

The colour coding is my own addition – Neil Godfrey, November 2023

Paul's letters are in *large italics*.

The Marcionite writing is in large straight characters.

The Catholic redaction is small.

LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS

1 Paul apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God and brother Timothy. 2 To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ who are in Colossae, grace and peace be to you from God our Father.

GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION

3 We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in the prayers which we pray for you without ceasing, 4 because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints , 5 because of the hope that is laid up for you in heaven, which has recently come to your knowledge through the word of truth of the gospel. 6 It is with you as it is throughout the whole world, where it bears fruit and grows as it has done with you since the day when, having heard of the grace of God in truth, you came to know it, 7 to the school of Epaphras our beloved fellow servant who is for you a faithful minister of Christ, 8 and who has informed us of your charity in spirit. 9 Therefore we, for our part, since the day we heard of you, have not ceased to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10

leading yourselves worthy of the Lord, to please him in all things; producing fruit in good works of every kind and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 filled by his glorious power with a strength that translates into absolute patience and resignation accompanied by joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. 13 He has rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the son of his love, 14 through whom we have deliverance, the remission of our sins, 15 who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creatures, 16 for by him all things were created in heaven and on earth, things visible and things invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers. All was created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and through him all things subsist. 18 He is the head of the body, that is, of the church. He is the principle, the eldest of the dead so as to be first in all things. 19 God has pleased that all the fullness ¹ should dwell in him; 20 He has judged it good to reconcile all things to himself through him, making peace with the blood of his cross, through him things on earth and things in heaven. 21 And you, who once were strangers and enemies in spirit and in evil deeds, he has now reconciled, 22 by his body of flesh, by his death, to present you holy before him, without spot and without reproach. 23 If at least you remain well founded and firm in the faith without turning away from the hope of the gospel which you have heard, which has been preached to all creatures under heaven and of which I, Paul, am the minister. 24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ I make up in my flesh for his body which is the Church, 25 of which I have been the minister by virtue of the mission that God has given me. has given to you to propagate the word of God. 26 The mystery hidden from ages and generations has now been made known to his saints, 27 to whom God has chosen to make known the riches of this glorious mystery spread among the Gentiles, the mystery of which is Christ who is for you the hope of glory. 28 We proclaim him warning all men, ¹ teaching all men in all wisdom, that we may make all men perfect in the knowledge of Christ. 29 In this also I work fighting with his strength which works powerfully in me. II For I want you to know what a great battle I am waging for you, for those of Laodicea and for all who have not seen my face in the flesh, 2 that their hearts may be comforted, united in love and for wealth of full knowledge, that is, for the knowledge of the mystery of God, namely of Christ. 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. 4 I say this so that no one deceives you with seductive speeches. 5 For although I am absent in body, I am with you in spirit, seeing with joy your discipline and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

1. The “fullness” spoken of here is that of the faithful; compare Eph. I, 23 where the Church is the body and the fullness. Without any possible dispute the meaning is that it pleased God and not the fullness.

1. Literally “every man”; but this collective singular is equivalent to a plural, so that I, 28 has the continuation II, 2.

6 Therefore as you have received the Lord Christ Jesus, walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, established in the faith as you have been taught, giving thanks abundantly. 8 Be careful lest anyone exploit you through philosophy and empty deception which is according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world and not according to Christ; 9 because all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily. 10 You are filled in him who is the head of all principality and power. 11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made by hands but consisting in the putting off of the body of flesh and which is the circumcision of Christ. 12 You were buried with him in baptism; you also were raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 You who were dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh he made alive with him, having forgiven you all your sins. 14 Erasing the writing which with its provisions was contrary to us, he deleted it by nailing it to the cross. 15 Despoiling principalities and powers he made a spectacle of them after having triumphed over them by himself. 16 Therefore let no one condemn you concerning food or drink or concerning a festival or a new moon or a sabbath, 17 which are shadows of future things, the shadow of which is Christ. 18 Let no one take away your reward by delighting in baseness and in the worship of angels, boasting in the things he has seen, vainly puffed up by carnal thinking, 19 and not holding fast to the head under the the influence of which the body gathered together and held together by the joints and bonds grows with the growth which God gives. 20 If you have died with Christ to the elements of the world, why do you suffer regulations to be imposed on you as if you were living in the world? 21 “Do not take; does not taste; do not touch”. 22 All these things perish through use, they are human regulations and teachings. 23 They have the appearance of wisdom as an expression of personal worship, of self-denial, of mortification of the body; but they do not take into account what the flesh needs to sustain itself.

