

Structure

The overall structure is ABCDCBA:

1:1-2 Address and blessing

1:3-8 Thanksgiving

1:9-2:5 Paul's ministry for you, the church

2:6-3:17 Sharing in Anointed's death and resurrection

3:18-4:6 Your ministry for others

4:7-9 Commendation of letter carriers

4:10-18 Greetings and blessing

Background

The city of Colossae was in the Roman province of Asia, now western Turkey. It was about 120 miles east of Ephesus and about eleven miles east of Laodicea on a road from Ephesus. The city of Hierapolis was about six miles north of Laodicea. Of these three neighboring cities, the three cities mentioned in this letter, Laodicea was the most important and Colossae the least, being, by far, the least important city to which a New Testament letter was addressed. Orosius the historian (fl. 415) reported that these three cities were overthrown by an earthquake during the reign of Nero (54 - 68).

Colossians appears to be connected to Philemon. Col 4:7-9 identifies Tychicus and Onesimus as the carriers of the letter to the Colossians, and Philemon identifies Onesimus as the carrier of that letter. Philemon mentions Paul plus ten others, eight of whom (all but Philemon and his wife Apphia) are mentioned in Colossians. This has raised the question of whether both letters were written by Paul about the same time and sent together, or whether the author of Colossians used the names in Philemon to identify Colossians with Paul.

Colossians indicates that Paul is in prison (4:3,10,18; 1:24), but the question is the same as for Philippians and Philemon: which imprisonment? Location favors an unrecorded imprisonment at Ephesus, only 120 miles from Colossae. Timothy, a co-sender, was with Paul at Ephesus (Acts 19:22; 1 Cor 4:17; 16:10-11; 2 Cor 1:1), but he was probably also with Paul at Rome (Phlp 1:1; Phlm 1:1). However, three others mentioned in 4:10,14—Luke, Demas, and Mark—are not mentioned with Paul at Ephesus, but are associated with him at Rome (Acts 28:15-16; 2 Tim 4:10-11; 1 Pet 5:13). Because of this—and some parallels with Romans, and some theology of Colossians on the church and the Anointed that seems more developed than Paul's undisputed letters—many favor Rome, if Paul is assumed to be the author.

Hymns and Theme

Colossians begins with a thanksgiving followed by a collection of three hymns that commemorate Paul's ministry to the church. The theme of the thanksgiving and these hymns—the unity among God, his Anointed, and his church—is faithful to Paul's theme in his undisputed letters, his good news. There are only two references to "spirit" in Colossians (1:8 and 2:5). Both are references to the spirit that believers share with each other and with God, but only one (1:8) is also usually regarded to be a reference to God's spirit. The term "holy" is used six times in Colossians, always in reference to God's "holy ones."

The "Mystery"

One of the parallels to Romans is the discussion, in Col 1:26-27; 2:2-3; 4:3, of a "mystery" that has been "hidden" until the time of the Anointed. It is summarized briefly as "Anointed among you, the hope of glory." It pertains to the Gentiles who have now been included in God's blessings. A similar mystery is explained in Eph 1:9-14; 2:11-3:13, and in 1 Tim 3:16. Paul's undisputed letters describe a mystery only in 1 Cor 2:1-16 and 15:51-57, and in Rom 11:1-36 and 16:25-26. In 1

Corinthians the mystery is applicable to all in general, not to Gentiles in particular. His only real explanation of a mystery that pertains to Gentiles, and that has been hidden from everyone until it was revealed to Paul, is in Romans. But Paul's explanation of what was hidden is difficult to understand. The author of 2 Pet 3:1-16 agrees that Paul was sometimes hard to understand, but seems to understand Paul's explanation, in Rom 11:1-36, of God's purpose in dividing the "Day of the Lord" into two parts, with the resulting delay in his coming in final judgment as an added opportunity for both Jews and Gentiles to be saved.

In Colossians and Ephesians that mystery has been simplified to be the Anointed himself, and broadened to be the salvation of the Gentiles through the Anointed, a simpler concept that is more readily understood. It does not even mention the aspect that Paul, in Romans, said was hidden until God revealed it to him. But the idea that God would save the Gentiles, and that he would send an Anointed one, can hardly be described as a mystery to the Jews, a mystery that was hidden up to the time of Anointed, because it was part of God's promise to Abraham (Gen 22:18), as Paul conveys in Rom 1:5; 4:1-25; 9:22-30; 10:19-21; 16:26. So the carryover of the idea that this was a mystery that had been "hidden" from everyone until the time of the Anointed and that it applies to the Gentiles, appears to come from Paul's more mysterious mystery in Romans, and not from anything that is described in Colossians and Ephesians. That would place Colossians after Romans.

