

Christ is *All* and in *All*

An interactive study of Colossians

Winter Retreat
January 17 & 18, 2000
Manitowoc, Wisconsin
Armin J. Panning

COLOSSIANS INTRODUCTION

Background

1. The City of Colosse
 - a. Small town in the beautiful Lycus River Valley, c. 100 mi. east of Ephesus
 - 1) native population Phrygian, but with many Greek colonists and also many Jews
 - 2) at Paul's time a part of the Roman province of Asia (modern-day Turkey)
 - b. The Lycus Valley known for:
 - 1) Phrygian wool: volcanic ground produced fertile soil and meadows excellent for sheep raising
 - 2) dyes: produced with chalky deposits in Lycus River
 - c. Neighbor to Laodicea and Hierapolis, also situated in Lycus River Valley (churches in both places, 2:1; 4:13,15,16)
 - 1) at one time the largest of the three
 - 2) now the smallest (bypassed by the Via Sebaste, which once went through it), the smallest, in fact, of the places to which Paul addresses any of his letters
2. The Church at Colosse
 - a. Not mentioned in Acts
 - b. Not founded by Paul (cf. 2:1), one of two such churches to whom Paul writes a letter (also Romans)
 - c. Evidently founded by Epaphras (1:8; 4:12,13), a native of Colosse and likely a convert of Paul
 - d. Probably founded during Paul's stay at Ephesus (Acts 19:1;8-10)
 - e. Consisted largely of Gentiles (1:21,27; 3:5-7)

Occasion for Writing: The arrival of Epaphras with a report of conditions in Colosse (1:4,7,8)

1. Good news: The gospel is bearing fruit, as seen by the Colossians' growth in faith and love (1:3-7)
2. Bad news: The "Colossian heresy," a syncretistic blending of Jewish, pagan, and "Christian" elements (seen not so much by what Paul *attacks* as by what he *asserts*)

Colossians Introduction

- a. *Jewish elements*: Emphasis on the need to observe circumcision, dietary laws, holy days (2:11-14,16,17)
- b. *Pagan elements*: Incipient form of gnosticism
 - 1) Salvation is by "knowledge," not faith, knowledge open only to the few initiated into the gnostic thought system (1:28; 2:3)

"The new teaching called into question and obscured the unique greatness of the Christ and the complete sufficiency of his atonement...[It] would, so the new teachers claimed, carry the Colossian Christians beyond their rudimentary Christianity to fullness and perfection" (Martin Franzmann, *The Word of the Lord Grows*)
 - 2) Matter is evil; spirit alone is good. Affected:
 - a) the doctrine of creation: aeons, emanations, angel worship (1:16; 2:9,15,18)
 - b) the doctrine of the person of Jesus: denial of his incarnation or of his deity (1:19; 2:9)
 - c) a person's approach to life: either ascetism (2:20-23); or libertinism (3:5ff)
- c. *"Christian" element*: Christian terminology was used, but with different meanings (2:8); the result: a dethroning of Christ and therefore also a denial of him

Purpose for Writing: To refute this heresy which was threatening the existence of the Colossian church

Place and Date of Writing

1. **Place:** A prison letter (4:3)
 - a. Some: Caesarea - But...
 - 1) a runaway slave (Onesimus) would hardly have gone to Caesarea (Philemon written same time as Colossians)
 - 2) no mention of Philip the evangelist (Acts 21:8)
 - 3) hope of release (Phm 22) not likely at Caesarea
 - b. Others: Ephesus - But...
 - 1) no mention in Acts of Ephesian imprisonment
 - 2) Luke is with Paul (4:14), but wasn't with him in Ephesus
 - 3) would a runaway slave have stopped so close to home?

Colossians Introduction

- c. Best: **Rome**, since everything mentioned in Colossians and Philemon fits very well with this imprisonment, e.g., Luke's presence, relative freedom, hope of release
2. **Date:** c. 62 A.D., assuming it was written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome

Authorship and Canonicity

1. Authorship: Early church unanimously attributes it to Paul
 - a. Irenaeus (c. 180), Clement of Alexandria (d. c. 215), Origen (c. 250) attribute it to Paul
 - b. In Marcion's list (c. 140) and Muratorian Canon (c. 175)
2. Canonicity: Homologoumenon

Contents

1. Theme: Christ is Sufficient (1:18; 2:9; 3:11)
2. Division:
 - a. Ch 1-2: Christ is sufficient for salvation
 - b. Ch 3-4: Exhortations based on the truths taught in chapters 1 and 2
3. Chapter summaries
 - a. Ch. 1: The supremacy of Christ
 - b. Ch. 2: Warnings against legalistic and ascetic errors
 - c. Ch. 3: Put to death the old and put on the new;
A table of duties
4. Relation to Ephesians
 - a. Similar in language and topics treated (Goodspeed: "Three-fifths of Colossians is reflected in Ephesians")
 - b. Difference in emphasis:
 - 1) Colossians: Christ as the Head of the Body
 - 2) Ephesians: The church as the Body of Christ
 - c. Ephesians an expansion by Paul of thoughts presented in more compact form in Colossians (probably written shortly after Colossians, since entrusted to same man, Tychicus, for delivery)

ΠΡΟΣ ΚΟΛΟΣΣΑΕΙΣ

1

Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ καὶ Τιμόθεος ὁ ἀδελφὸς
²τοῖς ἐν Κολοσσαῖς ἀγίοις καὶ πιστοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ,
χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν.

Translation Matters:

v.1 Letter formula: nominative = author(s)

: dative = recipients

: statement of greeting

v. 2. Note attributive position in τοῖς....ἀδελφοῖς

No verb(s): supply _____

Rough Translation:

NIV: Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our
brother,² To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and
peace to you from God our Father.

Content Matters:

1. What is an "apostle"? How does an apostle (ἀπόστολος) differ from a
disciple(μαθητής)? Cf. Mark 3:13-15

2. χάρις and εἰρήνη: cause and effect; Greek and Jewish greeting

1:3-6a

³Εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ πατρὶ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πάντοτε περὶ
ὑμῶν προσευχόμενοι, ⁴ἀκούσαντες τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τὴν
ἀγάπην ἣν ἔχετε εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἀγίους ⁵διὰ τὴν ἐλπίδα τὴν ἀποκειμένην ὑμῖν
ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἣν προηκούσατε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ⁶τοῦ
παρόντος εἰς ὑμᾶς,

Translation matters:

v.3 Is πάντοτε better taken with Εὐχαριστοῦμεν or προσευχόμενοι?

v.4 ἀκούσαντες = circumstantial participle

Review: 3 types of participles: circumstantial, attributive, supplementary

Note the "circumstances" or "shadings" possible with circumstantial participles: _____

v. 5 διὰ with the accusative = "because"; with genitive = "through

τὴν ἀποκειμένην = attributive participle; How can you tell?

προηκούσατε: What does the prefix προ add?

v.6 παρόντος: What type of participle?

Rough translation:

NIV:

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴ because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints— ⁵ the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel ⁶ that has come to you

Content Matters:

Why does Paul give thanks to God?

What can we learn from Paul's example?

How did the Colossians come to faith? How has Paul found out about their faith? Cf. vv.4,5,8

Who/What are τοὺς ἁγίους?

