

May 28, 1995

"Jesus Christ Is the Creator"  
Col. 1

Couples Class  
Wendell Alford,  
Teacher

I. Please remember that on 4-23-95 we noted that the letter of Paul to Colosse was hand-carried by Tychicus in about 61-62 AD from Rome. The writing is known as a prison letter, because Paul was in prison when he composed it. The city of Colosse was located in the country of Phrygia from which some citizens had come to Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:10. The significance of the coming of God's Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus at Lk 24:49 (See also Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:2-4.) is difficult to over-assess. Many groups of foreigners in Jerusalem for the Passover became believers in Jesus as the Christ (Savior) and began to worship him through that experience as Peter shared with the thousands there what God was doing through Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Thousands left Jerusalem after that celebration of the beginning of the spreading of the Gospel by these believers back in their home areas. Further, the persecution of the believers in Jerusalem drove them into all areas of the Roman Empire, Acts 8:1-2; 26-40. It is very probable that some of the attendants of that Pentecost immediately following Jesus' ascension were residing in Colosse and had become members of the assembly of believers there. During the years that the Colossian saints had fellowshiped together, false teachings had been brought in and wormed their way into the Gospel of God's grace. Many of the fallacies (heresy) introduced were a mixture of Greek philosophy, Judaic ritualism, and Far Eastern mysticism. The net result was that there must be intermediaries between God and mankind, including Jewish legal practices, worshiping of angels, all integrated together as proper, appropriate Christian teachings. Paul's approach to countering this false dogma was begun in Chap. 1.

II. Although Paul had gone through Phrygia on both his second and third missionary journeys, Acts 16:6; 18:23, the Scripture does not explicitly state that Paul himself established the congregation there. It may be that on one of these journeys he had visited Colosse, but more likely the group there was the result of Paul's work in Ephesus, Acts 19:10. Colosse was near the border of "Asia," about 100 miles east of Ephesus. Epaphras, 1:7; 4:12-13, could have founded the Colossian church. Paul had learned about the doctrinal problems at Colosse from a fellow prisoner in Rome, the same Epaphras, and Tychicus from Ephesus. Churches at that time did not have the open and constant communication between them that we take for granted today. Although the Colossian and Ephesian letters were written at about the same time, they have quite different themes. Ephesians speaks to the unity and glory that should exist in a local congregation of believers while Colossians stresses the deity and all-sufficiency of the Lord Jesus, the Christ, as the only Savior. The former can be labeled a letter which portrays the body of Christ (those whom God is calling out, Eph. 4:4), and the latter, the head of Christ's called out ones, Col. 1:18. Nevertheless, they both carefully outline statements of the great doctrines of the Gospel. Paul asks that they be read to the congregations to whom they were addressed and also to nearby

congregations, 4:15-16. Paul's letters as a portion of God's Word to us are amazingly complete in letting us know what God wants us to know. Romans and Galatians have as their central theme, justification by faith. Ephesians declares that the true church (ecclesia or those called forth by God's Holy Spirit to be his children through faith in Jesus Christ, John 15:16) are united into one body of Christ, no matter where they lived, when they lived mortally, or what they are or have been denominated (called or named). Philippians outlines the sheer joy of being and living as believers in Jesus as Lord, John 13:34-35. Thessalonians divulges for believers what they need to know about God's teachings about end-time things, I Thes. 5:4,9-11. Now we come to Colossians which proclaims the absolute supremacy and sole sufficiency of Jesus Christ to be a believer's complete link with Jehovah God as directed and aided by God's Holy Spirit who is God's Communicator and eternal Companion (paraclete or helper), John 14:23-28; 15:26. Jesus in Colossians is presented as the Bedrock (foundation) of God's holy assembly, Isa. 8:14; Rom. 9:33; I Pet. 2:4-10.

