

Colossians

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

2 To God's holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters^[a] in Christ:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father.^[a]

Thanksgiving and Prayer

3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, **4** because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people— **5** the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel **6** that has come to you. In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God's grace. **7** You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant,^[a] who is a faithful minister of Christ on our^[a] behalf, **8** and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,^[a] **10** so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, **11** being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, **12** and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^[a] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. **13** For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Supremacy of the Son of God

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. **16** For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. **17** He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. **18** And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. **19** For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, **20** and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of^[a] your evil behavior. **22** But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— **23** if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

Paul's Labor for the Church

²⁴ Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. ²⁵ I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— ²⁶ the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. ²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

²⁸ He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. ²⁹ To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

January 5, 2026

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, Colossians 1:1

Paul's identity is not wrapped in academic achievements, in religious affiliation, nor in ancestry. Paul's identity is determined by God. If nothing else, Paul knows that he is an apostle by the will of God. Certainty in one's calling is the baseline for ministry. Why am I here? What am I doing? Who do I serve?

When uncertainty arises and adversity comes, who you are, your identity, will determine how you respond to the circumstances, situations, and context you find yourself in. The assurance of being certain that it is God's will that has placed you here provides stability and hope during prosperity, adversity, and change.

January 12, 2026

and Timothy our brother, Colossians 1:1

Timothy is identified as our brother. Paul could have called him, "my brother" but Timothy has become our brother not by Paul's will or action but as a gift from God. Timothy belongs to the whole family as do you and I in Christ. In the same way in which God is never my Father when in the gathered community, so we are our brother and sister every time we gather. What a difference it would make when talking to someone in the congregation as "our brother or our sister" rather than mine. It calls the congregation to see that person as a gift to the community and reminds the individual that they belong to us and we to them.

January 19, 2025

To God's holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sistersⁱⁿ in Christ: Grace and peace to you from God our Father. Colossians 1:2

Paul's audience is God's holy people in Colossae. How the faithful in Colossae saw themselves is not the point of the greeting. We all need to be reminded that we belong to God and therefore, are being made one with Him. God's characteristics are becoming ours. Chief among God's characteristics is faithfulness. Paul readily acknowledges the image of God among them. There is no other image of God that is allowed other than our brother and sister. If you want to see God, look at them. There you will find the image of God. Grace and peace are reflected in our brother and sister.

January 26, 2025

³We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people. Colossians 1:3-4

Is there anything more precious to the ear than to know that you are being prayed for as a thanksgiving offering to God? When was the last time you felt offered up as a thanksgiving offering? When was the last time you offered up our brother or sister as a thanksgiving offering to God?

The basis of the thanks being offered to God lies in Paul and Timothy's hearing about the Colossians' faith and love for God's people. If you are known for anything, are you known for your faithfulness and love for God's people? How valued is that attribution?

February 2, 2026

— ⁵the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel ⁶that has come to you. In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God's grace. ⁷You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant,^(a) who is a faithful minister of Christ on our^(a) behalf, ⁸and who also told us of your love in the Spirit. Colossians 1:5-8

The source of love and faithfulness is hope. Hope is treasured in places where it can never be taken from us. Christ is our hope. He loved us and gave himself for us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ. Every time we gather as a people of faith and love we do so centering in Christ, our hope. This is the good news we celebrate and share. Paul calls it the true message of the Gospel. I confess that I don't celebrate and share good news enough. Good news is a contagion that should be shared early and often. Hope produces hope in ever increasing measure. Who caught hope from you?

February 9, 2026

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,^[e] ¹⁰ so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹² and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^[f] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:9-14

What have people heard about you? What do they know about your faith? Are you somebody's reason for thanksgiving to God in prayer? What Paul has heard about the Church in Colosse certainly prompts Paul's prayer. There are dear churches that I serve that prompt me to give thanks to God for them. There is a sweetness associated with God's people that lingers long after the meeting is over.

