

Chapter 1 : Colossians and Philemon | Free Online Biblical Library

Colossians 3 - Put Off, Put On A. Put off the old man. 1. () The basis for Paul's practical instruction. If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Thoughts on Romans, Colossians, Ephesians. This purpose was established before the foundation of the world. Many passages refer to details of this. Ephesians especially fully develops it. But God did not begin with this, nor with the second Adam in whom these promises were to be accomplished, but with the first, placed in responsibility before God and in blessings dependent on faithfulness in his position. Christianity begins when this question of responsibility is closed. I do not mean, of course, that Christians are not responsible. But their responsibility is that of children of God, redeemed by grace from the condition of ruin in which man was fallen. Individuals withal have to pass through in their own souls experimentally the results of this condition of responsibility; but in Christianity it is not to ascertain whether they can meet judgment, but to arrive at the clear discovery that they cannot, that they are guilty and lost; to have judgment realised in their consciences that "there is none righteous, no, not one" every mouth being stopped, and all the world guilty before God; that they cannot themselves get out of this condition, but that Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost; that "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. The question of responsibility was gone through in the first Adam. First, he failed being innocent; then displayed his lawlessness in corruption and violence, bringing in the flood; then under law broke it; and when all this being already true God came into the world in goodness, the full character of sin was developed in enmity against God by the rejection of the blessed Lord. This closed the probation of man. Now, says the Lord, is the judgment of this world. Hence we read, "He appeared once in the end of the world the consummation of ages, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and "these things. He is already guilty and lost, and proved so. Besides his state of innocence, inalienable life for ever and responsibility were attached to the two trees in the garden; but man took the wrong road in connection with responsibility, and forfeited life. In the law the question was again raised as to both; but satisfying responsibility was put before life. Thus and thus only the two are reconciled for sinful man" life and responsibility. Now, from the beginning, the coming of Christ was intimated in the judgment pronounced on Satan; and then, when God began to deal with man in the new world when it had wholly departed from Him into idolatry, in the promise of the Seed in whom the nations should be blessed, to Abraham called out from it. Thus propitiation for sins was made, which met the responsibility, and the ground laid for the accomplishment of purpose, and then the Holy Ghost comes down on earth, the witness of these things, and the present power of that Christianity in which through grace we enjoy them. Hence we have the responsibility and state owned and demonstrated, and man met in it in grace; and the purpose revealed and ourselves associated with Christ in it; but the old creation and the first Adam state judged and lying in wickedness and alienation from God; and the new creation, connected with the Second Adam, raised and glorified, revealed; while as to life we are brought into it, with the Holy Ghost dwelling in us. There is this difference in them, that while the three first Matthew, Mark, and Luke give us His rejection historically, and in prophetic testimony, more or less, what was to take the place of His presence; in the first Matthew as Man, and according to promise, that is, in the first creation, and in Israel; the last of the four John, being the revelation of His Person, that the Word was God, precedes all dispensation and creation itself, and begins by the world He had created not knowing Him, and His own rejecting Him, and then unfolds His Person, and what was proper to Himself and His service and the coming of the Holy Ghost when He had gone to the Father. This leads me to our immediate subject. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, does not enter on the ground of the new creation, but treats of man on this earth as a responsible being, only in one word as an abstract doctrine shewing him as he will be, and that only personally: But the purposes of God, or the new creation which is in purpose, are not in view. Man is a responsible creature in this world, dealt with as such, though in the end glorified. This responsibility is met by the work of Christ, and the coincident fact of having life in Him. With this the great fact of present Christianity is recognised" the Holy Ghost down here. By this we know that we are in Christ, but as down here. He sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts; but all

