

**The Supremacy of Christ**  
**06/18/2023 (Week 19) Colossians 4:15-18**  
**Paul's Letter to the Colossians**

**This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.**

## **Introduction**

- **Happy Father's Day!**
- So, this is it, our last message in **the Apostle Paul's 4-chapter (95 verse)** letter to the church of **Colossae**.
- Counting today, it's taken us **19 weeks, 19 messages**, which is close to **16 Hours**.
- That averages out to about **10 minutes per verse**.
- Now why am I telling you this?
- Well, because I want us to recognize that when **the church in Colossae** received this letter,
- they certainly didn't go through it like we have.
- **Basically**, when the letter arrived, the believers gathered and read it out loud.
- They **probably** read it a few times.
- And they **certainly** made a **few copies** to send on to other churches.
- We see this in verse **16 of Chapter 4...**

***16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. (Colossians 4:16)***

- So, the **Colossians** and the **Laodiceans** both received letters from Paul.
- The **Colossians** read their letter and then they exchange with the **Laodiceans** (whose letter has been lost).
- So clearly the **Colossians** didn't spend **16 hours methodically going through either letter**.
- **So why did we?**
- Well, because **I need a job!**
- No, seriously, **think about it...**
- They were reading a letter written specifically to them,
- addressing their circumstances,
- written during the time and culture they lived in.
- written in the language they spoke (Greek).
- Think about all the time I spend saying, in the culture of Paul's day,
- Or in the **Greek or Roman** culture they believed...
- Or in the **Greek this word** is this and it has a range of meanings such as....

- But the **Colossians believers** didn't have to do that,
- They were all Greek language and Culture **Scholars** so to speak.
- It was **their language and culture**.
- But as those who are close to **2,000 years** removed from the writing,
- who are in a totally **different culture**, speak a totally **different language**,
- and were **not part of the Colossian church** that Paul is writing to.
- It **naturally takes us time, effort, study** to come to the same **understanding and application** as the **Colossians** probably did when they **first read the letter**.
- That's why I took **19 weeks** go through this relatively short letter,
- **and this is true for all of Scripture**.
- If we (living today, far removed the **language and culture** when the Bible was written)
- If we're seeking to truly understand and apply what any given author (inspired by the Holy Spirit) meant.
- It's going to take **time, effort not to mention prayer**.
- **However**, there is at least one problem with taking so much time,
- **That is**, we can fail to see the overall picture of what the author (in this case Paul) is expressing.
- We're not impacted by the whole letter at once, as those in the Colossians Church were.
- Now to combat this, each week, I try to summarize what's gone before so we see the context of what we are looking at on that specific Sunday,
- But that can become tedious and take time we don't have.
- So, what can happen is we get focused on the verses of the day,
- but fail to understand and apply them in the overall scheme of Paul's letter.
- If you remember, this is what **Sean** preached about a number of weeks ago as he advocated reading large portions of Scripture, whole books at a time.
- Now with that in mind, even though I considered it,
- today we're not going to read aloud in one sitting, the entire letter of Colossians,
- I'll leave that to you.
- But we are going to summarize and read much of the entire letter.
- I've divided the message into three parts.... Three points in your notes...
- You can even fill in the three blanks now if you'd like.
- **First two points**, we'll be reviewing both...
- The **Context** of Paul's Letter to the Colossians. (Point 1)
- And the **Content** of Paul's Letter to the Colossians. (Point 2)
- And then we'll finish with **The Conclusion of Paul's Letter to the Colossians**. (Point 3)

