

YOU DON'T WALK ALONE.

Colossae

- Colossae, modern day Turkey.
- Multicultural: "The cities had a mixed population. The natives were Phrygian. Because of the military and commercial heritage of the valley, however, Greeks may have settled in the area during the Greek period of dominance. To this were added Jews of the Diaspora, Romans involved in politics, and various ethnic groups drawn by commercial interests. The exact population mixture of Colossae during this time is unknown. From the epistle, both Jews and Gentiles lived there and became part of the church."

Date

- Around A.D. 62.

Occasion

- Sabotage by false teachers. Colossae was the perfect storm.

Setting

- Prison Letters! Paul wrote Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Philemon while behind bars.

Distinctives

- Hapax City: "The epistle contains an unusually high number of words which are only used one time in the New Testament (*hapax legomena*)...In the Greek text there are 34 *hapax legomena* and 63 words which occur less than 5 times in the New Testament."
- Paul didn't plant the church, but he still cared for it.

Theme

- Centrality and preeminence of Christ.¹

Aspects of the right walk

- What sort of prayers do we _____? – 1:3

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you,

- A heart change eventually changes what people _____ about us – 1:4
since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints,

- Hope (grounded in God) _____ us to love (others who are not) – 1:5-8 *because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel,⁶ which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth,⁷ just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf⁸ and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.*

- Wisdom (spiritual) is needed to appropriately _____ knowledge – 1:9 *And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,*

- a. Mere knowledge: Mr. Know it All. Degrees = innumerable. Friends = Zero. The person who is an expert in data or theory but fails the most basic test of human relationships.
- b. The World's Wisdom: Mr. Worldly Wiseman. Skilled at working with or manipulating people exclusively for their own benefit without any thought to the Kingdom of God or eternity.
- c. Godly wisdom + knowledge: The knowledge of God's Word, the world, and people with the skill and passion to apply what we know to impact people for Jesus Christ.

- Walk like _____: Who are you, really? – 1:10-14 *so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him:*

- Q: What does it look like to *walk in a manner worthy of the Lord*?
- Living the Word – 1:10a *bearing fruit in every good work*
 - Learning the Word – 1:10b *and increasing in the knowledge of God.*
 - Being strengthened by the Word – 1:11 *being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy;*
 - Remembering the Word – 1:12-14 *giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

Key: generate/hear/enables/apply/yourself

¹ R. R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, Vol. 32, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1991), 163, 166, 172. "No one knows when Colossae was founded. As early as the time of Xerxes of Persia (485–465 B.C.), it was a thriving community. Herodotus, a Greek historian, said it was a "great city of Phrygia" in 480 B.C." p.162.