this is my state down here, not the new creation. Its being so indeed gives it such value, though from other scriptures I know all this involves a part in the new creation. But I am saved in hope, I rejoice in hope of the glory, I am a joint-heir with Christ as a son; but my present place is suffering with Him. Though promising thus personally the glory, likeness to Christ according to the purpose of God, the Epistle treats the question of the divine ground of righteousness and the standing of a Christian in this world through the removal of sin. This it does in a double way, having respect first to the conduct, and then to the state of man as a child of Adam. Every mouth is stopped, and all the world guilty before God. But the Epistle meets the whole question of our personal relationship to God. First, Christ is a propitiation through faith in His blood, and being risen again, the ground of our justification is shewn to be perfect, and being justified by faith we have peace with God. God imputes no sin to the believer, Christ having been delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Then, from chapter 5: Adam, by his obedience, has brought all connected with him into the condition of sinners; Christ, by His obedience, all connected with Him into that of righteousness. But with this another truth is connected. But I have this righteousness by having part in His death; the having part in it is the very profession of Christianity; but death is not living on! Thus delivery from the state and power of sin is by death, and our death is in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The assembly itself also is assumed in the hortatory part; chap. What is treated of, this state being assumed, is the divine way of grace as to it. Meeting our responsibility by bearing our sins I have already spoken of. The second part treats, we have seen, of our state. Such a Christ being our life, we are esteemed dead, for He who is our life, our true I, has died, and this is valid and effectual for faith. It is the profession of our common Christianity: He has been a propitiatory victim, and delivered for our offences, and died to sin once, all alone. He is not looked at as gone down into our place, and Himself and we raised up together. In this case He is not life to us, but a dead Man raised up, and this involves not merely life in Him but a new estate into which He is entered, and involves a new creation, though it may be and is considered apart. But in fact He has died to this creation, and been raised to be, as Man, head of the new creation, and head of the body. There is, however, in the teaching of Romans deliverance, for He has died. Risen with Christ involves the purposes of God, Christ being viewed as the object of those purposes, and the power which brings them about; and hence we are associated with Him in them, and hence it leads on to our union in the church with Him. Not but that Christ is viewed as risen in the Epistle to the Romans: But this is the acceptance of the victim; if not risen, I am yet in my sins. But we are not raised with Him. This introduces by the power of God at the next step into the new creation, as a state of things, and into the assembly. Christ, our life, or living in Him, is another thing from Christ viewed as a dead man raised, yet it is a risen man who is our life. Christ died unto sin once, and now lives to God. His death is essentially identical with His dying to sin. It is still the same responsible man, but all sins put away, one who will be like Him in resurrection, who is not to serve sin; it will not have dominion over him; it is not to reign in his mortal body, for there he yet is; but being set free to yield himself to God as alive from the dead, and his members as instruments of righteousness unto God; freed from sin by Christ being our life, and sin in the flesh condemned in Christ, a sacrifice for sin, and we, He having died, reckoning ourselves dead. The great point is that we have died. Only it is in the cross, where sin in the flesh was condemned, and are now alive in Christ, called to walk accordingly here; not put, according to purpose, in Christ in the new creation. Now the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. But we have died, and consequently have ceased to be under it. We are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that we should be to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead. Still we are looked at as here, but married to Christ, who is raised, but not we raised with Him. We are delivered from the law, having died in that in which we were held. But we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; if the Spirit of God dwell in us, our place and standing are not in the flesh before God. But note, the Spirit is come down here; it is still man down here, but in Christ and in the Spirit, and that by His Spirit dwelling in him, but that is down here. But, Christ being in me, who did die, because of it dead, it is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness; for that is what is looked for in this world, and that is what is found in the fruit of the Spirit, the fruit of righteousness, which is by Christ Jesus to the glory and praise of God. Still we are here, sons of God indeed, and so heirs-joint-heirs with Christ "but not in the new creation, but in the suffering one, and suffering with it, though that suffering be not worthy to be compared with the glory to be

revealed in us. But we suffer, having the Spirit, as taking up these sorrows according to God, and expressing them by groans produced by the Holy Ghost, and understood by God as those of His own Spirit, though in our hearts, even when we do not know what to ask for. Just as Christ here could groan in sympathy with a suffering creation, and even Himself in the days of His flesh offer up His petitions with strong crying and tears, only not imperfect as we are, in it. The Spirit is the power of life, the Spirit gives us consciousness of sonship and our joint inheritance with Christ, and the Spirit groans in our hearts, we being such in the sense of all that is around us, we being joined to it as to our body, Christ our life in the inner man, and the Spirit dwelling in us. We are saved in hope, and know our place in the glory to be revealed, and hence feel the sorrow of our actual position, according to the Spirit of God, according to God Himself. We are sons and know it, but the sons of God are yet to be manifested. Everything works together in this poor world for the good of those who love God. Hence the exhortation of the Epistle is to present "we being thus here" our bodies a living sacrifice that is, not in actual death, as Christ. Here they are set forth as actually subsisting men on the earth only set free, and to offer themselves to God as a living sacrifice. The Epistle to the Colossians goes farther still. The believer, indeed, is not seen sitting in heavenly places in Christ. But he is not only dead with Christ, but risen with Him; he is dead, and his life hid with Christ in God. When Christ appears, he will appear with Him. He is viewed as living in sins and the indulgence of evil, and he is viewed as dead in sins. It is one and the same state; if he is alive in the sins, he is dead toward God. In the former case death must come in to deliver, for there is no mending of the flesh; in the latter it is a new creation. The new creation is wholly the purpose of God. The former, living in sins, is connected with responsibility; the latter has the second Adam risen and glorified for its centre. Colossians practically takes in both as to the state of man; only it does not put him in heavenly places, nor speak of a new creation; it is only we "risen with Christ. Death there was death. He died, and therein died to sin once. That death, ours by faith, is the only death spoken of. His death as a person who had been alive in this world was His death to sin. We are dead with Him in Colossians, dead with Him in Romans. It is death to sin, in Him and in us; only He had none, and we do not literally die but appropriate His death through grace. But in Colossians we are looked at as having lived in sins; chap.