- And I have two main purposes for doing this.
- **First**, since we've spent **18 Sunday's** going through this letter in detail,
- we hopefully already understand much of its content.
- And so we're better prepared to see and be impacted by its overall message.
- This applies both to today as I preach this summary message,
- but more importantly this applies to **your** future reading/study of Colossians,
- Which I highly recommend.
- You've been given a firm Colossians foundation,
- and now you, in the power of the Spirit, will be able to better understand and correctly apply what is written as you read and study this letter yourself.
- **So first** I want us to be impacted by the overall message of Colossians today and beyond.
- This will be the main **application for point 2**, the content of Paul's Letter to the Colossians.
- **And then second**, as we look at this letter, written by the Apostle Paul, in one sitting,
- I want us to consider **his heart**.
- We didn't touch on this much as we went through the letter,
- because he doesn't write much about himself.
- But I want us to see **Paul's heart for the Colossians**, and thus his heart for **all believers**.
- This will be **our application** for both **points 1 and 3**.
- **The Context and the Conclusion of Paul's Letter to the Colossians**.
- **Paul** provides us **a much-needed example** of how our **hearts** should be toward other believers.
- I think this is something we all need to understand and apply.
- In fact, for me this was a very convicting message to prepare.
- You see, for those who claim the name of Christ, there are **two distinct ways to live and to feel**.
- One is to maintain a **small heart** that is **distant** from other people.
- This is by far the **safest way** to go because it results in **far less sorrow and pain**.
- If your goal is to avoid the **troubles of life**, **your path is clear...**
- Do not **entangle** yourself with **other people**, avoid **relationships**.
- If you do this, you'll dodge much of the messiness of life.
- And unfortunately, many Christians it seems, get through life with a minimum of sorrow and pain **by having a small distant unengaged heart**.

- **But there's another way to live,**
- this is the way that we **touched on** last week with **Epaphras,**
- And this is the way that is clearly seen in the life of **the Apostle Paul.**
- That is, living a life that seeks to develop (cultivate, grow) a **large heart** for other people,
- A heart that **ministers to** the messy lives of others.
- But be warned, if you **engage** with people,
- you become susceptible to much **more pain and sorrow** than those who remain distant.
- However, you will also experience more **joy, satisfaction, meaning and purpose.**
- And most importantly, it is the **large heart,**
- the heart that seeks to minister to others that is blessed by experiencing the filling and power of the Holy Spirit.
- For to engage with others, to minister to others we must have the power of God's Spirit.
- We must have the fruit of the Spirit which is...

***<sup>22</sup> ... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control... (Galatians 5:22-23)***

- You can see how necessary these fruits are to those with an engaged heart,
- and how unnecessary most are to those who have an unengaged heart.
- Who needs patience or kindness or goodness or faithfulness or gentleness if they are not spending time with people.
- Also, **and obviously,** the impact of these two kinds of hearts is drastically different.
- Small unengaged hearts, though safe and protected, never contribute anything.
- **No one benefits from them because they choose not to be involved.**
- On the other hand, large, engaged hearts, though vulnerable,
- also have a great impact on the lives of others.
- As Pastor Kent Hughes writes...

***Cultivate deafness and we will never hear discord, but neither will we hear the glorious strains of a great symphony. Cultivate blindness and we will be spared the ugly, but we will never see the beauty of a sunset or a bird on wing. Cultivate a small heart and life may be smooth sailing, but we will never know the heady wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails, the power and exhilaration of being borne along by the Spirit in accomplishing great eternal things for God. Cultivate a small heart, and we certainly will never have a great heart like the Apostle Paul's. (Kent Hughes)***

- And as we take our final look at **Paul's letter to the Colossians,**
- I want us again to see his large, engaged heart.
- That we might be inspired by him and become a large-hearted engaged people ourselves.

- So now we turn to our first point...

## 1. The Context of Paul's Letter to the Colossians

- We see Paul's **large heart** in the reasons why he wrote this letter.
- If you remember, he was under house arrest in Rome.
- Which meant he was chained to a **Praetorian guard** day and night.
- His feet, which had walked much of the Roman Empire, now couldn't even walk around the room.
- But his **great heart** continued to impact the world as he wrote some of his most powerful letters,
- Letters that we have today in the Holy Scriptures.
- Now over 1,000 miles from Rome, there was a man named **Epaphras** who also had a large heart.
- **He** was a leader in the **small house church in Colosse**.
- He'd probably come to know Christ through Paul's ministry in nearby **Ephesus**,
- and he'd gone back to Colossae where God used him to proclaim the Gospel.
- So even though Paul himself never visited **Colossae**.
- Through his ministry to Epaphras, Colossians were coming to Christ,
- They were experiencing the new life in Christ, that we've talked much about over these 19 weeks.
- **But there were dark demonic forces at work.**
- People began attending (infiltrating) the **Colossian church**.
- These **false teachers**, sought to divert the Colossians from their relationship with God,
- from their new life in Christ.
- In **Chapter 2 verse 8** we get a summary of the nature of their false teaching...

