS 12

Reasons for giving thanks unto the Lord. In a world of ungrateful people it is an excellent practice to learn to show our whole hearted gratitude unto the Lord for His manifold blessings which He daily bestows upon us. Besides making us to inherit all that He is, He has delivered us from the power of darkness. A work of deliverance that has been accomplished. Therefore if we walk with Him and live His life we are set free from all the works of darkness. There is no place for sinning saints. His work and power of deliverance is full and absolute. We may take advantage now of a completed work of deliverance. Those whom the Son sets free are free indeed. John 8:36 Jesus told the woman taken in adultery to "go and sin no more." John 8:11 Surely He would not charge her to measure up to a sinless life that was an impossibility.

John in his first epistle boldly stated that “he who sins is of the devil.”

1 John 3:8 Jesus came into the world that He might destroy the works of the devil. Strong but straight forward words. A subject that all need to consider. Paul declared that those who live after the dictates and desires of the flesh will die. There is no evidence of any difference made between the saved and the unsaved who sin. Sin remains sin, regardless of who the person is. He also showed the way of complete victory over the sin problem and that is by living in the Spirit. He, the Spirit will enable us to mortify or die to those things which hinder spiritual progress in the Christian life. Rom. 8:13 There is a degree of sin that brings about total separation from all things that are eternal. A place where there is no more possibility of repentance and being joined again unto Christ. Heb. 6:4-6 We will see this kind of a situation develop more and more as we draw closer to the end of the age. The deliverance wrought by the Spirit of the Lord in our hearts can be full and complete and it should be.

Not only has He delivered us but He has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. Not will but has, present tense we are afforded the privilege of enjoying the benefits of the kingdom. Col. 1:13b The benefits of the kingdom are made available to those who will live and pattern their lives after the example established by the Lord Jesus. There is a spiritual place in Christ Jesus where “all things” are bestowed on the believer and that in great abundance. 1 Tim. 1:7 Not the things of the world but those treasures which are to be found in the Lord Jesus. There is no greater joy in this life than to come into possession of those things which are eternal and everlasting. Col. 3:1

COLOSSIANS 13

Those who are in Christ Jesus are no longer the servants of sin. They have now been translated into His kingdom. Col.1:13 If we sin, then we are brought into subjection to sin. Paul wrote that we have been made free from sin. Deliverance is found in obedience to the Word of the Lord. We are loosed from sin to become the servants of righteousness. The power of a life surrendered to the will and purpose of the Lord brings liberty and freedom from the bondages of a life that is lived in sin. Rom. 6:17-18 Truth is found in the Lord Jesus. John 8:32 When the Son of God sets one free they are indeed liberated from sin. Rom. 8:36 We are exhorted to stand, to

maintain the deliverance which has been wrought in us and not to become entangled again with that from which we have been delivered. It is very apparent that the liberty obtained in Christ was to be maintained and even increased. Gal. 5:1

Fruitfulness, spiritual growth with the goal in mind of reaching the glorious measure and stature of Christ is the desire, the purpose of the Lord for His people. In His parable of the seed He made reference to the seed which fell among thorns and then explained it's meaning to them. Very explicitly He made clear the meaning of the thorns. Mark 4:19 They are the cares of this world. Those things which take the place of our time, our mind and heart away from things which are spiritual. Frequently they are the things over which we lose sleep. There is no end of them if we let them overcome us. Then He declared that a thorn could be the all consuming desire to be rich. He stated that riches are deceitful, deceiving one into thinking that once they possess riches they will bring happiness. All they can do is to add to the cares of this life. Thirdly, He mentioned the lust of other things. That opens the door wide for any and all other works of unrighteousness. Therefore their life becomes unfruitful and empty.

The apex of the Christian life is to be found in the hundred fold group. These are they who will be in the Bride of Christ in the end of the age. They are fruitful. They will reach the perfections which are found in the Lord Jesus. They embrace the whole of the doctrine of Christ and go on to perfection. Heb. 6:1 It was the desire of the Apostle Paul that they might present all unto the eternal presence of the Lord, in absolute perfection. Col. 1:28 A mature Christian is one who is living in victory and a life which emulates Christ. They live "perfect and complete in all the will of God." Col. 4:12 What a challenge the Word presents to us to upgrade our spiritual life that we might be like Him.

COLOSSIANS 14

The Lord Jesus is acknowledged as the creator of all things whether they are heavenly or earthly. The very order that we find in creation is absolute evidence that a divine intelligence was involved. The manner of life lived today on the earth is the result of the intelligence of mankind. None of it

happened by itself but was conceived in the mind of some individual and then made or constructed. The heavens and the earth in all of their creation and order require the thoughts and capabilities of an extremely intelligent being and only He who is the eternal Word qualifies. Heb. 3:4 From the invisible to the visible all exist because of Christ. Even to the powers that politically control the life of mankind. He places in power those who will fulfill His purposes, mostly unbeknown to the persons in leadership. Col. 1:16

He was before all, eternal in His being and existence. With Him there is no point of beginning. He has always existed. Prior to His birth as the Word of God, now as the everlasting Son of God. The Word was made flesh. John 1:14 That which was eternal became mortal for the sole purpose of redeeming mankind. What a extreme price He paid for the salvation of humanity laying aside His eternal deity as an act of love. Col. 1:17 He is the force, the power, the intellect that maintains the extreme order of every star and atom keeping them all working exactly as they should. The very fact that all things maintain their proper place and arrangement should be proof enough that there is a great and mighty God. Man stands before the Lord without an excuse for his refusal to acknowledge Him as Lord and Savior because of all that He has so wonderfully made. Rom. 1:20

Of great importance, in particular to the church, is the truth that He is the Head of the body of believers. Therefore the body is governed by Him. What a marvelous church He would have were all members of the body not only connected to Him but directed by Him, who is the source of a proper revelation of the Word of the Lord. With the physical body it is imperative that the body closely follow the instructions of the mind, the head. How much more so is this true of the spiritual. He is the beginning of a new race of people. The first resurrected from the dead with an eternal resurrected body. All other inheriting eternal life come through Him by way of the new birth then the ultimate change or resurrection with a new body, a spiritual, eternal body just like His. He is above all. He is supreme and will be eternally recognized as the King of kings and Lord of lords. Col. 1:18

COLOSSIANS 15

The relationship between the Lord Jesus and His church is to attain unto the very epitome of love. The totality of the human being is to respond to the love which has been demonstrated by the Lord Jesus with “all thine heart” That is the full and complete emotion of the heart as it is stirred by the Word and the Spirit. “With all thy soul” The motivating factor of all human feelings. With “all thy might” Strong translated the word might as being vehemently. In other words with the whole strength of intercession or travail. It is equal to the meaning of prayers and supplications with strong crying, which was a part of the spiritual life of the Lord Jesus. Heb. 5:7

A strong inward cry of love for true love to be fulfilled. There is no love like His love and we are to participate in the completeness of His love. There is an emptiness in the inner being of every child of God that can only be satisfied by partaking of the fullness of His love. Until then there will always be a cry in the inner man that we might know Him more completely and fully.

The ultimate of His love as it is destined to be manifest in the people of the Lord is when they are “filled up with to all the fullness of God” Eph. 3:19 The Lord Jesus in order to reach the comprehensiveness of the divine purpose of His life, death and resurrection must have a Bride who is exactly like Himself. One which has reached a place of righteousness and purity equal to very God Himself. She is to be the “fullness of Him” for she too is filled with all the fullness of God. She will complement Him as They two shall become one. Eph. 5:31 This is His Bride which He has purchased with His own blood. Acts 20:28 She is a true Bride with a marriage that is eternal in which all the divine purposes of the Lord will be accomplished. It is the most vital part of the redemption of mankind. She is the one hundred fold.

The Lord Jesus is the door of reconciliation between the Lord and man as well as race with race, Jew and Gentile. Racism cannot be harbored where there is a true revelation of the redemptive powers which are found in the Lord Jesus. The walls of separation He has destroyed and has made all men to be one who are in Christ Jesus. Past prejudices are laid aside by the power of the Gospel of Christ. The new creature, those having received

Christ have laid the old life aside and now recognize that we are all one in Christ. This is done in honor of the one who shed His most precious blood on the tree for the redemption and reconciliation of mankind with the Lord. Where there was enmity there now is peace, love and brotherly kindness. Eph. 2:14-19

COLOSSIANS 16

The good pleasure of the Father was and is that all fullness of the Godhead dwell in Christ. Col. 1:19 That is the reason Jesus could say that if any man knows the Father he knows Me he knows the Father and if he knows the Father he knows me. A complete and satisfactory understanding of the Godhead can only be gained by a revelation, which is the gift of the Son. Mt. 11:25-27 For instance when Jesus said that He and the Father were one, John 10:30 what He was saying was that they are of one another and are a unit, not one and the same person. God (the Father) who is Spirit, by the Spirit was in Christ (2 Cor. 5:19) even as the Holy Spirit made His abode within Him. Therefore the fullness of the Godhead was in Christ Jesus.

The very best example of the trinity of the Godhead is you. Mankind is triune in nature and being. We are body, soul and spirit. Three fold yet one person. We were created in His image and in His likeness. Gen. 1:26 Therefore we are each and everyone of us, one person but possessing three entities, body soul and spirit. Each separate, and identifiable as such, yet one individual. The body is the house or shell. The real man is inside. The soul life, the life of the flesh is in the blood. Lev. 17:11 The spirit is that unseen entity which departs at death. It is God breathed, and is known as the breath of life. Gen. 2:7 Incidentally, the Lord is still breathing into the spirit of mankind in the new birth and the baptism of the Spirit. John 20:22 Thus we see the triad which constitutes every individual of the human race. It is a witness and testimony of the existence of God which we see every day of our lives. God is and is a rewards those who seek Him with all diligence. Heb. 11:6

If we are saved and love the Lord and His Word then we must accept at face value the statements of His Word, such as; "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2:9 He is the only physical body of the

Lord and the word physical must be emphasized. Jesus was as humane as anyone else born into this world can be. He was known as the Son of man. Mt. 13:37 He was made subject to every temptation common to man, yet was triumphant over everything which the devil threw at Him. Luke 4:1-13 The place of absolute, complete victory is to be perfectly joined to Christ. For it is the place where we are made to be "complete in Him." Col. 2:10 The finished product will be the Bride of Christ. Those who are counted among the one hundred fold fruit producing category. From the beginning the Lord has had a project in mind and that is to produce out of redeemed sinners a complete and beautiful Bride for the Son and He will accomplish His purpose.