But what Colossians and Ephesians define as a mystery was a mystery to the Gentiles, and was hidden from the Gentiles, who were the audience addressed in Colossians and Ephesians.

Text in *italics* is omitted in the Greek source

Address and blessing¹

1 Paul, an apostle of Anointed Jesus by God's will,
and brother Timothy,
 ² To those in Colossae,
holy and faithful brothers in Anointed:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

Thanksgiving²

³ We give thanks to God, Father of our Lord Jesus Anointed,
always praying for you,
 ⁴ having heard of your faith in Anointed Jesus
and the love that you have for all the holy *ones*,
⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in the heavens,
 of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the good news ⁶ that came to you,
 just as also in all the world
 it is bearing fruit and growing,
 just as also among you,
 from the day you heard and came to know God's grace in truth,
⁷ as you learned from Epaphras,
 our beloved fellow slave
 who is faithful on your behalf,
 the Anointed's servant,
⁸ who also made known to us your love in spirit.

¹ 1:1-2 ABCBA. The first of seven divisions of this letter. Like 2 Cor 1:1-2. Parallel with 4:10-18.

² 1:3-8 ABA. The second of seven divisions. Parallel with the commendation of letter carriers in 4:7-9. Here Paul is hearing about them. In 4:7-9 they are being told about Paul. This thanksgiving, like the three hymns that follow it, commemorates Paul's ministry to the church, often indicating that he is absent. They may reflect Paul's farewell hymn in Phlp 1:27-2:18.

Paul's ministry for you, the church³

⁹ Therefore also **we**, from the day **we** heard *it*, **we** do not cease

for **you** praying and asking

that **you** may be filled with the knowledge of his will

in all spiritual wisdom and understanding

¹⁰ to walk worthy of the Lord, to please *him* in all respects,

in every good work bearing fruit and growing in the knowledge of God,

¹¹ in every power strengthened according to the might of his glory

for all perseverance and patience,

with joy ¹² giving thanks to the **Father**,

who qualified you for a share of the inheritance of the holy *ones* in the light,

¹³ who delivered us from the domain of darkness

and brought *us* into the kingdom of his beloved **son**:

¹⁴ in whom we have release, the forgiveness of sins,⁴

¹⁵ who is an image of God the invisible,

firstborn of all creation,

¹⁶ for in him were created

all things,

in the heavens and on the earth,

the visible and the invisible,

whether thrones or dominions,

whether rulers or powers,

all things

through him and for him were created,

¹⁷ and he is before all and all things in him hold together,

¹⁸ and he is the head of the body, the church,

who is first, firstborn from the dead, that in everything he may be first.

¹⁹ For in him *the Father* willed all fullness to dwell,

²⁰ and through him

to reconcile

all things to himself,

making peace

through the blood of his cross,

whether things on the earth or things in the heavens.

²¹ And **you** who were once alienated and enemies in mind through evil works,

²² he has now reconciled in the body of his flesh through death

to present **you** holy and faultless and blameless before himself,

²³ if **you** continue in the faith, grounded and firm and not moved from the hope of the good

news that **you** heard,

that was preached to every creature under heaven,

of which **I** became, **I, Paul**, a servant.

³ 1:9-2:5 ABA. The third of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with 3:18-4:6, your ministry for others. Three hymns, all with Paul at both ends. The first and last center on Anointed, the center centers on the church repeatedly. 1:9-23 has seven sections: Paul, church, Father, son, Father, church, Paul. The center, 1:24-29, has: Paul centering on the church, the mystery centering on the church, Paul centering on the church. 2:1-5 has: Paul, Paul absent, church, God's mystery, Anointed, God's mystery, church, Paul absent, Paul.

⁴ 1:14 *Forgiveness of sins* is a rare expression for Paul. It also occurs in Rom 4:7, Col 2:13 and Eph 1:7.

²⁴ Now I rejoice in *my* sufferings for you⁵ and I am completing what is lacking of the afflictions of the Anointed
 in my flesh for his body,
 which is the church,
²⁵ of which I became, I, a servant
 according to the stewardship of God given to me for you, to complete the word of God,
²⁶ the mystery⁶ that has been hidden from the ages and from the generations,
 but now has been revealed to his holy *ones*
²⁷ to whom God chose to make known
 what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles,
 which is Anointed among you, the hope of glory,
²⁸ whom we proclaim,
 admonishing everyone,
 and teaching everyone in all wisdom,
 so that we may present everyone completed in Anointed,
²⁹ for which also I labor,
 struggling according to his working,
 which is working in me mightily.

