

## Colossians 1 – Study Notes

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### Contextual Summary

Colossians 1 opens with Paul's affirmation of Christ's supremacy and sufficiency. Written to counter early heresies blending Jewish ritualism and Greek mysticism, the chapter declares Jesus Christ as Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer — preeminent in all things. Paul thanks God for the believers' faith and love rooted in hope and prays that they grow in spiritual wisdom. The focus is not on human effort but on the completed work of Christ, who reconciled believers through His blood. The chapter concludes with Paul's ministry of proclaiming this mystery — Christ in you, the hope of glory.

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1–2. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother..."

Paul's apostleship was not self-appointed but divinely commissioned (*thelēmatos Theou*, Gk.). "Saints and faithful brethren" describes all believers, not a spiritual elite. Grace and peace remain the foundation of Christian identity.

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3–5. "We give thanks to God... for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven."

"Laid up" (*apokeimenēn*, Gk.) expresses permanence — eternal security safeguarded in heaven (glorification). Their confidence rests in the gospel, not personal merit.

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6–8. "Which is come unto you... and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you..."

The "fruit" refers to the gospel's impact wherever it is received and taught - not an automatic outcome in every believer. As Luke 8 shows, responses among the saved can vary, but the gospel itself remains powerful to produce understanding, growth potential, and transformed communities. In Colossae, this fruit was seen through their faith, love, and the faithful ministry of Epaphras.

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9–11. “We... do not cease to pray for you... that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.”

Paul prays for knowledge (epignōsis, Gk.) that leads to worthy living — not to earn favor but to express gratitude. Strengthening “with all might” (dynamoumenoi) means relying on divine power for endurance (hypomonē) and joy.

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12–14. “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance...”

“Made us meet” (hikānōsanti, Gk.) means qualified — God alone enables participation in the inheritance of the saints. Believers are already “translated” (metestēsen) from darkness into Christ’s kingdom. “Redemption through his blood” (apolytrōsis) affirms complete forgiveness and eternal security.

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15–17. “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature...”

Christ is the exact representation (eikōn, Gk.) of God. “Firstborn” (prōtotokos) denotes rank and preeminence, not origin — He is Creator, not created. All things exist through and for Him. He holds all together (synestēken), sustaining creation continually.

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18–20. “And he is the head of the body, the church...”

Christ’s headship ensures unity and direction. “Firstborn from the dead” refers to His resurrection authority. God’s fullness (plērōma) dwells in Him, reconciling all things through the cross. Peace with God is permanently secured — not a process, but a completed act.

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21–23. “And you, that were sometime alienated... yet now hath he reconciled.”

Reconciliation (apokatallaxen) is past and finished. Believers stand “holy and unblameable” before God. The exhortation to “continue in the faith” encourages steadfastness in fellowship, not conditional salvation. Their position is unshakable; their experience should reflect it.

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24–27. “Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you... to fulfill the word of God; even the mystery... which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

Paul’s suffering benefits the Church. The “mystery” (mystērion) — once hidden, now revealed — is Christ indwelling Gentile believers. “Hope of glory” guarantees future transformation. This indwelling presence assures security and divine intimacy.

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28–29. “Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom...”

Paul’s goal is to present every believer “perfect” (teleion, mature) in Christ. His labor (agonizomenos) depends on God’s working (energeian), not his own. Ministry is stewardship of grace, not self-effort.

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### Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Thelēmatos Theou (Gk., v.1): “by the will of God,” divine commissioning.

Apokeimenēn (Gk., v.5): “laid up,” reserved securely.

Hikānōsanti (Gk., v.12): “qualified,” made fit by grace.

Metestēsen (Gk., v.13): “translated,” transferred from darkness to light.

Apolytrōsis (Gk., v.14): “redemption,” liberation by paid ransom.

Eikōn (Gk., v.15): “image,” visible manifestation of God.

Prōtotokos (Gk., v.15): “firstborn,” preeminent in rank.

Apokatallaxen (Gk., v.22): “reconciled,” fully restored relationship.

Mystērion (Gk., v.26): “mystery,” formerly hidden divine truth now revealed.

Teleion (Gk., v.28): “mature,” complete in growth.

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### Doctrinal Insight

Colossians 1 exalts Christ as the all-sufficient Savior and Creator. His deity, preeminence, and reconciling work guarantee eternal security. The believer’s redemption and inheritance are fully accomplished. Sanctification should follow from this assurance — we grow because we are secure, not to become secure. The indwelling Christ empowers maturity and service.

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### Free Grace Summary

Christ’s blood guarantees complete and permanent redemption.

