

**The letter that Paul wrote to
the Christians at Colossae
(The book in the Holy Bible
called Colossians)
About this letter**

Paul wrote this letter about 2,000 years ago, about 30 years after Jesus went back to heaven, and it is now in the Holy Bible.

God sent Paul to lots of countries and lots of towns to tell people about Jesus. Epafra heard Paul's message, and he believed in Jesus. Then Epafra went to the town called Colossae, to tell the people there about Jesus. Colossae was in the country that is now called Turkey. About 1,100 years later some enemy soldiers broke Colossae down, and today there are just stones and rubbish at that place in Turkey.

At the time when Paul wrote this letter, the Roman people were the bosses over lots of nations. The Roman bosses didn't like Paul telling people about Jesus, so they grabbed him and put him in jail. Epafra visited him there in jail and told him about the Christians at Colossae. He also told Paul that some people were teaching them lies. So Paul wrote this letter to the Christians at Colossae, to tell them the true message so that they would not believe those lying teachers. He was still in jail when he wrote this letter.

This letter has good messages for us today. We have to take notice of those messages that Paul wrote to the Christians at Colossae.

¹ I'm Paul, and this letter is from me. And Timothy is helping me write it too. God made me Jesus Christ's special worker.

² We are writing this letter to God's people that live at Colossae. You joined up with Jesus Christ, and you keep on trusting him, so you are like brothers and sisters to us.

We are asking God our father to be good to you, and to make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves.

People at Colossae believed the good news about Jesus

³⁻⁵ People tell us good things about you, so now, every time we pray for you, we always say *thank you* to God for you. He is the father of our leader Jesus Christ. You heard the true message about Jesus, and you believed it. Now you are really sure that God will give you the good things that he promised. You know that he is keeping them safe for you in heaven. So you keep on believing in Jesus Christ, and you keep on loving all God's people. That is what people tell us about you.

⁶ And other people everywhere are hearing that same true message that you heard about Jesus. And they are believing in Jesus and doing good things too.

⁷ Epafraas told you the message about Jesus. He works for Jesus Christ, just like we do, and we love him very much. You see, we couldn't go

and tell you the message about Jesus, but he went instead of us. He is a good man. You can always believe what he tells you.*

⁸ After that, Epafra came back here, and he told us about you. He said that the Holy Spirit now helps you to love everybody.

Paul prayed for the new Christians

⁹ Yes, Epafra told us about you, and so now we pray for you all the time. We ask God to help you to know what he wants you to do. And we pray that he will help you to understand spiritual things properly, and think about them properly.

¹⁰ Then you will live the way that our leader, Jesus, wants you to live, and you will do lots of good things that will make him happy. And you will know God better and better all the time.

¹¹ And we ask God to use his great power to make you strong, so that you will stay strong for him and you will not give up. And if people give you trouble, we pray that you will not worry or get upset. And we ask him to make you happy all the time. ¹² And we want you to always say *thank you* to God, our father. He brought you into his family so that you will get the good things that he promised to give to his people. Then you will live with him in his good place.

God's son died to set us free

¹³⁻¹⁴ You know, the boss over the bad spirits always used to push us to do bad things. It's like we were in a bad place, where he is the boss. But

* **1:7** Colossians 4:12; Philemon 1:23

God sent his son, Jesus, to get us out of that place. He took the payback for us, so that now God will not punish us. He set us free from that bad boss, and now we belong to the family of God's son. God loves his son Jesus very much.*

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ Nobody can see God. But God's son, Jesus, is just like God, and he showed people what God is like. You see, Jesus was there with God a long time ago, and he worked with God to make everything. They made all the things in heaven, and all the things on the earth. They made the things we can see, and the things we can't see. They made all the spirits, even the spirit bosses that we can't see. God worked with his son to make everything, so that now everything has to respect God's son. Jesus is God's son, and he is the boss over everything. ¹⁷ He was there at first, before anything else, and now he holds everything together, everything everywhere, and he keeps it all working properly.

