

Notations on the Book of Colossians

Introduction

Colossians is a brief letter written by St. Paul while he was imprisoned in Rome and is along the lines of Ephesians. As noted with regard to similar texts already posted on the home page, the current one is meant specifically for the practice of *lectio divina*, nothing else. While important, such *lectio* is itself secondary to what it hopefully leads to, namely, awareness of the presence of God in one's life. Apart from assisting towards that end, any notations in this document are of no value. As for any information about this letter, plenty can be found elsewhere which is why this Introduction is brief and to the point. The same applies to the notations themselves. They are intended to be a skeleton or structure on which to hang one's *lectio* and prayer.

Special emphasis is placed upon the role of the Greek prepositions whether free-standing or prefaced to verbs and nouns. They are spelled out to some detail, for awareness of their use is especially important in practicing *lectio divina*. Besides, attention to prepositions serves to slow down one's reading with the intent to relish the text which in a way would be unattainable otherwise.

Interestingly, Colossians contains no direct quotations in part or in whole from the Old Testament. A footnote to the NIV Bible says the title "Christ" appears some twenty-nine times. Finally, many words are listed with references to where they appear elsewhere in Colossians. Once such example is found in 1.16: *adoratos* (cf. 1-15).

The text used is **The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha** (New York, 1973).

Chapter One

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

-Paul identifies himself as being an *apostolos* or one-who-is sent, that is, with reference to Christ Jesus along with Timothy, both being in that capacity by God's will or *thelema* which also can mean something like "by the good pleasure of." Although Timothy is noted right here at the beginning, Paul is the author of this

short letter.

1-2: to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

-*Hagaios* and *pistos* are two adjectives with regard to the recipients of the letter, the former also something as those who are devoted or pure.

-Since Paul is an apostle by the *thelema* of God, he can be an *apostolos*...one-who-is-sent...with regard to God the Father. In other words, through Paul comes divine grace and peace, *charis* and *eirene*.

1-3: We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you

-This is an extended verse running through the first part of vs. 5.

-Here thanking and prayer are presented as one, *eucharisteo* and *proseuchomai*, just as the Father and Jesus Christ are present as one. Note the preposition *pros-*prefaced to the latter signifying direction-towards-which.

-Paul uses the first person plural ('we') although he is confined to prison, meaning that he's in contact not only with Timothy but with the local Christians supporting him.

1-4: because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love which you have for all the saints

-“Because” isn't in the Greek text.

-The thanking and praying of the previous verse derive from having heard of the Christians at Colossae, that is, their faith (*pistis*) in Christ Jesus and the *agape* for all the saints (*hagios*, cf. 1-1).

-Note the uses of two prepositions: *en* and *eis* or in and into, the former with regard to Christ and the later with regard to the saints. It's as those the former were transformed into a deeper presence or from an “in” to an “into,” an *en* to an *eis*.

1-5: because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel

-*Dia* or “through” translates as “because;” compare with 1-4 where “because” isn't translated *per se*.

-This verse is second fruit, if you will, of that thanking and praying found in 1-3 and

pertains to hope (*elpis*) which exists in heaven (literally as ‘in the heavens’) or is laid up there, *apokeimai* suggesting a keeping in reserve (*apo-* or from prefaced to *keimai*, to lay or to stretch). The idea seems to be that such hope is not simply static in heaven but is accumulating interest.

-This verse contains a second sentence which runs through 1-7. Paul assumes that the Colossians had gotten word of this treasure through the gospel which he calls the *logos* of truth (*aletheia*), a phrase found in Eph 1.13, *logos* taken in the fuller sense as an expression.

1-6: which has come to you as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing—so among yourselves from the day you heard and understood the grace of God in truth

-The gospel coming to the Colossians obviously depends upon those bringing it though the way it’s presented suggests that it has a life of its own independent of those bringing it.

-The verb *pareimi* has the preposition *para-* rendering it something like being with or beside you. To make it even more intimate, the preposition *eis* is used, literally as “into you.”

-Such intimate presence of the gospel Paul foresees as spreading throughout the world or *kosmos* which implies good order.

-The image is that of a tree which bears fruit and grows, that is, within the *kosmos* as it’s doing within the Colossians. This two-fold action is a result of both hearing understanding God’s grace or *charis* not in and by itself but in truth or *aletheia*.

1-7: as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf

-Epaphras is singled out for having taught the Colossians, *manthano*. He is a fellow servant or *sundoulos* (also a slave), the preposition *sun-* or with who is beloved, *agapao*, the verbal root for *agape*.

-In addition to being a *sundoulos*, Epaphras is a minister or *diakonos* of Christ who is *pistos*, faithful.

-“On our behalf” seems to be on behalf of Paul and his associates in Rome.

1-8: and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

-Either Epaphras himself traveled between Colossae and Rome or more likely used messengers to inform Paul, the verb *deloo* meaning to make clear or plain the *agape*

of the Colossians which is in the Spirit or *Pneuma*.

1-9: And so from the day we heard of it 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,

-“Day” is special for Paul in prison, a kind of *kairos* event for him, when he got news from the Colossians’ acceptance of Christianity chiefly due to Epaphras mentioned in 1-7. This news traveled quickly between Colossae and Rome either by boat or by the Roman road system or both.

-Two prepositions are at work here, if you will: *huper* or on (your) behalf and the *pros-* (direction towards-which) of *proseuchomai* (cf. 1.3). This verb is bound up with asking, *aiteo* or asking.

-*Pauomai* or (not) ceased serves to intensify such prayer, the object of which is that the Colossians be filled or *pleroo* with *epignosis* or knowledge, literally knowledge-upon, *epi-*, this *epi-* providing a kind of bird’s eye view relative to God’s will or *thelema* (cf. 1-2).