Chapter 2 : A commentary on the New Testament, - CORE

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Pulpit Commentaries Verse 1 1. With special reference to Colossians 2: But dying with Christ carries with it the thought of rising with Him, and to this St Paul now appeals, using a logical argument. The methods of the world are useless. You died with Christ and you rose with Him. Use therefore your new position. Observe that we have a restatement of Colossians 2: The aorist points to a definite time, viz. Baptism, see Colossians 2: Implying more normal effort than, e. He employs it in direct command here only, and in indirect only in 1 Corinthians Compare the compound phrase in 1 Corinthians See also 1 Corinthians Presumably the Colossians had been seeking spiritual victory by false methods, and he would now show them the true method. His thought therefore is that Christ, with whom they were raised, is above. But where, as here, merely the fact is stated, with only an indirect reference to the Psalm, the more natural form is used, Romans 8: The addition of this clause points out the supreme place of power which He now holds, from which therefore He can supply His people with all the grace that they require. Observe also [1] St Paul in Ephesians 2: This is promised in its fulness in Revelation 3: Similarly also St Peter in 1 Peter 3: The positive side see Colossians 2: It therefore distinguishes the spiritual from the worldly character; cf. For the phrase see especially Colossians 1: This inferiority is clearly expressed in John 3: Most expositors are of opinion that St Paul by this phrase is speaking quite generally, i. St Paul bids his readers to be not taken up with questions of eating, drinking, and such like, which belong to the earthly life. There is a higher and better way. To be taken up with things on earth is unreasonable, for dead men have no more to do with such things. For the tense cf. Therefore not the future life as such but the real and spiritual life to which believers have already risen; cf. For the thought is primarily not that of security but of concealment. Your life does not belong to the sphere of the visible why then be taken up by the visible? Not as well as Christ, in the sense that both believers and Christ have true life in God. But in intimate fellowship with Christ. Their life is bound up with Christ. He is invisible, and with Him is their life; cf. It seems to occur only here and in Romans 5: The connexion of thought with Colossians 3: Concealment is necessarily only temporary cf. His glory; but your life is now concealed with Him; yes, more than this, He Himself is our life; it therefore cannot but be that when He is manifested in glory you will be also. The very abruptness brings out the hope more vividly. The fourth time in Colossians 3: St Paul will do his utmost to help them to set their thoughts above. The Apostle declares that the life is Christ. Compare 1 John 5: Here he reverts to the proper form of the argument, the more readily as he is speaking not of need but of honour. As surely as your life is hidden with Christ while He is hidden, so shall you be manifested with Him when He is manifested; cf. See notes on Colossians 1: For the thought cf. Even the body shares in it, 1 Corinthians It is inconsistent with this future to let sins now live in us. Compare also Romans 7: Of course the death is ethical not physical, but it is the physical limbs that are intended, to which St Paul attributes as it were separate individualities. As included under the members, as their effects, these sins are of course to be put to death with them. The article is remarkable and its force is uncertain. Connected with fleshly lusts in Mark 7: Yet nowhere, as it seems, does it directly bear the sense of impurity, its connexion with this both here and in those passages being probably due to its representing the second of the two most striking aspects of a materialistic aim, viz. Observe that the latter is not necessarily miserliness. More than a relative, for, by classifying, it adds a reason for the preceding prohibition; cf. By putting the visible before the invisible. The individual life Colossians 3: Negatively together with a general description of the new life, for sins are inconsistent with the new self. Put therefore to death your bodies and their parts; all of which have only to do with earth and are instruments of sin, thus including immoral actions, and wrong desires, and greed, for this is idolatry; Colossians 3: Verses Colossians 3: See notes on Textual Criticism. Not His feeling or attitude towards sin, but the external manifestation of that attitude; cf. This is regarded as coming with certainty on the ungodly 1 Thessalonians 1: St Paul frequently appends a similar saying to his lists of sins, Ephesians 5: Here it is the

more needed in contrast to the hope of the godly in Colossians 3: Certainly neuter with the short form of Colossians 3: In fact 2 Thessalonians 3: In implied distinction from the ungodly among whom you no longer are. Wetstein compares Cicero, Ep. Quidquam me aliud agere censes? In 1 Peter 2: There is, ideally, to be no half-heartedness, or any time spent, in such putting off. Probably with a slightly different connotation from Colossians 3: For this and the context compare James 1: So especially Sirach Compare Theodoret on Psalms St Paul has the substantive only in two other of his lists of sins, Ephesians 4: The transition would be easier in an Oriental land than in our own, for Oriental abuse is generally foul. It marks, as it were, their final stage. That the change to the present tense suggests that the sin was still existing cf. The thought is expressed more fully in Ephesians 4: But on the use of participles in imperatival sentences, see Moulton, op. In favour of this are the following considerations a the parallel passage, Ephesians 4: On the coincident action of the aorist participle vide supra, Colossians 2: The participles are in the aorist, because the present would express a gradual or a repeated action, whereas ideally the action is complete in itself and once for all. Even if experience shows that it must be repeated, yet on each occasion the act should be in itself complete. But in earthly things the old in time becomes worn out Matthew 9: But there the outer man is the physical, the inner the spiritual side of our nature. The new man is perpetually maintained in vigour and growth. This is perhaps the more probable. Plummer on 2 Corinthians 4: Contrast in Colossians 3: The aim is knowledge, viz.

Chapter 3 : Thoughts on Romans, Colossians, Ephesians.

Colossians 3 Commentary, One of over Bible commentaries freely available, this commentary, by E.W. Bullinger, has stood the test of time as an incredible resource for the diligent student.