COLOSSIANS 17

Peace through His blood, peace with the Lord because, peace with our fellow human beings and most of all, peace with ourselves knowing that our sins have been purged by His once for all work of atonement. Col. 1:20 His blood cleanses from sin, not only forgiving but eradicating the desire to sin from our hearts. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7 Not only the forgiveness of past sins but a purging a purifying from the commission of sin. The implantation of His word in our hearts is the element that keeps one from sin. Ps. 119:11 Paul writing of the victorious life said; "let not sin reign in your mortal body." Rom. 6:12 furthermore that, "sin shall not have dominion over you." Rom. 6:14 Thus declaring that there is a life in Christ where the Christian is more than a conqueror over the sin and iniquity so prevailing in this world.

The death, burial, resurrection and ascension into heaven of the Lord Jesus is the assurance that our sins have been remitted and that the redeemed are truly reconciled to the Lord. Those who have been reconciled have the responsibility of taking the Word of reconciliation to the rest of mankind. 2 Cor. 5:19-21 We are now Ambassadors of Christ to the world with the divine message of the possibility of all being brought into fellowship with the Lord through Jesus the Christ. For, the sinless one became sin with all of its corruption that those who believe might be transformed into the righteousness of the Lord which is found in the Lord Jesus.. The difference between sin and righteousness is like day and night. His righteousness when dwelling in His church will keep from all sin.

Sin alienates. God who is righteousness, cannot look upon sin, so much so that He "is angry with the wicked every day." Ps. 7:11 When Jesus was nailed to the tree, the Father turned out the lights and there was darkness all over the land. For three hours there was total darkness. Mt. 27:45 The Sun of righteousness was made to be the sin bearer of the whole of humanity, from Adam right down the last who will be born into this world. He not only paid the penalty but He literally became sin for us. The entire corruption of six thousand years of sin was heaped upon Him. That day, the most unique unity found in the Godhead between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit was shattered. Because of the filthiness of sin, the Father had to forsake His Son and leave Him hanging on the cross as the sin bearing Lamb of God. Mt. 27:46 It is impossible for human kind to comprehend the terrific price that was paid to redeem mankind. It was far more than just dying on the cross. The agony, the suffering of the crucifixion was experienced as a dagger to the heart of the entire Godhead.

COLOSSIANS 18

Works of unrighteousness separate the Lord from mankind and cause them to be enemies. Col. 1:21 Carnal thinking, the mind of carnality, makes one to be the enemy of the Lord. Rom. 8:7 Thus those who live according to the dictates of the flesh cannot be pleasing unto the Lord. It makes no difference whether the claim to be a Christian or not, to live according to the dictates of the lusts of flesh places one in the category of the Lord's enemy. Rom. 8:8 His righteous nature will not permit Him to associate with unrighteousness. It must be understood that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. His kingdom is one of absolute purity. Nothing that contaminates will be able to make it's way into His kingdom. 1 Cor. 6:9

The death of the Lord Jesus will manifest itself in His people by a spirit of holiness whereby they may be presented to the Lord complete without charges of any kind, faultless and beyond reproach. Thus demonstrating the power of the gospel in a full and complete deliverance from all that is offensive to the Lord. Col. 1:22 This is the reward of continuing in the faith, the fullness of the doctrine of Christ. Demonstrating the ability of the Lord Jesus to deliver from all sin and bondage. The goal of the gospel, the faith

is that we hold fast to that which we received at the beginning of our Christian journey faithfully unto the end. That when the will of the Lord is consummated in us we might be made partakers of Christ. A case of being all that He wants us to be. Heb. 3:14 Those who are justified will live by the faith of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus. That Lord has said; that if any man draw back He will have no pleasure in him. In other words, he does not become a partaker of the ultimate plan of the Lord. Heb. 10:38

There are those who have started the walk of faith and have been turned aside by the call of the flesh and the world. These lose their hope. Col. 1:13 I have even met those who vehemently deny that they ever had an experience in Christ, when in all reality they had a wonderful salvation and a tremendous change of heart but because they did not continue in Christ became a branch plucked from the tree, dried up and cast into the burning. John 15:6 The history of the church tells us of those who were deeply involved in the spiritual activities of Christ but ended up even as a suicide such as Judas. Mt. 27:5 Then there is Demas whom Paul said forsook him having loved this present world. 2 Tim. 4:10 We have also Ananias and Sapphira who lied to the Holy Spirit and were judged because of their lying. Acts. 5: 1-10 They could well have given any portion of the sale of their property but they said that what was laid at the Apostles feet was the full price. Yes, it is possible to lose the best thing in this world, salvation in Christ.

COLOSSIANS 19

“If you continue” Col 1:23 Thus showing the necessity of continuous growth and advancement in the life of the Spirit. Maintaining the standard of life that is demonstrated in the scriptures. Building on the fundamentals of the gospel, being steadfast in the truth as it is revealed in the Word. “Be not moved away” The second indication in this one verse showing that where there is a forsaking of the truth and sin enters in there can be a loss of spiritual well being. “If we hold fast” that which was received at the beginning steadfast until the end. Heb. 3:14 It is not how quickly nor how spectacularly one begins a race but it is the final step crossing the finish line that counts as a victory. Not only are we to run to win but we must finish the race as one who has overcome all obstacles.

Paul, as a minister of Christ carried a great burden and concern for the whole of the body of Christ. He paid a great price and much persecution for his faith in the Son of God and for his zeal in establishing churches where ever he went. He was a man who paid a price and suffered not only the sufferings of Christ but also the agony experienced by the churches which he established. Col. 1:24 More than any other we find him periodically referring to the sufferings of Christ which he himself had partaken of by the moving of the Spirit in his life. His strong desire was to fully know Christ. Thus, to enter in to His sufferings by being made conformable to His death and resurrection. Today we want Christ to make us comfortable, not conformable. There is a place in our walk with the Lord Jesus where we can experience His death and subsequent resurrection by a visit to the cross wrought in us by the Spirit of the Lord. Phil. 3:10 Such a thing is far beyond the capacity for the vast majority of Christendom to understand in our day. There are thirty fold, sixty fold and one hundred fold Christians. Surely the one hundred fold will measure up to the standard established by the pioneers of the gospel such as Paul.

The Lord had allotted to Paul a period of time in which he was to declare the Word of the Lord and he made good usage of it. He spoke of his ministry as the revelation of a mystery which had been hidden for all the generations of time but was now being made manifest to the people of the Lord.

COLOSSIANS 20

The Apostle discovered the hidden mystery of the Christ of God. Col. 1:26 While the scriptures speak of many hidden things, secrets which are unknown to mankind, this is now an open and revealed mystery. There are hidden things in the Lord and also hidden or mysteries of unrighteousness to be found in the Word. Strangely enough both require the revelation of the Spirit in order to understand them. Paul came to a knowledge of the mystery of godliness or the comprehension of the being and nature of God, (1 Tim. 3:16), by revelation. Eph. 3:3 Even in our day there are still those who do not have a Biblical concept of the nature and character of the Lord. There are to be no secrets or hidden things between the Lord and His saints for the secrets are now made manifest.

The ultimate objective of the Lord in the revealed secret contained in the mystery of the ages is that the fullness of the glory of the Lord will be resident in His people. Col. 1:27 If the Lord glorified the Tabernacle and the Temple with the visible shekinah glory of the Lord, how much more will he glorify His church with the absolute fullness of His divine glory, which will be bestowed upon her without measure. The church is His Temple, the place of His abode. The body and the spirit are His and He will be glorified in her. 1 Cor. 6:19-20

The glory of the mystery is Christ in you. This is not in a casual manner but as the Father was made manifest through the Lord Jesus, so He will be made known through His church. Other than in name, the church which will become His Bride is extremely different than the church of today. Factually, she is living the "Christ life." She will exercise all the spiritual requirements of righteousness and holiness, being filled with all the fullness of the Lord. Eph. 3:19 In her is to be fully accomplished the mystery of Christ and His church. Eph. 5:32 This church and her subsequent marriage to Christ is the consummation of the plan of the Lord. In her He will have a people totally dedicated to Him and His cause. Their marriage will be a very real event. As the Father was married to Israel and the product of that marriage was the Christ Child, so the marriage of Christ and His church will be a fruitful event. Not many in today's church have a revelation of the crowning mystery of the ages. Yet it is plainly seen in the Word of the Lord, in prophecy, also in type and shadow. The lives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are overflowing with shadows of this end time event, i.e. the marriage of Christ and His church.

COLOSSIANS 21

There can be no statement of more importance to the church than that which the Apostle made concerning our relationship with the Lord Jesus which is "Christ in you." Col. 1:27 for in order to be a member of the body of Christ, He must dwell within. Christ is the name of the Spirit for it means anointing or unction. Jesus said; He is the Spirit of truth and dwells with you and shall be in you. John 14:17 The measure of His presence must be the same as that which was resident in the Lord Jesus. Furthermore the promise is not limited to the presence of the Holy Spirit but includes the

Father and the Son thus involving the entire Godhead. John 14:29 That will be the fulfillment of both the mystery and the hope of the glory of the Lord. It is His full intent to produce that glorious church in these last days. These people who comprise that true church of the last days will be a people who totally possess the love of the Lord. Just think, they love with the same intensity that is found in Him, they love with His love. John 17:26

The beauty of such a spiritual status is also seen in the sinless nature to be found in this body of believers. With the constant dwelling presence of Christ, sin can not prevail. The old carnal nature is totally dead and the Spirit, which makes His abode in those who have given their life completely over to Christ, rules in righteousness. Rom. 8:10 Consider carefully the expressed desire of the Lord and then what it means when He has accomplished that desire in His people. He wants to dwell in them to such a degree that He is actually walking in them in the depths of His love. Gal. 2:20

How completely and beautifully the Apostle expressed what is to be the glorious and wonderful experience of the Bride, eternally. She is the temple of the Lord., most definitely a mutual worship. 2 Cor. 6:16 She is built expressly to become the habitation of the Lord. Eph. 2:22 The rapport between the Lord Jesus and His Bride is far greater than the most intense love that has ever existed between a man and a woman. Their love is of the most holy kind. They are of the same spirit and divine nature. She is His body in all reality and is bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh as were Adam and Eve who are a type of Christ and His church. The first couple lost what is gained back in the marriage of Christ and His church. They were of this earth but Christ, the last Adam and His Bride are of the new heavens and new earth and will have gained back the righteousness which was lost when Adam and Eve sinned in the garden.. Rev. 21:1

COLOSSIANS 22

Jesus declared Himself to be the way, the truth and the LIFE. John 14:6 Life is lived in Christ and in Him alone. Physical, natural life is mere existence when compared to the eternal life that is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul, as does everyone who is born of the Spirit, was living the Christ life, which is Christ living in the Spirit of those who have consecrated

their life to the Lord. It is a life lived by the faith of the Son of God. Notice, it is His faith not ours. When He dwells within He make manifest that life which springs from Him. Ah, but there is a secret to obtaining the type of life of which the Apostle is speaking. "I am crucified with Christ." Gal. 2:20 This is not a minor thing but is an imperative if we are to have the fullness of the life of Christ manifest in us. The true church will fully comprehend this and will be able to make the same statement with Paul.

