

The letter Paul wrote to the
Christians at Colossae
This page tells a bit more about Paul's
letter to the Christians at Colossae

Colossae was a town in the country that we now call Turkey. About 2,000 years ago Paul went around telling people the good news about Jesus Christ. A man called Epaphras heard him and believed in Jesus, then he went to Colossae to tell the people there about Jesus.

Later the Roman bosses put Paul in jail. Epaphras visited him there in jail and told Paul about the Christians at Colossae. He told him that some people were teaching them wrong things. Those teachers reckoned they were teaching God's word, but they were lying. They told the Christians, "You mob have to become like Jews. You have to follow the same law that God told the Jews to follow." And they were teaching other wrong things too.

So Paul wrote this letter to them to tell them not to believe those lying teachers. He was still in jail when he wrote this letter. This was about 30 years after Jesus went up to heaven. Paul told the Christians at Colossae the true word about God, and about Jesus, and about the Holy Spirit.

This message that Paul wrote to the Christians in Colossae a long time ago is still a good message for us today.

¹ I am Paul, and this letter is from me and Timothy. He is helping me write this letter. God made me his special messenger to tell people about Jesus Christ. We are writing this letter to God's people who live at Colossae.

You joined up with Jesus Christ and you keep on trusting him, so you are like brothers and sisters to us.

² We pray that God, our Father, will keep on being really good to you, and that he will 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, and now you are really sure that God will take you to heaven and give you good things there. So you keep on believing in Jesus Christ, and you keep loving all God's people. This 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 Epaphras told you the message about Jesus. He works for Jesus Christ, just like we do, and we love him very much. When we couldn't go to you, he went and told you the message about Jesus. He is a good man. You can always believe what he tells you.

⁸ After that Epaphras came back here and told us about you. He said that the Holy Spirit now gets you to love everybody.

Paul prayed for the new Christians

⁹ Yes, Epaphras told us about you, and then we started to pray for you all the time. We ask God to help you to know everything he wants you to do, and that he will help you to understand spiritual things properly, and to think properly about the way you do what he wants. ¹⁰ Then you will live the proper way for our leader, Jesus, 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 pray to God too and ask him to use his great power to make you strong, so that you will stay with him and will not give up. We pray that if people give you trouble, 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 our Father for the good things he does for you. You belong to him now, and he will let you get good things in heaven, the place where light shines all the time.

Jesus, God's son, died to bring us back to God

¹³⁻¹⁴ We all used to be in the dark place, where the devil is the boss, and that devil pushed us to do bad things. But God sent his son, Jesus, to get us out of that place. He took the blame for us, so that now God will not punish us. He freed us from that bad devil boss and now we belong to the family of his son, Jesus. God loves him very much.

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ Nobody can see God, but his son, Jesus, was 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 put all the spirit bosses there in the world 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 first son, and he is the boss over everything. ¹⁷ He was there at first, before anything else, and now he holds everything together everywhere, and keeps it all working properly.

¹⁸ Jesus is the leader of all God's people, and God's people are the church. They are like his body, and Jesus is

the head of his body. He started the church and he makes it alive. 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 and anything else anywhere.

¹⁹ At that time, when God's son became a man, God lived in him properly. God was happy to live in him, ²⁰ so that God can get everything to come back to himself. God's son bled and died on 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 on the earth, but Jesus died for them all, so 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 in God's mob. You were his enemies. You always thought in a bad way and then you did bad things. ²² But God got Jesus Christ to live in a human body and then die, so that now you can come back to God and be his friends. God did this so that later, at the time when God will judge everyone, he will see that you are properly good and clean inside, and he will not blame you. He will say that you are not guilty.

²³ God will do this for you if you stay strong, and always remember that good news 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. This is really good news. And I, Paul, am one of God's workers now. My job is to tell people this good news.

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

²⁴ Yes, I tell people the message about Jesus, and some people don't like it and they give me trouble. But no

worries, this message helps you, so I'm happy to keep on telling it. You know, Jesus Christ said we will get trouble, so I'm happy to get as much trouble as he wants me to get. And I keep 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 explain it all properly.

²⁶ At first God didn't let anyone know what he was going to do. He kept it a secret for a really long time. But now he is showing this secret to his people. ²⁷ God wants his people to know this secret. It is very good, and it is really great for you people that are not Jews. And this is the secret. Jesus Christ lives in you people that trust him, so you can be sure that you will be great with him in heaven.

²⁸ So we tell everyone about Jesus Christ. We think properly about it, then we teach them to follow Jesus and do what he says. We want everyone to join with Jesus Christ and to become really good Christians. Then we can take them to God and show them to him. ²⁹ So I work really hard to do this. Jesus Christ gives me his power, and makes me strong for this hard work.