These four letters include Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians and Philippians. As we pointed out in an earlier lecture, 2nd Timothy was also written from prison, but the predominate view throughout the history of the church has been that it emanated from a different imprisonment and different set of circumstances in which we will cover when we discuss the pastoral epistles. Traditionally, the letters have been viewed as coming from Paul while was under house arrest in which the Book of Acts ends. There is one early dissenting tradition in the history of the church that considered the possibility of an Ephesians presentment. We know from the Book of Acts that Paul was also imprisoned in Caesarea Maritimes by the sea in Israel to be distinguished from Caesarea Philippi to the north of Galilee, but for the most part, these options have not commended themselves for the reasons we point out in our accompanying text book. Meanwhile, we will proceed on the assumption that these letters were written from Rome while recognizing that very little of exegetical significance when it comes to interpreting specific passages in these letters hinges on that debate. A bit more will be at stake when we come to Philippians. The PowerPoint slide being used by the lecturer is designed to stress that Philemon, Colossians and Ephesians also share a common gate at which they were sent out through common letter carriers to the same geographical area of the Empire, namely communities in western and central Asian Minor. We may deduce this from the less well-known names that appear in the introductions or closing greetings or travel reports of these three epistles. Philemon and Colossians share six important names; Colossians 1 discloses Epaphras, the founder of the Colossian church and his name recurs in the letter to Philemon and one of the people sending greetings. Onesimus is a slave of the house hold of Philemon to whom the short little letter of Philemon is addressed and toward the end of Colossians. Aristarchus, Demus, Mark and Luke all send their greetings, apparently companions with Paul during his imprisonment and all of those coincidences together suggest that these letters are being sent out at the same time. In which case, the otherwise unattested names of Apphia and Archippus in Philemon 1: Only one significant name joins Colossians in Ephesians suggesting that they were sent out jointly but it is the highly significant name Tychicus, the letter carrier, almost guaranteeing that we should put Ephesus into the mix with Philemon and Colossians not least because Ephesus was the main port on the west coast of Asia Minor to which a boat coming from Rome would arrive and then letter carriers would natural travel overland, the roughly hundred miles to the east to the much smaller community of Colossae. No such links of any kind require us to match Philippians with the same mail deliver and Philemon, Colossians and Ephesians and we will reserve further comment on Philippians for a separate lecture. If indeed Philemon and the church that may have met in his house to form the collection of Colossian house churches then we may cover a bit more background of both of these letters before embarking on and exegetical survey of them individually. Little is known about ancient Colossae compared to what we have unearthed about these other communities to which Paul wrote. No archaeological digs have ever been undertaken at the tell or hillside where it is believed whatever ruins of Colossae may exist remain buried precisely because it is comparative small and significant and therefore not of interest to major benefactors who fund such archaeological digs. Tourists can roam about on that hill side, every now and then unearthing a small shard of rock of some kind from the Byzantine era. We may well want to date these first three letters to AD 60 or The letter to Philemon can easily be neglected, two pages stuck together. The basic plot is straight forward; Paul has met up with a slave from the household of Philemon by the name of Onesimus who has become a Christian as a result of his time with Paul in prison, presumably in Rome. And now Paul is sending him back to his master and urging Philemon to welcome him at the very least as a fellow brother in Christ and possible as something more. Historically, the most common understanding of the circumstances leading to Paul meeting up with Onesimus have been that he was a run-away. Slaves desired their freedom in the ancient world as they have in all cultures that have included the institution of slavery and as in other times and places often tried to secure this freedom by running away. If this is indeed the scenario behind Philemon, then Paul is

implicitly requesting as he asked Philemon to welcome Onesimus back, that he not punish nor execute him which Roman slave owners were legally permitted to do. But that alone would hardly account for this inclusion for this little letter in the Biblical Canon. Even if tradition is accurate, that Onesimus became the Bishop of the church toward the end of the first century, and this would certainly account for the letter preservation. Colossians and Philemon There are a number of reasons why this letter merits even more respectful preservation, treatment, study and ultimately Canonization. Already in the thanksgiving prayer, Paul lavishes praise in his prayer, which of course he knows Philemon will read, on the fellowship of his faith. Verse 5 describes the reason for Paul thanking God for Philemon because of his love for his people and faith in the Lord Jesus. And then with this back ground, Paul continues, I pray literally that the fellowship of your faith or as NIV says, that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective, deepening your understanding of the good thing we share for the sake of Christ. Nothing else in the letter remotely suggests that anyone is talking about Philemon evangelizing anyone. Rather, using the most common meanings of the words and grammatical constructions here, Paul is praising the love and refreshing of hearts of the fellowship that Philemon has regularly extended to fellow Christians, but let this be the first time when one of his own former slaves had become a Christian. It is worth reflecting on the more increasingly modern popular options as an alternative to the theory that Onesimus was a run-away rather than some other kind of dispute between slave and master resulting perhaps that Philemon suggested that Onesimus seek out Paul. This would explain why the two did in fact meet up such a long ways away, harder to explain if there was no prior knowledge of Paul by Onesimus. In order that Paul function in what was called in the Roman World, a friend of the Master, who could act as a mediator or arbitrary in helping to settle disputes. Paul believed that it had been a success and that the welcome home would not have been to punish a returning slave because he would not have been a run-away, but must have been something even more. What would that be? Why not more directly? Why not make it more unambiguous? We may compare the positive witness and success of many various spiritual and non-violent protest movements of the 20th and 21st centuries as well. Though in many cases as those movements grew, there was violence and defection from the original vision and cause among at least a fringe group of those movements. Perhaps it is not quite as opaque as some of us in very direct and blunt cultures might at first think. As the body of the letter progresses, verse 8 finds Paul declaring though he could be bold and order Philemon, he prefers verse 9 to appeal on the basis of love. This is always a very commendable motive asking for something somewhat indirect and even euphemistically. Verses 10 and 11 makes it clear that his appeal is for Onesimus who is now useful, the very meaning of Onesimus in Greek because he has become a believer, a spiritual son of Paul in a way he had not been before. Use to Paul as well as to Philemon. Verse 12 makes it very clear that he is sending him home, despite verse 13 his preference for keeping Onesimus with him, which would not have been legally possible had he been a run-away slave, but would have been, had he appealed to Paul as an *ominus dominus* owned by someone. Ancient prisoners received no food or goods of any kind from their jailers but depended on friends or family from the outside for help. Again, we sense an elaborate build up, that is perhaps more understandable if Paul was asking for more than just a courteous punitive re-instatement of Onesimus as a household slave. If he continues in this mode, not until verse 17 do we get Paul coming to the exhortation part of this epistle or in this case the request portion? If you consider me as a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me, but Philemon would not welcome Paul as a slave returning home. He would welcome him as a partner and free man and fellow worker in the Gospel. If he has done you any wrong and owes you anything, charge it to me. For Onesimus is just a run-away slave then if he has stolen money and property, Paul was offering to reimburse Philemon. If he is merely an *ominus dominus*, Paul may be offering to settle some other kind of dispute that may have had financial overtones or at the very least, reimburse Philemon for lost man hours. What else could that be? And it is an illustration, again, as we can see in the Book of Acts in chapter 16 when Paul appeals for public release and declaration that he and Silas have done nothing wrong after spending a night in the Philippian jail. Paul appealed there to his citizenship only when the timing of the appeal would be most beneficial for the public well-being of Christianity in that community, not when it would in a private encounter with the Philippian jailer from the night before would have exempted him and Silas from spending a night in jail. Paul, like Jesus