Jesus was born of a woman therefore was in the likeness of sinful flesh. as the Son of man. He was subjected to every type of sin that is to be found among men, yet He was without sin. Heb. 4:15 It is not a matter of whether or not He could sin but the fact is that He did not sin, though thoroughly tempted. He was unique in His make up, being the Son of Man as well as the Son of God. In Him was combined the two natures. Being victorious over the temptations administered to Him by Satan, Jesus was in full control and continued to triumph over every power of the devil as the Son of man. Luke 4:1-13 Having defeated the devil he was able to demonstrate the glory and wonders of a victorious life, though still a man. He had power while still on earth to forgive sins and to heal the sick, though not yet crucified. Mark 2:9-10

Calvary was another great victory for through His death, burial and resurrection He has been eternally glorified. John 12:23 Now, the beauty of all this is that we, when we were dead in trespasses and sin were "quickened together with Christ" Eph. 2:5 Furthermore He has raised us up together with Him and even now, has made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2:6 All this leads us to a ministry which replicates the ministry of Christ. "Greater works than these shall he do." John 14:12 In order to work His works we must be filled with the same spirit and nature that was manifest in Him. Some day soon we will learn more fully what it takes to fulfill His instructions given to the church and show to the world that He lives on high but He also lives in His church.

COLOSSIANS 23

One beautiful thing about the Lord and His Word is that He is always ready to make known its depths of meaning to those who earnestly seek after it.

This is especially true of the hope which is to be found in the Word of the Lord. It is a portion of the riches of the Lord which He bestows upon those who desire to know Him better. His blessed impartation to His church is the glory, the shining presence of Himself. Col. 1:27 The word hope, as used in the Bible is a strong word for it enjoys the promises of the Lord to fulfill His Word to the fullest. The things hoped for as promised by the Lord are not items which may or may not be consummated. Very definitely every ray of hope planted in the hearts of His people will be satisfied, even to the literal presence of that glory which lightens the throne of the Lord. He will have a church of His glory. Eph. 5:27 This will take place in this life as the Bride comes together.

The messages preached by the Apostle were Christ centered. His ministry also was one of teaching, there is nothing better for the Christian than to receive true teaching of the meat of the Word. If it is necessary for success in today's world that one has a degree of higher learning, how much more important is it that every Christian be taught the things of Christ. There was also an element of warning in his messages to them. This would add a degree of seriousness to his sermons. Then we take note that his presentations contained a word of wisdom. This was godly wisdom and not the wisdom of the world nor yet the wisdom of religion. His goal was of the very highest order, "that we may present every man perfect in Christ." Col. 1:28

Perfect in Christ, in other words the perfection of Christ has been imparted, passed on and shared. The individual has reached a status of spiritual growth where they are matured in Christ. They are grown up into Christ to the fullest measure and are privileged to be joined, as the body of Christ with the head. The work of the five fold ministry will have reached it's climax and the saints have come to maturity. Eph. 4:11-13 This is a standard reached by those who have been sanctified. Made to be pure, clean, holy and dedicated to the Lord. Heb. 12:14 To further enhance our understanding, those who are perfect are people who work works of righteousness according to His will (not theirs). They delight in having the Lord work in them that which is well pleasing, in His sight. They have committed their life to fulfill the complete purpose of the Lord. They are the one hundred fold classification that is worthy of being in the Bride of Christ. Heb. 13:21

COLOSSIANS 24

The Apostle, though not present with them in Colossi nor were they members of the body whom he had met, yet he carried a great burden for their spiritual well being. He obviously knew of the spiritual condition of the Laodicean church and was greatly concerned for them. This illustrates for us the unity that is to be found in the body of Christ. Even though his only contact with them was by letter or word of mouth, he was deeply troubled and as a Father in the Lord had words of encouragement for their spiritual condition. Col. 2:1

His admonishment to them is very applicable to the church of today. The instructions of the Word are ageless. They dovetail with every generation. The motivating factor of spiritual life is always love. A love for the Lord and a love for the other members of the body of Christ as well as the lost. Where love prevails there is always to be found a bright and encouraged individual. They find their place in the body of Christ and react accordingly. Thus fulfilling the desire of the Lord for their life. These are persons who have a goal for their spiritual destiny and set out to achieve it at all costs. There could be no higher objective than that presented to them and definitely to us who follow the Lord today.

Consider carefully his words; "attaining to all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ." Reaching a place where the riches of a complete and comprehensive understanding and full knowledge of the mystery of God is no longer hidden but is now revealed with a complete understanding of who and what the Lord is. Where He is no longer veiled in the darkness of the lack of human understanding but now is made known in the fullest sense. He wants to reveal Himself and to make Himself known to His people.

In Him is currently hidden the treasure house of all wisdom and knowledge for He is both wisdom and knowledge. For all the wisdom and knowledge that is found in the minds of human kind, none of it even begins to compare to the one who is very wisdom and knowledge personified. We look for and rightly anticipate that in the end of the age the Holy Spirit will come upon the church to such a degree that the wisdom which shall be revealed will be an astonishment to all. To the true church the end time prophecies will no

longer be a mishmash of human understanding but fully known and understood by all who are members of that glorious and wonderful body of believers. Col. 2:2-3

COLOSSIANS 25

A strong warning concerning a spiritual attraction using words of doctrine which would lead them astray. Col. 2:4 If we take advantage of the protective measures which are found in the Lord we will not be led astray by strange teachings which are contrary to the Word of the Lord. In this world the church is to be as wise as a serpent but as harmless as a dove. Mt. 10:16 When the wisdom of the Lord is with us we are wiser than the old serpent, providing we take the Holy Spirits guidance and apply it to our own hearts. Col. 1:9

Paul though absent from them through the gift of the Spirit, that is the discerning of spirits was able to know and understand their spiritual posture through the revelation of the Spirit. They were a people who followed the order of service and in serving the Lord as had been established by the Spirit in the midst of all the churches. Col. 2:5 They followed the pattern established by the First Pentecostal Church of Jerusalem. They stood unmoved, united as one and embraced the Apostles doctrine as they continued in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers. Acts 2:42

With the measure that Christ was received so continue to walk in Him. Walk with the same fervor and zeal which was displayed in the beginning of ones walk with the Lord. Notice that the individual is to walk "in Him." Col. 2:6 We no longer are our own, He has purchased us and we are to emulate Christ in our walk through this life and all its circumstances. When we say that we are in Christ then we become duty bound to walk even as He walked. 1 John 1:6 Challenges such as this are periodically issued throughout the scriptures. Our walk is to be of the nature which pleases the Lord. 1 Thes. 4:1 The Christ life is to be the life of the church as He lives within our being. To find such a life the Apostle found that it was necessary to be crucified with Christ and to live a life above the sin of this world. While the measure of the dedication that is needed to be reached is not easily gained, Paul showed that it is possible for he considered himself to be crucified with

Christ. Consequently he was dead to the world and the sinful acts and pleasures of the world. Gal. 2:20 The very fact that he had advanced to such a high degree of spirituality causes us to understand that if one can achieve it, then it becomes possible for all to experience the very same thing. He wrote of being dead to sin, which eliminated the possibility of sinning. Which too many treat as if though it were a minor thing. It was the spiritual experience that was common to Christians. When we die to the ability to sin, eureka, we no longer sin. 1 Pet. 2:4 We do not have to sin every day in word, thought or deed. There is deliverance in Christ Jesus.

COLOSSIANS 26

Rooted, how essential are the roots to any plant or tree. They are the source of the water and nutrients necessary for the growth of the plant or tree. They also become the stability of that which is planted. Spiritual roots drink of the waters of life and receive their sustenance from the Word of the Lord. They are those who maintain good roots and are as a tree planted beside the waters. Jer. 17:7-8 A tree that is not subject to the whims of the weather. Strong and fruitful under all circumstances. Not only is their growth exciting but their fruit is bountiful. So, from the beginning to the consummation the roots are vital to the life of the plant. Everything is stunted and cannot develop properly where there are not healthy roots. Not surprisingly, the key element to prosperous roots is in having Christ within. His presence assures the Christian of the presence of His love and love is the very foundation of spiritual growth in the Lord Jesus. Eph. 3:17 He has laid out a very definite path that the spiritual gardener is to follow in order to produce a proper crop and harvest. Those who abide in Christ and in whom Christ abides are going to produce much fruit. One hundred fold fruitfulness John 15:5

Built up. The Lord is building a temple for Himself. One which He might occupy and fill with all the completeness of His Divine nature. This ever growing, evergreen, life giving tree is also the eternal building constructed for His presence. Again it is necessary that we take special note of the fact that all of this takes place in the life of those who are His and are walking so close to Him that it must be said that they are "in Him." To be "in Him" is to be one with Him and possess all the promises which He has made to His people. It is not unexpected that they would be recognized as a people who

are established, steadfast in the Lord, unmovable and unwavering in their following the Lord and in understanding His doctrine, His teachings. As a matter of fact the Apostle saw them as a people who are overflowing with thankfulness because of the revelation of the Word. Col. 2:7

Take care that contamination is not presented and accepted, whereby the whole of that which has been planted be poisoned and spoiled. The method which is used is human reasoning's and the so called wisdom of men. If it is contrary to sound doctrine it must be labeled as just that and thereby cast aside and rejected. Along with this 'vain deceit' is also mentioned as a weapon which will be predominant, particularly in the end of the age this is a means whereby the antichrist will gain control, "deceit." Col. 2:8 It is one of His best used weapons. 2 Thess. 2:9-12

COLOSSIANS 27

"For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form." Col. 2:8. Profound in its extremity, yet simply and adequately stated. All that God is, Has taken up permanent residence and is abiding in the human, resurrected, glorified body of the Lord Jesus. That is why John in the book of Revelation saw one on the throne. Rev. 4:2 Then the personal pronoun He, is used Rev. 4:3, 7:15, Rev. 21:3 Also, Him, Rev. 4:9,10, 5:1, 6:16, etc. Thus we must understand, from the scriptures that the only physical body of the Godhead, is that of the Lord Jesus. This does not diminish the doctrine of the Triune God. The Lord Jesus acknowledged His union with His Father by stating that "I and my Father are one," a unit, bound together in perfect unison as can only be experienced by things that are of a spiritual nature such as the true God. John 10:30

Jesus again made reference to this most splendid and beautiful companionship which exists between His Father and Himself, when He said; "the Father is in me and I in Him." John 10:38 Furthermore He said: that " he that that seen Me hath seen the Father." John 14:9 Jesus acknowledged that the Father dwelling within Him was the one who was doing the works, the miracles which Jesus performed. John 14:10 Paul proclaimed that "God was in Christ." 2 Cor. 5:19 To Timothy He wrote that; "God was manifest in the flesh." 1 Tim. 3:16 To Titus he declared the coming of the Lord Jesus as; " the appearing of the great God and our

savior Jesus Christ.” Titus 2:13 In the Lord Jesus, three became one as the Father and the Holy Spirit take up residence in the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 John 5:7 None the less, they do not lose their identity nor their being in comprising what Paul called, Godliness. 1 Tim. 3:16.

