Rock Valley Bible Church (www.rvbc.cc)

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Why Colossians?

Colossians 1:1-2

1. Why Colossians?
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This morning we will be begin our exposition of Colossians, a wonderful epistle written by Paul. Over the next few months, this book of the Bible will be our focus on Sunday mornings, as we dive into the Scriptures. This morning, my message will include an overview of the entire book to help set the context for future weeks.

Since I announced a change in our preaching plan a few weeks ago, one of the constant questions that I have been asked over the past few weeks is this, "Why Colossians?"

1. Why Colossians?

Why ought we at Rock Valley Bible Church devote ourselves to the study of the book of Colossians for the next season of our life together? It's a legitimate question. I'd like to answer it. I want to give you four reasons why the book of Colossians will be beneficial for us.

Reason #1 - To keep Christ pre-eminent.
A good demonstration of the pre-eminence of Christ in the book of Colossians can be found in chapter 1 verses 15-18. In that passage, we read of how prominent Jesus ought to be in our lives.

> Colossians 1:15-18
> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and

> in Him all things hold together. He is also the head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first born from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

Jesus is the image of God (verse 15). Jesus is the heir of all creation (verse 15). Jesus was the agent of creation (verse 16). Jesus was the reason for the creation (verse 16). Jesus existed before creation (verse 17). Jesus is the one who sustains the creation (verse 17). Jesus is the head of the church (verse 18). Jesus is the one who is "to have first place in everything" (verse 18).

As a Christian church, we need to give first place to Jesus Christ. This may seem to be a bit obvious to you. But I know how easy it is to drift away from keeping Christ central in everything. It's easy to focus our attention upon "God" in general, rather than thinking of God in terms of Jesus, our Creator, sustainer, and crucified Savior. It's easy to think about the way we ought to live, apart from the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf. We ought always to think of ourselves as "Christians," justified before God through the work of Jesus Christ.

To see how easy it is to drift away from keeping Christ central, lets take a simple test. Ask yourself, "Who created the world?" Your likely response is, "God, of course, created the world." That is often the first thing that comes to mind. It's proper. It's right. And yet, Col. 1:16 tells us that Jesus Christ was the creator. We need to work hard to see that Jesus is the Creator of the World. It's not that thinking of God as creator is wrong in any sense at all. But, we need to think of God in the fullness of the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Here's another question to ask yourself, "Why did God create the world?" Perhaps the obvious answer is, "For His Glory." Again, that's exactly right. But Col. 1:16 would again direct us back to Jesus. The world is created "for Him." It was created for Jesus! Again, it's not wrong to say that God created the world for Himself, if indeed we think of God as a Triune God.

And the same thing can be said of another question, "Who sustains the world?" Now, certainly, we believe that God sustains the world. And yet, here in Colossians, we read that in Jesus "all things hold together" (Col. 1:17). Paul would press us to think of Jesus Christ as the sustainer of the world. This is also mentioned in Hebrews 1:3, where we read that Jesus "upholds all things by the word of His power." Again, don't get me wrong. It isn't incorrect in any sense to think of God sustaining the world. However, we ought not to remove Jesus Christ from the sustaining role as well. We need to keep the Trinity in mind at all times.

This whole world was created by Jesus, sustained by Jesus, and ultimately for Jesus. As Christians, involved in the body of Christ, the church, we submit ourselves to the Lord of the church, who is Jesus (Col. 1:18). We need to keep Him central. We need to keep Him central in the Church. He is to have first place in everything (1:18).

Reason #2 - To help us deal with false teaching
There are many in this world, who are teaching all types of things today in the name of religion, much of which is harmful to our faith. Even in professing Christian circles, this is true as well. The epistle to the Colossians will help us deal appropriately with all types of false teaching.

The *deity of Christ* is under constant attack. Cults, liberals, and humanists all attack the person of Jesus. Many people think that Jesus was simply a good man, but He certainly was not God. In Col. 2:9, Paul says, "In Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." This is as straight-forward a statement that we have in all of the Bible of the deity of Christ. When we reach chapter two in our study of Colossians, we will spend much time dwelling on these things.

