**Introduction to the Book of Colossians – Colossians 1:1 - Col-001**

This morning we turn our attention now to a new book of the Bible, the book of Colossians. I’m always interested in watching church signs as I drive around the city, church signs which from week to week announce what the sermon is going to deal with that particular Sunday. Almost uniformly, I will notice that from week to week the sermon is from some different place in the Bible from where it was the week before. The hop, skip, and jump technique is the norm as ministers select passages of Scripture that they feel particularly drawn to that they would like to deal with. The result is that the congregation never has a consistent progressive view of a letter from the Bible written by one of the men of God who were selected to produce that Scripture; to be able to read that letter and understand it in its impact and its meaning in the background of the times in which it was written.

For that reason, we follow the technique which I think is the proper one, of taking a book of the Bible and going through it verse by verse—explaining what it says; giving you insight into the meaning of the words; not giving you stupid little grocery lists of three things, four things, ten things to solve some problem you have, and then actually thinking that you’re going to be able to do it with that. That never works, it gives you a little kick at the moment, but it no long-lasting effects.

There are however many Christians who cannot rise above that shallow level. It’s all they can go for, and it’s all they can stomach, and therefore they are never privy to the deep things of the Spirit of God. That’s one of the great things that God has provided for us as Christians—the deep things of the Spirit of God. Here at Berean Church, we specialize here at Berean, and those who don’t care for the deep things will in time peel off and go down to a level where they feel more comfortable.

So this morning, we are going to begin systematically a study of the epistle to the Colossians. This book was written by the apostle Paul in about 61 or 62 AD. It was written from the city of Rome during Paul’s first Roman imprisonment. The apostle Paul had endured four years of imprisonment—two in Caesarea and two in Rome—as a result of a riot that broke out in Jerusalem when he brought some financial help from the churches of the New Testament world to help the starving saints in Jerusalem. As a result of that misrepresentation of the apostle and the riot begun by the Jews, he was taken into custody by the Roman authorities. Finally, he demanded to be tried in Rome by the Caesar Nero, and at that time he was released. So that’s what we refer to as his first Roman imprisonment.

Subsequently, he was again picked up on the charge of preaching an illicit unauthorized religion in proclaiming Christianity—Christ crucified, risen, and coming again. From that second Roman imprisonment, he was never released. He was condemned, and, under Nero’s authority, he was beheaded.

So, we are talking about that first Roman imprisonment, during which he wrote this book of Colossians. During this same period, he also wrote Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon. We therefore refer to these four books of the Bible as the prison epistles. So if someone uses the term “prison epistles,” you know they are talking about Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

This book of Colossians was written about one year after Paul had arrived in Rome from Caesarea for his trial before Caesar. This letter was carried to Colossae by Tychicus along with the Philemon letter.

**Colossae**

The city of Colossae is located in the Roman province of Asia which today is part of Turkey. There is a distance of about 1000 between Rome, where Paul is writing this letter, and the city of Colossae where the Colossian believers will receive this letter. The city of Colossae was located near two other important cities of the ancient world—Laodicea, one of the churches to whom one of the twelve letters of the Revelation were written to; and, Hierapolus. Colossae was located about twelve miles from these two cities. All three of these cities lay in what is known as the Lycus valley, a very fertile valley in the Roman province of Asia. The city is situated 100 miles east of Ephesus. It lies on the bank of the Lycus River near where the river has a junction with the Meander River. The Meander River is called that because it has a lot of curves. That’s where we get our English word “meandering,” meaning “to wonder about.” It comes from the name of this river. There was a very famous mountain that overlooked the city of Colossae, Mount Cadmus.