Reconciliation is a finished act, not an ongoing process.

Believers are qualified for inheritance by grace, not performance.

Spiritual growth expresses assurance, not anxiety.

“Christ in you” ensures eternal security and future glory.

Colossians 1 proclaims that all fullness and sufficiency dwell in Christ alone — the believer’s life, hope, and unbreakable position forever.

### Colossians 2 – Study Notes

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### Contextual Summary

Colossians 2 warns believers against deceptive philosophy, legalism, and mysticism that threaten their freedom in Christ. Paul presents Christ as the fullness of God in bodily form, the source of all spiritual completeness. Believers are identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection — already forgiven and freed from the law’s condemnation. Human traditions,

religious asceticism, and self-made spirituality are powerless to produce holiness. The chapter affirms that every believer's position in Christ is secure, sufficient, and unchangeable.

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1–3. “For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you... that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love.”

Paul's “conflict” (*agōna*, Gk.) is spiritual struggle in prayer and concern. He longs for their unity in “full assurance of understanding.” “In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” emphasizes that all divine truth is centered in Christ — not in mystical experience or human reasoning.

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4–5. “And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.”

“Beguile” (*paralogizētai*, Gk.) means to deceive through false logic. Smooth speech cannot add to what grace has already given. Stability in faith guards against spiritual manipulation.

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6–7. “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”

Salvation and sanctification share the same principle — by faith. “Received” (*parelabete*, Gk.) recalls the moment of belief. “Walk” (*peripateite*) means daily conduct. Just as faith secured salvation, faith sustains fellowship. The believer is “rooted and built up in him,” not striving but growing in what is already complete.

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8. “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit...”

“Spoil” (*sylagōgōn*, Gk.) means to carry off as plunder. The enemy's goal is to rob believers of joy and assurance through human tradition and worldly wisdom. The “rudiments of the world” represent elementary, powerless principles compared to the fullness in Christ.

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9–10. “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him...”

“Fullness” (plērōma, Gk.) denotes the totality of divine essence. Christ is fully God, and believers are “complete” (peplērōmenoi) in Him. This perfect tense shows enduring sufficiency — nothing lacking, nothing to add.

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11–12. “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands...”

This “circumcision” is spiritual, performed by Christ, cutting away the old nature’s dominion. “Buried with him in baptism” refers to Spirit baptism (1 Cor. 12:13) — identification with Christ’s death and resurrection. Water baptism symbolizes, but does not accomplish, this reality.

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13–14. “And you, being dead in your sins... hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.”

“Forgiven” (charisamenos, Gk.) means graciously released from debt. “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances” refers to the Mosaic Law as a record of debt — now “nailed to his cross.” This signifies total cancellation of condemnation. Eternal security rests on this finished transaction.

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15. “And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly...”

Christ’s triumph (deigmatizō) publicly exposed the defeat of demonic and legal powers. The cross is not shame but victory. Believers share in that triumph by union with Him.

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16–17. “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink... or of the sabbath days.”

Legalistic observances are “a shadow of things to come,” but Christ is the reality. External rituals cannot improve a position already perfected in Him. The believer’s standing is independent of ceremonial performance.

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18–19. “Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels...”

False humility (tapeinophrosynē pseudos, implied) and angelic veneration substitute experience for truth. Such persons “intrude into those things which he hath not seen,” inflated by pride. Holding fast to the Head (Christ) ensures nourishment and growth by divine design, not mystical practice.

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20–23. “Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world...”

Since believers died with Christ, ascetic “touch not, taste not, handle not” rules are obsolete. These human regulations “have a shew of wisdom” but no power against the flesh. True holiness flows from new life in Christ, not external restraint.

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#### Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Agōna (Gk., v.1): “conflict,” intense spiritual struggle.

Paralogizētai (Gk., v.4): “beguile,” deceive with false reasoning.

Peripateite (Gk., v.6): “walk,” live in consistent daily faith.

Plērōma (Gk., v.9): “fullness,” total divine essence.

Peplērōmenoi (Gk., v.10): “complete,” fully filled permanently.

Charisamenos (Gk., v.13): “forgiven,” graciously released from debt.

Deigmatizō (Gk., v.15): “made a show,” publicly exposed or displayed.

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#### Doctrinal Insight

Colossians 2 teaches that the believer's union with Christ provides total sufficiency. No philosophy, ritual, or mystical experience adds to salvation. The cross disarmed all powers of sin and law, securing forgiveness forever. Sanctification flows from identity, not insecurity. Religious legalism and asceticism only mask unbelief in grace's adequacy.

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### Free Grace Summary

In Christ, believers are fully complete and forever secure.