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. ²⁻³ I'm working like this to help you be strong, so that all of you will be joined together by loving each other. Then you will understand God's secret, and you will be sure about it, and this will make you really happy. You will

know the secret message from God. That means you will know Jesus Christ himself. He knows everything and understands everything. Jesus is the only one that can get us to think properly, so that we understand God's wonderful message. And that message is really dear to 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 my spirit is there with you. And I'm happy about you. You all work together as a group, and you all keep on trusting Jesus Christ properly.

We are joined to Jesus so we have to live his way

⁶ You believe in Jesus Christ now, and you let him be your boss, so you have to 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 the people of this world. A long time ago the bad spirits in this world gave them these ideas, and they taught them to their kids and grand-kids. But they 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. God filled up his human body and lived in him, so he 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's 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. This is the ceremony that shows that you are doing what Jesus did. He died, then God made him alive again, and he came up out of the grave. 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 beat the devil mob

¹³⁻¹⁴ You used to do bad things before. Your spirits still had that bad part that made you go wrong. It is like your spirits were dead. I'm using 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 he chucked that paper away. It is like they nailed that paper to the cross when they nailed 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 this and he beat all the bad spirit mob. He even beat the most powerful spirit bosses. He beat them at the cross, at the time when Jesus died there. God took away their power and made them his prisoners. 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. 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 these 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 can tell 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 say, "God has shown us special things." They try to make you think they are not proud, but actually they think up their own ideas and this makes them proud. They tell you to show respect to God's angel messengers. 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. That is the way God makes the church grow, just like a body grows.

²⁰ Remember that you are joined to Jesus Christ. It is like you died with him when he died, and 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. They are laws about things that people use and finish up.

²³ Those laws might sound like they are good, but they are useless. They get people to do hard things to themselves, and then they think they are good, and they think it makes God happy. But even when people 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, so you have to be better than you used to be. It is like you died with him, and then God made your spirits 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 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 this yet, ⁴ but when Jesus comes back everyone will see

him. And they will see you too. They will see that you are really good and bright, just like Jesus.

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

⁵ So now you have to stop doing bad things. If that 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, and do what married people do together. 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 bad way. 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, so 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 come from another country, or even if you come 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 be proud and bossy. You have to be easy on other people and wait for them in a quiet way. ¹³ Don't get upset with each other. If somebody does something bad to you, don't payback to them. Remember that God doesn't do payback to you, for the bad things you do, so don't you do payback to other people. ¹⁴ And you really have to love each other properly. When you love each other it is like you properly tie 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, and in that way you will let him control you. And always say thank you to him for everything.

¹⁶ 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. Straighten each other out if anyone starts to get it wrong. Remember how good God is to you and always be ready to thank him, by singing to him with all kinds of spiritual songs. ¹⁷ Do everything the way our leader, Jesus, wants you to do, 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 ladies that are wives, you have to agree with what your husbands want. This is the right way to follow Jesus, our leader.

¹⁹ And now I am talking to you men that are husbands. You have to love your wives properly and never treat them roughly.

Children and parents

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

²¹ And now I am talking to you fathers. Don't be rough on your children. 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. 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 a human boss, so be happy to work hard. ²⁴ Yes, you are working for our leader, Jesus Christ, and remember that he will pay you properly in heaven, 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 judges each person the same way, no matter who that person is.

4

¹ And now I am talking to you people that are bosses of other people. 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 asking him to help you. Keep your minds 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 give us a chance to tell more people about Jesus Christ. We want to explain to them the things that they didn't know before. You know, I did tell this message to some people, and they put me in jail. But no worries, ⁴ I still have to tell it to everybody. 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, you have to take any chance you get to tell them about him. Be sensible in the way you live with these people, and ⁶ talk to 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 That's about all for this letter now. I will give it to Tychicus 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 you mob, and he is another strong Christian friend that we love. These 2 men will tell you all about everything that is going on here.

¹⁰ Do you remember Aristarchus? 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. These men are the only Jews who are working with me here. They are helping me get more people to come into God’s family, and they make this job much easier for me.

¹² And Epaphras is another one of your mob 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 stay spiritually strong, 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 Hierapolis.

¹⁴ Our good friend Luke, the doctor, says hello to you, 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 Nympha and to the Christians who 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, you get it from them and read it too.

¹⁷ Now here is a special word from me to Archippus. Tell him, “Our leader, Jesus, gave you a job, so keep doing it till 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

Colossians 4:18

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Colossians 4:18

from me, so from here on 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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Language: Aboriginal English (English)

Dialect: Australian Aboriginal

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2019-08-07

PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 27 Sep 2019 from source files dated 8 Aug 2019

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