The ancient site of Colossae was discovered in 1835, but there is little left. Some of the other ancient cities like Ephesus have a lot more ruins left, but not so for Colossae. It was however a very great city in the ancient world. It had a very large and a very wealthy population. The Persian King Xerxes marched through the city of Colossae in 41 B.C. This Persian King Name Xerxes is the name of the king in the Book of Esther. This city was located on the trade routes that ran north from Ephesus to Pergamos. Colossae was devastated by an earthquake in 60 A.D., along with Laodicea and Hierapolis, but it was rebuilt. Colossae is in an area which is rich in mineral deposits, pasture lands for sheep, in an area which is very fertile for the growing of figs and olives. The wool of the sheep was died a dark red, and that dark red color was called Colossian—that was the color of the material that came from the wool that was died in this way. The waters of the Lycus River, as a matter of fact, are impregnated with a chalky substance which made the dying of cloth particularly easy. This was a great factor that enabled them to capitalize upon in dying this wool. In Paul’s day, Colossae had become a small city overwhelmed by the nearby Hierapolis and Laodicea, and Colossae was not much of a city in Paul’s day. The city was abandoned in the eighth century A.D., and was finally destroyed in the twelfth century. The population of Colossae consisted mostly of Gentiles. They did have a community of Jews who had been settled there by Alexander the Great. It is interesting that one of the most significant books of the Bible, Colossians, at Colossae, was written to one of the lease important cities of the New Testament times.

This type of geographical background is part of the isagogics that you must have in understanding a book of the Bible—the background of the times, the geography, and the customs of the day. One of the things that we must also look into is why did Paul write to this city. What was his relationship to the city of Colossae? Paul had never visited the city of Colossae before he had written the letter to it. He had not founded the church in the city of Colossae. This church was planted in Colossae during the three-year stay that Paul had in the city Ephesus one hundred miles away, on his third missionary journey in the years 52 to 55 A.D. In Acts 19:10, this period of Paul’s ministry is referred to as the time when all the peoples of Asia heard the Word of the Lord. So this was a time of enormous evangelistic outreach with Paul operating from the base in Ephesus. Apparently, somebody who was reached out of that great period of evangelism went to Colossae and formed the church there. We think it may have been a man named Epaphras who was a native of Colossae, and who was in Rome with Paul, assisting him as Paul was in the process of writing this letter. This letter then had to be carried back to Colossae.

Again, it was about one thousand miles from Rome to Colossae, and this was an enormous distance for this letter to be carried. Just to give you some relationship of these places: this area of three cities have a climate on a parallel to being in San Francisco, while Rome’s climate is on a parallel to being in Chicago. Tarsus, where Paul was born, has a climate like being on a parallel of being in Springfield, Mo.

During this three-year stay in Ephesus, the word of God went out in a powerful way. Perhaps it was Epaphras who was the pastor teacher at the church in Colossae who founded the church there. Paul warned this church about false doctrines which diminished the deity of Jesus Christ, and which destroyed personal peace and stability. It is amazing how early on in Christian history when immediately Satan was there, instilling false doctrine. It was very tough in those days. There’s not much excuse for anyone being guilty of false doctrine today. There’s not much excuses for anyone today having a misconception about how to go to Heaven because we have a completed Scripture. We have all of the works—a completed canon (which means “standard”) of Scripture. So we’ve got all of the information at our fingertips. These people only had pieces that would be brought, especially if the apostle Paul wrote them a letter and dealt with a specific issue and problem. They had to get other letters that they would have to read in order for them to be able to capitalize upon and to enjoy the full information that was to comprise the New Testament. So Paul is trying to bring some caution to this congregation on the basis, no doubt, of what Epaphras had come to him and reported to him what was going on. The devil was at work, early on, in getting people confused as to what was false about the mind of God.

**The Church at Colossae**

So one of the things that God had to deal with, first of all, was to warn the people of Colossae. Please remember that when we talk about the church in Colossae, we’re not talking about a gymnasium full of people. We’re not talking about a stadium full of Christians that showed up for church every Sunday night. They didn’t have that. All they had was house churches. For the first 250 years of Christianity, there was nothing in the form of meeting places except houses. Those, of course, who were wealthier Christians tended to have larger houses, so they were the ones whose houses people tended to go to, such as John Mark’s mother, who was a business woman, a woman of means, and who had the space for the Christians to gather in considerable numbers. All over the city of Colossae there were these cells of believers, and each group had one elder in it who was their pastor teacher. They had a group of spiritual leaders to assist him and they had a board of deacons. That’s how the thing functioned. They never had more than one elder in each church. They had only one leader in each church, and they had those who assisted him in the spiritual ministry and in the material ministry. That’s the setup that you have to understand. However, we can properly speak of the church in Colossae, meaning the local church, and treat it as a single unit because the Word got around to all of them. As this letter arrived, they simply passed it around Sunday after Sunday, and that was the sermon. They would get up and read the whole letter there. Then they would begin making copies to duplicate it and spread it around and send it to other churches. That’s how we got such an enormous of copies of the New Testament Scriptures. We take as gospel truth something that we think that Homer wrote when we have only a half-dozen copies of what he wrote. Only in the Scriptures do we have such a vast array of manuscripts, as God’s provision, so that we can bring together and collate, in time, an accurate compilation of what those original letters had in them. Those original letters were destroyed. They got lost, but the copies existed. When we copy things, we tend to interject mistakes. However, when we have a lot of copies, we can notice what the mistakes were. Therefore, to this day, we have no doubt about what the original writers had in their original writings, except for about one-half page of your Bible, and those were mostly insignificant errors.