Legalism and mysticism rob joy but cannot remove salvation.

Forgiveness is total — every trespass canceled at the cross.

Spirit baptism unites believers to Christ's death and resurrection.

Rules cannot restrain the flesh; only grace renews the heart.

Colossians 2 affirms that salvation's fullness resides entirely in Christ — believers possess all they need in Him, now and forever.

### Colossians 3 – Study Notes

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### Contextual Summary

Colossians 3 turns from doctrinal foundation to practical transformation. Since believers are risen with Christ, they are to set their minds on heavenly realities rather than earthly distractions. Paul contrasts the old nature, which has been put off, with the new life that reflects Christ's character. The chapter applies grace to relationships — within families, workplaces, and the Church — showing that all Christian conduct flows from the believer's position in Christ, not from legalistic striving. The focus remains on gratitude, renewal, and the peace of Christ ruling the heart.

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1–2. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above... Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."



The conditional *ei oun* (Gk., “since therefore”) assumes reality — believers are already risen with Christ. “Seek” (*zēteite*, Gk.) and “set your affection” (*phroneite*) are imperatives of orientation, not of effort. The mind governed by eternal truth produces stability amid temporal change.

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3–4. “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

Positionally, the believer has died to the old identity. “Hid” (*kekryptai*, Gk.) implies permanent security — life concealed and preserved within divine protection. When Christ appears, believers will appear with Him in glory — glorification, not potential but guaranteed.

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5–7. “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth...”

“Mortify” (*nekrosate*, Gk.) means to reckon as dead, not to annihilate by human effort. The sins listed — immorality, impurity, greed — belong to the old life. God’s wrath falls on “children of disobedience,” not on His redeemed, though believers may experience discipline when imitating their ways.

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8–10. “But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice...”

“Put off” (*apothesthe*, Gk.) is imagery of changing garments. Believers lay aside destructive behaviors because the “old man” (*palaios anthrōpos*) has already been positionally stripped away. The “new man” (*neos anthrōpos*) is being renewed in knowledge after Christ’s image — progressive sanctification grounded in a completed salvation.

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11. “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew... but Christ is all, and in all.”

Grace erases distinctions of race, status, and class. Union with Christ defines worth, not external identity. Spiritual equality flows from shared regeneration.

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12–14. “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies...”

“Put on” (endysasthe, Gk.) means to clothe oneself with virtues consistent with one’s new identity. “Elect” (eklektoi) denotes chosen ones — corporately in Christ, not selected to faith individually. Above all, “charity” (agapē) binds all together in perfect unity.

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15–17. “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts... and be ye thankful.”

“Rule” (brabeuetō, Gk.) means to act as an umpire. The peace of God decides between competing impulses. The indwelling Word and thanksgiving shape worship. All is done “in the name of the Lord Jesus” — that is, in dependence upon His authority.

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18–21. “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands... Husbands, love your wives... Children, obey your parents...”

Grace restores domestic harmony. Submission and love flow from mutual reverence for Christ. Fathers are warned not to provoke discouragement, for authority under grace nurtures rather than controls.

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22–25. “Servants, obey in all things your masters... knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance.”

Work becomes worship when done “as unto the Lord.” “Reward of the inheritance” concerns recompense at the Judgment Seat of Christ, not entrance into heaven. “He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong” refers to divine discipline, not loss of salvation.

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Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Zēteite (Gk., v.1): “seek,” pursue by valuing above all.

Phroneite (Gk., v.2): “set your mind,” fix thoughts with purpose.

Kekryptai (Gk., v.3): “is hid,” securely concealed.

Nekrosate (Gk., v.5): “put to death,” reckon inactive.

Apothesthe (Gk., v.8): “put off,” remove as clothing.

Endysasthe (Gk., v.12): “put on,” assume or clothe with virtues.

Brabeuetō (Gk., v.15): “rule,” act as umpire or arbitrator.

Eklektoi (Gk., v.12): “elect,” chosen corporately in Christ.

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#### Doctrinal Insight

Colossians 3 teaches that practical holiness arises from positional truth. The believer, already raised with Christ, lives out that reality by setting the mind on eternal things. Sanctification is response, not requirement. Family and work life become extensions of grace when governed by peace, love, and gratitude. The chapter rejects ascetic self-reform and instead presents Christ-centered renewal empowered by the Spirit.

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#### Free Grace Summary

The believer’s life is hidden and secure in Christ forever (v.3).

“Mortify” means to reckon the old nature dead, not to earn favor.

God’s elect are all believers in Christ — chosen in Him corporately.