III. At Col. 1:1 Paul begins his letter as he did the one to Philippi by including his brother Timothy. He then addresses the group as saints of God who are in Christ (through their faith in Jesus Christ). It is well to remember that this exercising of faith is the sole need to become those who are "members of God's Kingdom," i.e., made right with God. There is no need for the church to designate any believer as a saint, because they are all saints through their faith and God's grace. Because of their saintly status, Paul prays for grace and peace to be theirs through God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. In vs. 4 Paul notes that their faith in Jesus Christ has created in them a love for all other saints who have the same faith in Christ. Epaphras is associated with the Colossians in vs. 7 as a faithful servant who had served among them. God the Father, because of their faith, had made them qualified to be inheritors with all saints and thereby transferred them to membership in Jesus' Kingdom, vs. 12-13. In vs. 14 Paul relates the believer's redemption, the forgiveness of sins, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. In vs. 15 the apostle proclaims the unique, singularity of God's Son, Jesus. The Son outranks every other creature in all of creation, because it was he who created all things. Not only was he in existence before all creation, but it is he who maintains the order of that which he created. Jesus the Lord made and maintains all things and now has given himself to reclaim to himself that creation which has rebelled and alienated itself from a loving God. The sacrifice of Jesus' human body created a possibility for all who had been alienated and separated from God (spiritually dead) to become spiritually alive through faith in Jesus. This reference to Jesus' body gives credence to the import of a believer's temporary living quarters while residing in it. That body is not inherently evil in and of itself although it can perform evil acts following the desires of a human spirit alienated from God. The body can also do contrary to God's will even after a person's spirit has been salvaged (made spiritually alive), or, as Paul observes at Eph. 4:30, God's Holy Spirit can be "grieved" or saddened. We believers should recognize this possibility and confess our infractions of God's will in our daily lives. We are not to say that we do not sin but confess our sins directly to God's only Advocate, Jesus Christ, I John 1:8-2:2. I stress this problem of sins of believers here, because Col. 1 stresses the preeminence of Jesus Christ in all things, vs. 18.

June 4, 1995

"Deceived By Men"  
Col. 2

Couples Class  
Wendell Alford,  
Teacher

I. Paul was terribly perturbed about what was happening in the Colossian congregation. In Chap. 1 he makes clear that no deviation should turn their sole faith, hope and trust away from Jesus Christ since he alone is preeminent in God's creation and in God's glorious redemption plan for all who will believe in his Son, Jesus Christ. Now in Chap. 2:1 the apostle expresses his deep concern, not only for the Colossians, but also for other churches in the area, including those believers at Laodicea. We have at Rev. 3:14-22 what had happened to the Laodicean congregation some thirty or so years later, nor should we neglect similar problems in the six other churches in the area: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyratira, Sardis, and Philadelphia. In other words, the introduction of spurious teachings and trending away from the preeminence of our Lord Jesus Christ was rather widespread in the very first century of God's second Covenant. [It is not difficult to see what has been built upon those human errors through the centuries since then.] Jesus' main complaint with the Laodicean congregation was their lack of enthusiasm which they had had earlier, their lukewarmness toward the original Gospel message. Jesus' remedy is given at Rev. 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man (as an individual person) hear my voice, and open the door, I will come to him (individually), and sup (dine or fellowship) with him (any person), and he with me." Remember that Jesus began his words to the seven churches in Rev. 1:8, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending," saith the Lord, "which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Again, at Rev. 1:11, he repeats the preeminence of his own position in relating to the churches, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." I interpret that message to mean that Jesus' undiluted or unmixed preeminence alone should remain until the end of the age without change, without any deletions or additions. That the improper teachings were coming from some persons "within" the churches is evident from our earlier study of Jude at Jude 3-4; and see also II Cor. 1:12-22; Gal. 1:6-9.