¹⁸ Jesus is the leader of all God's people, and God's people are the church. It's like God's people are a body, and Jesus is their head. He is the church's leader. He was the first one to ever die and then come back to life and keep on living. So he is really great. He is greater than anyone else, and greater than anything else, anywhere.*

¹⁹ At the time when God's son became a man, God lived in him properly. God was happy to live in him. ²⁰ God used him to get everything to come back to himself. God's son bled and died on

* **1:13-14** Ephesians 1:7 * **1:18** Ephesians 1:22-23

the cross, so that now everything can stop being God's enemies, and become God's friends again. Some of those things are in heaven, and some of them are on the earth, but Jesus died on the cross, so that they can all come back to God.*

God is a friend of people that trust Jesus

²¹ And I'm talking about you too. At first you were not God's friends. You were his enemies. You always thought in a bad way, and then you did bad things. ²² But God sent Jesus Christ to live as a man, in a human body, and then he let people kill Jesus's body. When Jesus died, he took the payback for the bad things you did, so you can be friends with God. It's like he washed you of those bad things, so you are properly good and clean inside. So at the time when God will judge everyone, he will see that you are clean and he will not blame you, he will say that you are not guilty.

²³ If you stay strong, God will do that for you. You have to always remember the good news that you heard about Jesus, so that you keep on trusting him and know that he will save you. You see, God got his workers to tell people everywhere that Jesus died to save us. It is really good news. And I, Paul, am one of God's workers now. My job is to tell people that good news.

Paul helped God's people no matter what trouble he got

* **1:20** Ephesians 2:16

²⁴ Yes, I tell people the message about Jesus. Some people don't like it, and they give me trouble. But that doesn't matter; that message helps people that believe it. You believe it, so it helps you. So I am happy, and I keep on telling it. You know that Jesus Christ got a lot of trouble. In the same way, I get a lot of trouble. But I want to keep on helping his people. They are the church. They are like the body of Jesus Christ. ²⁵ And God gets me to work for his people, so I do this to help you. My job is to tell you God's word, and help you understand it properly.

²⁶ At first, God didn't let anyone know what he planned to do. He kept that plan a secret for a really long time. But now he is showing it to his people. ²⁷ God wants his people to know that plan. He planned to use Jesus to save people that are not Jews, as well as people that are Jews. And now he is doing that, so it is really great for people that are not Jews. Yes, Jesus Christ lives in you, and he lives in everybody that trusts him, so you can be sure that later on God will make you great.

²⁸ So we tell everyone about Jesus Christ. We teach them to follow Jesus and do what he says. You see, God helped us to understand those things properly, and we want everyone to join up with Jesus Christ, and to become really good Christians. And God will see that they are really good. ²⁹ So I work really hard to do that. It is hard work, but Jesus Christ gives me his power, and he makes me strong.

2

Paul worked hard for Christian people

¹ I want you to know that I work very hard for you Christians at Colossae, and also for the Christians at that other town near you called Laodicea. And I work hard for lots of other Christians that have never met me. ² I'm working like this to help you be strong, so that all of you will be joined together by loving each other. You see, I want you to know and properly understand God's plan to use Jesus Christ to save people. Then you will be really sure about it, and that will make you really happy. ³ You see, Jesus knows everything, and he understands everything. He is the only one that can get us to think properly, so that we understand what is true. That is really good for us. ⁴ I'm telling you these things so that you will not listen to people that teach lies. They might talk in a way that sounds good, but they are liars.

⁵ You know, I'm not there with you right now, that is, my body is not there. But I think about you a lot. And I'm happy about you. You all work together as a group, and you all keep on trusting Jesus Christ properly.

We have to keep on living Jesus's way

⁶ You believe in Jesus Christ now, and you let him be your boss. That's good. Keep living his way. ⁷ Keep on believing that message about Jesus Christ, and keep on getting to know him better all the time. Keep on strongly believing

the things that we taught you. And always thank God very much for everything.

Don't believe any message about God that did not come from Jesus Christ

⁸ Some people might try to make you believe some ideas about God that are wrong. Those ideas didn't come from Jesus Christ, but they came from bad spirits, and from the people of this world. People taught those ideas to their kids, and to their grand-kids. But those ideas are not true. They might sound good, but they are tricky lies. Be careful. Don't believe them.

⁹ Listen. God himself lives in Jesus Christ. Jesus has a body and God lives in that body, so that Jesus is properly God. ¹⁰ And you are joined to Jesus Christ, so God is in you too. He gives you everything that you need to live the right way. And Jesus is the winner over all the other spirit bosses.