The triune nature and being of God is stated by John as three who bear witness in heaven and then He identified them as the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, making them to be definite and distinct entities who are unified together, as we have seen in the scriptures as a unit, marvelously blended together as one, while always retaining their own individuality, office and position. 1 John 5:9 Type and shadow found throughout the Word all verify the true nature of God. Nowhere is there a stronger witness of three blended together into one than that which we daily see as a witness. That is the triune being that we ourselves are. For we are body, soul and spirit a reminder that we never get away from as long as we live. We are created in His image and in His likeness. Gen. 1:26

COLOSSIANS 28

The people of the Lord are to share in every aspect of His character, being, personality, power and authority. Col. 2:10 “Ye are complete in Him.” You have been given fullness in Christ.” NIV. Who would even vaguely imagine the high and lofty post unto which the Lord Jesus will elevate those who are to be in the Bride of Christ. Christ is head over every power and authority. The church which is His body, because she is His body, is joined with Him in the absolute completeness of the word and He shares with her all that He is.

Now, the door to this blessed place in Christ Jesus is made evident. The circumcision that is made without hands is that which makes one eligible for membership in the body of Christ. A circumcision which is a spiritual act of separation from fleshly acts and attitudes which spoil a true relationship with Christ. It is the cessation of the dominance of the flesh in the lives of those would live for Christ. It is as necessary as any experience that is scheduled to take place in this spiritual journey through life. Col. 2:11 The relationship which will be between Christ and His church in the very end of the age is only possible when the individuals involved know and fully understand the sufferings of the cross by personal experience.

The old, carnal man is to be crucified with Christ. Rom. 6:6 Then and only then is this human nature and tendency for sin, released and we “no longer serve sin.” Replacing that old corrupt sinful person which was and which was most obnoxious, is a wonderful work of the Spirit whereby we are made to be new creatures in Christ Jesus. We shed the old nature with all of its sinfulness and throw away the old sinful temperament. It is replaced by a new man who is transformed into an entirely different person. Through an act of the Lord, that new man is a new creation, made new in the likeness of the Lord Himself. Eph. 4:22-24 The Word is exceedingly plain in the work that is to be accomplished in those who are new creatures in Christ Jesus. The Lord in this process of creation takes of His own nature and character and implants it within the heart of the life of that new creature. As certain as a Holy, just God will not sin, those who receive of His nature will live above sin for they are made to be like Him in holiness and righteousness. They are created into a people who bear his image and likeness therefore emulate Him in every portion of their lives. As the Lord cannot tolerate sin so those who are His cannot tolerate it much less practice sin. Col. 3:10 The call of the Spirit and the Word is to separate from the actions of this world and live a life that is separated unto the Lord. May we indeed hear His voice and obey it.

COLOSSIANS 29

The circumcision of Christ is revealed by the writings of the Apostle to be the individual being baptized in water unto Christ. An act of faith after that being crucified with Him we are also buried with Him. Step by step He leads us in the same path which He trod. The difference being in His walk He suffered, we receive of Him all that He purchased. We simply make a total commitment to Him whereby we lay aside the body of sin with all of its unclean works and take on the righteousness of the life of Christ. Col. 2:11-12 There is a life of resurrection glory prepared for those who truly follow Him. These actions are motivated by faith therefore there is great spiritual benefit to be found in them. Water baptism is not a ritual of the church which Jesus commanded us to follow but there awaits a true spiritual blessing for those who see the divine purpose and will acknowledge and do the will of the Lord in this most important step of faith.

When our understanding of what we are doing is in line with the Word of the Lord, we come forth from the watery grave to walk in the resurrection life which is found in the Lord Jesus. This is our place of victory over every temptation of Satan. By the spiritual operation of God involved we are liberated permanently from sin and its effects on our daily lives. Where we were once dead to the Spiritual life that is found in Christ we are now made aware of it and may participate in it to the fullest extent. Col. 2:13 What will it be, do we continue a weak Christian existence by constantly sinning, feeling badly about it, being convicted of wrong doing in our spirit and then repeatedly repenting and asking forgiveness or will we live His life. "According to your faith (your belief) be it unto you." We get what we believe for. Mt. 9:29

How much better it is to recognize the plan that He has presented to us and walk in a life made available to us that is glorious resurrection and victorious Christian life. He has triumphed over every manner of power made available to the powers of darkness. Jesus cannot be defeated but in a great display of victory he has overcome and has extended the right and privilege of those following Him to be in a relationship which is expressed by the word together. One, in a perfect unity with Him for as He was raised from the dead, so are we quickened together with Him, providing we have been crucified with Him and have been buried with Him. Col. 2:13 He is more than anxious to share with His people all that He has purchased for them. Come to Him and get your portion.

COLOSSIANS 30

Having received and identifying ourselves with Him in the waters of baptism opens the door to the most wonderful of intimacies that has ever been experienced. It is not on a natural level but of the highest of spiritual experiences. It is here that the great source and author of true love will make Himself known to His Bride in a togetherness that is of the highest sort. It is even as the Apostle wrote that if we have been planted together with Him we are raised together with Him and are now privileged to be in the likeness of His resurrection. Rom. 6:5 Those who are deceased are not subject to temptation and the subsequent result which is sin. When we have positively entered into the death of Christ and been crucified together with Him, there can be no longer a tendency toward unrighteousness, for

the old man is dead and will no longer respond. Replacing that individual is one who has been resurrected by the power of Christ, to walk in newness of life. Therefore the totality of their life now is lived as one who has been "raised together with Christ." Rom. 6:5-7 As a dead person cannot be forced to sin, so one who walks together, who has been raised together, with Christ cannot and will not commit sin. They are living the life of Christ and do not respond to sin.

Whereas those who live in sin are dead in their trespasses and sin when they come to Christ they are quickened and have real life in the Lord Jesus. Quickened, given new life. Not resuscitation but resurrection life. A life lived as Christ lives. Eph. 2:1 Like sown seed, life can only spring forth from the seed as it dies in the ground. The fullness of the life of Christ can only be displayed in those who have experienced His death, burial and resurrection. 1 Cor. 15:36 In the past, at one time, we all walked according to the manner of a sinful world, now the direction of our life has been changed and we walk arm in arm with Him. Recognizing the constant closeness of His presence how could we possibly sin. To be in such close proximity to the very epitome of all that is righteous and holy would cause one not to succumb to temptation. His presence overwhelms all temptations.

Quickened and raised together is one and the same spiritual operation wrought in the life of that person who is willing to totally dedicate themselves to the Lord. Then to add glory to glory the Apostle declared that we are greatly privileged to sit together with Him, and that in heavenly places. Oh the blessedness of it all. How He longs to share with His very own all that He has purchased for them. Imagine, sitting in heavenly places and that is not just anywhere for He has been seated at the right hand of the Father. Heb. 12:2 Mind you, we are not writing about the future, these are our rights available to us at the very present time.

COLOSSIANS 31

Every step of obedience, every commitment to the will of the Lord has it's very special reward. Water baptism and its subsequent reward of the assurance of His presence, will bring a knowledge of the quickening power

of the Spirit on the natural body. Not only is the spiritual life of the individual enlivened but the glorious presence of the Spirit of the Lord brings with Him a refreshing and strengthening of the natural body. There is an enabling associated with the presence of the Holy Spirit that was not available prior to being filled with the Spirit. Rom. 8:11 This also involves a special healing virtue bringing health and strength to the natural man. It is the effect of His life being lived in us and our unity with Him.

The crucifixion of the Lord Jesus not only purchased our eternal redemption but it also removed, that is, "blotted out" the "hand writing of ordinances" or the Law which were against us. Col. 2:14 It was nailed together with Him to His cross therefore bringing it to a conclusion. It takes the book of Hebrews to illuminate the futility of the Law. The New Covenant reveals the weakness and failure of the Law to bring any to a place where it relieved the conscience of the individual trying to serve the Lord by following it. It utterly failed to bring respite to the sinning soul. Heb. 9:9 It is stated as being weak and unprofitable, weak and useless (NKJV) therefore was disannulled, closed up and replaced. Heb. 7:18 The New Covenant was engaged to replace the old which decayed, waxed old and was to vanish away, and did as far as usefulness is concerned. Heb. 8:13 Probably the ultimate blow is delivered when it is stated that the Lord had no pleasure in them. Actually He despised them because they were made without true repentance. Heb. 10:8-9 The shed blood of Christ on Calvary satisfied forever the demands of a Holy and Just God for a perfect sacrifice, once for all and forever.

The crucified Christ not only settled the sin question but His crucifixion was the victory of all victories for He conquered the prince of the powers of the air and all of his cohorts who are in places of authority putting them to an open shame by His resurrection. Col. 2:15 The cross was not a defeat but the beginning of the greatest victory in the most vicious war ever fought. It's expanse covered time and eternity, heaven and earth and all of mankind. Of all the beauty and wisdom that may have been permitted Lucifer, he was not in on the most precious planning of eternity. He was unable to comprehend the purpose of the Lord by blood sacrifice. He therefore fit perfectly in participating in the atrocity that was his very defeat. Acts 2:23-24

COLOSSIANS 32

There is no doubt but what they had been criticized extensively for not following the demands of the Law pertaining to eating and the keeping of holy days. It is a foregone conclusion that such verbal attacks would be made against them by the keepers of the Law, even though they themselves did not keep the Law. Of how much greater advantage it is to follow the person or the thing making the shadow and not the shadow. A matter of substance verses emptiness. Everything about the Law, the Tabernacle and the Temple were nothing but types and shadows. Col. 2:16-17 When writing concerning the subject the author of the book of Hebrews emphasizes them being shadows which are vain, empty and without substance. Heb. 10:1 He likewise places them in the category of a blue print, examples and patterns of the heavenly which have very limited power. Heb. 8:5 Then he speaks of them as figures which had only a temporary relief of the conscience, totally incapable of leading them to perfection. Heb. 9:9 Realities are found in Christ.