1:6b-8

καθὼς καὶ ἐν παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ἐστὶν καρποφορούμενον καὶ αὐξανόμενον καθὼς καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν, ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας ἠκούσατε καὶ ἐπέγνωτε τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ· ⁷καθὼς ἐμάθετε ἀπὸ Ἐπαφρᾶ τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ συνδούλου ἡμῶν, ὅς ἐστιν πιστὸς ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διάκονος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ⁸ὁ καὶ δηλώσας ἡμῖν τὴν ὑμῶν ἀγάπην ἐν πνεύματι.

Translation Matters:

v.6 καθὼς.... καθὼς = correlatives: "as...so"

καρποφορούμενον = supplementary participle

ἐπέγνωτε: ἐπι = intensifier

v.7 Ἐπαφρᾶ = genitive (third declension proper noun)

ἡμῶν --- οἱ ὑμῶν?

Rough Translation:

NIV:

All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. ⁷You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, ⁸and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

Content Matters:

v. 6 "in all the world" Is that statement really true?

ἐπέγνωτε = key term (You might want to start a list of places where forms of it are used) The gnostics, by definition, stressed γνώσις; Paul offers ἐπίγνωσις.

v. 7 Note Paul's high esteem of co-workers. What can we learn from Paul's example?

v.8 Does διάκονος imply a lower level of clergy? Cf. 1:23

Construct a plausible scenario in which Epaphras may have "made known"

(δηλώσας) to Paul the situation in Colossae.

1:9-10a

⁹Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἡμεῖς, ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας ἠκούσαμεν, οὐ παύομεθα ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν
προσευχόμενοι καὶ αἰτούμενοι, ἵνα πληρωθῆτε τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ θελήματος
αὐτοῦ ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ καὶ συνέσει πνευματικῇ, ¹⁰περιπατῆσαι ἀξίως τοῦ κυρίου
εἰς πᾶσαν ἀρεσκείαν, ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ καρποφοροῦντες καὶ αὐξανόμενοι τῇ
ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ,

Translation Matters:

v. 9 Antecedent of τοῦτο = _____

προσευχόμενοι καὶ αἰτούμενοι = supplementary participles. What do they supplement?

What use of ἵνα?

Review: final = purpose clause

Non-final = noun clause (subject)

= noun clause (object)

= result clause (cf. John 9:2)

ἐπίγνωσιν = direct object retained when a transitive verb becomes passive

v. 10 περιπατῆσαι: infinitive occasionally = result, as in English (i.e. no ὥστε)

πᾶσαν -- no article

Review: ὁ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος = the whole man

πάντες ἄνθρωποι = every man; all people (unlimited)

πάντες οἱ ἄνθρωποι = all of the people (in a specific group)

Rough Translation:

NIV:

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. ¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way:

Content Matters:

v.9 Note again Paul's pastoral love and concern; an example for all called workers

πληρωθήτε = common gnostic term: "to be filled; to have fullness" (Start a list?)
Note Paul's argument: If you have Christ, you have complete "fullness."

According to verse 9, what should be a pastor's highest priority for his people?

v. 10 What result will ἐπίγνωσιν have in people's lives?

1:10b-12 -- Note that πᾶσαν ἀρεσκείαν is subdivided by the four participles in verses 10-12. Hence the NIV has a semi-colon to introduce the participles.

περιπατῆσαι ἀξίως τοῦ κυρίου εἰς πᾶσαν ἀρεσκείαν, ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ
καρποφοροῦντες καὶ αὐξανόμενοι τῇ ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ, ¹¹ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει
δυναμούμενοι κατὰ τὸ κράτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ εἰς πᾶσαν ὑπομονὴν καὶ
μακροθυμίαν. Μετὰ χαρᾶς ¹²εὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ πατρὶ τῷ ἰκανώσαντι ὑμᾶς
εἰς τὴν μερίδα τοῦ κλήρου τῶν ἁγίων ἐν τῷ φωτί.

Translation Matters:

v. 10-12 Antecedent of all 4 participles is the "you" of πληρωθήτε in verse 9

Note that all four of the πᾶς forms in this section are without article. What significance is to be seen in that? (Add to list)

v. 11 ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει δυναμούμενοι κατὰ τὸ κράτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ = "with complete power being empowered according to the strength of his glory" = "mightily empowered with his glorious strength"

Note the verse division from 11 to 12. Do you agree with the editors?

Rough translation:

NIV:

that you...may please him in every way:
bearing fruit in every good work,
growing in the knowledge of God,
being strengthened with all power according to his glorious
might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ...and
joyfully
giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the
inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

Content Matters:

vv. 10-12 Note that Paul apologetics consist in providing a thoroughly positive approach, i.e., in Christ you have everything. You don't need gnosticism's additional γνώσις.

v. 12 εὐχαριστοῦντες: Paul urges on others what he practices himself (cf. 1:23)

The basic meaning of ἱκανώσαντι is to make ἱκανός("capable", or "able"). How does Paul avoid a semi-pelagian slant in this section, as though God gives us a start (infused grace, so to speak), and thus makes us capable of doing what pleases him so as to be in line for an "inheritance"? Answer: cf. the "trailing relative clauses" of verses 13-14.

¹³ὅς ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σκοτούς καὶ μετέστησεν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ, ¹⁴ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν· ¹⁵ὅς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως.

Translation Matters:

v. 13 Antecedent of ὅς = _____

μετέστησεν: prefix μετα very often indicates a change

τῆς ἀγάπης = descriptive genitive between two possessive genitives; literally "the kingdom of the Son of his love = the kingdom of his beloved Son

v. 14 Antecedent of ᾧ = _____

ἄφεσιν (cp. ἀφ - ἴημι)

τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν = objective genitive

v. 15 Antecedent of ὅς = _____

πάσης κτίσεως: A grammatical possibility, and a common way of handling the genitive, is as a partitive genitive, which would yield the translation, "the firstborn of all creation." Is the genitive partitive? Is Christ part of the creation? Are the Jehovah's Witnesses right that Christ is a creature? If not, how do you analyze the genitive? Suggestion: πάσης κτίσεως = a division of the *comparative* genitive, e.g., better than _____, superior to _____, leader of _____, ruler of/over _____, "Firstborn *over* all creation."

Rough translation:

NIV:

¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Content Matters:

v. 13 "Trailing relative clauses" are not an after-thought; they often carry the main message.

v.13 ἐξουσίας is a gnostic term (cp. verse 16)

σκότους in contrast to φωτί of verse 11

Comment: βασιλείαν is a *verbal* noun (cp. βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ)

v.14 ἀπολύτρωσιν and ἄφεσιν: in apposition -- different picture but same concept

v. 15 εἰκὼν = "exact representation." Does that say something about the status of the Son relative to the Father?

πάσης -- no article (list)

What support is there for our analysis of the genitive as a comparative, namely, "over all creation"? Answer: a) ὅτι of verse 16

b) ἐν...δι' ...εἰς of verse 16

c) προ of verse 17

d) συνέστηκεν of verse 17

e) κεφαλή of verse 18

f) ἀρχή of verse 18

g) πρωτεύων of verse 18

1:16-18

¹⁶ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὰ ὄρατα καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα, εἴτε θρόνοι εἴτε κυριότητες εἴτε ἀρχαὶ εἴτε ἐξουσίαι· τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκτισταί· ¹⁷καὶ αὐτὸς ἐστὶν πρὸ πάντων καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν, ¹⁸καὶ αὐτὸς ἐστὶν ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος τῆς ἐκκλησίας· ὃς ἐστὶν ἀρχή, πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, ἵνα γένηται ἐν πάσιν αὐτὸς πρωτεύων

Translation Matters:

v.16 ὅτι: Review a) causal

b) indirect discourse = "that"

c) direct discourse = , "...."