The *completeness of Christ's work upon the cross* is questioned today. There are many people in the church, who believe that faith in Jesus is a start, but isn't quite enough. In order to be a complete Christian, these people suggest that you need to have some type of extra experience. You need to do certain things. You need to go through certain religious ceremonies. You need to read certain books. You need to listen to certain teachers. To this, Paul says, "in Him you have been made complete" (Col. 2:10). In other words, there is nothing that you need to add to your salvation.

In recent days, I have been criticized for emphasizing the benefits of reading through the entire Bible. If my words have been interpreted in such a way that you have thought that you need to read through the Bible every year in order to be a complete Christian, then I apologize to you. It is wrong to think such things, for in Him you have been made complete. There is nothing that you need to add to your salvation. We are saved, "By grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, plus nothing." This is also true for Family Worship. It is wrong to think that in order to be godly, I must practice Family Worship in my home. As a pastor, I desire to encourage you to do certain things in order to help you grow spiritually. But these things are not necessary for godliness. Christ alone makes you complete.

There are those today who love the *symbolism of religion*. They love the advent candles. They love Seder meals and feasts of the Jewish calendar. They love the religious festivals. They love their church liturgy. There is nothing wrong with these things, but how easy they can become the focus, rather than one to whom they all point! Paul writes, "no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day -- things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ" (Col. 2:16-17).

There are those who are very *mystic in their faith*. They seek experiences. They seek visions. They are quick to pronounce to others that God spoke to them. To these people, Paul speaks, "Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head" (Col. 2:18-19).

There are those who believe that you need to *abstain from certain things* if you want to be a "good Christian." They have rules like: Don't go to movies. Don't go to bars. Don't drink alcohol. Don't touch cigarettes. Don't send your children to public schools. To these types of things, Paul writes, "These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom ... but are of no value against fleshly indulgence" (Col. 2:23). These are legalistic standards that can easily come into our churches.

I was speaking recently with another pastor friend of mine who was pastoring a church that had taught for years all the things that we as Christians need to stay away from. And now, he is trying to deal with the effects of such teaching. What makes these things so difficult is that they have an appearance of wisdom (2:23). They seem reasonable. They seem to help us in our fight against sin by giving us clear rules to follow. But Paul says that they are "of no value against fleshly indulgence." (2:23)

The book of Colossians will help us to deal with all of these beliefs. And I trust that you see the solution to each of these tendencies. In every case, Paul brings us back to Jesus Christ. He is fully God. In Him we are complete. He is the substance of our faith. He is head of the body, to which we need to cling. He is the path to overcoming fleshly indulgence.

Reason #3 - To give us principles for living.
At the end of the day, isn't this what we want? We want our lives to be changed by the power of God. That's why everything I mentioned in my previous point gets a hold so quickly in our lives. We want tangible things to do. We want to know how to live.

Colossians is a very practical book. It's not all simply theological. It comes to a practical conclusion. In fact, all of chapter 3 is entirely devoted to application. To be sure, the application is all founded upon the theology which Paul presents. Without the theology, any application is mere moralism. But, Paul's applications in this book flow from his theological foundation that he laid in the first two chapters. I think that you can make the case pretty well that all of the applications in Colossians all have direct reference back to the person of Christ. Paul tells us what ought to occupy our thoughts. "Keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1). Paul tells us what to put aside: "anger, wrath, malice, slander and abusive speech" (Col. 3:9). Paul tells us what to put on: "as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (Col. 3:12). Paul will instruct wives and husbands and children and fathers and servants and masters in how they ought to live (Col. 3:18-4:1).

As we go through these things, it's my prayer that God will change us and conform us into the image of His son. Theological knowledge of Christ is not sufficient. Remember, to the church in Sardis, Jesus said, "I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead?" (Rev. 3:1). In other words, their theology was correct. They sounded like they were fine. But, they weren't. They were facing a terrible judgment. It's important that we apply the truths that God has given us in His word.