In a church I pastored, the historic minutes of every meeting ended with the phrase, "they departed in love". Somewhere in the record, they stopped that practice. Maybe it stopped because the church was in strife? My hunch is that someone felt the phrase to be "old-fashioned" or simply "unimportant" and so it was dropped. How unfortunate.

February 16, 2025

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,^[e] ¹⁰ so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹² and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^[f] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:9-14

I find myself praying Paul's prayer for the Colossians for myself. I want to know by intimate experience God's will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit provides so that I may live a life "worthy" of the Lord. Without an intimate knowledge of God's will, how am I supposed to know what "pleases Him in every way"? Will my efforts bear good fruit in every good work or will my labor be pointless and fruitless? A life wasted is not a life lived abundantly. If nothing else, knowing by experience God's will through His Spirit's provision is the key to abundant life.

February 23, 2026

⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,^[e] ¹⁰ so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹² and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you^[f] to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:9-14

Endurance in ministry is a necessary component. Pouring yourself out day after day will exhaust you. How do you revive after the daily grind? Paul recognizes the need to have a daily inpouring of the resurrection power of Christ, the secret to great endurance and patience. This is the inheritance of God's people, the power of God at work in us moving us from darkness into the kingdom of the Son He loves. This is the difference made by faith. A stark contrast between dark and light, so the contrast between what we were and what we are becoming. We have been brought into the kingdom life borne by the One who loves, forgives, and redeems.

March 1, 2026 St. David's Day

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Colossians 1:9-14

In Christ, all things were created through Him and for Him. He is the firstborn over all creation. The intimate connection between the created and the eternal is Christ. He is the bridge between what can be seen and that which is unseen. All things are held together in Him. It is hard to fathom the depth of Paul's insight into Christ. Such enormity is not often brought into my prayer life because I want to speak with Christ, person to person. How do you talk to the One who is before all things and in whom all things hold together? Are words enough? Do words matter? They must because it was through the spoken word that creation came forth. Then, it must be enough for me to utter words, trusting that my Savior will hear. In prayer, I imitate the One who spoke me into existence.

March 8, 2026

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones

or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Colossians 1:15-19

Christ is the firstborn from among the dead. Creation, God's hovering, bringing into being life, is in the Head of the Body, the Church. Here is the beginning again, Christ Creator, Christ Re-Creator for the purpose of supremacy. There is none like Him. Christ, the fullness of God reconciling to Himself all things, transforming all things into His image and likeness made through peace, the shedding of His blood on the cross. The death of the old creation on the cross explodes in life through His resurrection.

O Christ, what are we that you are mindful of us?

March 15, 2026

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— ²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. Colossians 1:21-23

Whenever I think that I can tell God how to run the world, I find that we are at odds. Whenever I demand God to do what I want and how I want it, God laughs and I become angry. God, at times, just doesn't understand what I need or want. He doesn't "get me".

Alienation and estrangement happens in relationships. Appeasement is never the answer; reconciliation is. Reconciliation is relational. It brings two divergent groups together to find a way to be or remain in relationship. Reconciliation is where both sides are willing to give, to submit, to that which restores the relationship. Reconciliation acknowledges that the relationship is of greater value than self.

Paul reminds us that God values relationship and gave His Son to restore our relationship. Paul reminds us that reconciliation is always a two-way street. Therefore, I must give if I want to be reconciled to God. To hold on to, to cling to the hope held out in the Gospel calls us to give ourselves in service to God. Reconciliation is part of the divine design which orders our relationship with each other. What are you willing to give to remain in relationship?

March 22, 2026

²⁴ Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. ²⁵ I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in

its fullness—²⁶ the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. ²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:24-27

Reconciliation is the on-going work of the body. Finding ways to deepen relationships while continually adding divergent people is filling up in our own fellowship, our own selves that which is lacking regarding Christ's affliction. "To err is human, to forgive is divine". This is the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now disclosed – God's design to reconcile the world to Himself is worked out in the gathered community of faith. This is the great mission of the church – to bring together in Christ every nation, language group and people. This is our work, our suffering, our calling, our joy; Christ in you, the hope of glory.