before him can speak eloquently of giving up his rights. We saw that in 1st Corinthians 9 with the right to receive remuneration for ministry. We saw it at length in 2nd Corinthians when Paul contrasted his whole style of ministry as one of suffering and being persecuted in contrast to the false apostles and Greco-Roman religion hecklers that has so confused the Corinthian church. But when it comes for seeking justice for others, even if it may require tack and time and patience and certainly a lack of violence, Paul is not nearly as passive or quiet as some have charged, and then finally, a point that should have become evident in our conversations thus far. The little letter of Philemon is a gem of a model of pastoral tack. In a context where writer and recipient of a letter did not know each other well, one could make a case that Paul was employing a manipulative form of sociology, but between two people who had once been partners in business and ministry. Where there is a relationship that Paul can describe in the second half of verse 19 as Philemon owning him his very self. This letter takes on a very different appearance, blunt commands, particularly in the ancient Mediterranean world were not appropriate in such contexts. The language of hope for a coming visit to reassure Philemon of good relationships remaining between the two but also in a very gentle and indirect and tactful way, a reminder that he will be able to come and check up on whether Philemon has granted his request. To conclude, this is a very deceptively short and straight forward letter, which in fact pays careful scrutiny and leisurely study and contemporary application to a particular situation. What of the letter to the Colossians; afore chapter epistle to the entire church and community of Colossae, no doubt including Philemon congregation. Here, we are faced as we were with 2nd Thessalonians, first of all, over the debate on whether or not Paul wrote this epistle. Of a number of questions, of which the two most central include: Secondly, it is too similarly in style and content to letter of the Ephesians, which is even more widely believed to be pseudonymous to have come from Paul. As with 2nd Thessalonians, we leave the interesting student to read the textbook and its sources for further details. Suffice to say that the issue of style is perhaps the hardest to simply forget it. We have no way of comparing Timothy and Colossians or Timothy and Luke for that matter, so again this remains speculative but at the very least, we must acknowledge that there are plausible historical alternatives to merely jettisoning the letter and labeling it as inauthentic and fully pseudonymous. More difficult and complex even than the issue of authorship is the problem of the false teaching, the worldly philosophy that chapter 2: The rest of chapter 2, gives us the most detailed window into what that heresy is, as scholars have come to term it, may have embraced. Because he immediately turns to emphasize the full deity of Christ in bodily form, there may have been questions about deity or the humanity of Jesus or both because of issues concerning circumcision in the verses immediately following, it is natural to assume a Jewish or Judaizing background to at least some of the heresy, which is reinforced in 13 – 15 with references to circumcision and legal indebtedness. The rituals introduced in verse 16 of eating and drinking could refer to the dietary laws of Judaism or the problem of food sacrificed to idols of 1st Corinthians 8 – 10 or some combination of the two as may have been present in Romans 14 – The new moon and Sabbath day festivals were probably exclusively Jewish in which case the religious festivals may have been as well, though there were plenty of Greco-Roman such festivals as well. The false humility and worship of angels is a bit more difficult in verse If this is a false kind of pseudo humility that fallen angels are seen in their worship of their lord, the devil, or even pretending to worship God himself or separated from false humility and referring to the genuine worship that good angels give to God, then this could be some additional form of Jewish practice that has changed in some respect. This grammatical expression may refer to humans worshipping angels who were almost non-existent in Judaism and therefore suggest a Greco-Roman or even a Gnostic component to this heresy which was from a Greco-Roman asceticism or Gnostic philosophical dualism. Several commentators, none in more detail than James Dune and his new International Greek commentary on Colossians and Philemon do attempt to see all of this coming from Jewish and therefore, Judaizing sources. Ebert Schweitzer finds intriguing parallels to the combination of features discussed here in the cult that grew up and took its name from the long since deceased Greek philosopher, come mathematician Pythagoras. Quintin Arnall sees parallels to these elements in various forms of Phrygian Folk religion in the province nearby to Colossae and we might add in nearby provinces as well. But for most scholars, some combination of Jewish and Hellenistic or even Gnosticizing if not yet full blown Gnostic, syncretistic, unique, eclectic, previously not encounters