Reason #4 - Teach us the priority of prayer.
One of the most powerful verses in all of this epistle comes in Colossians 4:2: "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving." Does your prayer life need any help? I know that mine does.

Paul tells us to be "devoted" to prayer. People devote themselves to many things. People are devoted to their physical fitness. People are devoted to their athletic teams. People are devoted to their jobs, their families, their gardens, their hobbies, their television shows, their financial portfolio, their vacations. You all can imagine the sacrifice that it takes to be devoted to these things. You may be

required to wake up early for practice and training. You sacrifice much time, effort, and thought in order to be devoted to these things.

But, Paul tells us to be "devoted to prayer." Prayer is always something that needs our diligent attention. You will never reach the point where you no longer need to work at your prayers. What I love about Paul is that he does not just tells us what to do. Like any good teacher, he first models it. Look back at chapter 1 verse 3: "We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints." That's a pretty high call. "Praying always for you." But, it was Paul's heart. Look over in verse 9, "For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you." Paul was one to pray always in all circumstances. Paul was "devoted" to prayer. I trust that his example and his exhortation will help us all grow in our prayer lives.

2. An Exposition (verses 1-2)

Having spent some time introducing the book of Colossians, I would like us to turn our attention to an exposition of the first two verses in Colossians.

> Colossians 1:1-2
> Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

The very first word of this epistle begins with identifying the author: Paul. This is very typical of Paul's letters that He wrote. We typically sign our letters at the end of the document. But, the people of the first century often wrote letters by identifying themselves at the beginning of the letter. In fact, every single epistle that Paul wrote began this way. Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Without exception, the first word of all of these letters is the word, "Paul." Other Biblical writers did this: James did it in his epistle. Peter did it in both of his epistles. Jude did it in his epistle.

Paul was a remarkable man. He was born a Roman citizen in the city of Tarsus (Acts 22:28). His parents gave him the name of Saul, which he later changed to Paul. He was born of Jewish parents, who raised him in strict accordance with the law (Phil. 3:5). At some point, he came to Jerusalem to study under Gamaliel, one of the most respected Jewish Rabbis of his day (Acts 22:3). Paul was top of the

class (Gal. 1:14). It’s as if Paul went to Harvard University and became valedictorian of his class. Paul’s intellectual abilities were remarkable. He knew several languages. He knew the Old Testament inside and out. He also knew enough of the secular literature to be able to quote the secular poets (Acts 17:28). He could stand up against the mightiest of scholars in Athens without backing down.

J. Oswald Sanders rightly gives us an idea of this man’s brilliance. He described what a modern-day parallel of Paul would be like. He would be one who "could speak in Peking in Chinese, quoting Confucius and Mencius; ... write closely reasoned theology in English and expound it in Oxford; ... and defend his cause before the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Russian in Moscow." [1]J. Oswald Sanders continues on to say that Paul "was certainly one of the most versatile leaders the church has known." [2] His religious obedience was unbelievable. At one point, he even said that there was nothing in the law that could convict him of being a sinner (Phi. 3:6), "as to the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless." Paul's obedience was matched by a remarkable religious zeal. He was a persecutor of the church (Gal. 1:14).

But, as Paul begins this letter to the Colossians, he doesn’t describe his great intellectual abilities. Nor does he focus upon his great zeal and obedience to the truth. Rather, he begins by describing his God-ordained purpose in life. Look back at verse 1. He identifies Himself as "an apostle." The word "apostle" comes from the Greek word, apostellw, which simply means, "to send" or "to dispatch." An "apostle," then, describes someone who was sent or dispatched. Often, the term denotes some authority. The one being sent is being sent with the authority of the sender.