Antecedent of αὐτῷ = _____

τὰ πάντα with article often = philosophical term for "the universe" (list)

Compare/contrast the aorist ἐκτίσθη(16a) with the perfect ἐκτισται(16b)

πάντων: no article

v. 17 συνίστημι: B-A-G "continue; endure; exist"

v. 18 τοῦ σώματος: partitive or comparative?

Antecedent of ὅς = _____

πρωτεύων = supplementary participle

γένηται: not "become" (not a change), but "be shown as," "become apparent as what he was all along"

πᾶσιν: no article

Rough translation:

NIV:

¹⁶ For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

Content Matters:

v. 16 ἐν αὐτῷ = "in connection with him" The Father is not ruled out; Christ is definitely included. Christ = Creator, not creature. Cf. also John 1:3.

Note the scope of τὰ πάντα, including the last four terms, which were often used by gnostics in connection with their system of "aeons" and "emanations", etc. Whatever exists, Christ has created it!

The universe, "the all," has been created "through"(διὰ) him and "for" (εἰς) him. Hence he is also the preserver of all creation. He is not part of it.

v.17 He is πρὸ πάντων; "above absolutely everything" -- totally in charge. In connection with him "the all" holds together. Christ is the "glue" that holds the universe together. Without him everything would fly apart.

v.18 "the head of the body": viewed as the controlling member, not part of the body -- as is evident from the appositive to *body*, namely, head of the *church*. Christ rules his Church; he is not part of it.

THEME: 18a could well be highlighted as the theme of Colossians: CHRIST, THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH. Compare/contrast that with the theme of Ephesians: THE CHURCH, OF WHICH CHRIST IS THE HEAD.

πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν Contrary to the bare genitive that accompanied this noun in verse 15, here the addition of the prepositional phrase spells out the partitive nature of the situation. Christ died and became one of τῶν νεκρῶν, but he rose from(ἐκ) among them and thus became the "firstborn from among the dead." As the first of many to follow him in rising from the dead, he can also be called, as Paul does in Romans 8:29. The "firstborn among many brothers," Cf. also Hebrews 2,:10,11.

πρωτεύων Christ's creating and sustaining activity established him as #1 over absolutely everything. With him at our side, who needs what gnosticism (or any other -ism) has to offer?

1:19,20

Christ can claim the #1 position...

¹⁹ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ εὐδόκησεν πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα κατοικῆσαι ²⁰καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ

ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν, εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ

σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ, [δι' αὐτοῦ] εἴτε τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἴτε τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

v.19 What use of ὅτι?

Antecedent of αὐτῷ = _____

The subject of εὐδόκησεν = _____

πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα: nominative or accusative?

Antecedent of αὐτοῦ = _____

Antecedent of αὐτόν = _____. Note that this personal pronoun doubles for the reflexive pronoun, which is losing out in koine Greek

Antecedent of αὐτοῦ = _____

Rough Translation:

NIV:

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Content Matters:

v.19 "Fullness" is a technical term used in many gnostic systems. Πλήρωμα("Fullness") was one of the things promised to those who accepted the new *gnosis*. (Start a list of "fullness" terms?)

v. 20 Note that, like justification, "reconciliation" can be spoken of in an *objective* sense. However, because it's there for all doesn't mean that all accept and receive it.

The scope of the neuter "all things" is indicated by Paul's expansion εἴτε τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἴτε τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

About "all things" the NIV *Study Bible* says,

"When Adam and Eve sinned, not only was the harmony between God and man destroyed, but also disorder came into creation (Ro 8:19 – 22). So when Christ died on the cross, he made peace possible between God and man, and he restored in principle the harmony in the physical world, though the full realization of the latter will come only when Christ returns (Ro 8:21)."

1:21-23

²¹Καὶ ὑμᾶς ποτε ὄντας ἀπηλλοτριωμένους καὶ ἐχθροὺς τῇ διανοίᾳ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς πονηροῖς, ²²νυνὶ δὲ ἀποκατήλλαξεν ἐν τῷ σώματι τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου παραστήσαι ὑμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους καὶ ἀνεγκλήτους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ, ²³εἴ γε ἐπιμένετε τῇ πίστει τεθεμελιωμένοι καὶ ἐδραῖοι καὶ μὴ μετακινούμενοι ἀπὸ τῆς ἐλπίδος τοῦ εὐαγγελίου οὗ ἠκούσατε, τοῦ κηρυχθέντος ἐν πάσῃ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν, οὗ ἐγενόμην ἐγὼ Παῦλος διάκονος.

v. 21 ποτε is in contrast to the νυνὶ of verse 22

ὄντας = technically an imperfect participle, (i.e. not present time)

διανοία = local dative; seat of emotions

ἐν = "in connection with" = "as shown by"

v.22 Subject of ἀποκατήλλαξεν is _____ (cp verse 20 and the αὐτοῦ here)

ἐν = "in connection with" = means

παραστήσαι = purpose

ἀγίους καὶ ἀμώμους καὶ ἀνεγκλήτους = triad of predicate adjectives

v. 23 τεθεμελιωμένοι καὶ ἐδραῖοι καὶ μὴ μετακινούμενοι = triad of predicate modifiers (participles and adjective)

εὐαγγελίου = objective genitive: "not dislodged from the confidence in the gospel which you have

οὗ = object of ἠκούσατε, in the genitive because it's attracted to the case of its antecedent

Rough translation:

NIV:

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— ²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

v.21 pure law; the human condition is clearly described

v. 22 pure gospel; the perfect solution to the human condition. Who needs gnosticism?

v. 23 What significance is there in Paul's using εἰ with the indicative rather than ἐάν with the subjunctive?

"which you heard": not from Paul but from _____ (1:7)

"in all creation" Is that literally true? Why stress the point?