mixture seems to be the most responsible way of identifying this Colossian heresy. Or if we put aside for the moment the question of origins and focus merely on the doctrinal components inferable from the text, thus far surveyed, there appears to have been Christological deficiencies, soteriological deficiencies and anthropological deficiencies in this false teaching. If we allow even for the possibility for both Jewish and Greek backgrounds, this enables us to consider a possible way in which these defective teachings played themselves out and led to the combination of problems that Paul had to address. If Judaizing elements contributed to the heresy, Christ would not be fully God because of the non-Trinitarian monotheism of non-Christian Judaism in the 1st century. But if Christ is not fully God, then he has not provided full eternal salvation and therefore as in the Judaizing agenda, Christians must supplement or fill up what is lacking but in regard to human salvation by doing good deeds, particularly the national badges of righteousness that were so central to 1st century Judaism, i. If we allow for at least some element of Hellenistic philosophical dualists and even Gnosticizing background to the heresy, then the Christological issue would be that Christ would not be fully human. For a god could not literal partake of the material world since matter was inherently evil. So therefore, again, Christians would not be fully saved because Christ could not fully identify with them because of not being completely human. But this time what must be added is that which will perfectly save the human spirit because the body is irredeemable, being irredeemably evil and thus a focus on inter spirituality which perhaps is best reflected in the contrast between verses 3: That or something much like it seems to account for quite a bit for what Paul has to say in response to the heresy. It includes the conventional greetings, thanks giving and prayer that leads a bit more imperceptibly to the body of the letter and the theological exposition probably because of the insertion of a pre-Pauline creed or confession, much like we discussed in 1st Corinthians 15 with Colossians 1:

The New Testament Books (canonical) The scholarly literature on the New Testament books is (of course) huge and easily accessible. There is no attempt here to discuss them individually.

In this hidden life of the Christian lies the ground and the spring of the more outward life of thought and endeavour of vers. And this life comes through death, from that "dying with Christ" out of which we "rose with him" ver. On the nature of this death, see notes to Colossians 2: The apostle says, "in God" "in heaven," Philippians 3: Paul spoke of the ancient mystery of a Christ for all the world; then of the new, perpetual mystery of a Christ dwelling within believing hearts. This mutual indwelling of the Head in heaven and the members upon earth is the most intimate and inscrutable of all secrets John But as the old historic secret had its manifestation at last Colossians 1: In its absence a stronger emphasis falls on the defining clause, "that are upon the earth. These members are indeed those of the actual body Romans 6: That body is "made dead" by destruction of the evil passions that animated it. The body of "the new man" is physically identical with it, but different in moral habit and diathesis - a difference that manifests itself even in bodily expression and manner 2 Corinthians 5: His language has approached that of the philosophical ascetics see Colossians 2: To these vices the Colossian Gentiles some of them at least had been to such a degree devoted that their members had become virtually identified therewith. The first two sins are related as particular and general. Neither of these words is etymologically, or invariably, evil in sense. The degradation of such terms in all languages is a sad evidence of the corruption of our nature. This word, often used by St. Paul, is peculiar to him in the New Testament. For the thought, setup. Lightfoot places a colon after "upon the earth," and supposes "fornication," etc. But this is needless see Winer, p. The grammatical awkwardness of the apposition is not without rhetorical effect. The latter phrase is cancelled by Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort; but retained by Ellicott and, preferentially, by the Revisers. The witnesses against it, though numerically few, are varied and select, and the parallel Ephesians 5: The objects of this anger "children of wrath," Ephesians 2: Even retaining "sons of disobedience" in ver. The latter interpretation is against the general usage of "walk in" with St. The parallel "because of which" ver. Revised Text points to the things enumerated in ver. The thought of the death of the old life gives place to that of the divesting of the old habit; the new life wears a new dress, Mark the triumphant emphasis in "but now! Colossians 1 , 21, 26; Romans 3: There is a similar order and division between these two chief classes of sin in the parallel passages. On "anger" and "wrath" or "rage" , see ver. The latter is once ascribed to God by St. In man it is universally condemned. The two last vices, being sins of speech, must be put away "out of your mouth. The imperatives of vers. Only in Colossians and Ephesians do we find the apostle give a general warning against lying. What reason there was for this we cannot tell; unless it lay in the deceit of the heretical teachers Colossians 2: The lying in question is uttered within the Church "to one another" , and is fatal to its unity ver. The following aorist participles, "having stripped off" and "having put on" ver. The latter view is preferable Meyer, Alford, Ellicott, English Version; but see Lightfoot ; for the participles describe a change already realized - a change of principle, which has, however, still to be more fully carried out in practice Colossians 2: The "Old man"; is the former self, the "I no longer living" Galatians 2: His "deeds" "practices," "habits of doing," Romans 8: And this participle is in the present tense continuous , while the former is in the aorist historical. So the notions are combined of a new birth taking place once for all, and a new character in course of formation. The nature and objects of this knowledge have been already specified Colossians 1: It is adverbial to "renewed," not to "knowledge. Chrysostom and others take "Christ" as "him that created," in view of Colossians 1: But "the image of God after which" man was created and is now recreated, is seen in Christ Romans 8: There is no place for them. These and the following words indicate the sphere, as "unto knowledge" the end, and "after the image" the ideal or norm, of the progressive renewal to be effected in the Colossian believer. It can be carried on only where and so far as these distinctions are set aside. The "new man" knows nothing of them. The enmity between Greek and Jew being removed, the malice and falsehood that grew out of it will disappear vers. The distinctions here enumerated appear as looked at from the Greek side. Only here in the New Testament does