**<sup>8</sup> See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. (Colossians 2:8)**

- These false teachers promoted **false deceptive philosophy**.
- **Philosophy** based on human tradition, that came from the **elemental or demonic spirits** of this world.
- And most damaging, what they were teaching was not according to, not of Christ.
- It was **not the true gospel of Jesus Christ**.
- **Now certainly Epaphras** did his best to confront and combat these false teachers.
- **But** he needed help.
- And so, he wisely decided to seek out Paul in Rome.
- We don't have a record **of Paul's meeting with Epaphras**.
- But we can surmise that as Epaphras poured out his concerns to the Apostle.

- Paul responded...
- *Epaphras, I can see your problem, but can you see mine?*
- *do you see these chains, I've got some major issues of my own to deal with,*
- *I really need to focus on me right now.*
- *I'll certainly pray for you and the church, but you probably need to handle this on your own.*
- Sound right? No, that might have been what I would have said, but not what Paul said.
- When Paul heard what was happening in Colossae, he did what all Christians with large hearts do.
- **He engaged.**
- Epaphras' concern became Paul's.
- A **deep concern** engulfed Paul's heart.
- We know this, not only from the content of Colossians,
- but from Paul's heart for all the **churches** and all the believers.
- To the Corinthians he wrote...

**28 And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches. (2 Corinthians 11:28)**

- Paul experienced anxiety, deep concern for all the churches.
- So Epaphras, knowing Paul's heart for all the churches, seeks him out to help with the issues in Colosseae.
- He tells Paul of the false teachers and how there are seeking to divert the believers from their new life in Christ.
- How they are promoting deceptive philosophies from the pit of hell.
- And Paul responds by engaging, by caring enough to get involved.
- He can't go there himself, but he can write a **powerful letter** that will both encourage the believers and refute the false teachers.
- We can imagine Paul hearing what's happening in Colossae.
- ***Maybe some righteous anger begins to be felt.***
- Certainly, Paul took some time to pray about and meditate on the situation.
- And when his heart and mind were ready, when he was **filled with the Spirit of God**,
- He called for his **secretary** and began to **dictate**.
- And what he (out of a full, engaged, large, inspired by the Holy Spirit heart) gave the world
- was the beautiful letter to the Colossians,
- a letter written to combat these false teachers and help the believers continue living their new life in Christ.

- And that brings us to our second point...

## 2. The Content of Paul's Letter to the Colossians

- So, I'm going to try and give you an overall picture of this letter.
- I'm not going to read or even mention every passage, but I want to highlight the main ideas.
- Paul begins with an encouraging celebration of the **Colossian church**,
- He calls them **saints and faithful brothers**.
- And he especially **celebrated** their faith in Christ, beginning in 1:3 we read...

***<sup>3</sup> We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, <sup>4</sup> since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, <sup>5</sup> because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. (Colossians 1:3-5)***

- Paul thanks God that their faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ produced in them **present love for one another** based on **their eternal hope in Christ**.
- And then in 1:9-14 of he prays for them.
- **The False Teachers** were promoting **deceptive philosophy** as the way to experience new life.
- So, Paul prays for **the knowledge of Christ for the Colossians**.
- In 1:9-10 we see the heart of **his prayer** for them...

***<sup>9</sup> And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; (Colossians 1:9-10)***

- Following his prayer that the **Colossians both know and walk (live) for Christ**.
- Paul goes on in 1:15-18 to give the foundation and motivation for this.
- And in these verses, we find the most glorious description of Christ in any of the epistles.
- It's a tribute to the **Supremacy of Christ**.
- This is the **heart of the Letter**.
- The false teachers are offering the Colossians what is **not according to Christ**,
- but Paul wants them to see who Christ is, **this is who you are to know and live for**.