The reliance of many today on the supposed protection of angels is a questionable practice, the question being, when we have Christ within and are filled with the Spirit, members of the Godhead why would we want to depend on those, such as angels who are far inferior and who can fall from their high and holy position? The modern day attitude seems to be one of seeking the spectacular (shadow) and not that which is reality and very practical. Paul issued a warning of a possible great danger involved with so called associations with angels. His warning is most apropos for our day.
Col. 2:18

There were those then, as there are today, who seek the dramatic which they feel is to be found in the appearance of angels. Paul emphasizes the need of being in constant connection with Him who is the head of the . . .
(note: incomplete)

COLOSSIANS 33

The process of spiritual growth is presented by the Apostle. Of vital importance is the ministration of nourishment. Is there anything more

necessary than a spiritual diet of the Word. Jesus called it the manna from heaven. Living bread. When the light of the revelation of the Spirit of the Lord shines on it there is nothing more satisfying. Even to the natural man, the precious nuggets of the Word bringing joy, worship and praise to the individual who loves the Lord. We learn to know Him through His Word. A mutual understanding of the Word is that which will knit the body of Christ together quicker and in closer accord than anything else. After all there can only be one doctrine, one interpretation of the Word. The Lord is not divided but the Godhead stands in absolute accord. The true church in the end of the age will embrace the total truth in perfect accord with Him. Whatever is necessary for growth is to be found in the relationship of the Bride with her Bridegroom. There will never be found any disagreement between Christ and His Bride. They walk together in perfect harmony. Col. 2:19

The foundation to the Christian life. The key to serving the Lord in a full capacity is to be found in that seemingly unknown, or is it simply ignored, necessity of being crucified with Christ. Those who die to the world, to self, to sin live in complete victory exemplifying the Life of Christ. The promise of His Word are much easier fulfilled when we have laid the proper foundation to our life as a follower of the Lord Jesus. Our confidence is greater our faith stronger when we are assured that there is nothing between the Lord and us that may become a hindrance to our petitions. Col. 2:20

The manipulations of willful men are already leading many in the church astray. This is just the beginning of the deceptions which will be perpetrated on the people of the world in the last days. There is ample warning in the Word pertaining to false teachers and false prophets, which will be multiplied greatly in the last days, for us to know that we are approaching the coming of the Lord Jesus. Those who are declaring certain dates of His coming seem to be increasing greatly. They are lying spirits sent forth to create confusion and disbelief in the return of Christ. Since their prophesied dates come and go, they fade out of the picture but then the wreckage of their lies is left behind. We will be able to discern the times and the seasons pertaining to His return, but Jesus said that no man knoweth the day nor the hour. Mat. 25:13

COLOSSIANS 34

Words of extreme importance and instructions on living for the Lord. Paul's writings are overflowing with teaching that when followed will develop a deeper Christian life. Having written concerning the importance of participating spiritually in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, he indicated a sign whereby we know that we are on the right path. The desires of the heart that is risen with Christ and is now in walking before Him, having been endowed with His resurrection life. Emulate Him having received the glory of His beautiful presence. The spiritual individual will seek those things which are above because Christ is seated at the right hand of God and He is the blessed attraction of their heart and life. Col. 3:1

The basic Christian life involves fulfilling the pattern set before us by the Lord Jesus. It is natural, if we have been quickened together with Him, to have a strong desire to be with Him and to be like Him. Col. 2:13 Having been baptized, buried with Him by means of water baptism in His name, by nature we follow the pattern of life which He established and walk in the mighty and power of a new life in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8:4-5 The place of a victorious Christian life has as its foundation the new birth, born of the Spirit and buried with Christ that as with all dead individuals, sinful things no longer have an appeal. How vitally important it is that we thoroughly research and fulfill this extremely necessary act with complete understanding of what is being accomplished in our spiritual life. It is a matter of who and what has the dominion in our life, Jesus or ourselves. Righteousness or sin. Rom. 8:9-10 The exceeding greatness of the power and ability of the Lord is demonstrated in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. This spiritual process is that area of our life in Christ where that same great power is demonstrated in its completeness. Eph. 1:19-20 We have not yet even started to enjoy all the power and blessing that has been purchased for us, nor will we until we have consummated His will in building a proper, Bible ordained Christian walk.

In the path of life which He has prepared for us to follow there is fulness of joy and everlasting pleasures, eternally. Ps. 16:11 Almost everything that is done in this life has joy and pleasure as a foundation that is greatly sought after involved in it somewhere. The joy and pleasure that He provides is to be found in His character. It is real lasting joy and pleasure. The pleasures

and joy of the world are transitory, temporary and very brief. That which proceeds from the Lord is full and complete and will remain with us as we walk with the Lord in the light of His presence.

COLOSSIANS 35

Paul was greatly impressed by the exaltation of the Lord Jesus to the right hand of the throne of God and spoke of His current and eternal position as being that of sitting on the right hand of God. Col. 3:1 However when Stephen was martyred as he was dying he looked up and saw the Lord Jesus standing at the right hand of God and bathed in the everlasting glory of the Lord. Acts 7:55 It had to be that Jesus was standing as a symbol of honor to one such as Stephen who was faithful unto the end. At the time of what is called the rapture, when Jesus comes in the clouds the world will not only see Him but they will see Him sitting on the right hand of power as well as His glorious appearing in the fullness of the heavenly glory. Mark 14:62

Jesus is the right hand of the Majesty on high. For He is the very effulgence of the brightness of the glory of the Lord. The visible one of the Godhead who is the demonstration of the shining forth of the brilliancy of the glory that is the essence of our God. Heb. 1:3 Jesus is the express image, the exact likeness, a perfect and exact replica of the Father. He is indistinguishable from the Father and may only be known and understood by the titles He bears, for instance, Jesus is the Son of the Father. Therefore, in spite of the strong similarities and likenesses which are exact in some instances there is a strong difference revealed in the Word. The Father and the Holy Spirit may only be known as Spirit, invisible but revealed through the mortal one, the Lord Jesus, who prior to His birth was also known as the Word. Certainly not the printed Word but the Word which was a spoken Word, which could be heard but was also invisible. Even as the words we speak are unseen, yet they exist and are acknowledged by our ability to hear.

Jesus is the image, not the one of whom He is and image. He is that which has been made visible of God. Col. 1:15 Moses left Egypt having faith and thus seeing that which was invisible to him. Heb. 11:27 Now, the invisible is clearly seen, by faith through the Word of the Lord. We have not seen the

Son but because of His presence in our lives we are well aware of His being. Thus, we clearly see with the eye of faith and believe that God is exactly as He is revealed in the Word of the Lord. Rom. 1:20 When we receive the volume of the book and its statements pertaining to who and what God is, the eyes of faith enlighten our soul and spirit to receive its truth and see God as He is. He is always ready to make himself known in the very fullness and has promised that if we will hear His voice (the Word) that He will pay a very personal visit where there is a beautiful fellowship enjoyed. Rev. 3:20

COLOSSIANS 36

The subject of a complete identity with Christ is again presented by the Apostle. It is when our life, through His blood, water and spirit has been completely identified with Christ that we achieve a position of great spiritual standing with the Lord. Everything that we could possibly spiritually desire is the other side of completing the full will and purpose of the Lord. In repentance, in water baptism and in walking in the light of the Word of the Lord. It is here that we find the fullness of that new life and the blessed privilege of being like Him in the power of His resurrection. Rom. 6:4-5 This is the place of full release from sin and death. This is the key to a sinless life. Rom. 6:9:8-11 This is the unifying factor whereby we live the life of Christ. Eph. 5:6 There is a Divine process plainly spelled out in the teachings of the Apostles, which if followed will bring the demonstration of His power into the ministry of the person who is one with Him. Not only can we, be but we must be strongly joined to the head, which is Christ.

The stamp of the spiritual individual is the expenditure of his time. What do we seek after? Is it here in this world? Those who have hope only in this world try to satisfy the longing of the heart and spirit with the things of the world. An impossible task for God has built a desire for spiritual things into every one of our hearts and nothing else will satisfy that desire. "He hath set eternity in their hearts." Ecc.3:11 ASV The spiritual individual will value spiritual joys and blessings to be of far greater value than even the whole world. To be spiritually minded is life eternal, to mind the things of the flesh is death and that eternal. Rom. 8:6 The spiritual have caught a vision of the glorious throne of the Lord and the majestic display of power which is involved in that throne. Their heart felt desire is to dwell and reign with Him

on His throne throughout eternity. He has promised that there will be those of His own who sit with Him in His throne. Rev. 3:21 That is the privilege of all privileges.

The rewards are tremendous and everlasting. All we have to do is to esteem the King of heaven above everything else in this life and make Him the sole drive of our lives. The deepest longing of our hearts indicates the measure of our spirituality. If we are dead to the world then there is room for the Christ of God to come and occupy our being. He will not accept a lesser place than the whole of our heart. His life is now the life of each and every person who has determined to follow Him according to the light of the Word of the Lord. Col. 3:2 He is our life.

COLOSSIANS 37

If Christ is our life then we are His possession and He will possess us in every way possible. If we really love Him that is the way we want it to be. His possession is to be totally His and His alone. It is not a selfish case of ownership but one where that which is possessed receives multiple blessings and benefits. Nothing is ever given up for the Lord but that which is received from Him is proliferated greater than the thing or things given up. We bring and give items that relate to this world and this life. In return, He gives that which is for this life, plus the life to come, which is eternal life. Therefore when He returns and appears in all the splendor and glory of heaven, we shall also appear with Him and share in the glory which is His. Col. 3:4

We are confident that His appearing is drawing nigh. There is no question about these being the last days. Not the last day but the days when the prophecies of the Word are being fulfilled alerting those who will listen that we are approaching His appearing, which will take place at the close of the tribulation period. This seems to be a time in which many believe in agreement, that the rapture is at the conclusion of the tribulation. When Christ is present there is a separation between the sheep and the goats. Mat. 25:33-41 Even as there is a cleansing taking place in the church today where the secret, sinful, hidden life of many is being revealed. This will continue until there is true repentance and confession of sin by the whole of the body of Christ and a major cleansing takes place. There will be a

angelic raid by the heavenly police whereby the sinful will be separated from His church. Mt.13:41 Be sure, your sins will find you out. Num. 32:23 Today there is forgiveness for those who voluntarily confess and forsake their sin. In that day it will be too late.