"Greek" precede "Jew" comp. Such terms of contempt would, in Asia Minor, be commonly applied by Greeks to the native population. The party who affected philosophic culture Colossians 2: On "circumcision," see Colossians 2: For "bond" and "free," a division then pervading society universally, comp. On this relationship he enlarges in the next section Colossians 3: The four pairs of opposed terms represent distinctions 1 of race, 2 of religious privilege, 3 of culture, 4 of social rank. But Christ is all things, and in all Colossians 1: The Church regards and values each man in his relation to Christ, and bids every other consideration bow to this. He is "all things" - our common centre, our standard of reference, and fount of honour, the stun of all we acknowledge and desire; and he is "in all" - the common life and soul of his people, the substance of all we experience and possess as Christians. The second "all" is masculine so most commentators, from Chrysostom downwards, referring more specially to the classes just enumerated. Similarly, in Ephesians 4: While he is "in all," it is equally true that all are "in him: Just as in the spiritual sphere, and in the relations between God and man, Christ is shown to be all, so that "principalities and powers" are comparatively insignificant Colossians 1: All human distinctions, like all angelic offices, must pay homage to his supremacy, and submit to the reconciling unity of his kingdom Ephesians 1: The terms "elect," "holy" same as "saints," Colossians 1: Bengel, Meyer, Alford, Ellicott prefer to read "holy and beloved elect ones ;" but "holy" and "beloved" are used frequently by St. Paul as distinct substantive expressions, and indicate conditions ensuing on, rather than determining, election. Colossian believers are "elect" in virtue of an antecedent choice of them to salvation on the part of God, as those who would believe on his Son 1 Thessalonians 1: Paul, are coextensive terms: By the latter title they were first addressed Colossians 1: This love dictated their election and set at work the means by which it should be secured Ephesians 1: As its purposes are increasingly fulfilled in them, it rests on them with an abiding complacency and satisfaction Ephesians 5: Christ is "the beloved One" Ephesians 1: But their choice by God and devotion to God, who is all love to them Romans 8: A heart of pity, kindness, lowliness of mind, meekness, long suffering Ephesians 4: The use of this figure, found three times in Philemon, is Hebraistic comp. It is synonymous with "goodness" Galatians 5: The objects of "pity" are the suffering and miserable; of "kindness," the needy and dependent. The "lowliness of mind" of Colossians 2: It is linked with meekness, as in Ephesians 4: Peter marks it as a womanly virtue 1 Peter 3: Paul claims this quality for himself 2 Corinthians 6: Throughout Scripture it is ascribed to God Exodus On "bearing with" or "forbearing," see 1 Corinthians 4: It is ascribed to God, with "long-suffering," especially as shown in his dealing with the sins of men before the coming of Christ Romans 2: Long suffering may be shown towards all who do us injury; forbearance especially towards those from whom regard or obedience is due. It falls short of forgiveness, which can only ensue on repentance Luke The change of pronoun in the two participial clauses appears also in Ephesians 4: Forgiving a Christian brother, it is as though a man were forgiving himself comp. The words, "if any have any complaint," etc. Even as the Lord or, Christ forgave you, so also ye Colossians 2: This argument is latent in the appeal to the "elect" and "beloved" of ver.

Chapter 5 : Colossians 3 Commentary - E.W. Bullinger's Companion Bible Notes

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The chapter I have read chap. From Paradise and onwards you find these very questions proposed by God Himself in the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But man broke down in his responsibility, and was shut out from the tree of Life. The same question was raised by the law. The two things were there, and by satisfying the responsibility man was to find the way to life. Then came Christ, who did satisfy the responsibility, and is the Life. Grace, which bestows the life, gave Christ, who met the responsibility. I receive eternal life through the righteousness of God when I have none, and I have to glorify Him in exhibiting this life in my body. In divine things, people forget what they see every day, and which is as simple as possible in human things that duties flow always from the relationship in which we are already placed. Putting a person into a relationship, puts him as naturally as possible into the duties belonging to that relationship. If the place is a constant one, the duty is a constant one, as with parents and children, husband and wife. The statement often made, that if I am saved I may do as I like, is thus disposed of. Can my child say that because he is my child he may do as he likes? No; the duty flows from the relationship. If I am a child of God, duty is always there; I may fail in it, and be chastened as a naughty child - quite true; but the duty is there. That is what redemption does; on the total failure of man under responsibility, it brings me the gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus. Thus praise, service, obedience - whatever belongs to the child of God - flows from it. These are connected with two aspects of sin; first, in its lusts and passions, in which man lives in sin; then its aspect as towards God, in which he is dead in sin. On the one hand I find him alive in sin, away from God, seeking to gratify his lusts. Then, I ask, what is the state of this soul towards God? Scripture speaks of both states. In Romans, man is alive in sins; in Ephesians, as towards God, he is dead. If looked at as alive in sins, it is a question of putting them away and justification. If looked at as towards God, dead, there is nothing of this; it is his being quickened out of that state - and, therefore, life and a new creation; all that side is connected with the counsels of God. Taking man as dead, there is nothing to be got out of him; he has not a feeling or a thought towards God: When Christ is brought in, he sees no beauty in Him that he should desire Him; that is man. In Colossians you find both states chap. This epistle then comes between Romans and Ephesians, and takes up both sides. When we come to Ephesians, we find the counsels of God, the sealing of the Spirit, the inheritance, and then our being made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Consequently, in the conduct of the Christian, it is God Himself who is given as the pattern of it - "be ye imitators of God, as dear children"; and we get the truth in Jesus, which is, you have put off the old man, and have put on the new. It is not a system of doctrine, but that I have done with the one, and have passed into the other. In Colossians you never find the Holy Ghost mentioned, except incidentally and exceptionally, as "love in the Spirit"; but life is the great subject. In Ephesians, the old man having been put off, and the new man put on, the Holy Ghost is in the Christian, as the power to manifest God in his ways, and thus be the expression of God in a man. God is love, and God is light; "walk in love," and "now are ye light in the Lord"; Christ is the pattern for light, and the pattern for love. There are two ways in which love is manifested; first, the divine love, which shews its greatness in having to do with the vilest, in rising above the evil, and putting it away; secondly, where the object characterises the affections in giving oneself up in devotedness to Him who has so loved us. If I love what is base, it is a base affection, and so on; the affection corresponds with the object on which it fixes itself. I find both these characters of love in Christ, in Ephesians 5: He "loved us," answers to the first; "to God for a sweet-smelling savour," answers to the second. Love going out to us in every need, but to God as its constant object. It is so with us; we must have God always before the soul, to keep up the character of our love. Here, then, I find the fullest description of what the walk of the Christian is: I am sitting in heavenly places in Christ, not in Adam at all. The works are suitable, and, moreover, fore-ordained. They are suited to the place we are in. If the position is Jewish, the works are legal; but the child is not a servant, nor the servant a child. We are called to walk in works as new in kind, as our position. There I find the Holy Ghost, consequently, as the link