II. In Col. 2:2-3 Paul reinforces his emphasis of Jesus' preeminence by assuring the Colossians that their comfort and congregational mutual love should be strengthened through their knowledge of the mystery of God and of Christ wherein are hid all the treasures of [spiritual] wisdom and knowledge. He stated this definitive arrangement in case anyone should attempt to deceive the Colossians with what, to some, could appear to be persuasive words, vs. 4. The apostle urges them to maintain their original order (original message of faith and hope), namely, steadfast faith in Jesus Christ [exclusively], vs. 5. The Colossians should continue as they first received him (Jesus) and in that way walk in him, vss. 5-6. Their faith should be "rooted (upon a solid rock, Psa. 61:2; Isa. 28:16; Matt. 21:42; I Pet. 2:4-10) and built up in him, and established in the faith, as you have been taught, copiously rejoicing with thanksgiving," vs. 7. In vs. 8 Paul cautions the Colossian believers about being overtaken as captives by the previously mentioned deceit. This vain deceit was being introduced through false teachers

(errorists). In the ancient world the word "philosophy" referred to anything that had to do with theories about God (or gods), the world, and the profound meaning of life. This word appears nowhere else in the New Covenant, and apparently its being compounded with "vain deceit" means that, related to genuine Christian faith, the Colossian heretics (false teachers) were expounding "high-sounding nonsense," Phillip's translation. Moffet: "a theosophy which is specious make-believe." Paul (God's Word) is very firm in stating that the false teachers had introduced into (mixed with) the Gospel truth, traditional human thought according to human understanding, i.e., after the way men organize their activities and not after Jesus Christ's teachings, Matt. 20:25-27. "For," as vss. 9-10 state emphatically, "in him [Jesus Christ] dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye (all believers) are complete in him which is the head of all rule and authority."

III. After declaring that the Colossians should not be enslaved by enticing words or vain philosophy, he notes the freedom from humanity's judgment regarding false (nonessential) so-called religious activities. Circumcision as a physical rite is meaningless for individual spiritual birth. [Consider infant immersion and human females in this connection.] However, having ones spirit renewed by personal faith in Jesus Christ is what makes a person spiritually alive (quicken). Believers are baptized to testify publicly of their faith in and commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Baptism itself physically demonstrates ones alliance with the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, vss. 12. Further, the believer is, through faith, cleansed from all trespasses, vs. 13. In this forgiveness Jesus erased the certificate of [spiritual] death which was continually condemning unbelievers. That certificate was nailed to the cross on which our Lord was sacrificed. Jesus was victorious over sin forever for all who trust him. Because believers are right with God through their faith in Jesus Christ, no one can justifiably condemn a believer by what is eaten or drunk, or the lack of observances of holy days or religious festivals. Worshiping God through Jesus Christ alone is appropriate and sufficient. Do not worship angels, because there are good and bad angels, Matt. 13:41; 25:41. Christians are superior to angels, I Cor. 6:2-3, and we as believers should not fear them, Rom. 8:38-39, since we are loved by God, in Christ, and inseparable from anything which could separate us from that love, including angels. God's Word condemns legalism in vss. 11-17; false worship in vss. 18-19; and human-centered teachings (asceticism) in vss. 20-23. We should not fail to mention some who seek to make themselves righteous by feigning humility and self-degradation and assuming that such enhances one spiritually. (Some call such, doing penance for repentance which is another example of human imagination.) These illusions only detract from the real source of the believer's hope, the Head, Jesus Christ. Why should a believer who is dead to such religious fantasies thought up by religious egotists, practice such nonsense? Material things are not to survive God's purging of the world, II Pet. 3:8-12. Therefore, false worship as devised by mankind which demonstrates pseudosophisticated thinking, humility or self-imposed religious concepts, perverse denial of body needs and comforts, but not, at the same time, growth in God's grace through Jesus Christ, will avail nothing in God's Kingdom. (Note again Rom. 9:30-33; 11:21.)

June 4, 1995

"Deceived By Men"  
Col. 2

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Couples Class  
Wendell Alford,  
Teacher

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false interpret  
of words  
mk 7:1  
23

MSM  
154-1

mt 11:19  
Lk 7:34  
F. John  
4:1-4  
Col 2:21

MSM  
140-3  
339  
154-3  
196-1

To 1994 Roman Catholic Catechism

\* MSM

camels, horses and a Three Wise Men visitors center and planetarium in Bethlehem.