Paul stated that when He, that is Christ, appears those in Christ will appear with Him clothed in the fullness of the glory of the Lord. Col. 3:4 The righteous are depicted as shining with Sun like glory in the kingdom of God. Mt. 13:43 In other words they are clothed with the visible light of the eternal glory of the Lord. Like the woman of Revelation twelve. The true church will be presented to the Bridegroom in absolute purity and righteousness. To deny that such a glorious thing will take place is to deny the authority of the Word of the Lord. For the Word stated that He is able to present a people unto Himself that is totally faultless. Jude 24 It is too obvious to deny, that He will have a perfect church which will be His Bride in the end of the age. Eph. 5:27 Anything and everything that the Lord has taken unto Himself that it might be something very special before Him, He has thoroughly cleansed and intensely prepared for the work or the intention behind His reason for choosing that particular object. How much more will this apply to the last day church.

COLOSSIANS 38

It should be noted that the human characteristics listed by the Apostle are beneficially negative. As a matter of fact they are harmful to the best of human relationships and with the Lord as well. Just ridding oneself of them will lift a weight of condemnation from the individual and transmit it into a feeling of being a conqueror. Col. 3:5 These things are a pattern of life which is attributed to the disobedient. Because of the commission of these things the wrath of God is manifest against all who do them and they are called the children of disobedience. Col. 3:6-8 Life becomes a path way of truth and righteousness.

Life in Christ follows a different pattern. Once all these sins have been put aside and conquered we find liberty in the new man and walk in a life that is new. Col. 3:9 We now live according to the dictates of the new man who has been brought to new life through the Lord Jesus. The old life, the old

man can only create hardship and trouble. There is no joy to be found in those who live accordingly. Joy, peace and happiness are the reward of those who follow the teachings of the Word. There is consistent growth for those who are in Christ Jesus. Their knowledge and likeness of Christ increases for that which hinders growth has been removed from their hearts. Col. 3:10

There is no longer a distinguishing nationality evidence that any one particular nation is of greater value or more influential with the Lord than any other. What counts now is the new creature and the spiritual advancement that is expected of those who are in Christ Jesus. Many today are exalting certain nations or a nation above others but “in Christ” Natural birth does not have value. It is that new life in Christ Jesus that causes the heart of the Lord to rejoice. Natural birth does not produce the new life. Spiritual birth is that which is absolutely necessary along with it’s new character and conduct. These elements and evidences of salvation are not common to the old man. However, they are exactly that which is to be expected of those who clothe themselves with Christ.

Paul concluded his list with the need to forgive others for their trespasses against us. Forgiveness is a most powerful tool and of absolute necessity. If we expect the Lord to forgive us, then we certainly owe it to those who may have, or at least we surmise that they have offended us, to forgive them. Forgiveness may be difficult but it yields a high reward of liberty and freedom from a constant disturbance in our hearts and lives and constant upset because we seek revenge. Col. 3:13

COLOSSIANS 39

Even better than forgiveness over some sort of an affront is a refusal to be offended. Offenses will come, but note the words of the Lord Jesus pronouncing a woe or a judgment on the person committing the offense. Mt. 18:7 What a great victory it is when words or deeds are presented with the purpose of deliberately causing hurt and they are ignored by the person toward whom they are directed. With our eyes ever on the prize, and that is the excellence that is found in the Lord Jesus, we press on. Finding in Christ that life where we neither offend with our words or actions nor are offended by the deeds and statements of others. Phil. 1:10 This will be a

sign and the life of the Bride of Christ. An extremely high goal, but all things are possible in the Lord Jesus. There are no impossibilities to be found in Him. What peace and tranquility is to be found in the heart of those who have the determination and God supplied ability to live accordingly.

Forgiveness should prevail in the household of faith. Many a marriage would be saved where a God given ability to forgive prevailed. Jesus placed a number, an extreme figure of the number of times that we should practice forgiveness, not just seventy times but until seventy times seven, or four hundred ninety times are fulfilled. Mt. 18:20 There is something very familiar about that number, four hundred ninety.

Turning to the book of Daniel we find that there are last day elements which must be brought to their conclusion prior to the final consummation of the age. There are seventy weeks, or seventy times seven days, or four hundred ninety days which precede the closing down of things which are beneficial in a positive spiritual sense. The final act being that of anointing the Most Holy or the final establishing His kingdom and of those things which are heavenly and eternal. Dan. 9:24

Forgiveness is an item of self interest. That type of thing usually catches the eye, for we are quick to embrace things which benefit ourselves. The forgiving of others has a powerful attraction to it. For the promise is that if we forgive, we shall be forgiven. How important is forgiveness? It depends one how greatly one wants to be forgiven. Heavens forgiveness is linked to our willingness to forgive others their unseemly and unkind acts against us. Forgive and be forgiven. Refuse to forgive and have the forgiveness of the Lord refused. Mt. 6:15 The importance of forgiving the many things in life, carried out by others. to which we take an offensive could not be more understandable than what it is in these few words uttered by the Lord Jesus. Lord help us to forgive!

COLOSSIANS 40

A certain, positive sign of having put on the new man is evidenced by the pattern of life now lived. Col. 3:10 It is a life where the new man does not follow every temptation but refuses to provide any assistance whatsoever to the lusts of the flesh. As a matter of fact, the new man will offer great

resistance. Rom. 13:14 Once again the power and value of water baptism is presented, for, those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Gal. 3:27 What more pleasant place could we possibly desire than to be clothed upon with the Lord Jesus Christ and all that He is. To be enveloped In all of His power and glory. To put on Christ is to be willing to receive the office of spiritual priesthood.

The new man is a work of spiritual creation and will bear the likeness of the one who has created him. The ultimate purpose of the plan of salvation is to produce a people who are identical to the Lord Jesus in every aspect of the Word. This new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. 4:24 All that the Lord does has as it's goal the very highest and purest of spiritual beings. If we really put on Christ how can we be anything but like Him. The extremely high standard of the Lord is expressed in words by the Apostle when he gives us a list such as we find here in, Col. 3:12-14 It is interesting to note that charity or love is the motivating factor of all that we are to put on in the Lord Jesus. Love reigns supreme. Love is that which unifies the body of Christ as well as enabling them to fulfill the demands of the Word.

These all are part of the confirmation of a segment of believers who are called "the elect of God. " Their righteousness is not of men but of obedience to the Word of the Lord. Peter in his salutation in his first letter uses the term when addressing them. He states that these are a people who are sanctified by the spirit. They bear the mark of true righteousness and holiness. They are sprinkled or washed in the blood of Christ, an outstanding element found among them is the fact that they are living in obedience to the Lord and His Word. How vital that is. 1 Peter 1:2 In his second letter, Peter urges them to make positively certain that they are numbered among the elect. He too had given them a call to walk before the Lord as being truly the elect of God. 2 Peter 1:10 There is such a vast storehouse of blessing and glory available to us today in the Lord Jesus, if we could only catch a vision of all that He has prepared for those who love Him, and desire to serve Him with all of their hearts. These promises are not the writings of mere men, they are the Spirit inspired Word of the Lord, therefore are available to us. Providing we are willing to pay the price in consecration unto Him.

COLOSSIANS 41

Everything that speaks of the character of the Lord is an act of perfection. There are no shortcomings nor failures to be found in the Lord. Therefore, when the Apostle speaks of the peace of God, he is speaking of the very perfection of peace, absolute, complete peace. Col. 3:15 A peace that can only be found in the Lord. People outside of Christ have no conception of the joyous feeling that comes into the heart of one who is resting in the peace of the Lord. In the first place they have made their peace with the Lord and there is no emotion stronger in this life than that of knowing that we are at peace with the Lord. The redeemed have found the way of the perfection of peace by fixing their minds on Christ. Isa. 26:3

From the very beginning of this Christian walk those who are called to repentance are called to take their place in the body of Christ. That body is not to be a series of separate parts but as any well coordinated physical body It is to work in unison with all other segments of the body. Col. 3:15 The unifying of the body is contingent on the spirit of those involved. Both their spirit and the Spirit of the Lord. Seeing as the Lord has called those who follow Him to be one body, there will be a coming together of all who are of like faith for there is but one body and one Spirit Eph. 4:4 There can be no division in the Godhead. He is not the author of confusion. There is to be a tremendous change in the body of Christ in the coming future. There is but one God and we are to be "in Him." One Lord Jesus Christ and our high calling is to be, "by Him." 1 Cor. 8:6 He will perfect and unify His church those refusing to cooperate with the moving of the Spirit will find themselves left out.

What could possibly be more important than the fulfillment of every prophetic word found in the Word of the Lord. Jesus said that until the time of the end not one jot or tittle would pass away until all be fulfilled. Mt. 5:18 Most naturally, the scriptures place great emphases on themselves. Rightfully so, for Jesus is that Word made flesh. Therefore, the more of His Word we hide in our hearts the greater the possibility that the revelation of Christ will be ours. We can only really know Him by His Word. Thus, we are to plant the Word in our hearts in great abundance. It isn't sufficient to just read the Word but it must be harbored in our hearts as the living Word, which we know it to be. For this cause we study the Word that through its

very presence it might make the Christ of God known to us in a manner that grows deeper every day. Col. 3:16

COLOSSIANS 42

The benefit of having the Word dwelling within in abundance and in all wisdom, is to be found in the manifestation of Spiritual gifts which edify the body of Christ. The Spirit of wisdom will reveal His knowledge to us as well as a comprehensive knowledge of who He is. Eph. :17 Paul's vision for the early church was that they might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. Col. 1:9 His desire was for the very best to be possessed by them. Out of the riches of the Spirit there will flow the pure teaching of the Word and a line of Doctrine which will give direction to the church in all things. Along with that a source of singing unto the Lord which will glorify His name and person. Col. 3:16

Excellent advice is given "to do all things" in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even a casual study of the Word will reveal the true value and power that the Lord has invested in that glorious name. Now the Apostle is urging them to do all things in that name, with the giving of thanks being a vital part of all prayer.. which is above every other name. Things prepared in His name are not apt to have a contrary or worldly side to them. Col. 3:17

Practical, spiritual exercises which are made possible by the presence of the Spirit and the Word in the heart of those who will listen and practice them. The wives are urged to be in obedience to their husbands as it is taught in the Word of the Lord. The husband on the other hand is to love their wives with a love that exceeds self love. Just these two pieces of advice can make a great difference in a day when marriages seem to be challenged as never before. Got a problem, give it a try, it works. Col. 3:18-19

Family relationships are likewise briefly addressed. Children are to be taught to obey their parents. Where this is accomplished there is a broader benefit of obedience in all places, such as school and the work place. Believe it or not "to obey is better than sacrifice" for it's end result is peace for all who are involved. The ways of the Lord are always superior to the

ways of man. Tranquility of heart and mind are assured the father who does not provoke his children. Likewise, the servant or worker in the work place who does their work as unto the Lord and not as unto men or money. Proper attitudes will reflect attitudes of the same nature and in that manner create an atmosphere of peace.. Let all things be done whether worship, work or play with a joyful, happy attitude let it be done as unto the Lord that a reward might be given as it fitting for those working for the Lord. Do good works which magnify the name of the Lord then be blest. Do wrong and receive a just reward. Col. 3:18-25

COLOSSIANS 43

Paul gave wise instructions to those who hired workers or possessed servants as to their wages. Those who were masters or hired people were to give a fair and just wage. A proper compensation would gain the loyalty of these individuals resulting in better and more productive work habits. Workers who are always upset over their wages will not produce as much nor as good a product as those who are satisfied. As with so many things in the natural he saw the Lord reacting toward the boss much as the he, the boss, treated those whom he hired. Consider this, "But a generous man devises generous things. And by generosity he shall stand. Isa. 32:8 NKJV. Such an attitude makes generosity a Divine principal and we live by Divine principals. Want to be blest. Be generous toward the Lord and man and you will learn that it is impossible to out give the Lord.

