

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan**COLOSSIANS 1****Colossians 1**

The Book of Colossians is an incredibly relevant book for the culture and church atmosphere in our present time. Remember, Paul was writing as a prisoner in Rome. During the early days of the first century, the Church of Jesus had to sort out and work through problems of every sort, many of which we still work through today. The very same problems. There is truly **"nothing new under the sun,"** as King Solomon wrote three thousand years ago.

The Judaizers were Jews who simply believed that Jews and Gentiles who were saved were only saved through faith, plus something else related to keeping the laws, keeping Shabbat, and/or the appointed days of Israel. They were the Apostle Paul's constant nemesis. Not only did the church at Colosse deal with the Judaizers, but it also had to deal with those who had come out of idol worship and especially mysticism. More than likely, by the chapters you will read, Paul was dealing with an incipient form of a particular heresy (deviation from the truth) called Gnosticism. These ancient heresies are realized today in different forms of Freemasonry and Mysticism in religions such as The Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints, or Mormonism. Paul defends the Biblical concepts of Salvation in Jesus alone through

faith alone, apart from works or any kind of special knowledge.

Think about it: Epaphras became a follower of Jesus in Ephesus and then returned to his home city to share the message of redemption and hope. Colosse was also the home of the wealthy businessman Philemon, who had a runaway slave named Onesimus. Amazing as it sounds, early church tradition among the early fathers tells us that Onesimus was the Pastor of the church in Ephesus, the great epicenter of Christianity at the close of the first century. The church had been founded by the Apostle Paul, Timothy, Apollos, the Apostle John, and Onesimus followed these giants in the faith.

Paul follows the pattern of all his other epistles to the early churches by beginning with doctrinal teachings, followed by a section on the relationship between the church of Jesus and the nation of Israel and the Jewish people, followed by the practical instructions of the believer. In the coming chapters, we can only comment on a few verses, as Ephesians and Philippians before it. The book is rich in inspired content. Please listen to the podcasts to get expanded teaching on these vital chapters.

ON THE WAY

Prayer and Action Steps

Lord, thank You for giving us a sure word and direction in how to know You and walk with You. Please help me to study and walk in obedience. May my life be a testimony of Your grace. Amen