■ Pope John Paul II has called for a series of reflections and ceremonies leading to the year 2000, when he hopes to travel through the Holy Land and pray atop Mount Sinai with Jewish and Muslim clerics. 5-20-95 *dem*

■ Cathedral pastor

MSM

- 88-1 Holy Spirit guides only "my Church"
- 
- 149-3 I believe Need of Roman grip + apostolic succession
- 154-3 Works, grace + angel worship
- 192-5 Mary as immaculate
- 196-1 Mary as mediator between God + people
- 219-3 Sins, mortal and venial
- 228-3 Sacraments and grace
- 232-4 Baptism + orig. sin, born again
- 240-3 Penance (see also pp. 337 + 339)
- 244-1 Eucharist as actual body + blood of Christ
- 248-1 Holy Eucharist added to Jesus' sacrifice
- 252-1 priests as dispensers of grace
- 276-1 works + purgatory
- 283-1 purgatory

Jan 6, 1938

Imprimatur = license to print or pub.  
 Nihil Obstat = certification of an

5-31-95  
Democrat

WORLD

ITALY

# Pope acknowledges 'difficulty' of papacy for non-Catholics

*Pope John Paul II continues his efforts to reconcile Christian faiths.*

**By Daniel J. Wakin**  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
**ROME**

Urging Christian unity, Pope John Paul II acknowledged Tuesday that the papacy has unsettled other Christians. He encouraged dialogue about the way popes exercise supremacy. *or primacy.*

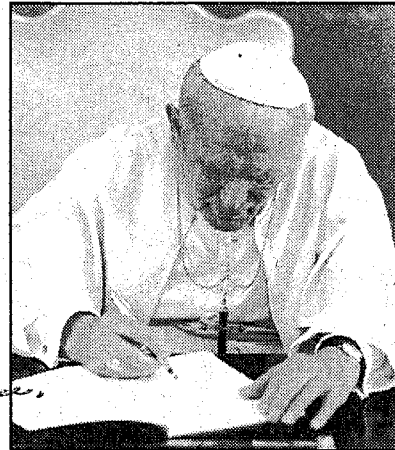
But the Roman Catholic pontiff ruled out any chance he would relinquish his final authority over church and flock, a role known as his "primacy." He did not immediately say how his administration of power might change.

The message came in John Paul's 12th encyclical, released Tuesday and dedicated to ecumenism — promoting cooperation among different Christian faiths.

Encyclicals are major declarations for Catholic clergy and the faithful. This one, however, is addressed to all Christians.

In it, John Paul acknowledged the papacy "constitutes a difficulty for most other Christians, whose memory is marked by certain painful recollections."

"To the extent that we are responsible for these, I join my prede-



ARTURO MARI/The Associated Press

**Pope John Paul II signs his "May They All Be One" encyclical on Tuesday.**

cessor Paul VI in asking forgiveness," he said.

He said he would heed the desire "to find a way of exercising the primacy which, while in no way renouncing what is essential to its mission, is nonetheless open to a new situation."

The 115-page encyclical, "May They All Be One," is the culmination of John Paul's thoughts on ecumenism, a topic he has stressed increasingly as the church nears the start of its third millennium.

Acknowledging his flock's failings, the pope urged Christians to re-examine their "painful past."



June 11, 1995

"Living a Heavenly Life"  
Col. 3

Couples Class  
Wendell Alford,  
Teacher

I. When I was a teen-ager, there were in that area a number of people who followed and promoted a religious music which came to be identified as Stamps-Baxter music. Quartets especially used this music and sang what many people enjoyed as a pleasant four-part harmony. My reason for bringing this music to the attention of the class is a particular piece of the Stamps-Baxter music entitled, "This World Is Not My Home." My recollection is not necessarily correct, but the first stanza was approximately:

"This world is not my home; I'm just 'a passing through.  
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.  
They're all expecting me, and that's one thing I know,  
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore."