THE CHRISTIAN IS RISEN

III If then you have been raised with Christ, think of things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. 2 Focus on things above, not on things

on earth. 3 For you are dead and your life is hidden in God. 4 When Christ appears, who is your life, then you also will appear with him in glory. 5 Put to death therefore the members which are on the earth, fornication, impurity, passion, evil desires, lewdness which is idolatry. 6 It is because of these things that the wrath of God comes¹. 7 This is how YOU yourselves behaved when you lived in these sins. 8 But now also put away all these things: anger, anger, and malice; do not let defamation, dishonest words come out of your mouth; 9 do not deceive one another, since you have stripped off the old self and its practices, 10 and have put on the new self, who has been renewed for knowledge, so as to be in the image of him. who created it. 11 Here there is neither Greek nor Jew, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, nor barbarian, nor Scythian, nor slave, nor freeman; but Christ is all in all.

1. If this verse is Marcionite the primitive text only mentioned “anger” implying that this anger was that of the Creator. The word “God” will have been added by the Catholic editor. But it is probably the entire verse which is a Catholic addition. He cuts the thread of ideas.

12 Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved by God, put on the bowels of mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, resignation. 13 Bear with one another and forgive one another. If anyone has a grievance against another, just as Christ has forgiven you, forgive one another. 14 Above all these things have love, which is the perfect bond. 15 And let the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, for which you were called into one body. Also be grateful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Learn in all wisdom and admonish yourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing well pleasing to God in your hearts. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

DOMESTIC MORALITY COURSE

18 Wives, be submissive to your husbands as is fitting in the Lord. 19 Mans, love your wives and do not be angry with them. 20 Children, obey

your parents in everything, for this is pleasing to the Lord. 21 Fathers, do not mistreat your children, lest they become discouraged. 22 Slaves, obey your masters according to the flesh in everything, not only in their sight as people-pleasers, but with an upright heart through the fear of God. 23 What you do, do it heartily, as for the Lord and not for men; 24 knowing that you will receive from the Lord the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. 25 Whoever does injustice will receive according to the injustice that he does, and there is no distinction of persons. IV Masters, give to your servants what is right and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

2 Persevere in prayer. Spend your vigils in her with thanksgiving. 3 Pray at the same time for us so that God will open a door of speech for us to preach the mystery of Christ, for whose sake I am in chains, 4 that I may make it known as I should speak of it. 5 Conduct yourselves wisely toward those outside and make the most of your time. 6 Let your conversation always be friendly, seasoned with salt; you have to know how to respond to each one.

PAUL'S POST

7 Concerning everything concerning me you will be informed by the beloved brother Tychicus, who is a faithful minister and my fellow servant in the Lord. 8 I have sent to you with the mission of making you known our situation and to comfort your hearts. 9 He is accompanied by Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother who is one of you. They will inform you of everything that happens here. 10 Aristarchus, my companion in captivity, greets you, as well as Mark, the cousin of Barnabas about whom you received orders. If he comes to your house, welcome him. 11 Jesus called Justus also greets you. They belong to circumcision; they are my only collaborators for the kingdom of God; the only ones who were a consolation to me. 12 Epaphras who is among you greets you. Servant of Christ Jesus, he constantly fights for you in his prayers so that you apply yourself to fulfill the will of God. 13 For I testify that there is great concern for you, for those of Laodicea and of

those of Hierapolis. 14 Luke, the beloved physician, greets you and Demas. 15 *Greet* the brethren who are in Laodicea and *Nymphas and the church which is in his house*.

16 When this letter is read among you, let it also be read in the church of the Laodiceans; on the other hand, do you also read that which will come from Laodicea. 17 And say to Archippus: "Take care to fulfill the ministry which you have received in the Lord.

18 *Greetings written by my hand, Paul*. Remember my bonds. May grace be with you.