***<sup>15</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. (Colossians 1:15-18)***

- Again, this is the heart of the letter, so let's remember what we learned here.
- We see that Christ is supreme in four ways:
- **First**, he is *the firstborn of all creation*, which in Hebrew thought means first in rank or honor.
- Therefore, Christ is completely supreme in creation.
- There is none higher; there is no god above him.

- **Second**, he is supreme because he is Creator:

***16 ...all things were created through him... (Colossians 1:16)***

- He created the invisible spirit world.
- He created the vast physical world.
- Einstein estimated that there are **ten octillion stars** in the universe.
- How many is that?
- Well, it's beyond our comprehension but you get an idea when you see it written out.
- Ten octillion stars! **10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000.**

- AND Jesus created them all.
- He also created every unseen molecule, atom, quark.
- He created the beautiful rainbow, the intricate cell, and on and on...
- and he did it all from nothing, ex nihilo, out of nothing.
- He did it by the power of his word!

- **Third**, he is the sustainer of creation:

***17 ...and in him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:17)***

- Or all things continue to hold together.
- Christ continues to hold all things together,
- Apart from his continuous activity all would disintegrate.
- He holds every speck of matter and every spiritual being together by his power.

- **Fourth**, he is the goal of creation:

***...all things were created through him and for (or towards) him. (Colossians 1:16)***

- All creation is moving toward its goal in Christ.
- All things were brought forth at his command, and all things will return to him at his command.
- He is the Alpha and Omega, beginning and the end.



- Paul wants the Supremacy of Christ over all things, to be solidified in the hearts of his readers.
- Because if you believe that Christ is eternal, without beginning and without end,
- that he always was and always will be;
- if you believe that he is Creator of everything,
- every speck of matter across trillions of light years of space,
- the Creator of beauty and shapes and colors which dazzle our eyes;
- if you believe that he is the sustainer of all creation,
- the force, which is presently holding the universe together,
- and that without him all would disintegrate;
- if you believe that he is the goal of everything,
- that all creation is for him and moving toward him;
- if you believe this, if it becomes fixed in your heart and soul,
- then no false teaching, no false empty deceptive Christless philosophy has a chance to divert you from your relationship with Christ.
- Trading the Christ of the Bible for some other thing, other philosophy, that is crazy talk.
- Again, this is the heart of the book of Colossians.
- Everything else flows from it, for this Christ is the one who entered our world and died in our place that we might be reconciled to God.
- As Paul writes in **1:19-20**

***<sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Colossians 1:19-20)***

- Christ's full Divinity makes it possible for his blood to reconcile all who trust him and to affect the redemption of all creation.
- Paul goes on in **1:24-2:5** to show that it's because of the Supremacy of Christ that he is personally motivated and empowered to preach the gospel and minister to the Colossians.
- For Paul Christ is everything.
- And in **2:6-7** he says that Christ's Supremacy in our lives should cause us to walk in Him.
- To live for Him who is Supreme, what could be more logical than this?
- You would have to be an **idiot to not live for the one who is Supreme over all things.**
- Paul then in **verses 8** (which we have looked at) warned the Colossians not to fall captive to the foolishness of the false teachers,
- He then give his rationale for this, based on Jesus' fullness:

***<sup>9</sup> For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, <sup>10</sup> and you have been filled in him... (Colossians 2:9-10)***

- Christ is filled with all the fullness of Deity, and we, as Christians, are full of his fullness.
- Paul then in **2:11-15** explains what our fullness in Christ means.
- This is our identity in Christ, this is I believe the second great truth of Colossians.
- Out of the first great truth (the Supremacy of Christ) flows the **Second Great truth** (Our identity in Christ)
- So, because Christ is supreme and you have trusted in him...

***<sup>11</sup> In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,***

- In Christ you were cut off from your sin.

