

Introduction to NT Books

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XI. The Book of Colossians

A. The Authorship of Colossians

1. External Evidence—the same patristics support the Pauline attestation as with Ephesians.
2. Internal Evidence—Paul named himself thrice as the apostolic author (1:1, 23; 4:18).

B. The Date of Colossians

1. The date is connected with the other Prison Epistles in AD 60-61.
2. Epaphras consulted with Paul in his house arrest about the Judaistic-Gnostic heresy in Colosse.

C. The Origin and Destination of Colossians

1. Paul wrote from Rome to the Colossian assembly through his servant Tychicus (4:7).
2. Tychicus was sent back with Onesimus to the Colossian church (4:9).

D. The Purpose of Colossians

1. Greek philosophy had invaded the assembly (2:8).
2. Their pastor Epaphras went to Paul for help and to be a blessing.

E. The Characteristics of Colossians

1. Paul addressed the faithful saints at Colosse, the body over which Christ was head (1:1, 18).
2. He reminded them that they had been delivered from “the power of darkness” (1:13).
3. The apostle acknowledged that God made him a minister (1:23, 25).
4. Paul taught biblical truth to counter the Gnostics:
 - a. Satan’s lies are deathlessness and deification of man (Gen. 3:4-5).
 - b. Man’s religions have embraced these lies in the form of the reincarnation, humanism, and “flesh is evil” heresies.

c. All world religions and cults teach that man is deity somehow and somehow locked into humanity and needs deliverance.

1) This deliverance comes by man advancing through various means from the state of deified man to the state of spirit deity.

2) The Gnostics taught that man must progress up the πλήρωμα or “fulness” through various helps.

3) These helps may be human or spirit guides,¹ teachings, behaviors, and/or activities.

4) For instance, Scientology believes that deity fell and became trapped in human bodies and need escape by having e-meters detect Engrams through multiple expensive sessions.

d. Paul retorted that Christ is the πλήρωμα. (2:9). He also taught that believers are complete in Christ and may not attempt to advance to godhood. Christ is the head of all angels/demons (2:10).

e. Paul taught that man is a sinner needing divine redemption from sin, rather than that he is good needing knowledge and experiences to escape to the πλήρωμα.

5. He paralleled Col. 3:16 with Eph. 5:18 ff. for the Spirit-filled life. Paul warned men not to be bitter against their wives, but instead love them (3:19).

6. The apostle encouraged the exchange of canonical Scripture between churches (the epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon).

¹Spirit guides of course would be demons (supposed aliens).