The peace of God rules hearts resting in assurance, not striving for it.

Rewards concern service and faithfulness, not salvation.

Colossians 3 anchors holy living in eternal security: because believers are complete in Christ, they can live thankfully, graciously, and confidently in Him.

#### Colossians 4 – Study Notes

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## Contextual Summary

Colossians 4 concludes Paul's epistle with practical exhortations for prayer, witness, and relationships within the church. Having emphasized the believer's new life in Christ, Paul now shows how grace transforms communication, evangelism, and ministry teamwork. The apostle also mentions faithful coworkers who exemplify service born of gratitude, not obligation. The chapter closes with Paul's personal greeting, reminding believers that grace sustains ministry partnerships even amid suffering.

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1. "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven."

Paul completes his instruction from chapter 3 by addressing those in authority. "Just and equal" (dikaion kai isotēta, Gk.) means fairness and integrity grounded in mutual accountability to God. Grace transforms power into stewardship — leadership under divine Mastery.

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2–4. "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving..."

"Continue" (proskartereite, Gk.) means to persist or devote oneself. Prayer is not ritual but relationship. "Watch" (grēgorountes) implies alertness, accompanied by gratitude. Paul asks for prayer "that God would open unto us a door of utterance" (thyran tou logou) to speak the mystery of Christ — boldness under chains, not escape from them.

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5–6. "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time."

"Walk" (peripateite) again signifies daily conduct reflecting grace. "Redeeming the time" (exagorazomenoi ton kairon) means to make full use of each gospel opportunity. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt" calls for gracious yet truthful conversation — preserving rather than provoking.

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7–9. “All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you... with Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother.”

Tychicus, Paul’s messenger, exemplifies trustworthy service. Onesimus, once a runaway slave, now returns as a “beloved brother,” demonstrating the gospel’s power to reconcile social divisions. Grace transforms relationships without overthrowing structure.

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10–11. “Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus... and Jesus, which is called Justus...”

Paul honors fellow laborers. Mark, once unprofitable (Acts 15:38), is now restored — a testimony of grace and forgiveness. “Fellow workers unto the kingdom of God” reminds readers that service flows from fellowship, not fear.

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12–13. “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers...”

“Labouring fervently” (agōnizomenos, Gk.) means contending earnestly, like an athlete. Epaphras’s prayer focuses on maturity (teleioi) and completeness in God’s will — growth from assurance, not uncertainty.

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14. “Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.”

Luke remains a loyal friend and historian of grace. Demas, later known for forsaking Paul (2 Tim. 4:10), stands here as a sobering reminder that even genuine believers can falter without losing salvation.

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15–17. “Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea... and say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.”

Paul values cooperation among neighboring churches. The letter exchange reflects early Christian unity. Archippus is exhorted to “fulfil” (plērois, Gk.) his ministry — to complete, not begin, what grace has assigned. Service is stewardship, not self-qualification.

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18. “The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.”

Paul’s closing note personalizes the letter, emphasizing both suffering and grace. “Remember my bonds” is not a plea for pity but a reminder of shared endurance under grace. The benediction centers all ministry upon the sufficiency of divine favor.

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#### Koine Greek Linguistic Notes

Dikaion kai isotēta (Gk., v.1): “just and equal,” fair and impartial treatment.

Proskartereite (Gk., v.2): “continue,” persist with devotion.

Thyran tou logou (Gk., v.3): “door of utterance,” opportunity for proclamation.

Exagorazomenoi ton kairon (Gk., v.5): “redeeming the time,” making the most of opportunities.

Agōnizomenos (Gk., v.12): “laboring fervently,” contending earnestly in prayer.

Teleioi (Gk., v.12): “mature,” spiritually complete.

Plērois (Gk., v.17): “fulfil,” to complete or bring to full measure.

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#### Doctrinal Insight

Colossians 4 highlights grace-driven living — prayerful dependence, wise witness, and faithful service. Christian ministry flows from identity in Christ, not religious duty. Every believer’s role, from master to messenger, functions under the same principle of grace. Paul’s closing greetings affirm the diversity and unity of Christ’s body, demonstrating that grace empowers ordinary people for eternal purpose.

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## Free Grace Summary

Prayer is the privilege of those already accepted in Christ.

Evangelism flows naturally from gratitude, not guilt.

Fellowship and teamwork in ministry rest on grace, not hierarchy.

Failures (like Mark or Demas) never nullify salvation — only fellowship.

Every believer's calling is received, not earned.

Colossians 4 closes the epistle affirming that grace sustains all — from the prisoner in chains to the servant at work — proving that completeness in Christ governs both doctrine and daily life.