Colossians

Bible Survey 6

Colossians

Theme

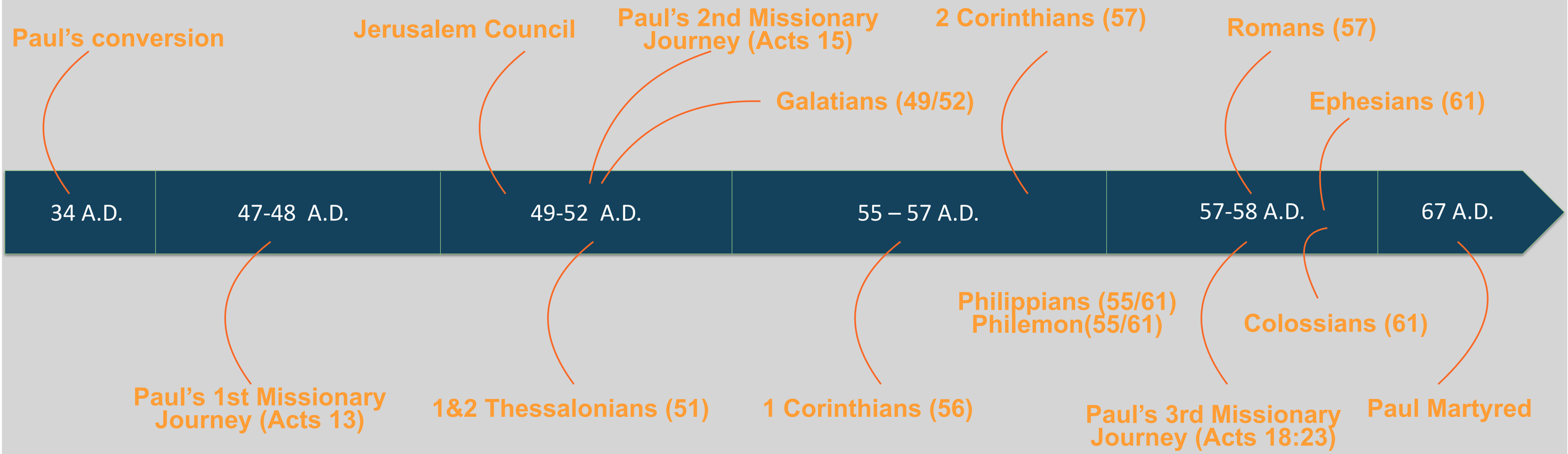
The Preeminence & Sufficiency of Christ

Purpose

Counteract the Judaic-Gnostic teaching in the Colossian church

“Colossian Heresy”

Paul's Timeline




Paul preaches the Gospel for 2 yrs under house arrest as he awaits for his appeal to Caesar
Tiber River
Rome
Three Tavers
Appii Forum
Puteoli
Pompeii
Tarentum
Brundisium
ITALY
ADRIATIC SEA
Paul meets fellow believers and is encouraged
TYRRHENIAN SEA
Messina
Rhegium
SICILY
Syracuse
Syrtis Minor
MALTA
Paul bitten by a viper suffers no harm
Many come to faith and are healed
MACEDONIA
THRACE
BLACK SEA
Amphipolis
Neapolis
Berea
Thessalonica
Byzanthium
BITHYNIA & PONTUS
ASIA
GALATIA
AEGEAN SEA
Pergamum
Thyatira
Smyrna
Sardis
Ephesus
Philadelphia
Laodicea
PHRYGIA
CAPPADOCIA
Delphi
Athens
Olympia
ACHAIA
Sparta
CYCLADES ISLANDS
Cnidus
LYCIA
PAMPHYLIA
CILICIA
Tarsus
COMMAGENE
Euphrates River
Antioch
RHODES
Myra
Phoenix
CRETE
Salmone
Lasea
CLAUDA
Fair Heavens
Change to a grain ship sailing to Italy
CYPRUS
SYRIA
Orontes River
Paul's warning about the dangers of the voyage ignored
Paul boards a ship Sent to Rome to appeal to Caesar
Sidon
Jordan River
Caesarea Maritima
Antipatris
Jerusalem
JUDEA
Dead Sea
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Alexandria
EGYPT
Memphis
NABATEA
Rome 1 - Paul, under house arrest for 2 years c AD61-63, writes to the Churches at Colossae (& personally to Philemon), Ephesus and Philippi
5 Philippi
4 Ephesus & the surrounding churches of Asia
Colossae 2
3 Personal letter to Philemon
MAP OF PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME
Acts 27 & 28
Nazareth
JERUSALEM
scale 250miles 400km
CYRENAICA