So the first thing that Paul had to do was to warn the Christians at Colossae against returning to the sinful vices that were practiced by the pagan who were all about them. You have to understand that these people came out of the grossest kind of immorality. These were people who lived in terrible lives morally, and now suddenly they’re born again Christians. Well, today, when a certain person who is an alcoholics becomes a Christian, some of these people today have a marvelous transformation. They go from booze to zip to nothing. However, others cannot do that. Their craving of alcohol is still with them and they now struggle even as Christians with handling this thing that they now understand is condemned by the Word of God. Well, these people had these evil practices which were not easy to shake because the appeal to the sin nature. However, now that they were born again spiritually, and they had the indwelling Holy Spirit, all they needed was the instruction of doctrine. With that combination, they had an explosive power, the Spirit of God and Bible doctrine, to conquer sin no matter how appealing it may be. You will say no to it.

So Paul wrote this letter to admonish them to reject the human viewpoint solutions for controlling the lusts of their old sin nature. He’s trusted them to keep their eyes on the Lord. So he’s trusted the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of mankind. The Colossians were converts in a society which surrounded them with coarse sexual immorality practices. It was a pagan society. Immoral sex was the way you worshipped your god. You went down to the local temple where there were hundreds of male and female prostitutes, and that’s how you worshipped your god. And when they got really degenerate, they participated in bestiality, sexuality with animals. So this was not a nice group out of which to become a Christian, having all of this in one’s background.

Furthermore, Paul wrote the letter to tell them to direct their love and worship to Jesus Christ alone, as the image of the invisible God. He stressed to them that Christ is to be viewed as the preeminent one of all of the universe. He is true God of true God, and true humanity of true humanity. Undiminished deity and perfect humanity was what they had to remember was through Jesus Christ. He is the only way that they will reach maximum spiritual well-being. Part of the reason for this is that these people had fallen into worshipping angels. They were going for the angelic route for reaching a great spiritual level with God.

He also wrote this letter, no doubt, to enhance the authority of their faithful pastor teacher, Epaphras, who was on leave with Paul in Rome. With that special recognition of the special gift given to a pastor teacher, people understand it and the deep things of God become something they can grasp and metabolize, and therefore they can respect that instruction, provided they keep matching it up with the Word of God. Furthermore, if you have a difference of opinion, because here Epaphras came back and he had a lot to say, so they had a lot of differences of opinion because some of the people, in their case, were way out in left field away from the real truth, so that they were going to have to put things on the back burner and think things over. Don’t ever be hot-headed because you think you’re so smart about some doctrinal position, or it doesn’t strike you well, or you like some other teacher who has said something that sounds good to you but it’s in conflict with what your pastor-teacher may say. That’s OK with me, and it should be OK with you. That’s known as freedom of speech. Yow get all access to all ideas, and in time God will hold you responsible for the ones that you choose as being the truth. This is what Paul was concerned about for these Colossians. He knew that if the people chose the wrong thing as truth, the consequences would be eternal for them. The loss would be enormous.

He also wrote this letter to stress a spirit of forgiveness and kindness to those among them who are in sin or to those who may have caused injury. Probably the background of this was the situation with Philemon and his slave Onesimus who were a part of this congregation at Colossae. This is why, when Paul finished this letter, he also wrote the letter to Philemon, and both letters were carried to Rome together. So he instructed these Christians to take it easy even when did them injury and treated them in a terrible way. We should just back off and let the Lord deal with it, and we should deal with it with a spirit of forgiveness and kindness, knowing that we’re no better. After all, how many times have we hurt people; said something that we thought was funny that wasn’t funny; and, how many times have we had a misconception about something without first checking out the facts. Paul says that we should let love be without dissimilation—no hypocrisy, just love, and let forgiveness reign.