Paul's next phrase denotes who it was that sent him: It was Jesus Christ, himself. Continue on with verse 1, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ." With these words, Paul was simply acknowledging that he was sent by Jesus Christ, with the authority of Jesus Christ. When you remember how Paul was converted, you can see how true this actually is. The story of his conversion is told in Acts 9. Being zealous for the glory of God, he was persecuting the church which he thought to be in error. He had obtained legal papers allowing him to arrest and persecute any Christians that he could find. He was on his way up to the city of Damascus to persecute these Christians when he came face-to-face with Jesus Christ.

Perhaps you remember the story. As he and his companions were along the way, "suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him" (Acts 9:3). Paul would later

describe this light as being "brighter than the sun" (Acts 26:13). "He fell to the ground and heard a voice" speaking to Him (Acts 9:4). This voice said, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4). Having no idea who was speaking to him, Paul replied, "Who are You, Lord?" At which point this voice responded, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city and it will be told you what you must do" (Acts 9:5-6). When Paul finally got up from the ground, he found himself to be blind. He had gazed directly into the bright light, and now he couldn't see. His traveling companions, who were dumbfounded at the scene, hearing the voice but seeing no one, brought him into Damascus (Acts 9:7-8).

Shortly after these things took place, Jesus also appeared at Damascus, to a disciple named Ananias. Jesus told Ananias to go to a certain house, where Saul of Tarsus was staying. Speaking of Saul, Jesus told Ananias, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake" (Acts 9:15-16). Ananias went as he was told (Acts 9:17). He found Saul in this certain house, laid hands upon him, and spoke a few words to him. Immediately, he regained his sight, arose, and was baptized (Acts 9:18). After a few days, Paul went straight into the synagogues at Damascus, where he began to proclaim Jesus saying, "He is the Son of God" (Acts 9:20).

When Paul encountered Jesus Christ upon the road to Damascus, His life was instantly changed. He changed his name from Saul to Paul. No longer would he resist Jesus. But rather, he would become one of the strongest defenders of the faith. No longer would he persecute the church. But rather, he would become persecuted with the church. Even before He left the city of Damascus, he was beginning to suffer for the name of Christ.

The Jews were confounded by Paul's new message. They couldn't prove him to be wrong. And so, they made a plot to kill him. The Jewish leaders had set men at the gates of Damascus, day and night, to catch him when he attempted to leave the city (Acts 9:24). The only way for him to escape the city was by being lowered in a large basket at an opening in the wall (Acts 9:25). This was all in fulfillment of the words of Jesus at his conversion: Jesus said, "I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake" (Acts 9:16). And for the rest of his life, Paul would endure persecution by the Pharisees who hated Jesus.

It's easy now for us to understand everything that Paul was communicating to those at Colossae with his opening words: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the

will of God." Paul was sent by Jesus Christ to be His ambassador of the good news of the gospel of Christ. It was God's will that Paul be a messenger for Him. Jesus sent Paul to be His proclaimer of truth. Jesus told Paul at his conversion, "I am sending you to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in [Christ]" (Acts 26: 18).

At this point, I want to move to my third point.

3. Why Colossians?

The question is, "Why did Paul write this epistle to the Colossians?" From the best that we can tell, Paul had never been to the church at Colossae. That's the sense we get from chapter 2, verse 1, when Paul told them of his struggles for them, although he had never seen their face. In reality, it's not so surprising that he had never been to Colossae. The city of Colossae was a small town in the interior of the Roman province of Asia. This area is essentially modern day Turkey. It once held great prominence during the times of the Persians and Greeks. But by the time that Paul wrote this epistle, it was an insignificant market town. J. B. Lightfoot said that the church in Colossae was "the least important to which any epistle of Paul is addressed." We know very little about the church, other than what we read here in the book of Colossians. The church isn't mentioned in the book of Acts. But, we do know that there was a church established in Colossae.

When Paul wrote Colossians, it was during a time of his imprisonment. We know this because he finishes this letter with a simple plea (in chapter 4, verse 18), "Remember my imprisonment." How appropriate for Paul, who knew that he would suffer much for the name of Christ, to be imprisoned for His name. I'm sure that Paul was quite confident that his suffering also came through the hand of the Almighty. He knew that he was sent by the will of God. He was now suffering by the will of God. He knew that his life would be destined for suffering.