***<sup>12</sup> having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. <sup>13</sup> And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, <sup>14</sup> by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. (Colossians 2:11-14)***

- Because of Christ's Supremacy, his divine fullness, we are filled in him.
- Which means, we've died with him, we have died to our old sinful self.
- He has dealt with and forgiven our sins as only he could through his death on the cross.
- And we have been raised with Christ to a new life.
- So, summarizing the first two Chapters of Colossians,
- Chapters filled with theological truth about Christ and those who trust in him.
- We can say that because of Christ's Supreme divine fullness that by his death on the Cross those who trust in him are filled with Him.
- That we die to our old sinful life and receive a new life in Christ.
- **We are new Full Creatures in the Supreme, Fully Divine Christ.**
- And to accept anything less, any deceptive Christless Philosophy would be foolish.
- **Amen**, so that's the big picture of the first two Chapters.
- Then beginning in **Chapter 3** Paul gives the Colossians **and us** instructions for living out our new full life in Christ.
- **3:1-4** prepares, exhorts and gives us a foundation for the instructions to come...

***<sup>1</sup> If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4)***

- To experience new full life in Christ, **our minds and hearts** must consistently be focused not on the things of this world but upward, **on the things of God**.
- We cannot be too heavenly-minded!
- You may have heard the saying, "He's so heavenly minded, he's no earthly good."
- But it is wrong.
- He may be so **self-righteous**, so **pious**, so **"goody-goody"**, but never too heavenly minded.
- As **one author** expressed it, **"Lord, burn eternity into my eyeballs."**
- Only when eyes (minds and hearts) are focused on the things of God can we really experience our new full life in Christ,
- only then will we live for Christ!
- Paul followed this marvelous exhortation with a series of specific instructions for living our new life.
- **3:5-14 explains that we are to put off (kill) our old sinful self and to put on the garments of God the Character of God.**
- **Then In 3:15-17** he gives instruction for our personal life, our relationship with God and our relationship with one another.
- We are to **let peace of Christ rule in our hearts.**
- We are to **let the word of Christ richly dwell in us.**
- And this is to flow into our experience with one another and God.
- We are to **teach the word to one another and join together in worshiping God through song.**
- Then in **3:18-4:1** Paul gives instruction for experiencing new life in the Christian household.
- **Wives submit to your husbands.**
- **Husbands love your wives.**
- **Children obey your parents.**
- **Fathers do not provoke your children.**
- **Bondservants obey your Masters.**
- **Master's treat your Doulos justly and fairly.**
- Then, in **4:2-6** Paul gives **his final instructions.**
- He begins with a general call to **pray steadfastly, watchfully and thankfully.**
- And then he calls his readers to **pray that the gospel is preached clearly.**
- And to **live in such a way that the gospel is communicated to outsiders, those who are outside the church.**
- So, **Paul's engaged concerned heart**, seeking to keep the Colossians from falling for false teaching.
- Gives them a beautiful picture of **the Supremacy of Christ.**
- He also tells them what it means for them,
- that they have new full life in the Supreme Christ.

- And then he gives them instructions for living for Christ,
- for living out their new full life in Christ.
- That is the big overall message of Colossians.
- Put simply...

***Colossians combats false teaching by declaring the truth of both Christ's Supremacy over all things and the believer's new full life in Christ.***

- And then Paul puts a cherry on top, by describing his fellow workers and sending greetings from them.
- And in so doing he exemplifies **new full life in Christ**.
- **Tychicus** shows a new life of service.
- **Onesimus** shows a new life of transformation.
- And through the 6 others listed + Paul he shows **a new life of fellowship**.
- The **3 Jews and 3 Gentiles** show fellowship break barriers.
- **Mark and Paul** show fellowship forgives faults.
- And **Epaphras** shows Fellowship creates concern.
- Now we still have the conclusion of the letter to come...
- But I think as the **Colossians heard** this letter read out loud it inspired them,
- It motivated them to walk away from the false teachers of their day and begin to live their new life fully in and for the Supreme Christ.
- **And I pray it does the same for us.**
- And that brings us to our final point...