¹¹ You know that the Jewish people do a young man operation on their baby boys. Well, when you joined on to Jesus, God did something like that to you. He didn't cut away a part of your body, but it was like he did an operation on your spirit. He cut away a bad part from your spirit. That was the bad part that made you want to do bad things. ¹² You know, after you became a Christian, the church leaders baptised you. You went into the water, then you came up out of it. In that ceremony, it's like you did what Jesus did. He died, and it's like that bad part of your spirit died. And God made him alive again, and he

came up out of the grave. And now you believe that God has strong power, and your spirit is joined to Jesus, so God's power makes your spirit alive too, just like he made Jesus alive again.*

God finished up the power of all the bad spirits

¹³⁻¹⁴ You did bad things before. Your spirits still had that bad part that made you go wrong. It is like your spirits were dead. I will use picture talk to show you what I mean. Whenever you did bad things, it is like somebody wrote it down on paper so they could blame you later. But God let them blame Jesus instead of you, and then God chucked that paper away. It is like he nailed that paper to the cross when he let people nail Jesus there. And then God made your spirits alive again, just like he made Jesus alive again. Now he doesn't blame you for the bad things you did.*

¹⁵ God did that, and he finished up the power of all the bad spirit mob. He was even stronger than the most powerful spirit bosses. He finished up their power when Jesus died on the cross. He shamed them, and he showed everyone that he is the winner over all those bad spirits.

You don't have to follow laws that people make up

¹⁶ You know, some people make up laws, and they reckon that if you want to make God happy, you have to follow those laws. But remember what I just said. God is already happy with you.

* **2:12** Romans 6:4 * **2:13-14** Ephesians 2:1-5

So don't listen to anyone that says you are wrong if you don't follow their laws. Don't take any notice of them. They might have laws about things you can't eat or drink. Or they might have laws about some ceremonies on special days, or laws about the time of a new moon, or laws about a special day for rest.

¹⁷ God gave the Jewish people laws about those things, but they are not for us now. It is like this, and I'm using picture talk again now. Sometimes you see a shadow moving along, and you know that somebody is coming. Well, God gave them those laws, but those laws are just like a shadow. They are not the real person. The real person is Jesus Christ. And now he has come to us, so we don't need to look at that shadow any more. That is, we don't need to follow those laws any more.

¹⁸ There are some people that tell lies and say, "God has shown us special things." Those people think up their own ideas, and that makes them feel smart. But they tell you that they are not smart, and then they tell you to show respect to God's angel messengers, as if those angels are God. But they are trying to trick you. Don't take any notice of those people, and don't believe those lies. ¹⁹ They are trying to have a church without Jesus.

You see, God set the church up like this. Jesus is the head, and his people are his body. Jesus holds his people together just like a body has joints and ligament strings that hold it together. And God

makes the church grow, just like he makes bodies grow.*

²⁰ Remember that you are joined to Jesus Christ. It is like you died with him when he died. You don't belong to this world any more, so you don't have to follow the laws that the people of this world make up about God. ²¹ They have laws like, "Don't use that thing," and, "Don't eat that," and, "Don't touch that thing." ²² Those laws just come from people, not from God, so you don't have to take any notice of them. Those laws are just about things that wear out when people use them.

²³ Those laws might sound like they are good, but they are useless. They get people to do things that hurt their bodies, and then they think they are good, and they think it makes God happy. But even when people try to follow those laws, they still can't stop themselves from going wrong. Their bodies still make them want to do bad things, and then they do those bad things. So those laws are useless.

3

Think about heaven, and live God's way

¹⁻³ You see, you have new life now from Jesus Christ. He is up in heaven now, sitting with God, at God's right-hand side.* He is a powerful boss there with God. Remember that Jesus died, then God made him alive again, and God lifted him up from the grave. Well, you believe in Jesus now,

* **2:19** Ephesians 4:16 * **3:1-3** Psalm 110:1

so you have to be better than you used to be. It is like you died with him, and then God made you alive again, and now you live for Jesus. He is in heaven now, so you always have to think about doing good things that belong to heaven. Don't think about doing bad things that belong to this earth. You are joined to Jesus Christ now, and he is joined to God. The people of this world can't see that yet, ⁴ but when Jesus comes back, everyone will see him, and they will see that he is great. And they will see you too, and you will be great too.