March 29, 2026

²⁸ He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. ²⁹ To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me. Colossians 1:28-29

Christ is proclaimed. He is Lord. We teach, correct, and counsel the gathered community with wisdom – God is a God of reconciliation. We disciple others so that they grow up and take on the responsibility of reconciliation. Anyone who has raised children will wonder, "when are they going to grow up?" or stand amazed at their maturity which is beyond the years, sometimes all in the same day. This is the calling of ministry – to strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me to bring others to maturity in Christ, to be a people known for reconciliation. This has been a distinctive of American Baptist life and thought. We work at reconciliation because God is at work in us.

Colossians 2

April 6, 2026

I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. ² My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is. Colossians 2:1-5

The hard work of ministry is contention. Contention is not with people; it is for people. The goal of contending is to bring together people in Christ who are encouraged and united by the love of God in Christ so that together they may know personally and experientially Christ and be shaped by His character and image. Motives are always questioned. Why are you doing this? What is the purpose of this? Unless the answer to questions of why is, so that you may know Christ personally and experientially, our motives are misguided. Ministry must always be about bringing people together in Christ alone.

Some have tried to bring unity through creed, some through doctrine, some through dogma, each does bring a certain amount of unity, but it is always manufactured rather than organic. Christ alone was, is, and will be the only One that brings unity and is worthy of contending for. All other things will pass, but He shall reign forever and ever. Amen.

April 13, 2026

I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. ² My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. ⁵ For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.
Colossians 2:1-5

A disciplined faith is a faith that clings to Christ alone. I wish I was more disciplined. It is easy to follow the latest trends, to be caught up in the new, to be engaged by human insight and critique. In our information age, we are bombarded by trends, arguments, insights, and opinions. It is and can be maddening. So much noise, so little quiet.

The Spirit does work quietly. The Spirit's work is a hidden work, revealed in time. It is both corporate and individualistic. It always endears Christ and provides wisdom to those who ask. Self-reflection and discernment is a needed and necessary aspect of ministry, of contending. Ministry is engaging with the Spirit so that transformation in Christ is the result. How attuned am I to the prompting of the Spirit? Is my world view shaped more by social media, news stations, blogs, etc. or by the quiet promptings of the Spirit? Am I disciplined?

April 20, 2026

⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. ⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces^[a] of this world rather than on Christ. ⁹ For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in

bodily form, ¹⁰ and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. ¹¹ In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh^[b] was put off when you were circumcised by^[c] Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you^[d] alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Colossians 2: 6-15

I received Christ as a gift from God. I received Christ as Lord, the One who is over all, in all, and through all. I received Him by faith. I received Him because He received me. There are no barriers, nothing to hide. He has found me out and still received me. This is the essence of His love for us. He took us when we had nothing to offer Him.

The old Welsh hymn, Bryn Calfaria, comes to mind: "Take me as I am Oh Savior, better I can never be. Thou alone canst bring me nearer, Self but draws me far from Thee. I can never, I can never, I can never but within Thy wounds be healed, but within Thy wounds be healed." Here is where I need to remain rooted for here, I am strengthened, renewed and made whole.

April 27, 2026

⁹For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. ¹¹ In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh^[b] was put off when you were circumcised by^[c] Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you^[d] alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Colossians 2: 9-15

In Easter's glow, we live. The triumph of the cross is the end of the old creation. The cross put to death Death itself with all its trappings in order that we might have life and have it abundantly. Christ recreated the world. Out of the old creation, the new creation springs. I can only understand so much about His crucifixion and resurrection. There are depths where I cannot go. But I am certain of this, Christ has raised me, and the power of God is at work in my life. I know this because I want to know Christ and what He accomplished in His death and resurrection. I know that if I wasn't raised with Him, I wouldn't care about what He did or did not do.