### **3. The Conclusion of Paul's Letter to the Colossians**

- **Okay all that has gone before is review.**
- **So now the Sermon begins (brief sermon)**
- Paul's conclusion includes his **final greetings** and **three-part encouragement**.
- First, in **verse 15**:

***<sup>15</sup> Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. (Colossians 4:15)***

- Like Colossae Paul had never been to **Laodicea**,
- but he was still engaged in their lives.
- His heart compelled him to **greet the church** there and the woman, **Nympha**, who so graciously hosted it.

- **Second**, in **verse 16** which we looked at earlier...

***16 And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea. (Colossians 4:16)***

- Paul encouraged the exchange of the letters he was sending to Laodicea and Colosse.
- He wanted them to be read aloud to the churches.
- We know according to **Revelation 3:14-22**, that in the future Laodicea would need all the help it could get,
- Because it became a church that was neither hot nor cold and spit out by Christ.
- **Third**, in **verse 17** he encouraged a leader in the **Colossian church**:

***17 And say to Ar-chippus, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord." (Colossians 4:17)***

- In **Philemon 1:1-2** we read...

***1 To Philemon our beloved fellow worker 2 and Apphia (Ap-fia) our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house: (Philemon 1:1-2)***

- From this many scholars believe that **Archippus** was the son of **Philemon and Apphia**.
- Perhaps **Epaphras** told Paul of **Archippus's** growing spiritual life and potential for ministry.
- At any rate, Paul reminded him that his ministry originated "**in the Lord**."
- It was divinely given and must be treated as such.
- Paul told him that he must "**fulfill**" it,
- The Lord has given you this ministry, but you must engage in it,
- you must step out in faith and do it.
- And I think there is a word about the heart here.
- Those who cultivate a heart for others, will like Paul, Like Epaphras fulfill the ministry that God gives us.
- And that takes us to **Paul's fourth and final encouragement**.
- Remember he's been dictating this letter.
- Many believe this is because Paul's thorn in the flesh was his eyesight.
- He just couldn't see well enough to write legibly.

- But as he draws to a conclusion,
- We can picture him stretching out his hand for the stylus to personally write his last words.
- We can even image that as he did so, the chain which fastened him to the Praetorian guard at his side hindered him.
- His thoughts turned to the fact that he was **imprisoned**.
- And he was probably exhausted after pouring out his heart to the Colossians.
- And he writes...

***18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. (Colossians 4:18)***

- Paul was in jail, but no power on earth could **cage his heart** for the people of God.
- He has given them so much of **himself in this letter**, and he asks but **one thing for himself**.
- Well, 2, he did ask for them to pray that he would **preach the gospel clearly**.
- And he also asks them to **Remember his chains**.
- **Remember that I am imprisoned for the sake of the gospel.**
- **Remember that I am willing to be chained up for the sake of Christ and You.**
- **Remember me and pray for me brothers and sisters in Christ.**
- Paul then turns back to the **Colossians** and closes with the words, **"Grace be with you."**
- A closing word of grace was the **trademark of Paul** in all his letters.
- Grace speaks of **God's unmerited (unearned) favor**.
- May God's unmerited, freely given, favor be with you.
- May you, **in all you say and do in your new full life in Christ**, experience the Grace of God.
- Grace that comes from God and is **available because of Jesus Christ**.
- It is only because of the Supreme Christ made the Supreme sacrifice by dying in our place.
- By taking our sins upon himself that you and I can receive **the Grace of God**.
- That you and I **can live new grace filled lives in Christ**.
- May we daily remember the reality and joy of being filled with the grace of God through Jesus Christ.
- May God's grace cause us to seek those things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.
- **And may we receive the grace necessary to live like Paul,**
- **To open our hearts to the Lord and to others,**
- **To both the people of God and to outsiders.**
- And as we do, as we receive the grace of God which comes from the **Supreme Christ**.
- May we **live our new lives with full, engaged, hearts**.
- May we be **filled to overflowing with Jesus Christ!**
- **Would you pray with me to that end?**