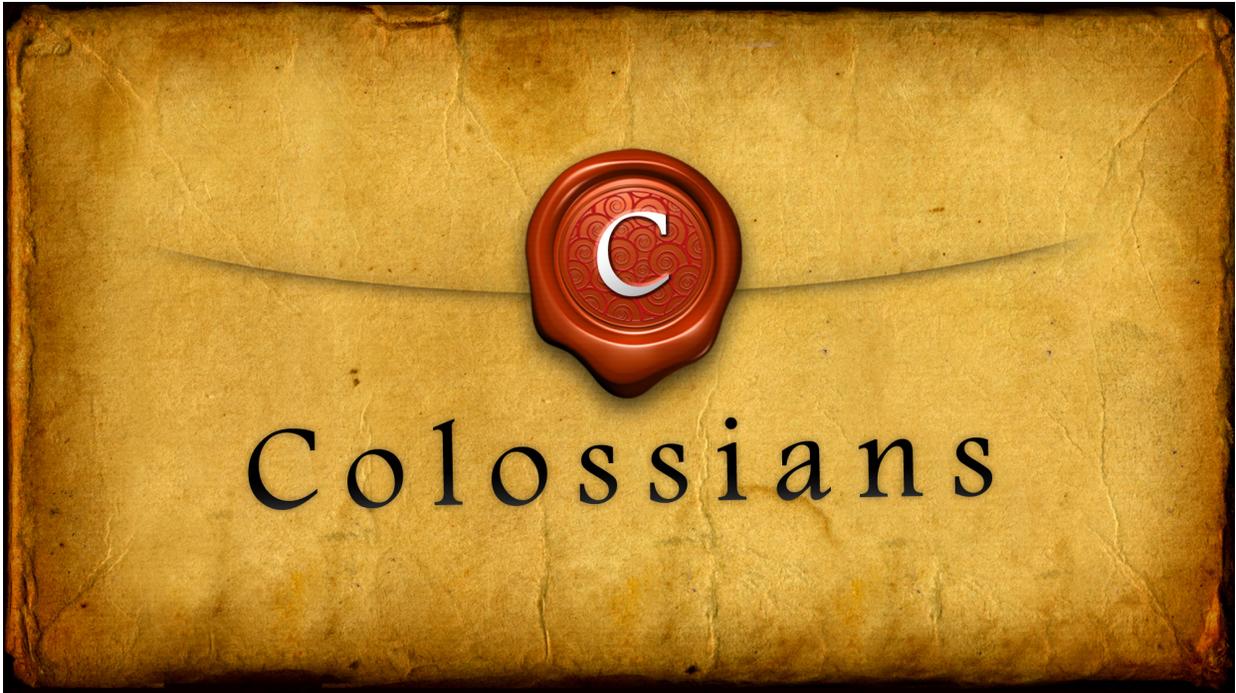


Systemic Christianity

Colossians 1:1-23



Good Start

Intro to Series

When we talk about something being systemic it means that it's effects a system-wide. Usually has a negative connotation. Disease, politics, nuts in fudge. The issues isn't the system, it's the thing that has influenced, infiltrated, permeated every dynamic of the system. Systemic.

When we talk about Christianity it means being one of Christ's, a little Christ though not in the new age sense. Your whole identity, purpose, the definition of everything you do and everything you are is found in and through Him. A disciple. Kung Fu movies.

Jesus should be systemic in our lives. **2 Cor. 5:17, Gal. 2:20**. Jesus, by the power of the HS, should influence, infiltrate, and permeate every system in our lives. There should be no corner in us that isn't directed and defined by Him. This is systemic Christianity.

We are launching into a study of Colossians and I believe **2:6-7** is the heart of the letter that talks about this.

Ingression

If there are parts of your life that are isolated and compartmentalized, then you aren't walking in systemic Christianity. Sometimes this is intentional because we want control either out of pride or fear. At other times it has crept in through the influence of something else that looks or feels right, but isn't. This is where the church in Colossae was when Paul wrote them a letter.

Intro to Letter

Need some historical context to have a better grip on where they were at.