2 For I want you to know how great a struggle I am having for you and those in Laodicea and all who have not seen my face in flesh,
² that their hearts may be encouraged, being brought together in love, and into all richness of assurance of understanding
 into knowledge of God's mystery,
 Anointed,
³ in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.
⁴ This I say so that no one may deceive you with fine-sounding arguments.
⁵ For even though I am absent in the flesh,
 yet in the spirit I am with you, rejoicing and seeing your orderliness and the firmness of your faith in Anointed.

⁵ 1:24 This verse and Eph 3:1,13 speak of Paul's vicarious sufferings on behalf of the church. Compare how he expressed it in Phlp 1:12-26; 2:17-18; and 3:7-14.

⁶ 1:26-27 See Rom 16:25-26 and the discussion on the "mystery" in the introduction to Colossians.

Sharing in Anointed's death and resurrection⁷

⁶ So, as you received the Anointed Jesus, the Lord,
in him

walk,

⁷ rooted and built up

in him

and established in the faith, as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

⁸ See that no one captivates you through philosophy and empty deception
according to human tradition,
according to the elements of the world,
and not according to Anointed.

⁹ For in him dwells all the fullness of the deity bodily,

¹⁰ and you are brought to fullness in him,
who is the head of every ruler and authority.

¹¹ In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands,
in the stripping off of the body of flesh in the circumcision⁸ of the Anointed,

¹² having been buried with him in baptism,

in which also you were raised with *him*
through the faithfulness of the working of God
who raised him from *the* dead.

¹³ And you who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh,
he⁹ made you alive together with him,
having forgiven us all *our* trespasses.

¹⁴ Having erased the handwriting against us
with *its* legal demands opposed to us,
he also set it aside, nailing it to the cross.

¹⁵ Having disarmed the rulers and the authorities,
he made *them* a public example,
triumphing over them in the *cross*.

¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food and in drink or in regard to a festival or new moon or Sabbath,

¹⁷ which are a shadow of what is to come—
the Anointed's body.

¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you, insisting on humility and worship of angels, dwelling on visions, in vain
puffed up by the mind of his flesh,

¹⁹ and not holding fast to the head,
from whom the whole body, by the joints and ligaments being supplied and held together, grows
with the growth of God.

⁷ 2:6-3:17 ABA. The central of seven divisions. Three imperatives, 2:6-19, 2:20-3:4, and 3:5-17, to share in Anointed's death and resurrection.

⁸ 2:11 *Circumcision*. His death, see the next phrase.

⁹ 2:13 *He*. God.

²⁰ If you **died** with Anointed to the elements of the world, why as though living in *the* world do you submit to regulations—

²¹ “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch,”

²² which are all to perish with the using—

according to human commandments and doctrines?

²³ These, though having a word of wisdom

in self-chosen worship and humility *and* unsparing treatment of *the* body, *are* of no value against indulgence of the flesh.

3 If then you were **raised** with the Anointed,
 seek the *things* above,
 where the Anointed is,
 seated at God’s right hand.

² Think on the *things* above,
 not the *things* on the earth.

³ For you have **died**,
 and your life
 is hidden

with the Anointed
 in God.

⁴ When the Anointed
 is revealed,
 your life,
 then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

- 5 **Put to death**, therefore, the members that *are* on the earth:
sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry.
6 Because of these, God's vengeance is coming.
- 7 In these you also once walked,
when you lived in them.
- 8 But now **put away**, even you, all these:
anger, fury, malice, slander, foul language from your mouth.
- 9 Do not lie to one another,
having **put off** the old self with its deeds,
10 and having **put on** the new *self*,
which is being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of its creator,
11 where there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian,
Scythian, slave, free,
but all and in all *is* Anointed.
- 12 **Put on** then,
as chosen *ones* of God, holy and beloved,
hearts of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience,
13 bearing with one another and forgiving each other if any against another has a complaint,
and as the Lord forgave you,
so also you.
- 14 Above all these, **put on** love, which is *the* bond of wholeness.
- 15 And let the Anointed's peace rule in your hearts,
to which also you were called in one body,
and be thankful.
- 16 Let the Anointed's word dwell in you richly,
in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another,
psalms, hymns, *and* spiritual songs with thankfulness singing in your hearts to God.
- 17 And whatever you do, in word or in deed, *do* everything in *the* name of *the* Lord Jesus, giving
thanks to God *the* Father through him.