Where exactly this Roman prison was is difficult for us to determine. Several suggestions have been made. The best guess of all of them is that Paul was in Rome, under house arrest as described in Acts 28:30-31. If this is the case, then we know that this letter was sent somewhere in the early 60's, for that is when Paul was in prison in Rome. In the epistle, we get some clues as to his situation in his imprisonment. We know that Timothy was with him during this difficult time. Verse 1 states, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy

our brother." It’s not that Timothy was a co-author of this epistle. Rather, he was with Paul as a co-laborer. But, Timothy wasn’t the only one. In chapter 4, we find out that several others were with him as well. Men like Tychicus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Mark, Jesus who is called Justus, Epaphras, and Luke were all with him as well.

So, Paul wasn’t alone during this difficult time in his life. He had some other laborers along side him. Some were fellow prisoners. Others were around for encouragement and support. Others would be sent out to encourage other churches with letters that Paul would write to them.

When you read what Paul says about the men in chapter 4, you can discern that Paul is planning on sending two men: Tychicus and Onesimus to deliver this letter to Colossae (4:7-9). When you look to other books of the New Testament, you also find out that Paul had sent these two men to deliver two other letters: Ephesians and Philemon. Aristarchus was a "fellow prisoner" (Col. 4:10). Epaphras was also a "fellow prisoner" (Philemon 23).

Paul found out about the church through a man named Epaphras, who was a "fellow prisoner" with Paul (Philemon 23). Apparently, Epaphras brought the gospel to those in Colossae and told Paul about how they had received the gospel and had born great fruit. Epaphras must have told Paul all about that took place. Look at verses 7-8, "just as you learned [of the gospel] from Epaphras, our fellow bond-servant, who is a faith servant of Christ on our behalf, and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit."

Such verses are quite encouraging. Those in Colossae had heard the truth of the gospel from Epaphras and had accepted it and had embraced it and had believed it. According to verse 6, the gospel had been bearing fruit in their lives. I’m sure that Paul wrote to encourage those in Colossae to continue in their faith. In chapter 1, he tells them of how was praying constantly for them. In chapters 3 and 4, he helps instruct them on how to live.

But, not only did Paul learn about the good from Epaphras. He also learned the bad from him as well. Those in Colossae were being taught some heretical things. Those in Colossae were being pulled away from the truth. And so, perhaps the main reason why Paul wrote this letter was to correct the wrong teachings that were circulating in Colossae. It’s difficult to know exactly what was being taught in Colossae, as we don’t have any record of any teacher in Colossae. However, we can read of how Paul sought to diffuse the errors that were cropping up, and from

Paul's writing we can make a good guess as to the nature of the heretical teachings. It's a bit like hearing one side of a telephone conversation. When you hear what one person is saying, you can get an idea of what is taking place on the other side of the phone. Let me demonstrate this for a minute, as you listen to one end of a phone call between my wife and her mother:

> "Hello?"
> "Hi mom! How are you?"
> "Yeah, we remembered. We sent Aunt Janelle a card. I'm sure that she'll really enjoy it!"
> "What? Yeah, our kids are fine. They are doing well."
> "What's that? That's good! When we come next time, I'm sure that our children will love to play with the neighbor's kids. Perhaps we can invite them to come over and play in the pools."
> "Yes, we are all excited about coming out. Is the Model T ready for the 4th of July parade? Our kids are really looking forward to the parade."

From this, we can pretty much guess what the person on the other line of the phone was speaking about. And that's what we have in Colossians. We can hear what Paul is telling the Colossians, and from that we can make a real good guess as to what their problem was.

There has been so much discussion as to what exactly was the heresy being taught in Colossae, that it has come to have its own name. It has been called, **"The Colossian Heresy."** The heresy was really a mixture of a bunch of different things.