Now the basic Colossian heresy is a little tricky to identify, and this was ultimately the reason that Paul wrote this letter. It was a combination that fused together Jewish legalism with Greek philosophical speculation and Oriental mysticism. All of this combined the syncretism of these ideas that created a tricky philosophy. Features of this included eating certain foods and avoiding others. Another feature was that you had to observe Saturday—the Sabbath day of a day of rest. It also demanded that circumcision be practiced as part of salvation. They fell into the worship of angels as being the bridge to reach God.

They were deep into asceticism based upon the thesis that the body, being a material thing, was inherently evil. They were taught by somebody that everything material was evil. Therefore, like Martin Luther, they had the idea that one should punish his body as much as possible in order to drive the evil from it. Of course, this is not true. The body is not inherently evil. As such, there is the genetic structure of the sin nature that makes the body do evil things.

They offered this combination of errors as a way to control evil. That was a strange thing. All this did was to make them even more sinful because it doesn’t work. They also claimed that certain people had superior wisdom that went beyond Scriptures and went beyond Jesus. This is the insipient heresy that came to be known as Gnosticism. You may recognize that word “gnosis” which means knowledge. The Gnostics became a group that believed that the Bible was good; the writings of the Old Testament were true; and, what the New Testament writers said was true. However, they also believed that there was additional superior wisdom that they could bestow upon people. The Greeks prided themselves on their human viewpoint intellectualism. Therefore, they scorned the gospel as being an unsophisticated and simplistic way of reaching God. They claimed that all matter was inherently evil, so it didn’t come from God; i.e., God could not create evil matter—and that was true. They said that the evil resulted from a gradual corruption of a series of spirit emanations from God beginning with Jesus Christ. Christ was created as a good emanation, and these emanations were viewed as angelic beings. The idea was that Christ was here; i.e., God created Him, but Christ wasn’t God, but just a spirit being. And that spirit being (Jesus) created another one that was not quite as perfect as the previous one, etc. They kept going down until they became more and more imperfect, and thus came evil into human experience.

Now this was all philosophical speculation. It was not based upon anything revealed from God or in Scriptures. The good angels then were worshipped as emanations which could break the evil power of demons who were bad emanations. So they denied the deity of Christ as well as His true humanity. They claimed that if He had a body then he was evil, but He was not evil, so He didn’t have a human body. So they denied Him both as God and as man.

When we start reading Colossians, we must know this background. All this was an enormity of stupidity, it was buzzing around in the background of the congregation in Colossae. They therefore denied the efficiency and sufficiency of Christ to save sinners apart from works. If the devil cannot do his work to make you reject the gospel, he will do his best to tell you that you must have a work. He will say that you must have the work of water baptism to be saved; he will say that you must have the work of celebrating the Lord’s Supper to be saved; he will tell you that must have good works to be saved; or, he will tell you that you must have the work of never sinning to be saved—how anybody could do that, I don’t know. He just adds all of these subtle works, and that’s what these people were being exposed to in Colossae.

Incidentally, this devastating misconception went completely out of hand not too far away from them. The province next door to Asia was the province of Galatia. The cities of Galatia—Lycaonia, Lystra, Derbe, etc. (cities on Paul’s first mission journey)—just went crazy with works to please God. They got legalism all balled up left and right so that Paul had to write the whole letter of Galatians, and he really got mad. In that letter we can see his temper rising. He had taught them grace, and he had taught them well. Then some fool comes in and says you have to add this human effort to get to God and to please God, and you believe him, after I have brought you spiritual life? Why would you listen to some yo-yo who comes through town? These people were performing religious rituals for salvation—circumcision, dietary laws, abuse of the body, observance of holy days and the Sabbath, and good works.

Colossians’ Relevance to Our Day

Now it is interesting to observe that Colossians is a very appropriate book for our day. What are we faced with? We have New Age Hinduism which exalts man as a potential divine emanation who will become a god in his own right. New Age, Hinduism, and Mormonism all teach that. Furthermore, evolution today is the basis for the origin of man, and it promises constant upward progress of the human race. This is in complete reject of what the Bible says about God being the Creator and the one who makes the rules. Evolution is the core belief of all science and of all academic thinking today because it conveys the idea that man can improve, especially when we have governments forcing that improvement upon people. In contrast, the book of Colossians says that Christ is the all-sufficient Creator.