Your ministry for others¹⁰

18 **Wives**, be subject to *your* husbands as is fitting in *the* Lord.

19 **Husbands**, love *your* wives and do not be harsh toward them.

20 **Children**, obey *your* parents in everything, for this is pleasing to *the* Lord.

21 **Fathers**, do not aggravate your children, that they may not lose heart.

22 **Slaves**, obey in everything *your* lords according to flesh, not with eye service as currying favor, but in sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.

23 Whatever you do, do from *your* soul, as for the Lord and not for your masters,

24 knowing that from *the* Lord you will receive the due payment of *your* inheritance.

To the Lord Anointed be slaves.

25 For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done,

and there is no partiality.

4 Lords, treat *your* slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Lord in heaven.

2 *All of you*, persevere in prayer,

keeping watch in it with thanksgiving,

3 praying at the same time also for us,

that God may open **for us** a door for the word,

to speak

the mystery of the Anointed for which I am in chains,

4 that I may make it known as it is necessary for me

to speak.

5 Walk in wisdom toward **those outside**,

making the most of the time,

6 your speech always with grace,

seasoned with salt,

so that you know how you ought to answer each one.

Commendation of letter carriers¹¹

7 Everything about me, he will tell you,

Tychicus,¹² the beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow slave in *the* Lord,

8 whom I have sent¹³ to you for this very *purpose*,

that you may know about us,

and that he may encourage your hearts,

9 together with Onesimus,¹⁴ the faithful and beloved brother, who is *one* of you.

They will tell you about everything here.

¹⁰ 3:18-4:6 ABBA. The fifth of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with 1:9-2:5, Paul's ministry for you, the church. A structure of four pairs; the fourth, 4:2-6, is ministry by insiders for outsiders. This household code is similar to Eph 5:21-6:9, but less developed. Other household codes are in Titus 2:1-10; 1 Tim 2:8-15; 6:1-2; 1 Pet 2:18-3:12.

¹¹ 4:7-9 ABCDCBA. The sixth of seven divisions of this letter. Parallel with the thanksgiving in 1:3-8. Here they are being told about Paul. In the thanksgiving, Paul is hearing about them.

¹² 4:7 *Tychicus*. Also the letter carrier for Ephesians. Also mentioned in Acts 20:4; Titus 3:12; and 2 Tim 4:12. Note the similarity of Col 4:7-8 and Eph 6:21-22.

¹³ 4:8 The past tense reflects the readers' viewpoint when they receive this letter by the hand of Tychicus

¹⁴ 4:9 *Onesimus*. See Phlm 1:10

Greetings and blessing¹⁵

10 Greeting you is Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner,
 and Mark, the cousin of Barnabas
 (concerning whom
 you have received
 instructions;
 if he comes to you,
 welcome him),
 11 and Jesus, who is called Justus.

These are of *the* circumcision, *my* only fellow workers for God's kingdom; they have been a comfort to me.

12 Greeting you is Epaphras, who *is one* of you, Anointed's slave,
 always struggling for you in *his* prayers, that you may be established, complete and fulfilled, in every purpose of God.

13 For I testify for him
 that he works hard for you and those in Laodicea and those in Hierapolis.
 14 Greeting you is Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas.

15 Greet the brothers in Laodicea, and Nympha and the church in her house.

16 And when *this* letter has been read before you,
 see that it is read also in the church of *the* Laodiceans,
 and that you also read the *letter* from Laodicea.

17 And tell Archippus,¹⁶ "Look to the ministry that you received in *the* Lord, that you carry it out."

18 The greeting by my own hand, Paul.¹⁷
 Remember my chains.
 Grace *be* with you.

¹⁵ 4:10-18 ABBA. The last of seven divisions. Parallel with the address and blessing in 1:1-2. The first and last sections mention Paul as a prisoner and are about Jews, the inner two are about Gentiles.

¹⁶ 4:17 The only other reference to *Archippus* is in Phlm. The same for Epaphras and Onesimus.

¹⁷ 4:18a Exactly the same as 1 Cor 16:21 and 2 Th 3:17a.

The Greek text is from *Novum Testamentum Graece*, Nestle-Aland, 27th Edition, © 1993 Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart. Used by permission.

Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ
καὶ Τιμόθεος ὁ ἀδελφὸς
² τοῖς ἐν Κολοσσαῖς
ἀγίοις καὶ πιστοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ,
χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν.