There were aspects to this heresy that had a **Jewish** origin. There were some in Colossae who were urging the people to pay close attention to the festivals and new moon celebrations and the Sabbath days (Col. 2:16). There were other aspects to this heresy that had an **ascetic** focus. By this I mean that there were some who focused their attention upon "self-abasement and severe treatment of the body" (2: 18, 23). They thought that the key to being religious was in keeping your body under constant discipline and hardship. There was a **mystical** element to what was being taught. Some in Colossae had seen visions and were thus held up as experts (Col. 2:18) in spiritual matters. Some in Colossae were focusing their attention upon worshiping angels (Col. 2:18).

There was a **Gnostic** slant as well. The Gnostics thought that the key to life was in a higher knowledge of the truth, where you remove yourself from this evil world. Thus, they would often tell you not to handle, taste or touch certain things because

such things are evil (Col. 2:21). The Gnostics also had a difficulty accepting Jesus Christ come in the flesh, which is something that Paul emphatically declares (Col. 2:9). There was also a **philosophical** element as well. Some thought that the way to God was through a special knowledge or wisdom that the teacher had (2:3). They tried to persuade the Colossians through their "persuasive arguments" (2:4). But Paul said (in 2:8), "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."

Finally, (and perhaps most dangerous of all), there was a **Christian** element in the teaching. To be sure, they wouldn't deny the name of Christ. They would simply attempt to mix all of this teaching with Jesus Christ. They were adding all of these other things to Christ. As one commentator said, "It wore the mask of Christianity. It did not deny Christ, but it did dethrone him. It gave Christ a place, but not the supreme place. This Christian facade made the Colossian error all the more dangerous." [2]

And so, Paul wrote this epistle to those in the small, insignificant town of Colossae to encourage the saints as well as to refute the errors that were creeping into the church.

At this point, we can really thank the Lord for heresy. In the providence of God, He has always used the false teachings of heretics to help Christians clarify what they believe. Such is the case with Colossians as well. As Paul was forced to deal with the false teachings of those in Colossae, he has given for us a clear and concise statement of the central elements to our faith. This book is as relevant for us today as it ever was.

In verse 2, we read that Paul wrote this epistle "to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae." Paul writes to "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ." These two descriptions are describing the same group of people. It's not that some of the Christians are "saints" and others are "faithful brethren." On the contrary, these are simply designations of the same people, who are followers of Christ. I love these words that are used to describe Christians. As Protestants, we often shy away from using the word, "saints" as is conjures up on our minds an image of some extra-holy person who is always represented by a nice halo around their head. Unfortunately, this is a disservice that the Roman Catholic Church has done for us. We ought to embrace this word as a description of Christians. The message of the gospel is that we have been cleansed by faith in Christ. We are holy people, bought with His blood, to walk in a holy manner. That is what the

second term "faithful brethren" is about. It simply describes those who follow Christ. The first term, "saints" speaks about our "standing" before God. The second term, "faithful brethren" speaks about how Christians live. They are "faithful brethren."

Paul finishes up his introduction with a very standard greeting. He wrote, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father." In many of his epistles, he writes much the same thing (for instance, see Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:2). On the one hand, this is merely a way to introduce a letter. Yet, these words are rich. They are short expressions of prayer for God's grace and peace to be upon the Colossians. Do you want grace? I trust you do. We all are in desperate need of God's grace in our lives. It is God's grace that saves us and sustains us. From His grace come every blessing in our lives. Do you want peace? I trust you do. In the midst life's turmoils and difficulties, God's peace is available to comfort us and encourage us. Simply rest in Him.

As we look at Colossians in the weeks and months to come, let us remember that the purpose of our church is to give first-place to Christ in everything. And may it be that our hearts will be refreshed in knowing the pre-eminence of Christ in our lives.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on April 23, 2006 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

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[1] - J. Oswald Sanders, Spiritual Leadership, p. 50.

[2] Ibid, p. 50.

[3] The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 11. Curtis Vaughan, p. 168.