There is also today the ecumenical movement, the uniting of all religions into one great wisdom. I surely hope you read my insert in the letter I sent you this week that shows you how the United Nations itself has now established commissions which are pursuing the organizing of the religions of the world, in order to remove all of the offensive matters from it so that people will feel at ease and not threatened, and so all of the religions of the world will be brought together in agreement. Do you know what that is called? It is called a world church of the antichrist. I hope you will not become so insensitive with all the burdens of your life such that you do not realize that you are living in the intensified stage of angelic warfare. The end is near.

Every now and then, you see a cartoon with some guy wearing a board on each said which says, “Repent, the world is about to end.” Well, you can put that board on because it’s true. The things that are taking place are so subtle that most of you aren’t even aware of them, and this is one of them—the ecumenical bringing together of religions, so that Christianity is viewed as just a variation of the same thing as Roman Catholicism, Mormonism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism—that all roads lead to God. There’s also in our day rebellion against authority. That is the spirit of the age today. The Bible is not viewed as absolute truth but as relative true. The Bible is true but so is the Koran. The Bible is true but so are the infallible dogmas of the Pope. The Bible is true but so are the writings of Joseph Smith of Mormonism. Well that kind of rebellion against the authority of the Bible is now widespread. When there is rebellion against the Bible, it is interesting that there is also rebellion against the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution of the United States is a clear document with words which have meaning. That Constitution is now being opposed. What a different country we have become since the Constitution is no longer governing what our political leaders do. When you have no frame of reference of truth that you’re tied to, politically as well as spiritually, you are misguided, as you are not attached to the Bible as the basis of spiritual truth.

So you can try to dismiss reality by your will, if you choose. You think you can dismiss reality. However, you cannot dismiss what is real. You can get to the top of the highest building in Dallas, and you can dismiss the reality of the law of gravity and jump off and say that you’re going to fly. However, you will find that you do not dismiss reality. No matter what you insist is fact, it’s not a fact. When you dismiss reality that way, it is said that you are insane. What is the characteristic of people who are crazy? They live in a world of unreality. That’s what insanity is. To dismiss spiritual reality as it is revealed in Bible doctrine is to become spiritually insane. People who are insane go to their deaths. They do things that lead them to death.

So all of mankind today, as was happening in the Colossian church, people are out of touch with spiritual reality, and they are suffering the consequences. They live in fear, they have family breakdown, they have sexual immorality, and they have emotional traumas. The whole thing is torn apart from the way God had put it together. The way God puts together a family—that’s reality. The way God puts together who does what in a family—that’s reality. However, you may not abide by it even though the preacher says this is the way it is.

I had a young lady tell me this week that she makes a lot more money than her husband, so they were contemplating that the husband would stay at home while the wife went to work. After all, somebody should be at home. It’s not nice to leave your children at home alone. Every now and then we see a child here at the academy with a string around his neck with a key, the old latch-key kid, so he can let himself in when he gets home and nobody is there.

So I told this young woman that this would not be in biblical order, and that if they did it, this would really devastate the husband. His manhood would be destroyed. God has an order that is not negotiable. And girls, please have the good sense of not marrying somebody who is going to sell you to an employer. Marry somebody who will nurture you, care for you, and keep you at home so that the finest part of your day and the finest part of your energies are there waiting for him when he comes home from work. And your children receive the pleasures of your presence all day. Whatever else you may justify is between you and God in your own priesthood, but do not pretend that God does not say that this is the way He wants it. When the time comes that you no longer have children at home and they’re off in a school situation, then you are free if you want to go to employment, you want to help out in church work, or you want to help out in community work. That’s then a wonderful thing that you should be doing.

One of the things that our first grade children do on Mother’s Day is to write stories about their mother. We are sometimes shocked when the kids write only two or three sentences about their mother. In years past, these kids would write three whole pages about their mother, but they can’t now. They’re not with her that much. They’re off with other people. Well, they can write three pages about their baby sitters, but not their mother. That’s reality. You can spit in the face of reality if you want to, but it doesn’t change reality, and the consequences are eternal.