οὐ ... trailing relative = transition to the next section: Paul's ministry

1:24 – 29 Paul's Ministry to the Church

²⁴Νῦν χαίρω ἐν τοῖς παθήμασιν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ ἀνταναπληρῶ τὰ ὑστερήματα τῶν θλίψεων τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου ὑπὲρ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ὃ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐκκλησία, ²⁵ἧς ἐγενόμην ἐγὼ διάκονος κατὰ τὴν οἰκονομίαν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθείσαν μοι εἰς ὑμᾶς πληρῶσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, ²⁶τὸ μυστήριον τὸ ἀποκεκρυμμένον ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν γενεῶν- νῦν δὲ ἐφανερώθη τοῖς ἀγίοις αὐτοῦ, ²⁷οἷς ἠθέλησεν ὁ θεὸς γνωρίσαι τί τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τοῦ μυστηρίου τούτου ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ὃ ἐστὶν Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς δόξης· ²⁸ὃν ἡμεῖς καταγγέλλομεν νουθετοῦντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον καὶ διδάσκοντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ, ἵνα παραστήσωμεν πάντα ἄνθρωπον τέλειον ἐν Χριστῷ· ²⁹εἰς ὃ καὶ κοπιῶ ἀγωνιζόμενος κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν δυνάμει.

v. 24 τοῖς: the article occasionally serves as a possessive, as in German

τῶν θλίψεων = genitive with a verb of lacking (separation idea)

v. 25 οἰκονομίαν: (οἶκο + νομος = house-rule) the way God does things in his house = his "administration"

εἰς + infinitive = purpose clause

πληρῶσαι: not "to fill up" but "to proclaim fully" as in Romans 15:19

v. 26 τὸ μυστήριον = appositive to τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ

τῶν αἰώνων καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν γενεῶν = gnostic terms

ἀγίοις = holy by faith in Christ; believers

v. 27 τί τὸ πλοῦτος(indirect question) = object of γνωρίσαι; hence "to make known what the wealth is." One might render the clause: "to make known in what the glorious treasure of this mystery, intended for Gentiles, consists, namely: Christ in you (Gentile Colossians)." For a parallel, and somewhat fuller, statement of the same truth, cf. Ephesians 3:2-6, particularly verse 6

ἡ ἐλπίς = appositive to τὸ πλοῦτος -- in reality, appositive to the whole preceding concept

Antecedent of ὄν = _____

τέλειον: Another gnostic term. Is "perfect" a good translation of this term to describe a Christian?

v. 29 εἰς ὃ does not have a neuter accusative singular word as its antecedent. The antecedent is rather a previously developed concept. What concept is that?

Note the cognate use of ἐνέργειαν and ἐνεργουμένην. Cp our English "energetic."
"... according to his effective working that is powerfully (ἐν δυνάμει) at work in me."

Rough translation:

NIV:

²⁴ Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. ²⁵ I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— ²⁶ the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. ²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. ²⁹ To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

Content Matters:

v.24 χαίρω: "rejoicing in suffering" Is Paul a masochist? Cp. Acts 5:41

Isn't it almost blasphemy to say that something is lacking in Christ's work? What lack is Paul "filling up"? cp. v.25

σώματος: cp. v. 18

v. 26 What is a μυστήριον? Is it something "mysterious"?

v. 27 οἷς has as its antecedent the "holy ones" (i.e. believers) of the previous verse. Is Paul here limiting the revelation of this mystery to believers? Does this verse allow a Reformed "limited atonement" idea? Cp. v 28.

v. 28 Antecedent of ὄν is _____

Note the three(3) identical expressions using πάντα without article. In strong contrast to the clubiness and cliquishness of gnosticism, no one is excluded from Paul's gospel appeal.

ἵνα... = the goal of Paul's ministry

ἀγωνιζόμενος = to strive with all one's might (cp."agonize"). Does Paul's example always find a parallel in our ministries?

2:1-5

Θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναι ἠλίκον ἀγῶνα ἔχω ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ ὅσοι οὐχ ἑώρακαν τὸ πρόσωπον μου ἐν σαρκί, ἵνα παρακληθῶσιν αἱ καρδίαι αὐτῶν συμβιβασθέντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ καὶ εἰς πᾶν πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως, εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ, Χριστοῦ, ἃ ἐν ᾧ εἰσιν πάντες οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως ἀπόκρυφοι. ⁴Τοῦτο λέγω, ἵνα μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς παραλογίζηται ἐν πιθανολογίᾳ. ⁵εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῇ σαρκὶ ἄπειμι, ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι σὺν ὑμῖν εἰμι, χαίρων καὶ βλέπων ὑμῶν τὴν τάξιν καὶ τὸ στερέωμα τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν.

Translation Matters:

v. 1 ἠλίκον stresses extension toward the limit, either > great or >small. Here it obviously means "how *great* an ἀγῶνα I have"

ἀγῶνα = cognate to ἀγωνιζόμενος at 1:29

ὅσοι = another quantity word: "as many as," "all who"

ἵνα...εἰς...εἰς "In order that(ἵνα)your hearts be encouraged... for(εἰς)πᾶν πλοῦτος... and for(εἰς)ἐπίγνωσιν

συμβιβασθέντες: βιβάζω is the causative form of βαίνω; hence "cause to go together"
= "be united"

v. 4 παραλογίζεται: the παρα- prefix has a negative quality; hence "mislead"

πιθανολογία: πιθανο- is related to πείθω; hence *persuasive* logic, but wrong and misleading

χαίρων καὶ βλέπων: Koine Greek tends to favor keeping things on the same level (paratactic constructions) even when the sense may require subordinating an idea(hypotactic structure). So here; the sense is not:"rejoicing and seeing" but "rejoicing to see..."

Rough translation:

NIV:

I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. ² My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

Content Matters:

v.1 If there hadn't been any face-to-face contact between Paul and Colossians, what sort of ἀγώνα do you suppose Paul is having? Cp v. 5.

Laodicea: together with Hierapolis(4:13), sister city of Colossae, all three lying within a dozen miles of each other and located in the same valley

v. 2 How do the two εἰς phrases relate to one another? Are they appositives? Is there progression? Note the NIV paraphrase of the second εἰς.

v.3 How do you understand ἀπόκρυφοί?

One could say that this verse really represents the heart of Paul's argument against the false teachers: "If you have Christ, you have everything. You don't need anything else!"

v. 4 μηδεῖς: Note the singular. Paul doesn't name or identify the false teachers very clearly. (We'll get just a glimpse of their wrong teachings at 2:16-23.) Paul dwells on the positive: CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL.

v. 5 Note again Paul's optimistic and generous evaluation of the Colossians' faith, despite the challenges that confront them.

2:6-10

⁶Ὡς οὖν παρελάβετε τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον, ἐν αὐτῷ περιπατεῖτε,
⁷ῥριζωμένοι καὶ ἐποικοδομούμενοι ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ βεβαιούμενοι τῇ πίστει καθὼς
ἐδιδάχθητε, περισσεύοντες ἐν εὐχαριστίᾳ. ⁸Βλέπετε μή τις ὑμᾶς ἔσται ὁ
συλαγωγῶν διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν
ἀνθρώπων, κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου καὶ οὐ κατὰ Χριστόν· ⁹ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ
κατοικεῖ πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος σωματικῶς, ¹⁰καὶ ἐστὲ ἐν αὐτῷ
πεπληρωμένοι, ὅς ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλὴ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας.

Translation Matters:

v. 6 Ὡς needs a correlative to be supplied with περιπατεῖτε: "as...so"

περιπατεῖτε is a look-alike form -- either indicative or imperative. Which do you favor?

v. 7 Four participles in predicative position; note the different pictures suggested by the various verbs used: rooted; built up; made firm; increasing

v. 8 μή clause: Koine Greek has lost the object clause of fearing (ὅπως + future indicative) that Classical Greek had. Here it's been replaced with an implied clause of fearing ("lest"), but it has retained the future indicative rather than the subjunctive that would be standard with a clause of fearing.

συλαγωγῶν: σύλη("booty") + ἄγω = "carry off as a captive"

παράδοσιν: neutral term; can be good or bad things that are "passed along"(παρα-δίδωμι) from one generation to the next. Paul's teaching = good "tradition" (2 Thess. 2:15). Here bad "tradition" is spoken of.

v. 9 What use of ὅτι?