- ³ Εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ πατρὶ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν προσευχόμενοι,
⁴ ἀκούσαντες τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ
καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην ἣν ἔχετε εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἀγίους
⁵ διὰ τὴν ἐλπίδα τὴν ἀποκειμένην ὑμῖν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς,
ἣν προηκούσατε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ⁶ τοῦ παρόντος εἰς ὑμᾶς,
καθὼς καὶ ἐν παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ
ἐστὶν καρποφορούμενοι καὶ αὐξανόμενοι
καθὼς καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν,
ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας ἠκούσατε καὶ ἐπέγνωτε τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ·
⁷ καθὼς ἐμάθετε ἀπὸ Ἐπαφρᾶ
τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ συνδούλου ἡμῶν,
ὅς ἐστιν πιστὸς ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν
διάκονος τοῦ Χριστοῦ,
⁸ ὁ καὶ δηλώσας ἡμῖν τὴν ὑμῶν ἀγάπην ἐν πνεύματι.

⁹ Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἡμεῖς, ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας ἠκούσαμεν, οὐ παυόμεθα

ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν προσευχόμενοι καὶ αἰτούμενοι,
 ἵνα πληρωθῆτε τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ
 ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ καὶ συνέσει πνευματικῇ,
¹⁰ περιπατῆσαι ἀξίως τοῦ κυρίου εἰς πᾶσαν ἀρεσκείαν,
 ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ καρποφοροῦντες καὶ ἀυξανόμενοι τῇ ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ,
¹¹ ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει δυναμούμενοι κατὰ τὸ κράτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ
 εἰς πᾶσαν ὑπομονὴν καὶ μακροθυμίαν.

Μετὰ χαρᾶς ¹² εὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ πατρὶ
 τῷ ἱκανώσαντι ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν μερίδα τοῦ κλήρου τῶν ἁγίων ἐν τῷ φωτί·
¹³ ὃς ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σκοτούς
 καὶ μετέστησεν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ,

¹⁴ ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν·

¹⁵ ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου,
 πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως,

¹⁶ ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη
 τὰ πάντα

ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς,
 τὰ ὀρατὰ καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα,
 εἴτε θρόνοι εἴτε κυριότητες
 εἴτε ἀρχαὶ εἴτε ἐξουσίαι·

τὰ πάντα

δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται·

¹⁷ καὶ αὐτός ἐστιν πρὸ πάντων καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν,

¹⁸ καὶ αὐτός ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος τῆς ἐκκλησίας·

ὃς ἐστὶν ἀρχή, πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, ἵνα γένηται ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτὸς
 πρωτεύων,

¹⁹ ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ εὐδόκησεν πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα κατοικῆσαι

²⁰ καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ

ἀποκαταλλάξαι

τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν,

εἰρηνοποιήσας

διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ, [δι' αὐτοῦ]

εἴτε τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς εἴτε τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

²¹ Καὶ ὑμᾶς ποτε ὄντας ἀπηλλοτριωμένους καὶ ἐχθροὺς τῇ διανοίᾳ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις
 τοῖς πονηροῖς,

²² νυνὶ δὲ ἀποκατήλλαξεν ἐν τῷ σώματι τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου
 παραστήσαι ὑμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους καὶ ἀνεγκλήτους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ,

²³ εἴ γε ἐπιμένετε τῇ πίστει τεθεμελιωμένοι καὶ ἐδραῖοι καὶ μὴ μετακινούμενοι
 ἀπὸ τῆς ἐλπίδος τοῦ εὐαγγελίου οὗ ἠκούσατε,

τοῦ κηρυχθέντος ἐν πάσῃ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν,

οὗ ἐγενόμην ἐγὼ Παῦλος διάκονος.

²⁴ Νῦν χαίρω ἐν τοῖς παθήμασιν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ ἀνταναπληρῶ τὰ ὑστερήματα τῶν θλίψεων τοῦ Χριστοῦ

ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου ὑπὲρ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ,
ὃ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐκκλησία,

²⁵ ἧς ἐγενόμην ἐγὼ διάκονος
κατὰ τὴν οἰκονομίαν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι εἰς ὑμᾶς πληρῶσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ,

²⁶ τὸ μυστήριον τὸ ἀποκεκρυμμένον ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν γενεῶν-
νῦν δὲ ἐφανερώθη τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ,

²⁷ οἷς ἠθέλησεν ὁ θεὸς γνωρίσαι

τί τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τοῦ μυστηρίου τούτου ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν,
ὃ ἐστὶν Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, ἡ ἐλπίς τῆς δόξης·

²⁸ ὃν ἡμεῖς καταγγέλλομεν

νουθετοῦντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον

καὶ διδάσκοντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ,

ἵνα παραστήσωμεν πάντα ἄνθρωπον τέλειον ἐν Χριστῷ·

²⁹ εἰς ὃ καὶ κοπιῶ

ἀγωνιζόμενος κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν αὐτοῦ
τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν δυνάμει.