“My sin, Oh the Bliss, of this glorious thought, my sin not in part but the whole. Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more, praise the Lord, Oh my soul.”

May 4, 2026

¹⁶Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. ¹⁸Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. ¹⁹They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. ²⁰Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: ²¹“Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? ²²These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. ²³Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. Colossians 2:16-23

Living in the shadows. Seeing things but never clearly. The constructs of the human mind are amazing and terrifying. Sometimes, they are both at the same time. Shadows do that. They draw you in and then scare you. How many philosophies, and schools of thought are there? Each is a shadow of reality, half-truths whispered in darkened places caught by willing ears that want to be drawn into what is offered. Zombies, the living dead, are frightful creatures of our own making. They exist but never live. In the power of the resurrection, there is no half-life. We are raised in Christ, set free from half-truths, shadows and whatever schemes would impose their will on us.

In Christ, we belong to a new age that is even now breaking into and tearing apart the old. You can't impose, scare, or force your will on another. A Baptist distinctive is soul liberty. Baptists have long understood the reality that the conscience is free and only God can, by the power of the resurrection, renew and transform it. “*Let God be true and everyone else a liar*” (Romans 3:4).

“My life I give henceforth to live, O Christ, for Thee alone.”

Colossians 3

May 11, 2026

³Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly

things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your^a life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.^b ⁷You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Colossians 3:1-11

Where you sit changes your view and your responsibilities. How does it feel to sit in your seat? Seated in and with Christ at the right hand of the Father is more than a vantage point. It is a seat of governance. Governance must have a primary overarching value or set of values that provide both aspirations and accountabilities.

Paul calls the gathered community to live out what it means to be in Christ. This is how we see and govern the world. The gathered community has the responsibility to bring God's kingdom and will on earth as it is in heaven. Paul calls the gathered community to put to death that which belongs to our human nature: division, hostility, and death. In Christ, God is recreating humanity after the image and likeness of Christ.

In the Kingdom, there is a putting off the old and putting on the new which is marked by compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Love is the essential value of the new which is demonstrated in the willingness of the gathered community to forgive one another as God in Christ forgives you.

An essential distinctive of being Baptist is the responsibility that each member of the gathered community voluntarily assumes by covenant to "work out what it means to love one another as Christ loved us." At the heart of every gathered community is the responsibility of living out the reality that we are seated in the heavenly realms. Let us strive to behave so. Anything less is not worthy of the Christ we proclaim.

"May the Mind of Christ, my Savior, live in me from day to day by His power and love controlling all I do and say."

May 18, 2026

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Colossians 3:12-14

What are you known for? Self-reflection is hard work. Hearts deceive so easily. What we may aspire to may simply be a “hope or wish” rather than a work in progress. Soul change is hard work. Asking, “Am I”, questions require truth and integrity. It also requires a willingness to change, to grow, and to mature. God places difficult things, circumstances, and situations in our lives so that we may wrestle with ourselves and with His character and nature. This is the way of love. Love is always sacrificial.

Once insight is gained, change follows, people notice and God smiles. *“My life I give henceforth to live, O Christ for thee alone.”*

May 25, 2026

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:15-17

Peace, the process of taking that which is broken and making it whole again, is at the center of Christ’s rule in our lives. Like Christ, we bind up, renew, heal and restore. It begins in our own life and then pours out and into the lives of others. Being thankful isn’t an option it is part of Christ’s rule.

I have found that poetry, words rightly and fitly spoken, produce amazing results in our quest for peace when put to rhyme and meter. As I write, songs accompany my thoughts and bolster Paul’s revelation. I, at times, need to be careful because I can’t often tell if the tune in my head isn’t leaking out of my mouth. Yes, you do get strange looks in the grocery store when this happens but, every now and then, you get the privilege of forming a duet with a stranger.

