

Colossians 1

Date and Place of Writing

- Paul is writing the letter from prison

Place and Date	
Caesarea, AD 57-58	<p>Paul was imprisoned for approximately 2 years in Caesarea (Acts 24:27)</p> <p>However, none of Paul's companions listed in Colossians are with him during the Acts account of his imprisonment in Caesarea.</p>
Rome, AD 60-61	<p>Paul was imprisoned for approximately 2 years in Rome (Acts 28:30-31)</p> <p>The freedom Paul was allowed for preaching suggests circumstances well suited for writing the prison letters. // Deterding, Colossians.</p> <p>Most scholars support a Rome location for writing</p>
Ephesus, unknown	<p>Some argue that Paul was imprisoned while doing ministry in Ephesus, however the book of Acts never says this.</p> <p>Another argument for Ephesus is that is closer to Colossae and other recipients of the letter.</p>

- "All things considered, it seems most likely that Colossians was written from Rome in A.D. 60 or 61." // Deterding, Colossians.

Recipients

- The church in Colossae was not found directly by Paul.
 - The book of Acts when speaking of Paul's ministry in Ephesus: *all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.* // Acts 19:10
 - "The description of Epaphras in Colossians 1:7-8 and 4:12-13 strongly suggests that he was the founding missionary of the congregations at Colossa, Laodicea, and Hierapolis." // Deterding, Colossians
- While Paul did not know this church and most likely hadn't traveled to it, he had a few personal connections to it:
 - Philemon
 - Onesimus
 - Archippus
 - Epaphras

Colossian Heresy

- The Colossian heresy written against by Paul's letter to the Colossians was an early form of Gnosticism
 - Gnosticism comes from the Greek word for knowledge
 - Gnosticism refers to a secret knowledge possessed by its followers that would allow them to have union with God
 - Gnosticism's biggest teaching was that the material world was evil and the spiritual world was good. Therefore the goal is to escape the material world and be joined to the spiritual

Colossians 1:1-2 - Introductions

- Paul is exerting authority over the church as an Apostle because he is addressing a heresy that is growing within the church.
 - Paul's authority comes from Jesus Christ

- Paul roots the identity of the church in Christ Jesus
 - Saints means “holy ones or those made holy”
 - ἀδελφός - adelphois means brothers and sisters in this context
- **Grace and Peace**
 - Grace is a typical Greek letter greeting
 - Peace is a typical Hebraic letter greeting
 - By using both, Paul is emphasizing the unity of the church found in Christ Jesus
 - **16** *And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. // John 10:16*
- **In Christ**
 - “The phrase describes a harmonious relationship with Jesus Christ and baptismal incorporation into the body of Christ.” // Deterding, Colossians.
 - Paul uses this phrasing 170 times in his letters

Colossians 1:3-5 - Thanksgiving

- Give thanks for saving faith
 - **27** *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. // John 10:27-28*
- Give thanks for love
 - **16** *“For God so loved the world,[i] that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. // John 3:16-17*
- Give thanks for hope
 - o0jk

Colossians 1:5-8 - Mission

- The Gospel is the “word of truth” opposed to the false teaching of the Colossian heresy
 - **31** *So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” // John 8:31-32*
- The Gospel is a global message
 - **18** *And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[b] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20*
 - **44** *Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance for[c] the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. // Luke 24:44-48*