2 Θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναί ἡλίκον ἀγῶνα ἔχω ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ
καὶ ὅσοι οὐχ ἑώρακαν τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ἐν σαρκί,

² ἵνα παρακληθῶσιν αἱ καρδίαι αὐτῶν συμβιβασθέντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ καὶ εἰς πᾶν
πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως,

εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ,

Χριστοῦ,

³ ἐν ᾧ εἰσὶν πάντες οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως ἀπόκρυφοι.

⁴ Τοῦτο λέγω, ἵνα μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς παραλογίζεται ἐν πιθανολογίᾳ.

⁵ εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῇ σαρκὶ ἄπειμι,

ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι σὺν ὑμῖν εἶμι, χαίρων καὶ βλέπων ὑμῶν τὴν τάξιν καὶ τὸ στερέωμα τῆς
εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν.

⁶ Ὡς οὖν παρελάβετε τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον,
ἐν αὐτῷ

περιπατεῖτε,

⁷ ἑρριζωμένοι καὶ ἐποικοδομούμενοι

ἐν αὐτῷ

καὶ βεβαιούμενοι τῇ πίστει καθὼς ἐδιδάχθητε, περισσεύοντες ἐν εὐχαριστίᾳ.

⁸ Βλέπετε μή τις ὑμᾶς ἔσται ὁ συλαγωγῶν διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης
κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων,
κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου
καὶ οὐ κατὰ Χριστόν·

⁹ ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ κατοικεῖ πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος σωματικῶς,

¹⁰ καὶ ἐστὲ ἐν αὐτῷ πεπληρωμένοι,

ὅς ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλὴ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας.

¹¹ Ἐν ᾧ καὶ περιετμήθητε περιτομῇ ἀχειροποιήτῳ

ἐν τῇ ἀπεκδύσει τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκός, ἐν τῇ περιτομῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ,

¹² συνταφέντες αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βαπτισμῷ,

ἐν ᾧ καὶ συνηγέρθητε

διὰ τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐνεργείας τοῦ θεοῦ

τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν·

¹³ καὶ ὑμᾶς νεκροὺς ὄντας [ἐν] τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ τῆς
σαρκός ὑμῶν,

συνεζωποίησεν ὑμᾶς σὺν αὐτῷ,

χαρισάμενος ἡμῖν πάντα τὰ παραπτώματα.

¹⁴ Ἐξαλείψας τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον

τοῖς δόγμασιν ὃ ἦν ὑπεναντίον ἡμῖν,

καὶ αὐτὸ ἤρκεν ἐκ τοῦ μέσου προσηλώσας αὐτὸ τῷ σταυρῷ·

¹⁵ ἀπεκδυσάμενος τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας

ἐδειγμάτισεν ἐν παρρησίᾳ,

θριαμβεύσας αὐτοὺς ἐν αὐτῷ.

¹⁶ Μὴ οὖν τις ὑμᾶς κρινέτω ἐν βρώσει καὶ ἐν πόσει ἢ ἐν μέρει ἑορτῆς ἢ νεομηνίας
ἢ σαββάτων·

¹⁷ ἃ ἐστὶν σκιὰ τῶν μελλόντων,

τὸ δὲ σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

¹⁸ μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς καταβραβεύετω θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ καὶ θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἃ
ἐόρακεν ἐμβατεύων, εἰκὴ φυσιοῦμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦς τῆς σαρκός αὐτοῦ,

¹⁹ καὶ οὐ κρατῶν τὴν κεφαλὴν,

ἐξ οὗ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα διὰ τῶν ἀφῶν καὶ συνδέσμων ἐπιχορηγούμενον καὶ συμβιβαζόμενον
αὔξει τὴν αὔξησιν τοῦ θεοῦ.