Antecedent of αὐτῷ = _____

v. 10 πεπληρωμένοι: supplementary participle with ἐστὲ. Note the NIV's paraphrase.

πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας: Again a genitive of comparison – "head *over* all..."

Rough translation:

NIV:

⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him,
⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught,
and overflowing with thankfulness.

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

⁹ For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

v. 6 Motivation is in the ὡς clause; note also the inferential οὖν("therefore")

What positive note is conveyed by Paul's use of the *present* tense in the imperative περιπατεῖτε? A colon after the περιπατεῖτε would be appropriate to introduce the series of participles.

v. 7 Another encouragement to thanksgiving, the third in 36 verses

v. 8 φιλοσοφίας: Perhaps better taken in its literal meaning of "a love of wisdom." That was gnosticism's basic appeal.

στοιχεῖα: "rudiments," "ABCs" of the world = misguided thinking of unregenerate man (cp. Galatians 4:3).

v. 9 κατοικεῖ: In contrast to παροικέω, which means "to live as a stranger," κατοικέω means "to settle down," "to be a permanent resident." Why would καρτοικέω be particularly fitting for Paul's argument here?

v. 10 Another summary verse that embodies Paul's case against the false teachers: In Christ you have all the "fullness" anybody could want! Who needs anything in addition?
-- Does the argument still hold today?

NOTE: The previous section has presupposed problems from a basically pagan, Gentile source. Now there is a shift to include also a mix of Jewish error and misunderstanding.

2:11-15:

¹¹ Ἐν ᾧ καὶ περιετμήθητε περιτομῇ ἀχειροποιήτῳ ἐν τῇ ἀπεκδύσει τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκός, ἐν τῇ περιτομῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ¹² συνταφέντες αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βαπτισμῷ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ συνηγέρθητε διὰ τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐνεργείας τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν. ¹³ καὶ ὑμᾶς νεκροὺς ὄντας [ἐν] τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν, συνεζωοποίησεν ὑμᾶς σὺν αὐτῷ, χαρισάμενος ἡμῖν πάντα τὰ παραπτώματα. ¹⁴ ἔξαλείψας τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν ὃ ἦν ὑπεναντίον ἡμῖν, καὶ αὐτὸ ἦρκεν ἐκ τοῦ μέσου προσηλώσας αὐτὸ τῷ σταυρῷ. ¹⁵ ἀπεκδυσάμενος τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας ἐδειγμάτισεν ἐν παρρησίᾳ, θριαμβεύσας αὐτοὺς ἐν αὐτῷ.

v. 11 Antecedent of ᾧ is _____

ἀχειροποιήτῳ: ἀ-χειρ-ποιέω = "not-hand-made"

ἐν τῇ ἀπεκδύσει: in connection with = "consisting of"

σώματος = objective genitive

σαρκός = descriptive genitive

τοῦ Χριστοῦ = another descriptive genitive: "a Christ-circumcision"

v. 12 Antecedent of ᾧ is _____

τῆς ἐνεργείας: objective genitive = "faith in the effective working...."

Antecedent of αὐτόν is _____

v. 13 ὄντας = *imperfect* participle; circumstantial with what "shading"?

παραπτώμασιν and ἀκροβυστία = causal datives: "by virtue of"

The subject of συνεζωοποίησεν is _____

The antecedent of αὐτῷ is _____

v. 14 ἐξαλείψας: ἀλείφω = "to anoint"; ἐξαλείφω = "to wipe, sponge off"

δόγμασιν: Robertson lists this as a locative (p. 524).

ὑπεναντίον = Koine piling up of prepositions: ὑπο + ἐν + ἀντι, with ἀντι being the functional part of the expression

ἤρκεν = perfect of αἴρω: "to lift up, take away"

προσηλώσας: προσ-ηλόω = "nail to"

v. 15 ἀπεκδυσάμενος: ἐν-δύω = "to put on"; ἐκ-δύω = "to take off." Note again the redundant prepositional prefix in ἀπο-

Antecedent of αὐτούς is _____

Antecedent of αὐτῷ is _____

Rough translation:

NIV:

¹¹ In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Content Matters:

v.11 Circumcision = a Jewish element being introduced into Paul's discussion. A "Christ-circumcision" is the positive counterpart to a "hand-made Jewish circumcision."

v. 12 "buried with...raised with" cp. Romans 6:4ff.

v.13 συνεζωοποίησεν: What is the force of the συν- in this compound verb? Were the Colossians "made alive" in the same way Christ was? Cf. John 5:24,25, noting also 28&29.

To show how the Colossians were "made alive," supply proper shading for the circumstantial participles χαρισάμενος and ἐξαλείψας.

v. 15. Compare with 1 Peter 3:19 for the doctrine of Christ's descent into hell.

2:16 – 19

¹⁶Μὴ οὖν τις ὑμᾶς κρινέτω ἐν βρώσει καὶ ἐν πόσει ἢ ἐν μέρει ἑορτῆς ἢ νεομηνίας ἢ σαββάτων· ¹⁷ἃ ἐστὶν σκιά τῶν μελλόντων, τὸ δὲ σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

¹⁸μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς καταβραβεύετω θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ καὶ θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἃ ἑώρακεν ἐμβατεύων, εἰκὴ φυσιοῦμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦς τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ, ¹⁹καὶ οὐ κρατῶν τὴν κεφαλὴν, ἐξ οὗ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα διὰ τῶν ἀφῶν καὶ συνδέσμων ἐπιχορηγούμενον καὶ συμβιβαζόμενον αὔξει τὴν αὔξησιν τοῦ θεοῦ.

v. 16 Μὴ = standard negative with an imperative

ἐν: "in connection with" = "in the matter of..." or "in regard to..."

v. 17 μελλόντων = another *imperfect* participle

καταβραβεύετω = a picture from the sports world. βραβεύω = to act as an umpire or a referee. Hence, κατα + βραβεύετω = to "call a foul on..." or "to disqualify"

vv. 18,19 Note the 4 participles describing the μηδεὶς:

θέλων...ἐμβατεύων...φυσιοῦμενος...κρατῶν

v. 19 Antedecent of οὗ is _____ (Hint: Look at the context, rather than rely on strict grammar.)

ἀφή = ligament; σύνδεσμος = sinew (literally "binder"). Both terms go better with συμβιβαζόμενον ("joined") than with ἐπιχορηγούμενον ("supplied" or "furnished").

αὔξει τὴν αὔξησιν = cognate accusative

Rough translation:

NIV:

¹⁶ Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. ¹⁸ Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. ¹⁹ He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

Content Matters:

v. 16 $\tau\iota\varsigma$ Note Paul's low-key way of speaking about the troublemakers, who obviously bring a Jewish element to the scene, such as dietary regulations and OT festivals.

v. 17 What is the sense of $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ here?

v. 18 It's difficult to get specifics here because Paul doesn't specify -- in keeping with his pattern of dealing with heterodoxy.

v. 19 Notice how Paul works in a positive twist in what is essentially a criticism of the false teaching and activity of the troublemakers.