- Has Greek origins dating pre 200s BC. Sometime around 200BC Antiochus III moved 2K Jews from Babylon to Colossae. By the 70s AD there were some 11K Jewish males in the area.
 - Large commercial center before Paul's time. In the same river valley were Hierapolis and Laodicea. The valley was that part of the world's leading producer of black wool, as well as purple and scarlet dyed wool. Volcanic soil offered prime pasture lands and chalky waters helped in dyeing process.
 - Volcanic soil also meant volcano. Town was destroyed and rebuilt several times, most recently in 60s AD.
 - Rome built road that went around the district which caused it to fade out, like in movie Cars.
 - Today all that's left is a tel. [\[slide\]](#)
- When written, town was commercial, lots of influences. A mixture of gnostic and Jewish influences crept into the church.
- Church wasn't planted by Paul, but probably by Epaphras who is mentioned in the letter.
 - Paul had heard about church's solid beginnings and also its current compromised state, had some time (in jail) so write them this letter, as well as some to other churches (Ephesians, Philippians, and one to Laodicea).

Intro to Today

Ever been reunited with someone you haven't seen in a long time, or perhaps met someone that was described to you a long time ago, only to find that they have changed, and for the worse? So much so that instead of talking about now you talk about then? Awkward! That's how Paul opens.

Paul goes out of his way to [\[s\]](#) (1) remind them about the beginning of their faith, (2) what he is praying to see in them (which is apparently now in questions or jeopardy), (3) the nature of Jesus in whom they are to abide, (4) and the importance of remaining in those foundational truths.

1:1-2 Intro section of the letter. Standard opening. Timothy probably scribe of this letter.

1:3-8 Begins the body section of the letter. Walk through, pick out. Also semi-standard opening for Paul. Great beginning of a church! We should be mindful.

1:9-12 The awkward pointing out of what is missing or is at least in jeopardy.

- I. **(1:9) We do not cease to pray for and ask** - What's the diff? Prayer is something you offer up. Asking is the lesser going to the superior, carries the sense of begging. Beggar to giver, child to parent, us to God. For what?
 - A. **that you may be filled** - full, no room for more, satisfied, stuffed. With what?
 1. **with the knowledge of His will** - how does that happen? **Romans 12:1-2**.
 2. **in all wisdom and spiritual understanding** - when we face life's difficulties, be they our own or helping others, who's wisdom and understanding are we full of? Trouble with spouse, children, co-worker, etc. Do you stop and ask the HS to fill you with His? Systemic.
 - B. **(1:10) that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him** - Jewish discipleship concept of ongoing sense of presence of God. How do you perform when that someone you love/loves you is watching? Football, theater, yard work, preaching, life!
 - C. **in every good deed (Eph 2:10)**
 1. **bearing fruit** - at least have the mindset of "how can this produce fruit for the Lord?"
 2. **increasing in the knowledge of God** - "everything is preparation for something else" Chuck Smith. Fruit for us as well.
 - D. **(1:11) strengthened (enabled) with all might** - powered up.
 1. **according to His glorious power** - show of force
 2. **for all patience and longsuffering** - what is the purpose of being powered up with all the potential of God's power? Patience and longsuffering. Ha! What's the diff? **Patience** is with circumstances. **Longsuffering** is with people. Systemic! Don't look for a way out or around, look for a way through.
 - E. **with joy (1:12) giving thanks** - Do you give thanks to God the way you thank Aunt Sally for the pink bunny PJs?
 1. **to the Father**
 - a) **who has qualified us** - passive, we didn't do it, it was done to us
 - b) **to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light** - probably addressing something local, not sure what. But a very cool phrase!
 - F. How are those thing in your life systemically?

1:13-18 It's all about Jesus. He is first in, above, through all things.

1:19-23 Remaining in these things

1:20 2 Cor. 5:18+. Addresses both gnosticism and legalistic Judaism.

1:21 Sin doesn't begin with the action, but in the mind and heart.

1:22 It's through His physical body (gnosticism) that He presents, and it's in His sight that matters. Again, gnosticism and legalistic Judaism. Applies today with world's philosophy and legalistic Christianity.

1:23 Interesting contrast. Why He is the one who does it, it's important that we continue it, be grounded and steadfast (all active), not moved away (passive).

Imploration

How did you begin? Mental decision to switch belief teams, or an encounter with God?

How are you continuing? On cruise control, living a Christian life, or is Jesus systemic?

It's all about Jesus. Gospel.