Part favorable report

just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.

Col 1:7,8; 2:5

However…

- The danger of relapse into paganism with its gross immorality (cf. Col 1:21-23; 2:6; 3:5-11)
- The danger of accepting what has been come to known as "The Colossian heresy". This heresy was a syncretism involving four elements of both pagan and Jewish origin:
- Philosophies of men - *“taken captive”* - which denied the all sufficiency and pre-eminence of Christ (Col 2:8)
- Judaistic ceremonialism - which attached special significance to the rite of circumcision, food regulations, and observance of special days (Col 2:11,16-17)
- Angel worship - which detracted from the uniqueness of Christ (Col 2:18)
- Asceticism - which called for harsh treatment of the body as the means to control its lusts (Col 2:20-23)

Blue Letter Bible

Be on guard…

- Warn the Colossians against relapse (Col 1:21-23)
- Warn them against the "solution" being urged upon them by those denying the all-sufficiency of Christ (Col 2:8-23)
- Direct their attention to the "Beloved Son", the "All-Sufficient and Pre-Eminent Savior" (Col 1:13-18; 2:8-10)

Gnosticism

- Prided themselves on their knowledge (Gk., gnōsis)
- Claimed to have information superior to that of the apostles
- A person could not be truly happy unless he had been initiated into the deepest secrets of their cult.
- Some, denied the true humanity of Christ.
- Teaching that “the Christ” was a divine influence that came out from God and rested on the Man, Jesus, at His baptism.
- Further, that the Christ left Jesus just before His crucifixion
- Resulting: that Jesus died, but the Christ did not.

I. The Doctrine of the Pre-Eminence of Christ (Chapters. 1, 2)

A. Salutation (1:1, 2)

B. Paul’s Thanksgiving and Prayer for the Believers (1:3–14)

C. The Glories of Christ the Church’s Head (1:15–23)

D. The Ministry Committed to Paul (1:24–29)

E. Christ’s Sufficiency (Chap 2)

i. Perils of Philosophy - deity is in Christ (2:8-10)

ii. Legalism is wrong - reality is in Christ (2:11-17)

iii. Mysticism is wrong - headship is in Christ (2:18-19)

iv. Asceticism is wrong - immunity is in Christ (2:20-23)

The Preeminence of Christ

Colossians 1:15-20

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

The Heresies

Perils of Philosophy

Deity (fullness) is in Christ (2:8-10)

The Heresies

Legalism is wrong

Reality is in Christ (2:11-17)

The Heresies

Mysticism is wrong

Headship is in Christ (2:18-19)

The Heresies

Asceticism is wrong

Immunity is in Christ (2:20-23)

II. The Believer’s Duty to the Pre-Eminent Christ (Chapters 3, 4)

A. The Believer’s New Life: Putting Off the Old Man and Putting on the New (3:1–17)

B. Appropriate Behavior for Members of the Christian Household (3:18–4:1)

C. The Believer’s Prayer Life and Witness by Life and Speech (4:2–6)

D. Glimpses of Some of Paul’s Associates (4:7–14)

E. Greetings and Instructions (4:15–18)

Abundant Life in Christ

Things above

You have died

Put aside evilness

Colossians 3:1-9

Summary

Position in Christ (Chapters 1, 2)
Practice in Christ (Chapters 3, 4)

…that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Colossians 1:18c