2:20 – 23

²⁰ Εἰ ἀπεθάνετε σὺν Χριστῷ ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων τοῦ κόσμου, τί ὡς ζῶντες ἐν κόσμῳ δογματίζεσθε ²¹ μη ἄψη μηδὲ γεύση μηδὲ θίγης, ^{22^a} ἔστιν πάντα εἰς φθορὰν τῇ ἀποχρήσει, κατὰ τὰ ἐντάλματα καὶ διδασκαλίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ^{23^a} ἅτινα ἐστιν λόγον μὲν ἔχοντα σοφίας ἐν ἐθελοθησκία καὶ ταπεινοφροσύνη [καὶ] ἀφειδία σώματος, οὐκ ἐν τιμῇ τιμῇ πρὸς πλησμονὴν τῆς σαρκός.

Translation Matters:

v. 20 $\epsilon\iota$ with the *indicative*; hence certain -- not really iffy or hypothetical

$\alpha\pi\omicron$: The Greek says: "you died *from* the ABCs of the world (separation idea), whereas we would say, "...died *to*..."

Adjustment to the word order of verses 21,22:

τί ὡς ζῶντες ἐν κόσμῳ δογματίζεσθε κατὰ τὰ ἐντάλματα καὶ διδασκαλίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, Μὴ ἄψη μηδὲ γεύση μηδὲ θίγης, ²² ἃ ἐστὶν πάντα εἰς φθορὰν τῆ ἀποχρήσει,

Paraphrase or expanded translation: You've died to the ABCs of the world. Why, as if still living in the world, do you observe regulations that follow human commands and teachings -- teachings such as "Don't touch! Don't taste! Don't handle!" All of the things you're not supposed to touch, taste or handle are going to come to an end when they're used.

v. 23 Antecedent of ἄτινα is _____

λόγον = "appearance," "semblance"??

ἐθελοθρησκία = θέλω + θρησκεία(18); cp. KJV's "will worship" = "worship devised by the human will"??

ἐν τιμῇ τιμῆ = "to be in honor" = "to have value"??

Rough translation:

NIV:

²⁰ Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? ²² These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. ²³ Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Content Matters:

στοιχεῖα: Comment: The rudiments, the ABCs of the world, are basically natural man's *opinio legis*.

vv. 21-23: Jewish regulations? Pagan? Mixture of both? Can't tell?

3: 1-4

Εἰ οὖν συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ, τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε, οὗ ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ καθήμενος. ²τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε, μὴ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. ³Ἀπεθάνετε γὰρ καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν κέκρυπται σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ ἐν τῷ θεῷ. ⁴ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς φανερωθῆ, ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν, τότε καὶ ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ.

Translation Matters:

v.1 Εἰ + the indicative is not "iffy"; it's so certain that it can be translated as "since " or "because"

ζητεῖτε: a look-alike form; could be indicative or imperative. Which is it here?

ἄνω: adverb used as a noun

οὗ: looks like a genitive of the pronoun ὅς, but it really is an old locative case of that pronoun = "where"

καθήμενος: supplementary participle with ἐστιν

v. 2 φρονεῖτε: indicative or imperative?

v. 4 ὅταν + the subjunctive = _____ clause.

Rough translation:

NIV:

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Content Matters:

vv.1,2 What does it mean to think τὰ ἄνω? Note the opposite of it in τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

What is the basis of confidence on which a Christian can, and should, think τὰ ἄνω?

v. 3 In what sense is our life hidden (κέκρυπται)?

v. 4 What is Paul saying when he makes ζωή an appositive to ὁ Χριστός?

Overview of the 3:5-17: Directives for Sanctified Living

1. Vices to avoid 3:5-9a

- a) Νεκρώσατε = "put to death ..."
- b) ἀπόθεσθε = "put off also..."

2. transition to "new man" (3:9b-11)

- a) ἀπεκδυσάμενοι = "having taken off..."
- b) ἐνδυσάμενοι = "having put on..."

3. Virtues for the new man to practice (12-17)

- a) Ἐνδύσασθε = "put on..."
- b) ἐπι = "add ..."
- c) βραβεύετω = let peace be the umpire...

3:5-11:

⁵Νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, πορνείαν ἀκαθαρσίαν πάθος ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν, καὶ τὴν πλεονεξίαν, ἣτις ἐστὶν εἰδωλολατρία, ⁶δι' ἣ ἔρχεται ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ [ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας]. ⁷ἐν οἷς καὶ ὑμεῖς περιεπατήσατε ποτε, ὅτε ἐζήτε ἐν τούτοις. ⁸νυνὶ δὲ ἀπόθεσθε καὶ ὑμεῖς τὰ πάντα, ὀργὴν, θυμὸν, κακίαν, βλασφημίαν, αἰσχρολογίαν ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν. ⁹μὴ ψεύδεσθε εἰς ἀλλήλους, ἀπεκδυσάμενοι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον σὺν ταῖς πράξεσιν αὐτοῦ ¹⁰καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν νέον τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν, ¹¹ὅπου οὐκ ἔστι Ἕλληνας καὶ Ἰουδαῖος, περιτομὴ καὶ ἀκροβυστία, βάρβαρος, Σκύθης, δοῦλος, ἐλεύθερος, ἀλλὰ [τὰ] πάντα καὶ ἐν πάσιν Χριστός.

v.5 A colon after γῆς would be appropriate to indicate the beginning of the series of vices that follows.

ἐπιθυμίαν is neutral *per se*; κακὴν puts it among the things to get rid of.

πλεονεξίαν: πλεον(comparative of πολὺς) + ἔζω(future of ἔχω) = "wanting to have more" = "greed"

v. 6 ἀπειθείας: descriptive genitive

v. 7 Antecedent of οἷς is _____

Antecedent of τούτοις is _____

v. 8 A colon after πάντα would be appropriate to indicate the start of the series that follows.

vv. 9,10 ἀπεκδυσάμενοι and ἐνδυσάμενοι: What shading best reflects the author's intent in both of these circumstantial participles?

v. 11 ὅπου = "where"

ἔνι = shortened form of ἔνεστιν: "there is"

Rough translation:

NIV:

⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸ But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹ Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Content Matters:

v.5 οὖν: "therefore" suggests a course of action. Viewed in its context, why is νεκρώσατε a very logical thing to do?

What do you understand Paul to be urging when he says to put τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς to death? Cp Romans 6:13

ἀνακαινούμενον: What type of action does the *present* participle show? Why is that significant here?

v. 11 ὅπου: Where does the situation obtain that Paul describes in the series of pairs?

What does it mean that Christ is πάντα καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν? What significance does that truth have for us as individual Christians? As called workers?]

3:12 –17

¹²Ἐνδύσασθε οὖν, ὡς ἐκλεκτοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ ἅγιοι καὶ ἠγαπημένοι, σπλάγχνα οἰκτιρμοῦ χρηστότητα ταπεινοφροσύνην πραύτητα μακροθυμίαν, ¹³ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων καὶ χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς ἐάν τις πρὸς τινα ἔχη μομφήν· καθὼς καὶ ὁ κύριος ἔχαρίσατο ὑμῖν, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς· ¹⁴ἐπὶ πᾶσιν δὲ τούτοις τὴν ἀγάπην, ὃ ἐστὶν σύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος. ¹⁵καὶ ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ Χριστοῦ βραβευέτω ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν, εἰς ἣν καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι· καὶ εὐχάριστοι γίνεσθε.