²⁰ Εἰ ἀπεθάνετε σὺν Χριστῷ ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων τοῦ κόσμου, τί ὡς ζῶντες ἐν κόσμῳ δογματίζεσθε;

²¹ μὴ ἄψη μηδὲ γεύση μηδὲ θίγης,

²² ἃ ἔστιν πάντα εἰς φθορὰν τῇ ἀποχρήσει,
κατὰ τὰ ἐντάλματα καὶ διδασκαλίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων,

²³ ἅτινά ἐστιν λόγον μὲν ἔχοντα σοφίας

ἐν ἐθελοθρησκίᾳ καὶ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ [καὶ] ἀφειδίᾳ σώματος,
οὐκ ἐν τιμῇ τινι πρὸς πλησμονὴν τῆς σαρκός.

3 Εἰ οὖν συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ,

τὰ ἄνω ζητεῖτε,

οὗ ὁ Χριστός ἐστιν

ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ καθήμενος·

² τὰ ἄνω φρονεῖτε,

μὴ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

³ ἀπεθάνετε γὰρ

καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν

κέκρυπται

σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ

ἐν τῷ θεῷ.

⁴ ὅταν ὁ Χριστὸς

φανερωθῇ,

ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν,

τότε καὶ ὑμεῖς σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε ἐν δόξῃ.

- ⁵ Νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς,
πορνείαν ἀκαθαρσίαν πάθος ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν, καὶ τὴν πλεονεξίαν, ἥτις ἐστὶν
εἰδωλολατρία,
⁶ δι' ἃ ἔρχεται ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ [ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας].
- ⁷ ἐν οἷς καὶ ὑμεῖς περιεπατήσατέ ποτε,
ὅτε ἐζῆτε ἐν τούτοις·
- ⁸ νυνὶ δὲ ἀπόθεσθε καὶ ὑμεῖς τὰ πάντα,
ὀργὴν, θυμόν, κακίαν, βλασφημίαν, αἰσχρολογίαὶν ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ὑμῶν·
⁹ μὴ ψεύδεσθε εἰς ἀλλήλους,
ἀπεκδυσάμενοι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον σὺν ταῖς πράξεσιν αὐτοῦ
¹⁰ καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν νέον
τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ' εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν,
¹¹ ὅπου οὐκ ἔστι Ἕλλην καὶ Ἰουδαῖος, περιτομὴ καὶ ἀκροβυστία, βάρβαρος,
Σκύθης, δοῦλος, ἐλεύθερος,
ἀλλὰ [τὰ] πάντα καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν Χριστός.
- ¹² Ἐνδύσασθε οὖν,
ὡς ἐκλεκτοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ ἅγιοι καὶ ἠγαπημένοι,
σπλάγχνα οἰκτιρμοῦ χρηστότητα ταπεινοφροσύνην πραύτητα μακροθυμίαν,
¹³ ἀνεχόμενοι ἀλλήλων καὶ χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς ἕαν τις πρὸς τινα ἔχη
μομφήν·
καθὼς καὶ ὁ κύριος ἐχαρίσατο ὑμῖν,
οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς·
- ¹⁴ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν δὲ τούτοις τὴν ἀγάπην, ὅ ἐστιν σύνδεσμος τῆς τελειότητος.
¹⁵ καὶ ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ Χριστοῦ βραβευέτω ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν,
εἰς ἣν καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι·
καὶ εὐχάριστοι γίνεσθε.
- ¹⁶ Ὁ λόγος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐνοικεῖτω ἐν ὑμῖν πλουσίως,
ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ διδάσκοντες καὶ νουθετοῦντες ἑαυτούς,
ψαλμοῖς ὕμνοις ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς ἐν [τῇ] χάριτι ἄδοντες ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν τῷ
θεῷ·
- ¹⁷ καὶ πᾶν ὅ τι ἕαν ποιῆτε ἐν λόγῳ ἢ ἐν ἔργῳ, πάντα ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου Ἰησοῦ,
εὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ θεῷ πατρὶ δι' αὐτοῦ.

¹⁸ Αἱ γυναῖκες, ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ὡς ἀνήκειν ἐν κυρίῳ.

¹⁹ Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπᾶτε τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ μὴ πικραίνεσθε πρὸς αὐτάς.

²⁰ Τὰ τέκνα, ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν κατὰ πάντα, τοῦτο γὰρ εὐάρεστόν ἐστιν ἐν κυρίῳ.

²¹ Οἱ πατέρες, μὴ ἐρεθίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμώσιν.

