

The Epistle to the Colossians

Objective

To understand the purpose and meaning of this epistle and to apply it to our lives.

References

1. The Epistle to the Colossians
2. “Interpretation of the Epistle to the Colossians” Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty.

Scriptural Verse

“For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him” (Colossians 1:16)

Lesson Guidelines

Heresy had entered Colossian society, lowering from the state of the Lord Christ, and denying His authority over the Church. So St. Paul sent this epistle with Epaphras who was preaching in Colossi to address this problem, however, he was put in prison while in Rome, so St. Paul sent it with Tychicus (4:7-9).

In this epistle St. Paul focuses on the person of the Lord Christ, repeating His Name numerous times. He writes about His Divinity, assuring that He is God, One with the Father and equal to Him.

Chapter 1: Christ is the Depth

The Lord Christ is the Depth, how?

- Only He can enter into our depths to solve our problems in their depths; a root solution that doesn't change with the external conditions, but a solution through our reconciliation with the Father.
- Since He is one with the heavenly Father, He is able to grant us fullness and to take away our corruption and grant us His incorruption; forgive our sins, and grant us His righteousness.
- Through His passion we find comfort and joy when we share our deepest pain with Him.

1. St. Paul and the Colossians (1-14)

- a. The Salutation (1-2)
- b. What he heard of them (3-8)
- c. His prayer for their sake (9-14)

2. A Praise for the Chief of Our Salvation (15-19)

- a. The Origin of all creation (15-17)
- b. The Head of the Church (18)
- c. In Him all fullness dwells (19)

3. The Role of the Chief of Our Salvation (20-29)

- a. He reconciled us with His blood (20-21)
- b. He plants us in His righteousness (22-23)
- c. He grants us happiness in the midst of the pains (24-25)
- d. He reveals to us the hidden mystery (26-27)

- e. He presents us perfect in Him (28-29)

Chapter 2: Christ is the Height

- Christ takes us above the lying traditions of people.
- He raises us over the false wisdom and the deceiving philosophies.
- He raises us above external practices that we may enjoy in Him the spiritual circumcision that happens through baptism, making us heirs to the Father.
- This chapter is written so that everyone may enjoy the secret of knowing the Father and the Son to gain the treasures of wisdom inside us.
 1. Love is the motive, and the richness of knowledge is the goal (1-5)
 2. The divine knowledge and the behavior (6-7)
 3. Being aware of the deceit of philosophers (8)
 4. The life of fullness in Christ (9-10)
 5. The spiritual circumcision and the baptism (11-13)
 6. The victory over darkness (14-15)
 7. No return to the shadows (16-17)
 8. Worshipping angels (18-19)
 9. The greatness of dying with Christ (20-23)

Chapter 3: Christ and the Inner Life

- Our life cannot grow in its depths or rise higher unless it grows from inside.
- We should know that Christ is our life and He dwells in us.
- The Lord Christ is the law of our life and he directs our external and internal behavior.
 1. The life with the Heavenly (1-4)
 2. Taking off the old man (5-9)
 3. Enjoying the new man (10-15)
 4. Praising and Thanking (16-17)
 5. Christ is the law of the family (18-25)

Chapter 4: Christ and the Outer Life

- Our new life should be visible to others so that they may see and taste the Lord Christ (4:5).
- The name “Christian” means: “Little anointed people united with the Lord Christ”. The life of Christ didn’t end with the completion of writing the gospels, instead He lives in us.
 1. A commandment to the masters (1)
 2. The prayer for the sake of service (2-4)
 3. The care about outsiders (5-6)
 4. Encouraging those who are working with him (7-14)
 5. The Conclusion (15-18)

Conclusion

- Christ should always be the core of our life. He is the only One able to restore us back to Him. Our faith in Him should never change no matter what other people say or believe.

- We should submit our lives to Christ so that He may bring change in our internal and external behavior. It is our duty as Christians to be witnesses of Christ to the whole world by applying His words in everything we do.

Activities/Discussion Points

1. In your own words, summarize the message that St. Paul is sending to the Colossians.
2. Give some example of verses that depict the Divinity of Christ.