Be persistent in prayer. Do not cease regardless of circumstances. Prayer has its reward, though sometimes it is not immediately evident, in the ultimate we see its multiplied benefits. Too often today our first knee is leaving the floor even before the second touches the floor. Short prayers may be effective but learning to watch and pray is more productive. When he refers to watching and prayer he is following the division of the Hebrew day which was divided into four hours watches. Therefore watching unto prayer was an extended period of time where one waited upon the Lord. It has it's very definite benefits, such as, being delivered from temptation. Mt. 26:41

Those who watch and pray will escape the trials and great tribulation which are coming on the earth in the last days. Lk. 21:36 Not knowing the day nor the hour of His coming, watching and praying will prepared the heart for that beautiful event.

Mk. 13:33

Prayer is to be accompanied by thanksgiving. The two blend together beautifully and quickly bring us into the presence of the Lord. Col. 4:2 David had learned the secret of entering into the presence of the Lord and that was with thanksgiving. What more wonderful way is there than preceding our petitions with and offering of thanksgiving. Ps. 100:4 He is exalted, glorified and lifted up by our giving of thanks, much more so than our requests. He knows our needs before we ever pray but how much better it is to enter into His presence with words of adoration and the expressions of a grateful heart than to constantly remind Him of our wants and needs. In all things give thanks. I thank my pastor, Dennis Austin, for pointing out in his Thanksgiving message the fact of thanksgiving, or the giving of thanks, as we enter the presence of the Lord.

COLOSSIANS 44

It is interesting to note the emphasis which the Apostle makes on prayer. It manifests the importance of setting aside special times for seeking the Lord. One need not always be in a particular place or position to be in prayer. Most definitely these days we need to watch and pray when we drive down the freeways of the world. He urged them to continue or be faithful in praying. Not to grow slack in the same. That they were praying into the night and perhaps at times all night is apparent as they are encouraged to watch or keep awake and be vigilant in prayer. Col. 4:2 He had confidence in their prayers for he requested that he too be included in their prayers. Col. 4:3

The Apostle Paul was a man driven by one desire and that was to see men hear and understand the Word of the Lord. Therefore he requested that they pray for an open door for him to declare the mysteries of Christ. To the unsaved that would be the milk of the Word but to those who knew the Lord he had a revelation pertaining to the end of the age that burned in his heart. The ultimate goal of his message was to see a perfected church which will

become the Bride of Christ. Eph. 5:27, 32 The great desire of his heart was to help all to see the plan of the Lord and guide them in that direction. He has left us a legacy, a heart to search out and fulfill the divine purposes of the Lord.

Because of his vehement desire to spread the Word of the Lord he found himself in chains for the gospels sake. Nevertheless, it did not restrain him from ministering to those with whom he came in contact. His boldness in the face of persecution may be seen in the strong desire of his heart to make the Word of the Lord as easily understood as possible. Col. 4:4

As always in his writings he very easily switched the tone of his letter into Christian instructions for he was ever the teacher. Their walk, their daily lives as lived out before their neighbors was a concern to him, as it should be to all who witness and testify of the Christ of God. "Walk in wisdom." was his exhortation to them. Live a life that will show forth the character of the Lord Jesus, whom we now claim to know and emulate in our Christian walk. Watch our words for the unsaved are quick to pick up on anything negative or unseemly that appears in the life of the Christian friend or neighbor. The Christian has become an open book which all now read and watch very carefully, trying to calculate whether or not this testimony is real. Col. 4:5

COLOSSIANS 45

Redeeming the time. Col. 4:5b A more appropriate statement could not be found to be used to address the church of today. If there is one theme to be found in the Word of the Lord to which almost all would agree, it has to be that we are living in the last days and that the coming of the Lord is drawing nigh. What better time than this to "redeem the time," that is evaluate it and properly use it for the advancement of the gospel. Also to use the time left to perfect our lives before the Lord. He is not coming for a church that bears the appearance of a beggar, though sometimes we sound like it with all the requests we have of Him for help in so many secular things. Soul searching followed by a season of spiritual works is in order. A total commitment to the will and desire of the Lord. He is looking for a people who have pledged themselves unto Him in a true espousal. 2 Cor. 11:2 A

church such as Paul introduced in the fifth chapter of Ephesians. It is time for His very own to pledge themselves in an act of redeeming the time, of wisely using it for divine purposes.

“It is time to seek the Lord..” Hos. 10:12 In the heart of every true child of the Lord there is a desire to see the glory of the Lord manifest in mighty revival. We want to see the church drawn to a place of the closest proximity, the most intimate of relationship with her Lord and Savior. That can only come about as we determine in our hearts to seek the Lord with a whole, absolutely undivided heart. Jer. 29:13 A whole hearted search after the presence of the Lord will produce the revelation of Christ within the heart of the seeker. Only when sought with the whole, the entire heart focused on the search, may He be found.

All the great movements of revival fires have a history of intense, travail and prayer as the foundation of the outpouring of the Spirit. Always such intense seeking of the Lord will result in a recognition by the seekers of their short comings and lack of true spirituality causing them to repent. At times even with strong crying and a display of true sorrow for sin. The fallow ground, unplowed and hardened is prepared for a crop by being plowed and broken up. Hos. 10:12 It is time to sow righteousness and true holiness. To conform ourselves, as His church, to the entire will of the Lord for the days that lie ahead. The results are beautiful, especial as translated by the NIV. “Reap the fruit of unfailing love.” There is no limit to the display of the glory of the Lord upon a people, a church or even the individual who will follow the will and purpose of the Lord by approaching Him with a broken spirit and a broken heart of repentance because our time has been so occupied by the things of this life.

COLOSSIANS 46

“Redeeming the time because the days are evil.” Eph. 5:16 Times of unrighteousness and blatant sin are challenges to the church to maintain a code of righteousness. The tide of worldly thinking today is toward dismissing unrighteousness as being an illness therefore is not something for which they should be held accountable. Along with that, so many leaders of the world have committed gross sins and because of their

standing there is no correction. The results are that license to sin and not be judged or condemned is increasing everywhere and in all categories of life. Pathetically many in the church have been swept up in this attitude and sin prevails everywhere. To redeem the time is to take unto ourselves, as spirit filled saints the exhortation of the Apostle to put on the whole armour of God. Thus being able to be victorious in an evil time. Eph. 6:13

In a time of warfare the tools of battle are of vital importance. They are only beneficial when they are at hand. How much greater is the importance of placing the spiritual weapons of battle right where they belong. In this case it is to be clothed upon with the spiritual weapons provided by the Lord. The ability to be victorious depends entirely on the coat of armor that is made available. To be able to stand against the wiles of the enemy we must allow truth to embrace us, having our loins wrapped about with the purity of truth as it is found in the Lord Jesus. Righteousness is shown as the protective covering of a breastplate it is the righteousness of the Lord Jesus as it is imparted unto us. Fear and confusion may rage in a battle situation but were Christ prevails there is peace, even in the midst of great confusion. When we wear the footwear provided, which is the gospel, peace under all circumstances will prevail.

The child of God will use the shield of faith against every doubt and fear that comes their way. In this warfare the mind and spirit are constantly being tested. The enemy will deposit disbelief and fearful questionings in the mind but the shield of faith will strike them all down. Next on his list is to be found the helmet of salvation. Whereby knowing the power of the Spirit which has been manifest in our lives we turn our thoughts toward the Lord Jesus. The weapon supplied is the Word of the Lord. Therefore we hide the Word in our hearts. There is not a confrontation or attack which we face that does not have a solution in the Word. Added to all this is that which is most necessary, prayer. The lines of communication must be maintained by any army. Prayer is our contact, our source of strength and power. We can not win without it. Eph. 6:13-18 We are more than conquerors through Him who loves us! The foregoing is sufficient to win any spiritual battle.

COLOSSIANS 47

A proper usage of words and purpose in conversation are vital as a sign and witness to the ungodly. "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life." Prov. 15:4 That is, a healing tongue which brings serenity and tranquility in the heart and spirit of the one privileged to hear its message. Therefore make certain that your part of any conversation is seasoned with salt or the restraint placed on the tongue by the caution of the Spirit of the Lord dwelling within. Col. 4:6 Restrain the tongue from harsh criticism and words of judgment toward others. When not bridled with the control of the grace of the Lord toward others it can become a great conflagration wrecking untold harm at times on innocent people. James 5:6 The Apostle also called it a world of iniquity. Unwise words can produce great destruction in the lives of others. It contaminates the spirit of a person until they become one whom others avoid because of the constant words of condemnation which flow from that wicked and filthy tongue. One need not use foul language to contaminate the spirit but a tongue of constant condemnation and hurtful disparagement defiles the whole man and also those who listen to its vileness.

A pure, clean tongue is required, seasoned with salt.(under the control of the restrictions of the Word and the Spirit), thereby held in constraint, that the inquiring seeker might receive a proper answer to their questions. Col. 4:6 A true and proper response will be well received when it is motivated and spoken by pure lips and a proper analysis of the question asked. Jesus responded with the Word of the Lord which is always effective and convincing.

