Colossians

Who, When, Where

Written by Paulus (Paul). Paulus was originally a fanatical Pharisee, persecuting, imprisoning, and even killing Christians for teaching what he thought was heresy, that Yeshua was the Anointed, (The Jewish Messiah). After meeting Yeshua in a miraculous way on the road to Damascus, Paulus became not just a Christian but one of Christianity's most fervent preachers and teachers. He spent most of his life as an itinerant missionary, with all the life threatening perils that that brought with it, to the towns and cities which lay along the route between Jerusalem and Rome. Paulus died in Rome somewhere in the 60'sAD, and he wrote most of the letters which we have in the New Testament.
was written by Paulus, probably during his house arrest in Rome, around 62AD.
From house arrest in Rome.

Summary

At a time when the church was divided over whether we still need to keep the old testament law, (the Ten Commandments), Paulus wrote to explain why we don't, and why it is important that the children of God remain united with each other in what they think and teach.

Before You Read

What's the most important thing in your life?
How do you measure that?
Is it all you ever do? Is it all you ever think about? Is it where all your money goes?
Would you die for it?
Would you rather die than have it totally removed from your life?

What would society be like if we didn't have laws?
What if everyone could really be trusted to always try to do the right thing?

How many rules do you think you break every day?
How do you justify that?

Key Verses

Colossians 1:16

All things were created in him, both in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, whether lordships, whether rulers, whether authorities, all things have been created through him, and for him.

Yeshua did not begin his life when he was born 2,000 years ago. Yeshua is eternal. He was not only there at Creation, it was him who was doing the creating.
Does this change your image of "baby Jesus"?
He had already been working on Earth for 4,000 years by then! You may have "seen"

him as you read through the Old Testament… Who visited Abraham near the trees of Mamre? (Genesis 18). Who wrestled with Jacob? (Genesis 32). Who was that in the fire with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednigo? (Daniel 2)
Angels do appear as men from time to time. But the extra "person" in these stories seems to be more than an angel. Could it be?

Colossians 1:21

And you, who used to be alienated, and enemies in understanding by the wicked works, but whom he's now reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and without reproach in his sight

Don't kid yourself. You used to be an enemy of God.
No matter how "good" you thought you were, you were his enemy.
And the only reason you're not now, is because Yeshua reconciled you to him by his own death. The **only** reason.

Colossians 1:28

… warning every person, and teaching every person in all wisdom, so that we should present every person mature in Anointed Yeshua.

Every person.
Every.

Fortunately, even you. Even me.
But most of us have to be honest. There are some people we really don't want to be saved.
Do you have a list?
Is it just individuals that did something bad?
Is it whole groups of people, like drug addicts, or homosexuals.
Are you so righteous?
Is your sin so trivial and theirs so great?
Or have you just lost sight of how God sees them?

Colossians 2:8

Watch out that nobody leads you away captive through empty and deceptive philosophy, according to the tradition of people, according to the fundamentals of the world, and not according to the Anointed.

There is so much false teaching these days. All sorts of deceivers with nice sounding philosophies, from "the Universe will provide for you if you're nice", to white supremacists who claim to worship God, but who forget that Yeshua was a Jew!
Watch out.

Colossians 2:14

And he made you, (who were dead in the transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh), alive again with him, showing grace to us in all our transgressions, having blotted out the written decrees which were standing opposed to us, and lifting them from our midst, nailing them to the stake.

You were dead, (spiritually), but Yeshua made you alive.
Yeshua did it, you didn't. Don't ever forget that.
And he did it by blotting out the written decrees, (The Law), nailing it to the stake.
The Law, the Ten Commandments and everything that goes with it… has been blotted

out. It's gone.
Christians do <b?not need to keep them. They are not rules with punishments for us. We need to go beyond them and love one another. But not because it's a rule that we mustn't break, but because it is the response of a heart which understands the gift of eternal life which it has been given.

Colossians 2:16

Therefore, don't let anyone judge you in eating or drinking, or in a particular festival, or new moon, or Sabbath, which are a shadow of the ones which are about to come…

Don't let anyone put you back under those old rules.
Paulus goes on to say, even if their argument sounds right, even if it seems like they're being more righteous.
They're not, they are going against the teaching of the Bible. We do not need to do these things any longer.