¹⁶Ὁ λόγος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐνοικεῖτω ἐν ὑμῖν πλουσίως, ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ διδάσκοντες καὶ νουθετοῦντες ἑαυτοὺς, ψαλμοῖς ὕμνοις ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς ἐν [τῇ] χάριτι ᾄδοντες ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν τῷ θεῷ· ¹⁷καὶ πᾶν ὃ τι ἐὰν ποιῆτε ἐν λόγῳ ἢ ἐν ἔργῳ, πάντα ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, εὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ θεῷ πατρὶ δι' αὐτοῦ.

Translation Matters:

v. 12 σπλάγχνα = internal organs viewed as the seat of emotions; recall KJV's "bowels of compassion"

v. 13 ἀλλήλων = reciprocal pronoun: "each other"

ἑαυτοῖς = reflexive pronoun rather than another reciprocal pronoun, as we would have expected. Note also the "generic" plural of reflexives (all 3rd person) that needs to be adjusted by context.

v. 14 ἐπι= "on top of" = "in addition to"

τελειότητος: descriptive genitive

v. 15 βραβεύετω: again the sports imagery of an umpire or referee

v. 16 A colon after πλουσίως would be appropriate to introduce the series of participles. Does Paul envision a two-way or a three-way division here? In other words, what goes with which participle?

Rough translation

NIV:

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Content Matters:

v. 13 Note Paul's tact in using *ἐάν* + the subjunctive. How does that set a different tone from what *εἰ* + the indicative would have done?

καθὼς ὁ κύριος οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς = powerful motivation. Cp. the parallel statement at Ephesians 4:32.

v. 15 What does it mean to let peace "be the umpire"?

εὐχάριστοι: fourth encouragement to be thankful

v. 16 χάριτι: fifth encouragement to be thankful

v. 17 *ἐάν* with the subjunctive + imperative (supplied) = a present general condition (not iffy; all-inclusive: "whatever")

εὐχαριστοῦντες: sixth encouragement to thankfulness

3:8 - 4:1

¹⁸ Αἱ γυναῖκες, ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ὡς ἀνήκεν ἐν κυρίῳ.

¹⁹Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπάτε τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ μὴ πικραίνεσθε πρὸς αὐτάς.

²⁰Τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν κατὰ πάντα, τοῦτο γὰρ εὐάρεστον ἔστιν

ἐν κυρίῳ. ²¹Οἱ πατέρες, μὴ ἐρεθίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμῶσιν.

²²Οἱ δοῦλοι, ὑπακούετε κατὰ πάντα τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις, μὴ ἐν

ὀφθαλμοδουλίᾳ ὡς ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀπλότῃ καρδίας φοβούμενοι τὸν

κύριον. ²³ὅ ἐὰν ποιῆτε, ἐκ ψυχῆς ἐργάζεσθε ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις,

²⁴εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπὸ κυρίου ἀπολήμψετε τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομίας. τῷ

κυρίῳ Χριστῷ δουλεύετε. ²⁵ὅ γὰρ ἀδικῶν κομίσεται ὃ ἠδίκησεν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν

προσωποληψία.

4

Οἱ κύριοι, τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὴν ἰσότητα τοῖς δούλοις παρέχεσθε, εἰδότες ὅτι καὶ

ὑμεῖς ἔχετε κύριον ἐν οὐρανῷ.

Translation Matters:

vv. 18,19 Αἱ γυναῖκες = vocative case

γυναῖκες... ἄνδρες: in some contexts = "women...men." Here context narrows it down to "wives...husbands"

ὑποτάσσεσθε = ὑπο + τάττω; "role" rather than rank. Contrast this verb with the ὑπακούετε used with children(20) and slaves(22).

vv.20,21 τέκνα... πατέρες = vocative case.

εὐάρεστον ἔστιν ἐν κυρίῳ = parallel to ἀνῆκεν ἐν κυρίῳ (18)

vv. 22 Οἱ δοῦλοι: vocative

ἀπλότῃ = single-mindedness of purpose

v. 24 τῆς κληρονομίας = appositional genitive; the inheritance is the reward

δουλεύετε: indicative or imperative?

v. 25 What thought needs to be supplied in this verse?

Rough translation:

NIV:

¹⁸ Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

²¹ Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

²² Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. ²⁵ Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.

4 Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven

Content Matters:

v. 18 ὡς ἀνήκεν ἐν κυρίῳ: "role" reflects God's order of things; not male chauvinism

v. 19 ἀγαπάτε, not φιλέω or στέργω, though these are by no means excluded

v. 21 πατέρες: Just fathers and not mothers? Cp γονεῦσιν (20)

On a congregational level, is fathers embittering and discouraging their children a major problem? Are Christian men's retreats necessary? Helpful?

v. 22 Why four(4) verses for slaves and only one each for wives, husbands, children, and parents? Cp. 4:9 and all of the letter to Philemon

v.23 What is Paul's stand on slavery? Would he be politically correct today?

v. 24 What is the inheritance (κληρονομίας)? Is it the reward for faithful labor?

4:1 Note the play on words: κύριοι....κύριον

What would you include under the "just and fair"(τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὴν ἰσότητα) things that Paul expects a master to provide for his slaves?

4: 2 - 6

²Τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτερεῖτε, γρηγοροῦντες ἐν αὐτῇ ἐν εὐχαριστίᾳ,

³προσευχόμενοι ἅμα καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν, ἵνα ὁ θεὸς ἀνοίξῃ ἡμῖν θύραν τοῦ λόγου λαλῆσαι τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' ὃ καὶ δέδεμαι, ⁴ἵνα φανερώσω αὐτὸ ὡς δεῖ με λαλῆσαι. ⁵Ἐν σοφίᾳ περιπατεῖτε πρὸς τοὺς ἔξω τὸν καιρὸν ἐξαγοραζόμενοι. ⁶ὁ λόγος ὑμῶν πάντοτε ἐν χάριτι, ἄλατι ἠρτυμένος, εἶδέναι πῶς δεῖ ὑμᾶς ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ ἀποκρίνεσθαι.

Translation Matters:

v. 2 προσκαρτερεῖτε: In many Greek words a "vocalic ρ" leads to the interchange between ἄρ and ῥα. For example, "strength" can be either κράτος or κάρτος. Here in προσκαρτερεῖτε we have αρ. Meaning: "to get a firm grip on"

v. 3 What use of ἵνα here? Do we pray "in order that" something happen?

τοῦ λόγου: descriptive genitive

v. 4 What use of ἵνα here?

ἐξαγοραζόμενοι: literally "buying out, or buying up"; hence "to get a corner on" = to make full use of

v. 6 Supply an imperative form of εἶναι.

ἄλατι from ἄλς (cp the German *Salz*)

ἠρτυμένος: perfect passive participle from ἀρτύω "to season"

Rough translation:

NIV:

² Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the

most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Content Matters:

v. 2 What kind of prayer life is Paul urging with the imperative προσκατερείτε?

έν εὐχαριστία = seventh(7th) reminder. Gratitude is obviously a priority for Paul.

v. 3 Note Paul's appreciation for the support of fellow Christians. Is there a lesson here for us?

What is the "mystery"? Cp Ephesians 3:2ff.