Evidently the author of this stanza must have had Col. 3 in mind where in vs. 1 Paul asserts that since we believers are so identified with a risen (from death) Christ, we are to seek out heavenly attitudes to motivate our thoughts and behavior. In Philip. 3:2 we learned that, as believers, our citizenship (conversation) is in heaven from where we look for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, i.e., Christ reigns over us as our Lord. This heavenly citizenship is where Christ sits at the very right hand of the Almighty God. Our minds are to reserve at all times the Lord's influence upon what we do, not the earthly influence, but upon what Christ would have us do. We believers are dead (separated from) those things which are supremely worthy by worldly standards, but alive (united with) in our relationship with Christ in God, vs. 2-3. Such an arrangement will make the transition to Jesus' Kingdom (the Kingdom of God) when the Lord comes back to establish God's Glorious Kingdom, vs. 4. At that time our salvation will become complete, I Cor. 15:49-58; Philip. 3:13-14; I Thes. 5:9. Since we are already chosen to be citizens of God's Kingdom, we should put to death (separate ourselves from) those actions which are not heavenly, i.e., displeasing to God and which will bring wrath upon those who practice such. Paul (God's Word) enumerates at vs. 5 some human activities which God hates. They are: sexual intercourse practiced by those who are unmarried; uncleanness, i.e., lustful, luxurious, profligate (completely given up to dissipation and licentiousness [lacking legal or moral restraints, especially sexual restraints]); (For further use of the Greek term here translated "unclean," see Rom. 1:24; II Cor. 12:21; I Thes. 4:7-8.); vile affections or passions (used also in Lev. 18:22 and Rom. 1:26); evil desire (lust, satisfying bodily appetites without regard to assuming the commensurate responsibilities to self or others for such practices); covetousness (greedy desire to have more than what one needs at whatever cost to self or others, see Mk 7:1-23). These disobediences are modern expressions of idolatry, vs. 5b. Paul states that these types of moral choices were practiced among the Colossians before their decision to become followers of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Now their goal was to abandon these disobediences to God's will. Other bad moral choices were being fine-tuned also, such as: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy (the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God), filthy conversation, and lying, which things

See card Col. 3:8

VIA

are unfitting for those who have become recreated spirits through faith in God's Son. Within this group of new faithful ones were Gentiles (Greeks), Jews, Barbarians (uneducated ones), Scythians (uncivilized), slaves, and freemen. The common denominator of every individual believer in every group was that Jesus Christ was his or her Savior and Lord. Their faith established a new people with entirely new values. Loyalty to Christ is now the prime concern of all who have placed their trust in the Redeemer, vss. 7-11.

II. The above negative characteristics are related to the unregenerate (those who are not in Christ), but in vss. 12-17 Paul relates the positive ideas and activities of those who love and trust the Lord Jesus Christ. We believers are to put on, as God's chosen ones, forgiving mercy, kindness, genuine humility, meekness, patience with one another, and remembering that, as Christ has and is forgiving us, we should forgive one another. Our anxieties are to be overruled by the peace of God which causes believers to have, as a group, respect and love for one another. Our memories should be saturated with the words of Christ which produce wisdom. This wisdom should be shared among the congregation through hymns relating to God's grace, with reviving results for all. Everything should be done (words and deeds) as representatives of God's Son, Jesus Christ, with thanksgiving and praise to God through him for all blessings.