Do what is right, don't do what is wrong

⁵ So now you have to stop doing bad things. If that bad part inside you wants you to do something bad, don't do it. It's like you have to kill that old bad part inside you. Don't listen to it. Don't sleep with anyone that is not your wife or your husband, as if you are married to them. And don't think bad, dirty thoughts. Don't think about doing bad things. Don't be greedy, wanting lots of money and things. Greedy people respect money and things more than they respect God. ⁶ You know, some people will not do what God says, and he will be angry with those people, and he will punish them.

⁷ At one time, you lived the wrong way, and you did bad things like that. ⁸ But now, don't do these bad things any more. Don't get angry easily. Don't go around angry and yelling at people. Don't hate people or think about giving them trouble. Don't talk in a bad way about

people, or tell lies about them. Don't talk in a dirty way. ⁹ Don't lie to each other. You see, you believed in Jesus, and you stopped living that old way. You stopped doing bad things.* ¹⁰ You are now living a new way. God made you a new person, and he is helping you to know him properly. He is the one that made you, and now he is making you more like himself.* ¹¹ You are a new person now. It doesn't matter if you are a Jew or not, or if they did a young man operation on you or not. It doesn't matter if you are from another country, or even if you are from a wild tribe. It doesn't matter if you are a prisoner, or a free person. This is what matters, Jesus Christ lives inside all of his people. He is really great.

Live God's way

¹² You see, God loves you. He picked you to be his own special people. So you have to live a new way for him. You have to be good to other people. You have to feel sorry for people that have trouble and try to help them. Don't think that you are more important than other people. You have to be easy on other people, and don't get angry with them, even if they give you trouble.* ¹³ Don't get upset with each other. If somebody does something bad to you, don't do payback to them. Remember that God doesn't do payback to you, for the bad things that you do. So don't do payback to other people.* ¹⁴ And you

* **3:9** Ephesians 4:22

* **3:10** Genesis 1:26; Ephesians 4:24

* **3:12** Ephesians 4:2

* **3:13** Ephesians 4:32

really have to love each other properly. When you love each other, it is like you properly join yourselves to each other. ¹⁵ Jesus Christ wants you to all live together in a quiet way, so let him make you feel happy and quiet inside yourselves, so that you think the right way. That's how you can let him control you.

And think about the good things that God does for you, and always say *thank you* to him for them.

¹⁶ And always think about the message that came from Jesus Christ, so that you follow it all the time. Talk to each other about Jesus's message, and help each other to follow it properly. Think about it the right way. If anyone starts to get it wrong, straighten each other out. Remember that God is really good to you, and always be ready to thank him by singing to him with hymns and songs that the Holy Spirit gives you.* ¹⁷ Do everything the way our leader, Jesus, wants you to do it, and talk the way he wants you to talk. And always thank God, our father, for the good things that Jesus does for us.

Treat each other the right way

Husbands and wives

¹⁸ You women that are wives, you have to think about what your husbands want, and agree with them. That is the right way to follow our leader Jesus.*

* **3:16** Ephesians 5:19-20 * **3:18** Ephesians 5:22; 1 Peter 3:1

19 Yes, and you men that are husbands, you have to do your part too. You have to love your wives properly, and don't ever be hard on them.*

Kids and parents

20 And now I am talking to you kids. You always have to do whatever your mothers and fathers want. Our leader, Jesus, is happy when you do that.*

21 And now I am talking to you fathers. Don't be hard on your kids. Don't make them get angry with you, or they might stop trying to be good.*

Workers and bosses

22 And now I am talking to you people that have to work all the time for other people, like you are their prisoners. Make sure you always do whatever your bosses want. And don't only work hard when they can see you, to make them think you are good. But also work hard when they can't see you. Remember our leader, Jesus, can see you all the time, so respect him, and respect your bosses as you do your job. 23 Work as if you are working for our leader, Jesus, not for a normal human being. So work hard, and be happy about it. 24 Yes, you are working for our leader, Jesus Christ, and remember that later on he will pay you properly, just like he promised us.* 25 But if you do what is wrong, God will do payback to you for the wrong things you do. God

