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The Preeminence of Jesus Christ

Reading Colossians 1:1-2

Colossae was a city in a region called Asia Minor. If you were to visit that physical location today, you would be in modern Turkey.

There was a main road leading from Ephesus over toward the east and the Euphrates Valley. Colossae was in that route. Another geographic marker is, this city rested on the banks of the Lycus River. Other cities in the area were Laodicea and Hierapolis.

Colossae was like a health resort to many tourists, well known for the abundant supply of its medicinal waters and natural baths.

Concerning the church at Colossae, we do not have specific background information. When we study Philippians, Ephesians, Thessalonians and the letter to Corinth – we can refer back to the book of Acts and discover the history of when those churches were first formed. We do not have that



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kind of specific history to inform us of how this church came into existence.

There might be some inferential conclusions. There was extensive preaching in the region of Asia Minor (we can follow that work in Acts 16, 18, 19 and 20). From those passages we conclude, the gospel was taken into this region, people obeyed the gospel, shared the gospel and local churches came into existence as Christians assembled and worked together.

There is something some call *The Philemon Connection* (see Col. 4:7-9). The name Onesimus is there. He was the slave returned to Philemon and that story is told in Philemon. All considered, it is highly possible that Philemon and Onesimus were members

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church in Colossae. Along with this, there is the probability, the church met in the home of Philemon.

The writer of Colossians was the apostle Paul, and he was accompanied by Timothy when he wrote this letter to the Christians in Colossae.

There was a problem in Colossae; a threat Paul needed to deal with.

There was a system of religious error that was insidious and pervasive in the area. It was a movement or system that wasn't in keeping with the truth of Christ the apostles revealed. It was a religious system created by men, not God. Some in Colossae were enamored with this new thing. Especially in chapter two, Paul addressed this with genuine apostolic authority.

This religious error was a blend, a mixture of religion and philosophy and carnal distortions. Since it was gaining popularity, Paul needed to hit this with the truth to keep people alert and spiritually safe.

The Colossian Heresy seems to have been a corrupt combination or blend of Judaism, Gnosticism, Paganism and Materialism (very similar to modern day New Age religion).

From this epistle we can learn – the gospel is not available to be mixed in with or married to anything man invents.

A dominant theme in Colossians is, therefore, **the preeminence of Jesus Christ**. When we become His followers, we surrender our lives to Him who died for us. That authority He has over us, is not to be shared with another. We cannot take the truths of the gospel and connect them and mix them in with the philosophies of men. Before Paul gets into all this he says to his brethren: *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.*