*Now that I'm Yours and You are mine
Our love is the secret that I find
I'll spend forever in the pleasure
I found looking in Your eyes
Give me Jesus
Give me Jesus
You can have all this world
You can have all this world*

June 1, 2026

*¹⁸ Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. ²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. ²² Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. ²⁵ Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism. **4** Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven. Colossians 3:18- 4:1*

How do you redeem the social structures of the world in which you live? Paul's answer is simple and shocking. You don't overthrow structures and institutions, you disembowel them. The structures and institutions only have power over if you assume that they have authority. In Christ, all authority over all things is His. The gathered community lives in that reality and lives out that reality with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. It sees the world differently and refuses to play by its rules. In essence, it shakes the world to its core.

*“Onward, then, ye people, joine our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices in the triumph song;
Glory, laud, and honor, unto Christ, the King;
This through countless ages men and angels sing.”*

Colosians 4

June 8, 2026

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. Colossians 4:2-6

Christian faith is a life lived in relationship with God. To “call upon the name of God” is a marvelous gift. Naming is at the heart of any relationship. Names are given not to control but to coalesce. God reveals His name, the I Am, to Moses. Jesus reveals God as Father. We are given a name by God precious to Him and to us.

Prayer is the deepening of our relationship which God desires and affirms. How sweetly does the name of Jesus fall on our ear. There is something about the name.

*“Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;
I will ¹⁴set him on high, because he has known My name.
¹⁵ He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble;
I will deliver him and honor him.
¹⁶ With ¹⁴long life I will satisfy him,
And show him My salvation.” Psalm 91:14-16*

June 15, 2026

⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. Colossian 4:5-6

What could possibly be added?

*“Teach me, Lord, teach me truly how to live,
that I may come to know thee,
and in thy presence serve thee with gladness,
and sing songs of praise to thy glory.”*

June 22, 2026

*⁷ Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant¹⁴ in the Lord. ⁸ I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our¹⁴ circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. ⁹ He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here. ¹⁰ My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.) ¹¹ Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews¹⁴ among my co-workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me. ¹² Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. ¹³ I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis. ¹⁴ Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. ¹⁵ Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.
Colossians 4:7-15*

Relationships are at the heart of ministry. The old adage is true, “Ministry would be a whole lot easier without people but then again, it wouldn’t be ministry.” The care of souls is a most difficult and rewarding work. It begins with a desire to be in community with others. Are you willing to serve others? Will you pay the costs of serving others? Will you put their needs ahead of your own? What will you sacrifice for them? These are not questions for a pastor. These are questions for you.

It is amazing to me how strangers that we encounter in ministry become “more than friends’ in service. Their faithfulness becomes your inspiration. You’re never to forget that you have been used by God for their training, but the Holy Spirit is the “Teacher”. Wisdom recognizes when to step out of the teaching role and step back as they lead, basking in their care as a gift from God.

“Spirit of the Living God, Fall afresh on me,
Spirit of the Living God, Fall afresh on me.
Break me, melt me, mold me, fill me.
Spirit of the Living God, Fall afresh on me.”

June 29, 2026

¹⁶After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.¹⁷Tell Archippus: “See to it that you complete the ministry you have received in the Lord.”¹⁸I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. Colossians 4:16 -18

Some folks share trials for their own benefit. I’m not sure why. Perhaps it stokes their ego, it may be that misery loves company. It could be that old habits die hard.

Paul shares his “troubles” to inspire others. We all have crosses to bear. He doesn’t make light of that fact. He embraces it. Because we all have needs, we all need encouragement. If the circumstances of life inspire others to be faithful, then what is shared is meant to motivate faithfulness not engender pity. Let this question linger behind the scene and before you share, ask “Why am I sharing this detail of my life with you?”

“O Soul are you wearied and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There’s light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free!”