So the same kinds of things that were taking place in Colossae are taking place today. The trauma is there, and people are trying to escape the lake of fire. They have all kinds of opinions on how they are going to go to heaven, but they’re really going to be surprised. One of the shocking things will be that the lake of fire will be filled with religious people—church members, multiplied millions of church members, because they were wrong on grace salvation. They interjected a spec of works. People seek reality therefore in psycho-babble, but Colossians says it is to be found in Christ alone and the principles of doctrine with the Holy Spirit. Colossians has the answer for our evil age in the final stages of disorientation and degeneration.

**Paul**

The first word of the book of Colossians is “Paul.” In Greek, it is “paulos.” He had a Hebrew name which was Saul. Paul’s contact with Christianity is significant. The man Paul is a big problem for Jews today. On one occasion, I was speaking to a Jewish man that I knew well who had come to our campus for something. I was talking to him about Christ, about God, and about salvation. He had a problem with the Trinity, because he said there is only one God. I reminded him that he was a Jew and that he understood Hebrew. He knew that the word “Elohim,” the first early-on name for God in the book of Genesis is a plural word. I asked if that did not mean something to him. Furthermore, you know that you have these plurals in creation and at the Tower of Babel incident, such as “Let us make man in our own image.” I asked why this was a problem for him. He said something strange, “I know. I’ve read Paul. I’ve read all about Paul. I know.”

I thought, “How did we get there?” However, Paul was the quintessential Jew. He was the Hebrew of the Hebrews, the Jew of Jews, an intellectual of intellectuals, and a Pharisee of the Pharisees. Still, this man is proclaiming Jesus Christ as the Son of God? A Jew who thinks that the Godhead consists of three persons in one essence? To him, Paul was a big problem.

**Stephen**

To understand this, we have to think back about Paul’s history, and we will begin there, with Paul’s contact with Christianity. This was a smart human being, and here he is, in Jerusalem. A lynch mob, led by the religious leaders of the Sanhedrin court drive the Christian man Stephen outside the city to the stone pit, and they throw him in. The Jews are enraged at Stephen because he pointed out to them the reality of their spiritual blindness and their negative volition toward Jesus Christ. Stephen had told them that they were too blind to see that Jesus Christ was the true messiah of Israel. He told them that they were doing the same thing their fathers before them had done when they killed the prophets and they rejected the true voice of God through the prophets.

So, without legal authorization from the Roman authorities, these religious leaders were so beside themselves that they pushed Stephen outside the city, threw him into the pit, and then proceeded to pick up huge rocks and throw them down upon Stephen in order to kill him. In order to do this, those who were to be the executioners took off their outer robes. They placed their robes at the feet of a well-known Pharisee from Tarsus in Philistia in Asia Minor who was named Paul. They knew him by his Hebrew name Saul. Stephen prayed for Christ to receive his human spirit. At the very moment of his death, Paul heard Stephen say, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”

This hit Paul right between the eyes. He was watching the robes and he was watching this procedure of execution, and he hears this man say, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” Because Paul had a logical mind, he understood the implications of what Stephen was saying. He was saying what the Lord said on the cross, “Father, you have provided salvation. Cause these people to believe the message of Jesus Christ as Savior, so that this sin will not be held against them for all eternity for them to suffer and pay for. Paul grasped that this man, in his dying breath, is asking God for these people to be saved—to believe in Jesus of Nazareth.

Paul had never seen Jesus whom the Jews had crucified, and whom the Christians worshipped as the resurrected God-man. As far as Paul was concerned, the disciples had stolen Jesus’ body, and Jesus was still dead. Yet he encountered a strange reality as he watched Stephen being executed, and he saw the enormous conviction and confidence of this man at the moment of his death. That unnerved Paul. He was not pleased with the claim that Jesus was the messiah of all Israel. That was something that was a great offense to him. As Paul watched approvingly, in 31 AD, Stephen died as the first Christian martyr. His death is recorded for us very simply in Acts 8:1: “And Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him (Stephen) to death.” This was the beginning. It was the first little irritating grain of sand that God put into the consciousness of the mind of Paul which was going to irritate him over and over to cause him to become the pearl that became the great apostle evangelist. We shall proceed next time to look more closely at the consequences of this moment in Paul’s life.

God our Father, we do thank thee for the book of Colossians, it’s pertinence to our day, and for the great truths that are to be mined from this Scripture.