Sadly, we go even further and add our own. We added Easter and Christmas so we could fit in better with the world around us. We added rules about not smoking, or dancing, or shopping on Sunday. We added rules about eating fish on Fridays and giving up something for Lent, like such a pitiful sacrifice made us more worthy of Yeshua.
These things seem humble, but they puff us up with pride and make us so much more judgemental of others.
Love on another and follow Yeshua.

Colossians 2:20-23

If you died with the Anointed from the fundamentals of the world, why, like those who live in the world, are you being subject to rules? Don't touch. Don't taste. Don't contact. These will all end in destruction in their use, and are according to the commands and teachings of people, which indeed have a message of wisdom, in self-made religion, and humility, and harsh treatment of the body, but which have no value whatever against gratification of the flesh.

They seem to be based on wisdom, and humility and self denial.
But they don't work.
And they have no value whatsoever in reducing your sinfulness.
No value whatsoever.

Colossians 3:1-3

So if you were raised with the Anointed, then keep seeking upwards, where the Anointed is sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind upwards, not on things of the earth, for you died, and your life has been hidden with the Anointed in God.

Where is your mind most of the time?
On the things of heaven? Or the things of earth?
On God? On yourself?
On money? Career? Golf? Cars? Holidays?
Or on ministry? On church? On the poor?
You died. (That's a long story, but Romans 6 has more to say about that). You were raised with Yeshua. You have a new life. Stop living it like the old one.
Look up.

Colossians 3:9-10

…having taken off the old person together with its actions, and having put on the new…

How are you going with that?
Have you really taken off your old self?
Or are you still wearing you old underwear under your new suit? Do you look like a Christian on the outside, but deep down, when you're alone, when you're anonymous it's still the same old you?
Put on your new undies.

Colossians 3:11

Where there's no Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, slave, free – but the Anointed is all and in all.

Division among the body of Yeshua is the sign that people are still walking around in their old selves.
Cliques, gossip, backbiting. All signs of old underwear…
You might think you're fooling everyone, but your actions give you away. You're only fooling yourself.

Colossians 3:13

…even if someone has a complaint against someone, just as the Anointed shows grace to you, in the same way, so should you be.

Even if you have a complaint against someone. Even if you're right. Show grace to them because Yeshua showed grace to you.
You know Yeshua had a legitimate complaint against you before you became a Christian. Don't you?
If he had had your attitude, do you think he would have bothered showing grace to you? Would he have bothered saving you?
Be gracious. Take the high road. Be the bigger person. Copy Yeshua.

Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do, in word or in work, do all things in the name of the lord Yeshua, giving thanks to God the father through him.

Colossians 3:18-19

Wives, be subject to your own husbands as is proper in the lord. Husbands, love your wives and don't be bitter towards them.

A perfect marriage. A wife who is subject to her husband, and a husband who loves his wife.
"Subject to" is not "obey", it is letting the husband make the decisions.
"Love" is not romantic. It is making the decisions based on what is best for your wife, even if that means sacrificing yourself.

Colossians 3:22

Slaves, obey those who are masters according to the flesh in all things, not with eye-service like people pleasers, but in oneness of heart, fearing God.

This is “obey”. Workers, obey your bosses.
Would that change your workplace?
Would that change our culture?
Would that change you?

Colossians 3:23

And whatever you do, do it from the soul, working as to the lord and not to people

Do you work as is Yeshua is your boss?

Colossians 4:3

Praying at the same time also about us, so that God will open a door of the message to us, to speak the secret of the Anointed…

Good marketing? Great music? TV? Prosperity? Impressive Cathedral/Temple/Church building?
What does it take to open the door to people so you can tell them the good news?

It takes prayer, because God, and **only** God can open that door.

After You Read

What verses really stood out to you?

How would you summarize this book in a sentence or two? What is it about? What is God trying to say to us?

Paulus reminds us how devotedly he labours on behalf of the assembly, and calls us to do the same. To walk worthy of the one who reconciled us to God - Yeshua, the one who is above everything ever created, the one who is the physical representation of Yahweh himself.

The Law is gone. It has been fulfilled and done away with. From now on we should just do what is right, putting on our new selves. No more division, no more politics, no more hatred. Love one another and be gracious.
Wives should be subject to their husbands. Husbands should love their wives. Children should obey their parents. Workers should obey their bosses. Bosses should treat their workers well.

Would that change your world? Would that change your church?

What would it mean for you to realise that Yeshua is above all your petty concerns? That Yeshua is the reason you should overlook everyone else’s failings and just “get on”.
Stop your squabbling. It’s not about who is right and who is wrong. It’s about we’re all here because Yeshua saved us.

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