* **3:19** Ephesians 5:25; 1 Peter 3:7 * **3:20** Ephesians 6:1

* **3:21** Ephesians 6:4 * **3:24** Ephesians 6:5-8

judges each person the same way, no matter who that person is.*

4

¹ And now I am talking to you bosses that own your workers, like they are your prisoners. You have to give your workers a fair go. You have to look after them properly and give them what is right for them. Remember, you have a boss too. He is God, in heaven.*

Pray to God all the time

² Now I'm talking to all of you. Keep on praying to God, and keep on asking him to help you. Keep your minds properly awake while you pray. Don't give up easily. And also thank God for the good things he does for you. ³ And pray for us too. Ask God to make a way for us to tell more people about Jesus Christ. We want to clearly tell them the message about God's plan to use Jesus to save them. You know, I told that message to some people, and they didn't like it, so they put me in jail. ⁴ But I still have to tell more people about Jesus. So I want you to ask God to help me make this message clear to them.

Help other people to believe in Jesus

⁵ And you too, whenever you are with people that don't believe in Jesus, if you can tell them about him, you have to do it. Be sensible in how you live with those people.* ⁶ And talk to

* **3:25** Deuteronomy 10:17; Ephesians 6:9 * **4:1** Ephesians 6:9

* **4:5** Ephesians 5:16

them in a good way, to get them interested in your message. And be ready to answer their questions.

The end of Paul's letter

7-8 All right, I'm not going to write much more in this letter. I will give it to Tikicus to take to you. He is a Christian friend that we love. He works for our leader, Jesus, just like I do, and he always works really well. When he gets to you mob there, he will tell you all the news about us. And he will help you to feel brave, and to trust Jesus more.* 9 And I'm sending Onesimus with him. You know Onesimus. He is one of your mob, and he is another strong Christian friend that we love. Those 2 men will tell you all about everything that is going on here.*

10 Do you remember Aristarkus? He is here with me in jail. He says *hello* to you. And Mark too, he says *hello* to you. He is a cousin of Barnabas. And like I told you before, if he comes to visit you, tell him, "Good to see you, Mark."*

11 And there is another man here that says *hello* to you. His name is Jesus, but we call him Justus. He says *hello* to you too. Those men are the only Jews that are working with me here. They are helping me get more people to come into God's family, and they make this job much more easy for me.

* **4:7-8** Acts 20:4; Ephesians 6:21-22; 2 Timothy 4:12 * **4:9**
 Philemon 1:10-12 * **4:10** Acts 12:12, 25; 13:13; 15:37-39; 19:29;
 27:2; Philemon 1:24

¹² And Epafras is another one of your mob that is here with me. He says *hello* to you too. He works for Jesus too, and he is always praying strongly for you. He prays that you will keep on trusting God, and that you will properly know everything that God wants you to do.* ¹³ I can tell you truly that he works very hard for you, and for the Christians that live in the towns called Laodicea and Hirapolis.

¹⁴ Our good friend Luke, the doctor, says *hello* to you too, and so does Demas.*

¹⁵ And I want you to say *hello* from me to all the Christians at Laodicea. And say *hello* from me to Nimfa, and to the Christians that meet in her house.

¹⁶ After you mob at Colossae read this letter, send it to the church people at Laodicea, so that they can read it too. And I sent another letter to that Laodicea mob a little while ago, so after they have read it, make sure you get it from them and read it too.

¹⁷ Now here is a special message from me to Arkipus. Tell him, "Our leader, Jesus, gave you a job, so keep on doing it, until you finish it properly."*

Paul signed this letter

¹⁸ *This is me, Paul, writing these words now with my own hand. I got somebody else to write all the words up to here, but I want you to be sure that this letter is really from me, so from here on*

* **4:12** Colossians 1:7; Philemon 1:23 * **4:14** 2 Timothy 4:10-11; Philemon 1:24 * **4:17** Philemon 1:2

*it is me writing it. I'm saying hello to you mob
there at Colossae.*

*Remember that I am in jail here, and pray for
me.*

I'm asking God to be very good to you.

From Paul

Plain English Version
Portions of the Holy Bible in the Plain English
Version translation for Australian Aboriginal people
who speak English as a second language

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