δέδεμαι establishes this as a "captivity letter."

v. 5 Who are τοὺς ἔξω? Note Paul's outreach and evangelism thrust.

v. 6 What do you understand with έν χάριτι?

What do you understand with ἄλατι ἠρτυμένος "salty speech"???

Outline of the Final Matters Paul Treats:

- a) the letter carrier(s) 7-9
- b) greetings from Paul's Jewish coworkers 10,11
- c) greetings from Paul's Gentile coworkers 12-14
- d) greetings for the Laodiceans 15
- e) instructions for the Colossians 16,17
- f) Paul's "signature" 18

4:7 – 9: Letter Carrier(s)

⁷Τὰ κατ' ἐμέ πάντα γνωρίσει ὑμῖν Τύχικος ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος καὶ σύνδουλος έν κυρίῳ, ⁸ὃν ἔπεμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο, ἵνα γνῶτε τὰ περι ἡμῶν καὶ παρακαλέση τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, ⁹σὺν Ὀνησίμῳ τῷ πιστῷ καὶ ἀγαπητῷ ἀδελφῷ, ὃς ἐστίν ἐξ ὑμῶν· πάντα ὑμῖν γνωρίσουσιν τὰ ᾧδε.

Translation and Content Matters:

v.7 Τὰ κατ' ἐμέ πάντα = a noun, object of γνωρίσει

Τύχικος = "Lucky" (Τύχη = Fortune) cp. also Ephesians 6:21

ἀγαπητὸς ... πιστὸς: Note again Paul's high esteem of colleagues and fellow-workers.

ὃς ἐστὶν ἐξ ὑμῶν: Onesimus is from Colossae. Cp. Philemon

Note Paul's commitment to sharing information regarding his own situation and staying informed about others. Do we sometimes complicate our life and compromise the effectiveness of our ministry by not communicating adequately?

NIV:

⁷ Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. ⁸ I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. ⁹ He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here

4: 10-11 Jewish Coworkers

¹⁰ Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Ἀρίσταρχος ὁ συναιχμάλωτος μου καὶ Μάρκος ὁ ἀνεψιὸς Βαρναβᾶ (περὶ οὗ ἐλάβετε ἐντολάς, ἐὰν ἔλθῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς, δέξασθε αὐτόν) ¹¹ καὶ Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰούστος, οἱ ὄντες ἐκ περιτομῆς, οὗτοι μόνοι συνεργοὶ εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, οἵτινες ἐγενήθησαν μοι παρηγορία.

Aristarchus: cf. Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2

Is συναιχμάλωτος to be taken literally? Cf. the same term being used for Epaphras at Philemon 23, even though here in Colossians Epaphras he is referred to simply as a δοῦλος Χριστοῦ (4:12).

Mark: cf. Acts 12:12; 12:25; 15:37; 15:39; 2 Timothy 4:11

ἀνεψιὸς = "cousin" Might that explain to some extent why Barnabas was willing to give Mark another chance?

ἐντολάς = what orders???

δέξασθε: "receive him" implies that Mark is back in Paul's good graces. Cf. also 2 Timothy 4:11

Jesus...Justus = ???

συνεργοὶ...παρηγορία Note once more Paul's positive evaluation of all three men.

NIV:

¹⁰ My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.) ¹¹ Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me.

4: 12 – 14 Gentile Coworkers:

¹² ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Ἐπαφρᾶς ὁ ἐξ ὑμῶν, δοῦλος Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ], πάντοτε ἀγωνιζόμενος ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς, ἵνα σταθῆτε τέλειοι καὶ πεπληροφορημένοι ἐν παντὶ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ. ¹³ μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτῷ ὅτι ἔχει πολὺν πόνον ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἱεραπόλει.

¹⁴ ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Λουκᾶς ὁ ἰατρός ὁ ἀγαπητὸς καὶ Δημᾶς.

Ephras

ἐξ ὑμῶν = a Colossian

δοῦλος Χριστοῦ : Why has Ephras come to Rome? Is he also in captivity? Cp. the συναιχμάλωτος used in Philemon 23

How is Ephras "contending" or "wrestling" (ἀγωνιζόμενος)?

What use of ἵνα?

πεπληροφορημένοι (πληρο + φορέω): "fully convinced" = a parting shot at gnosticism's phony πλήρωμα ("fullness")

μαρτυρῶ: a virtual oath, undegirding Paul's commendation of Ephras

ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἱεραπόλει Is/Was Ephras serving a tri-parish?

Luke:

Constant companion of Paul; cf. the "we" passages in Acts 16:10-39 and 20:5 – 28:31. Note the gap in Philippi. Did Luke conduct a Christian ministry there? Practice medicine?

Demas:???

Is he the "deserter" spoken of in 2 Timothy 4:10?

NIV:

¹² Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. ¹³ I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis. ¹⁴ Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings.

4: 15 Greetings to Laodicea

¹⁵ Ασπάσασθε τοὺς ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ ἀδελφοὺς καὶ Νύμφαν καὶ τὴν κατ' οἶκον αὐτῆς ἐκκλησίαν.

Νύμφαν (note accent) = a woman's name, reflected by the manuscripts' use of the pronoun αὐτῆς. Every bit as well attested is the masculine Νυμφᾶν, with the manuscripts showing the gender-appropriate pronoun αὐτοῦ.

Note the existence of house-churches.

NIV:

¹⁵ Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

4: 16-17 Instructions for Colossae:

¹⁶ καὶ ὅταν ἀναγνωσθῆ παρ' ὑμῖν ἡ ἐπιστολή, ποιήσατε ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ Λαοδικέῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀναγνωσθῆ, καὶ τὴν ἐκ Λαοδικείας ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀναγνώτε. ¹⁷ καὶ εἶπατε Ἀρχίππῳ· Βλέπε τὴν διακονίαν ἣν παρέλαβες ἐν κυρίῳ, ἵνα αὐτὴν πληροῖς.

ὅταν ἀναγνωσθῆ = indefinite temporal

The *ἵνα* clauses are not purpose clauses but both are object clauses; objects of ποιήσατε: "see to it that..."

τὴν ἐκ Λαοδικείας = what letter???

The public reading of Paul's letters is assumed. Note that also in Thessalonica such reading was specifically commanded (cf. 1 Thess 5:27). The sharing (and copying?) of the letters resulted in the collecting of a corpus of Pauline writings such as Peter alludes to when he says, "He(Paul) writes the same way *in all his letters*, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort..." (2 Pe 3:16).

Ἀρχίππῳ = a διάκονος who is to tend to his διακονίαν. Does that make him the pastor of the Colossian group? Cp. Philemon 2 where an Archippus is mentioned together with Philemon and Apphia. Is he related to them? A son???

NIV:

¹⁶ After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

¹⁷ Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord."

4:18 Paul's "Signature"

¹⁸ Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ Παύλου. μνημονεύετε μου τῶν δεσμῶν. ἡ χάρις μεθ' ὑμῶν.

τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ: Paul apparently always wrote the closing greeting in his own hand to certify the genuineness of the letter. Cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:17, where Paul alerts them to this as his standard practice, "I Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters. This is now I write." Note also the closing section of Galatians, "See what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand!" (6:11)

μου τῶν δεσμῶν: another "captivity" indicator

NIV:

¹⁸ I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.