²² Οἱ δοῦλοι, ὑπακούετε κατὰ πάντα τοῖς κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις, μὴ ἐν ὀφθαλμοδουλίᾳ ὡς ἀνθρωπάρεσκοι, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀπλότῃ καρδίας φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον.

²³ ὃ ἐὰν ποιῆτε, ἐκ ψυχῆς ἐργάζεσθε ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις,

²⁴ εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπὸ κυρίου ἀπολήμψεσθε τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομίας.

τῷ κυρίῳ Χριστῷ δουλεύετε·

²⁵ ὃ γὰρ ἀδικῶν κομίζεται ὃ ἠδίκησεν,

καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν προσωποληψία.

4 Οἱ κύριοι, τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὴν ἰσότητα τοῖς δούλοις παρέχεσθε, εἰδότες ὅτι καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔχετε κύριον ἐν οὐρανῷ.

² Τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτερεῖτε, γρηγοροῦντες ἐν αὐτῇ ἐν εὐχαριστίᾳ,

³ προσευχόμενοι ἅμα καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν,

ἵνα ὁ θεὸς ἀνοίξῃ ἡμῖν θύραν τοῦ λόγου λαλήσαι

τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' ὃ καὶ δέδεμαι,

⁴ ἵνα φανερώσω αὐτὸ ὡς δεῖ με

λαλήσαι.

⁵ Ἐν σοφίᾳ περιπατεῖτε πρὸς τοὺς ἕξω τὸν καιρὸν ἐξαγοραζόμενοι.

⁶ ὁ λόγος ὑμῶν πάντοτε ἐν χάριτι,

ἄλατι ἠρτυμένος,

εἰδέναι πῶς δεῖ ὑμᾶς ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ ἀποκρίνεσθαι.

⁷ Τὰ κατ' ἐμὲ πάντα γνωρίσει ὑμῖν

Τύχικος ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος καὶ σύνδουλος ἐν κυρίῳ,

⁸ ὃν ἔπεμψα πρὸς ὑμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο,

ἵνα γνώτε τὰ περὶ ἡμῶν

καὶ παρακαλέσῃ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν,

⁹ σὺν Ὁνησίμῳ τῷ πιστῷ καὶ ἀγαπητῷ ἀδελφῷ, ὅς ἐστιν ἐξ ὑμῶν· πάντα ὑμῖν γνωρίσουσιν τὰ ὧδε.

¹⁰ Ἀσπάζεταιται ὑμᾶς Ἀρίσταρχος ὁ συναιχμάλωτός μου
καὶ Μᾶρκος ὁ ἀνεψιὸς Βαρναβᾶ

(περὶ οὗ
ἐλάβετε
ἐντολάς,
ἐὰν ἔλθῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς,
δέξασθε αὐτόν)

¹¹ καὶ Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰουστός,
οἱ ὄντες ἐκ περιτομῆς, οὗτοι μόνοι συνεργοὶ εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, οὔτινες
ἐγενήθησάν μοι παρηγορία.

¹² ἀσπάζεταιται ὑμᾶς Ἐπαφρᾶς ὁ ἐξ ὑμῶν, δοῦλος Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ],
πάντοτε ἀγωνιζόμενος ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς, ἵνα σταθῆτε τέλειοι καὶ
πεπληροφορημένοι ἐν παντὶ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ.

¹³ μαρτυρῶ γὰρ αὐτῷ
ὅτι ἔχει πολὺν πόνον ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ τῶν ἐν Ἱεραπόλει.

¹⁴ ἀσπάζεταιται ὑμᾶς Λουκᾶς ὁ ἰατρός ὁ ἀγαπητὸς καὶ Δημᾶς.

¹⁵ Ἀσπάσασθε τοὺς ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ ἀδελφοὺς καὶ Νύμφαν καὶ τὴν κατ' οἶκον αὐτῆς
ἐκκλησίαν.

¹⁶ καὶ ὅταν ἀναγνωσθῇ παρ' ὑμῖν ἡ ἐπιστολή,
ποιήσατε ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ Λαοδικέῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἀναγνωσθῇ,
καὶ τὴν ἐκ Λαοδικείας ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀναγνώτε.

¹⁷ καὶ εἶπατε Ἀρχίπῳ· Βλέπε τὴν διακονίαν ἣν παρέλαβες ἐν κυρίῳ, ἵνα αὐτὴν
πληροῖς.

¹⁸ Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῇ ἐμῇ χειρὶ Παύλου.
μνημονεύετέ μου τῶν δεσμῶν.
ἡ χάρις μεθ' ὑμῶν.