III. Beginning with vs. 18 Paul notes attitudes and activities which are becoming for members of believing families. It is difficult to understand the admonitions given in vss. 18-21 without considering the peculiarities of families at that place and time. Also, we must note that many families accepting Jesus as personal Savior was not true of every member in a given family, I Cor. 7:13,16. A wife or husband could become a believer while his or her spouse would not. This condition could create a very miserable life for the believer. Remember what has been outlined above (vss. 5-11) as normal activities for unbelieving Colossians who were not followers of Christ and his teachings. How could the believer relate to his or her spouse who did that which was disgusting and so against the leadership of God's Holy Spirit? Marital intimacy would make life essentially unbearable, see again I Cor. 7:10-16. Believing families are much happier when all members accept Jesus as Lord, as in Acts 16:15,34. Paul at I Cor. 7:4-6 and here in vss. 18-19 makes clear that husbands and wives are equally responsible to one another for emotional and intimacy support. The children-parental relationships as related in vss. 20-21 assume that the parents will be responsible and discretionary in caring for the children, except that the fathers could be overpowering in discipline which could cause the children to become discouraged. In our day there are considerable differences in most families, differences which do not follow Paul's admonitions. At vs. 22 and in the remainder of the chapter, the apostle calls upon the Colossian believers to understand the Christian perspective in their work relations. We refer to these relations today as labor-management matters. The language used could refer to household servants or slaves (owned). All believing workers of all types should be sincere and conscientious in whatever their work because of their loyalty to the Lord Jesus whom they are representing above all else.

To Blasphemy  
Matt. 12:31-32  
Mk 3:28-30 ←  
~~Lk 12:10-12~~

Harris ? re  
"blasphemy"  
877 4595  
3 wks ago

blasphemy - to revile or abuse

blasphemy - 1) the act of insulting  
or showing contempt or lack  
of reverence for God, 2) the  
act of claiming the attributes  
of deity, 3) irreverence toward  
something considered sacred  
or inviolable or secure from violation  
or profanation.

Read Mk 3:28-30

That ~~anna~~ man you are not  
calling into question, but the  
miracles I perform signify  
that I am God (God in me) you  
~~deny what you know~~  
is an eternal sin which will  
not be forgiven. (See John

14:8-11); Matt. 19:17, 26

Mk 8:31 "Son of man"

MA

June 18, 1995

"Review And Personal Concerns"  
Col. 4

Couples Class  
Wendell Alford,  
Teacher

I. The main theme and reason for writing the letter to the struggling band of believers at Colossae was to confront head-on the errors that were being introduced there and elsewhere in the area. Paul laid the groundwork in the first chapter by stressing the importance of Jesus Christ's being the sole, preeminent person in a believer's access to God for knowledge, inspiration, and forgiveness. In chapter two others were denying through false teachings and the mixing of added factors into the pure, unadulterated Good News which began, continued, and would always be based solely upon the person and work of Jesus as God's only begotten (of the Holy Spirit) Son and Savior. Through Christ alone a believer is spiritually complete by exercising childlike faith in him. The Gospel was being contaminated by adding another layer or layers through which one must go to know the Lord and his forgiveness. Such an arrangement elevated the position and prestige of such claimers to be between God and people (other than Christ alone as the sole intermediary). Originally, at the writing of this letter, even angels were brought into the bridge between God and believers. Along with angels were certain activities (rites) such as the eating and refraining from eating of certain foods and drink, the celebrating of certain holy days, and feigning humility to substitute for God's righteousness were woven into a conglomerate which was presented by these false teachers as necessary for believers to add to Jesus' sacrifice and preeminence in order to be right with God (righteous before God). In chapter three Paul makes very clear that all of the errors outlined in chapter two should detract from the direct leading and empowering of the Holy Spirit for every believer to know and to be able to live a Godly life in their daily faith experience with Jesus Christ. Putting layers between an individual believer and the Lord (forced, feigned, pseudonymous transcendence or separated falsely, believers away from direct access to God the Father through Jesus Christ) created another or others in a position of spiritual authority apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. It is no wonder that Paul was so upset over what the false teachers were spreading among the local congregations in the early church period! Nor would it be wise for those reborn of God's Holy Spirit today to be unaware that these same heresies (false teachings) are also prevalent in the "church" of the late twentieth century, and most likely will prevail even more effectively as errors into the forthcoming twenty-first century and beyond. The message for us believers today in God's letter to the Colossians is the same as it was for them, i.e., to exercise faith in Jesus Christ alone and accept no other intermediary than Jesus, God's only Savior. Also, the message is that we should live holy lives dedicated to being pure witnesses to what God has done for us (and all who will believe) in Christ. The Holy Spirit will give to us individually direct guidance and power to have and hold our faith in Jesus Christ and to live lives exemplary of that relationship with our Lord. Our individual lives should be examples of integrity, leaving no doubt in the minds of associates that we are influenced by and led by the Lord Jesus Christ as noted in chapter three. Sexual purity should be practiced instead of that