Tychicus , Name meaning, chance.), one of seven mentioned in Acts 20:4 who accompanied the Apostle Paul on part of his third missionary journey. He was also sent by Paul with a report on his condition and in return a report on the spiritual condition of the Churches. Eph. 8:21, 2 Tim. 4:12, Col. 4:7, and Crete, Titus 3:12. Paul gave a brief but glowing résumé concerning Tychicus. He very obviously meant a good deal to him as a beloved brother, both terms may well be taken as endearing terms. Men among whom the love of God had been shared as well as the persecutions which followed Paul wherever he went. That he was also involved in the ministry of the Word is seen for he was called a faithful minister, one who

was totally dedicated the spreading of the gospel of Christ even under the most adverse of conditions. Paul also held him to be his own equal one whom he termed to be a fellow servant in the Lord. Most definitely the kind of person one would want on Paul's missionary trips.

COLOSSIONS 48

Onesimus, also noted to be a faithful and beloved brother in Christ. Like all who come to Christ he had a history of wrong doing but now in repentance he had become a man of great value to the Apostle Paul. Paul's letter to Philemon reveals the history of the man who had been a servant, a slave in the service of Philemon. Onesimus had become a Christian under the ministry of Paul, therefore he called Onesimus his son. One born of the Spirit of the Lord with his past forgiven. Philem. 10

The approach of the Apostle in seeking forgiveness and freedom for Onesimus is unique. I love his verbiage and the show of divine intelligence that Paul displays in seeking freedom for Onesimus. That which was unprofitable, a run away slave, now is made extremely profitable both to his former master and the one who had led him to the Lord. Philem. 11. I have sent him back to you, receive him with all the love and care that I so deeply feel for him in my heart. Philem. 12 I would have kept him to serve me in my old age but without your feelings on the matter I would do nothing. That his benefit to me would not be forced but willingly, and with liberty. Philem. 13-14 Rather than saying that he was a runaway Paul simply said: he departed for a season, that you might receive him forever. Now that he was in Christ he should be treated as a brother. His status was entirely new. Philem. 15 He is no longer to be looked upon as a servant but as a beloved brother in Christ, to me and much more so to you. Both as a person and as a fellow Christian. Philem. 16

Now comes the clincher. If you value our friendship and fellowship in Christ, treat him as you would me, a partner. If he is indebted to you, place the charge on me. Having written this with my own hand consider it as a contract. I take full responsibility for any indebtedness that there is owing you. Then Paul really applied the pressure by reminding Philemon that he was in Christ because of the efforts of Paul. Therefore he owed him his

allegiance and obedience in the matter presented to him. Philem. 17-19 Yes brother let me rejoice in your assistance, refresh my heart, make me feel good. I have great confidence that you will not only fulfill my request but go even beyond that which is asked of you. Philem. 20-21 Paul furnished us with a beautiful picture of Christ taken our sins and paying for them with His own blood.

COLOSSIANS 49

The Apostle Paul as a prisoner in Rome when addressing his letter to Philemon made two comments concerning himself. The first that he was a prisoner of the Jesus Christ, i.e. because of his belief in Jesus. Philem.1, 9 The second being that he was Paul the aged. These help us understand what was taking place in his old age. Following the custom of that day, there were those who had come to him in Rome to see to his physical needs, while others were there to gain all the wisdom and knowledge of the doctrine and revelation of Christ which had been give to Paul. His knowledge of the Word was like a magnet attracting men who were novices and fellow ministers alike. While seeing after the necessary secular matters concerning Paul they were extracting all the knowledge and revelation that they possibly could from Paul. His dwelling place must have been like a bees hive, filled with activity and a seeking after the jewels, that is, the knowledge of Christ. Some of these are named by him along with statements pertaining to them which would have helped the Colossians identify them Col. 4:10-11 Paul also stated that these had been a comfort to him. Their presence, their watchful care, their hunger and appreciation for the teaching of the Word presented to them by Paul were all points of joy and encouragement to the Apostle.

Among them was this one named Epaphras (Meaning; lovely, dear, charming), he is noted as being a “fellow servant of Christ” Also this Colossian church was his church home for Paul said; “he is one of you”. Inasmuch as names were often prophetic, sometimes of events at other times of the character of the individual, I take his name Epaphras to show the nature of this man. He was a man with a deep burden of prayer, praying fervently. That is to be considered a prayer of travail. He would of fully understood the most involving of prayer, the type that involves the total

being. Paul spoke of it as being a prayer that is not formed with words but as in intercession or spiritual travail it is made "with groanings which cannot be uttered." Rom. 8:26 Such prayer is necessary to bring forth a movement of the Spirit of the Lord in the earth which will lead the church to maturity. His prayer was for the perfection and the completion of the Spirit of Christ to be made manifest in the Colossian church. A prayer which will be the prayer of all who are led by a Spirit of prayer in these last days. This is precisely the prayer that is needed for the day and hour in which we are living. None other will break the spirit of worldliness which has invaded the modern day church.

COLOSSIANS 50

The prayer of Epaphras was aimed directly at the spiritual standing of the church. His prayer was for the church to reach a status of perfection where she would stand as a completed work of the Lord. Col. 4:12 He had an understanding of the will of the Lord for His people of all generations. The great desire of the heart of the Lord has been a people who embrace to the full, His very likeness.

From the time of Abram until now the invitation of the Lord is that those who are His, walk before Him in perfection. Gen. 17:1 It is interesting to note that this Word came to Abram when he was ninety and nine years old. Nine, is the number which represents the Holy Spirit. Therein lies the secret of perfection before the Lord. Walking in the Spirit leads to perfection. The scripture proclaims that the way of the Lord is perfect. There can therefore be no question as to how we are to walk before Him. Ps. 18:30 A double nine signifies the double portion or the fullness of the Spirit. Over the span of the centuries the intentions of the Lord toward His people has not changed. Jesus issued a challenge when he called upon His followers to be perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Mt. 5:48 However a person tries to get around the words of the Lord Jesus, the fact remains that He said we are to be like our Father in heaven. He meant it and has made it possible for all who desire to take on the likeness of that which is heavenly, holy and perfect.

While there are several different words used in the Old Testament which are translated to mean either perfect, finished or complete the intent of

them all is a finished product that bears the exact image and likeness of the original. That which is the very essence of beauty is the work of the Lord in bringing forth a woman of exceeding great beauty. From within her will shine forth the fullness of the glory of the Lord. She is called Zion. Ps. 50:2 She is that mount Sion which is the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. Heb. 12:22 That along with the truth that the foundation stone, which is Christ, is laid in Sion. 1 Peter 2:6 Is a seal of identification that the perfection of beauty is founded on the teachings of the New Testament and that the true Sion of the Lord is the woman of Revelation twelve, the bride of Christ. Outside of the Lord Himself, there is nothing more beautiful than the woman clothed with the fullness of light. Shining forth in the most brilliant fashion for she is filled with all the fullness of the Almighty. Eph. 3:19 She is the finished product. The very ultimate of womanhood. Exalted and made to be equal with her Bridegroom, Christ. Eph. 1:23

COLOSSIANS 51

The ministers and associates who worked with the Apostle Paul received of him, his vision for the church. Considering the fact that Paul was responsible for the establishment of many of these churches they would teach and believe what he did. Epaphrus was certainly one of them for in his prayer he prayed for the church to be complete or come to a place of fullness. Col. 4:12 Developing into a body of believers who all believed the identical thing and conducted themselves after the same order. Comparing that day with today, they were much closer to accomplishing unity than the church of today. Nevertheless out of the confusion of today will arise a church of perfect and absolute harmony. There will first be man made efforts to accomplish this but they will fail. However out of such movements will come forth that which is true and is motivated by the Spirit and the Word.

The words penned by Paul express his anticipation of such a glorious happening taking place among the brethren. "Till we all come in a unity of the faith." Eph. 4:13 Blended together until their teaching, i.e. doctrine, is in perfect accord with the Word of the Lord. The word faith translate to persuasion, moral conviction, truth which will be the very heart, soul and spirit of a harmonious body of believers. Their knowledge of the Son of God will identical, with positively no differences to be found among them.

The end result being that of the full development of a perfect a complete being. These being blended together will comprise the true Bride of Christ in the end of the age. They will have come to the full measure of the stature of Christ. Through the operation of the Spirit these who are so totally committed to Christ will walk as He walked. They will talk His talk and manifest His life to all.

Paul writing to te Ephesians expressed and sealed the same thought when he urged them to be motivated by humility and the love of Christ into the unity of the Spirit. For, said he; there is one body and one Spirit. Eph. 4:1-3 It is utterly impossible for harmony to prevail when the human spirit dominates a gathering together of God' people. In the context of this fourth chapter of Ephesians the Apostle leaves no doubt in our minds but, what for the body of Christ to function as it should there must be absolute agreement in all things Spiritual. Every true member of the body of Christ will have foregone the inspection of the Word and the Spirit and will measure up to the standard that has been established by the Lord Himself. Epaphras may not have seen an answer to his prayer in his day but be assured that when the church of today begins to prayer as he did there will be a drastic change.

COLOSSIANS 52

Paul's companions and visitors on his trips and while in captivity in Rome prove to have an interesting number among them. In his salutation to the Colossian church he includes a greeting from one named Aristarchus, (meaning; best ruler) who was of Greek extraction and joined him on his third missionary journey. Paul called him his fellow prisoner. Actually, he was a voluntary prisoner who would ministry to Paul when he was incarcerated in jail. Col. 4:10

Marcus, a cousin to Barnabas and whose mother's name was Mary was also one of Paul's companions. He shared the family home with his Mother which was also used as a church. It was at this home that when Peter was released Rhoda answered the door but was so excited she ran to tell the others who were having a prayer meeting, that Peter was at the door but she forgot to open the door and let him in. Acts 12:8-17

Jesus Justus, termed “a fellow worker” and one who had been a comfort to Paul. He was also a Jew one who had been converted to Christ from the Law. Col. 4:12

Then there was Luke, whom Paul called the beloved physician. Col. 4:14
If Paul accepted his profession and thought so highly of him, Luke had to be a legitimate physician of some reputation. Most definitely not a magician or necromancer as the term is so used in the Old Testament to describe such individuals. He was a faithful friend and companion staying with Paul when others had left him, for what ever purpose. 2 Tim. 1:15 Only Luke is with me. 2 Tim. 4:11

Demas, (meaning, popular) So once again we see that the meaning of a name turns out to be the prophetic circumstances of the life of an individual. Paul made mention of Him in Colossians but later had to report that Demas had left him, “having loved this present world.” It could mean but one thing and that was that the popularity of this world so captivated him that he left Paul and consequently, Christ. 2 Tim. 4:10

Paul then urged them to share his letters to them for his message was to the whole of the church, even reaching down to the church of today. He concluded by letting them know that he cared enough to have personally written the letter to them and to remember him in prayer. Col. 4:18 **Finis.**

