

PAUL'S LETTER ON THE LORD

(Col. 1:1-12)

Introduction:

1. Colossae was located in the Roman province of Phrygia in Asia Minor on the Lycus River. It lay on the great highway that ran from the coast at Ephesus to the Euphrates Valley. Colossae was ~120 miles East of Ephesus and ~10 miles SE of Laodicea. In antiquity it had been a great city but with the founding of Laodicea and Hierapolis it had been diminished greatly.
2. Apparently the church in Colossae had been established by a fellow worker of Paul's named Epaphras (1:7; 2:1; 4:12). It also appears that it was at Epaphras' prompting that Paul wrote them this letter, one of the 4 "prison epistles".
3. Paul's letter to the Colossians is short but chock full of the gospel message. It breaks down easily and naturally into three sections: who Jesus is; what Jesus did; and how we should respond to Jesus.
4. Let us this morning co-opt the Colossians and consider Paul's letter to the Jamestonians. Let us consider Paul's teaching on who Jesus is, what Jesus has done, and how we should respond to Jesus.

Discussion:

I. Who Jesus Is.

- A. He is the source of our grace and peace (1:2; cp. Eph. 2:8, 14-18).
- B. He is the object of our faith (1:4; the good news is the good news of Jesus Christ!).
- C. He is our Lord and our Christ; the Messiah of God, our Savior (1:2-4, 10, 13; John 4:26; 18:36; Luke 19:10).
- D. He is the very image of God (1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:3).
- E. He is God (1:16, 17; 2:9; John 1:1; 8:58).
- F. He is the head of the church, the King of THE Kingdom (1:13, 18; Matt. 16:18, 19; Acts 2:41, 47; 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 4:4-6).

II. What Jesus Did.

- A. Reconciled man to God (1:18-23ff; cp. Eph. 2:14-18; 2 Cor. 5:18-20).
- B. Provided the "way" for man to become and stay reconciled to God (2:6-10; 1 Cor. 15:1, 2; Matt. 28:19, 20).
- C. Freed us from the law of sin and death (2:11-15; Rom. 8:1-4; Gal. 3:13, 24, 25).

III. How We Respond To Jesus.

- A. Stay focused on Jesus and His teaching (3:1-4; Heb. 12:1-3).
- B. Live the "way" and not the old life (3:5-7; cp. 1 John 1:7-10).
- C. Be Christ-like in all of our relationships (3:18-4:1; cp. Eph. 5:22-6:9).
- D. Pray fervently and constantly (4:2-4; because it is effective and affective).
- E. Reach out to others wisely (4:5, 6; cp. 1 Thess. 4:1-12).

Conclusion:

1. Paul concluded the letter in normal style; with news/greetings/well wishes.
2. The letter to the Colossians is a powerful teaching of our Lord, and is often summarized as being a letter on the pre-eminence of Christ.
3. Nothing has changed with regards to that pre-eminence in the last 2000 years, and nothing ever will. The question also remains: knowing who Jesus is and what He did for you and for me, how will we respond?
4. Invitation.