*Blasphemy - the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God*  
*2. The act of claiming the attributes of deity*

of most lower animals which have not the image or likeness of their Creator in them. Believers likewise are not to practice the morals of unregenerate humanity who have not God's likeness in them. We are to put off those things such as unwarranted anger and blasphemy which are not our Lord's example nor the Holy Spirit's leading. Our fellowship with other believers is not to be interrupted because of their customs, education, nationality, rich, or poor, because Christ is the commonality that makes them all one and each one a member of God's household, the family of those with faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

II. In examining Col. 4 we find that the first verse is a continuation of Chap. 3 and should have been included as the end of that chapter, I believe. The thought there is that owners of slaves should keep in mind that they also have an Owner (Master) in heaven. This recognition should cause them to be fair in their treatment of their slaves, their brothers in Christ. I believe that the fact that slavery as a social institution is not accepted today throughout the world, is the influence of Christ upon humanity since his visiting his earth. Beginning with 4:2 Paul gives attention to the believers' need for maintaining a vigorous prayer life. The apostle wants to be included in their prayers so that his work, even as a prisoner in Rome, against false influence among the believers would be effective and that the simplicity and purity of the Gospel would prevail. In vss. 5-6 Paul makes the Colossian believers aware that their relations with those outside the faithful should be dealt with wisely, with graceful words, grounded in common sense ("seasoned with salt"), for such an approach will make them (the believers) know the most effective method of witnessing.

III. At 4:7 Paul begins sharing with the Colossian believers matters of a personal nature: vss. 7-9, commendations; vss. 10-15, greetings; vss. 16-17, instructions; and finally in vs. 18, his signature and benediction. At least ten people, either with Paul in Rome or there in Colossae are described in one way or another in this section. Tychicus and Onesimus are noted, the former was probably the bearer of the Colossian letter from Rome to Colossae. Paul commends Tychicus as his beloved brother and a faithful fellow servant in the Lord. The apostle explains the two reasons he had asked Tychicus to come to Colossae. First, "that ye may know our circumstance" and secondly, "that he may comfort your hearts." The latter, no doubt, was a reference to aggravation being caused by the false teachers who were attempting to call to question the simplicity of the Good News which Paul had preached and which they had first believed. (Review Paul's statement about this at I Cor. 2:1-5; Gal. 1:6-9.) Tychicus was accompanied by Onesimus whom we remember as a runaway slave of Philemon's from Colossae. Here again Paul relates to Onesimus as one whom he had led to the Lord and one who is now "a faithful and beloved brother." Onesimus is said to be "one of you" which could refer to citizenship or a fellow believer, or both. I believe that both are intended. Six persons are mentioned as sending greetings to the Colossian congregation. They are: Aristarchus, a native of Thessalonica (Acts 19:29); Mark, the cousin of Barnabas and author of the Gospel; Jesus Justus; Epaphras, probable founder of the Colossian congregation; Luke, the beloved physician and author of the Gospel; and Demas. After instructions regarding letter distribution, he signs the letter and asks for their prayers and that God's grace be with them.

*small of Jesus*  
*blasphemy*  
*Roman*  
*10:22-42*  
*26*  
*Jesus*  
*Holy Spirit*  
*understand*

June 18, 1995

"Review And Personal Concerns"  
Col. 4

Couples Class  
Wendell Alford,  
Teacher

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