to connect me with Christ. Among the Gentiles there were things too horrible to mention; among the Jews, the law broken; in result, "every mouth is stopped. Sentence is pronounced, "there is none righteous; no, not one. Because "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Mark, the wrath is revealed, not hidden, and the revelation is just as complete as if He were sitting on the great white throne. In the second part of the epistle chap. It is not guilt, but state. The guilt is met by Christ dying for our sins, and we have redemption through His blood. The state is met by our being crucified with Him. Then "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us," but it is not bringing back the law to give us a rule for right conduct it required righteousness, but never produced it, but by our walking in the Spirit. He produces the righteousness which the law required. Christ is my righteousness, and the Spirit is the power of life in us, producing righteousness. The law produced nothing but condemnation, provoking the sin. Life and the Spirit of Christ give us the path of godliness in contrast to law, beyond which the epistle does not go as to practical righteousness. Then having been justified by the blood of Christ, and brought to God through Christ, the hope is fully given of being like Christ in glory. He shews they could not take the ground of promise at all, and shuts up all to mercy. In Romans, redemption meets the whole case I am in: Ephesians is the answer to the counsels and purposes of God. In Colossians both are found; and as between the two, you have not the full consequences of Ephesians, but you have more than in the Romans: If merely quickened, I cannot say that. I was lying dead in sins; Christ comes down in grace to where I was, clearing away, as He comes down, all that belongs to sin. Then God comes in and raises Him and us up together. This involves union; I do not say more, because union is actually by the Holy Ghost. Romans does not give that; for this reason; he takes up an individual and says, You have been living in sins - you must personally be justified. Each has to answer for himself; "I am carnal," - not "we" are - that would take in all. The moment I find that we are all dead together in sins, we are all brought together out of death, God has quickened us together with Christ; wherever you find death and resurrection, it is a step towards union, and involves "one body. Consequently in Colossians I am seeking the things that are above, not sitting there. I am here - not as alive in the world, but risen - and my affections set there, occupied with Christ, going up after Him. If I speak of the Holy Ghost, I must have union. In Colossians it is life, not the Holy Ghost uniting in one body in the heavenlies in Christ. Heavenly things are our hope chap. Both aspects of the truth are important. It is most important that we should learn in Ephesians "to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" - most important, too, that my heart and affections should be set there; this Colossians does. My hope is laid up in heaven, but I am not sitting there. There you get the blessings and the privileges of the church - the whole body; in Colossians the value and fulness of the Head. It is well for us to see where He sets us. How often we find ourselves doubting about the will of God, and it is always because we have not a single eye. Perhaps we have never thought of the thing before; still if there is doubt, the eye is not single. God puts us through all sorts of things to test the state of the soul. If you do not see, the eye is not clear - the thing is clear. It is the condition of the soul that is tested by all these spiritual exercises. I may think I require wisdom, while all the time it is God testing me. Here, again, the state is tested. I must know the Lord, to know what is worthy of Him. I must know His mind and feelings - must be spiritually minded. It is increasing in the knowledge of Him, and thus we know how to walk. What a poor kind of result it seems! Had He a will? In Philippians 2 - emptying Himself, He only goes lower and lower - He is the first example of "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Why, the man was meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light all the time v. Am I going to be with saints in light? Then I must get all the sanctity and light I can have here. If I am looking for holiness in view of acceptance, it is not really holiness I want, but righteousness.

Chapter 6 : Colossians 3 Commentary - Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary

Romans New International Version (NIV) A Living Sacrifice. 12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Chapter 7 : The Development of the Canon of the New Testament - The New Testament Books

Colossians 3 Commentary, One of over Bible commentaries freely available, this commentary is filled with great exegesis and written by the best British Bible scholars of the time.

Chapter 8 : Daily Devotions from the PAuline Epistles

Romans New American Standard Bible (NASB). 15 But [] the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

Chapter 9 : Series 2 - EBSCO Publishing - blog.quintoapp.com

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