-*Epignosis* leads to a kind of “in-ness,” that is, concerning wisdom and understanding or *sophia* and *sunesis*. Both are modified by the adjective *pneumatikos* or spiritual. The first noun connotes skill or technique in anything whereas the latter, a uniting or union (i.e., the preposition *sun-* or with), that which pertains to our faculty of comprehending something quickly.

1-10: to lead a life worthy of the Lord fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

-The second part of Paul’s *proseuchomai* and *aiteo*, his praying and asking, consists of the Colossians literally walking about or around *peripateo* which is to be done worthily, *axios* being an adverb.

-The phrase governed by *eis* (into) consists of the noun *areskeia* which has the connotation of obsequiousness and the adjective *pan* (all).

-The two participles *karpophoreo* and *auxanomai* are found in 1-6 but not noted there but here are specified by every good work, *ergon* also as an occupation. Both are related to the knowledge-upon (*epi-*) or *epignosis* of God (cf. 1-90..

1-11: May you be strengthened with all power according to his glorious might for all endurance and patience with joy,

-The verb *dunamao* and the noun *dunamis* derived from it are used, the former suggestive of might and ability while the latter is a capacity for accomplishing something.

-The adjective *pan* (all; cf. 1-10) means that both words apply to everything conceivable. However, the *dunamao* of *dunamis* to this *pan* is done according (*kata*) divine might which is glorious, that is, *kratos* which is related to the noun *doxa* in the sense of effulgence.

-*Kratos* differs from *dunamis* insofar as it pertains to inherent strength or sovereignty in the sense of exercising rule.

-The two nouns endurance and patience or *hupomone* and *makrothumia* are the direct consequence of God's *kratos*, the way he wishes to rule. The former means literally to wait under (*hupo-*), suggestive of standing one's ground while the latter is the noun *thumia* prefaced with the adjective *makros* (large); *thumos* is a difficult term to nail down meaning soul, spirit, the principle life as well as the seat of emotion and appetite. Both are to be associated with joy, *chara* also meaning delight.

1-12: giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

-*Eucharisteo* (cf. 1-3) or giving thanks with respect to the Father (dative case) because he has made us worthy (*hikano* suggests making sufficient or qualified) with respect to (*eis*, into or full presence-in) the inheritance or *meris* which means a part or portion of *kleros* or lot as it applies to the saints who live in the light, *phos*, saints being mentioned for the first time in 1-2.

1-13: He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son

-*Rhuomai* or "has delivered" also pertains to keeping guard or safe with respect to the *exousia* or darkness, this noun meaning freedom to do something without hindrance. Compare with *dunamis* and *kratos*, both in 1.11; here *exousia* belongs to darkness (*skotos*) which seems close to being personalized but not quite.

-After *rhuomai* comes a transference by God the Father, *methistemi* consisting of the root *histemi* (to stand) with the preposition *meta-* or after prefaced to it. The idea is a radical shift...transference...from *skotos* to the Son's kingdom, he being beloved which is put literally as "Son of agape" (cf. 1-8).

1-14: in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

-In Christ we have the following two prefaced with the preposition *apo-* or from: 1) redemption or *apolutrosis* whose is *luo* (to loosen) and 2) forgiveness or *aphesis* which is from *aphiemi* or to let go, this being relative to sins, *hamatia*.

1-15: He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation;

-*Eikon* or that which also can be seen as a portrait, semblance or comparison. In other words Christ is an exact replication, if you will, of God who is invisible, *aoratos*. What is seen in him is a mirror of what cannot be seen.

-*Prototokos* or first-born doesn't intimate being part of creation but since Christ is an *eikon* of *aoratos*, he is also *prototokos* of the same *aoratos*, if you will.

1-16: for in him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

-This verse contains two instance of the verb *krito*, to create, the first being with the preposition *en* or in and the second with the two prepositions *dia* and *eis* or through and into. Thus both have creation firmly related to the person of Jesus Christ.

-The two aspects of creation are *en* or in heaven and *epi* or upon earth: visible and invisible, *horatos* and *aoratos* (cf. 1-15 for the latter).

-*Aoratos* contains the following three: *thronos*, *kuriotetes* and *arche*, angelic hierarchies alluded to in Eph 6.12: "For we are not contending against flesh and blood but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Despite this formidable array, the small word *eite* or "whether" is important to keep in mind. It casts them into an almost casual regard.

1-17: He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

-This straight-forward sentence is important in light of the angelic array aligned against Christians. Despite any havoc they may cause, Christ is both *pro* and *en* or before and in *pan* or all things; the latter has the verb *sunistami* with its preposition *sun-* or with suggesting that Christ is the principle of cohesion with regard to creation. The verbal root is *histemi* (cf. 1-13) or to stand...to stand-with Christ, if you will.

1-18: He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent.

-Head and body or *kephale* and *arche*, two words suggestive of a beginning which contains the end result as well as sovereignty. To the head belongs a body or *soma*, the church.

-As for *arche*, *prototokos* or first-born with respect to the dead whereas in 1-15 this word is with reference to the creation.

-As for *protreuo* (to be pre-eminent), it resembles *prototokos* insofar as both have the preposition *pro-* (before) prefaced to it and means to hold the chief place in anything.

1-19: For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell,

-Note that *pleroma* or fulness has a kind of autonomy or self-identity, if you will, distinguished from God, i.e., it is “of God.” This *pleroma* has a will of its own, that is, it was pleased to dwell in Jesus Christ, *katoikeo* meaning to settle down permanently (*kata-* according to).

-The other noun is *eudokeo* consists of the root *dokeo* meaning to think or to suppose with the preface *eu-* suggestive of well-ness, the adverb form.

1-20: and through him to reconcile to himself all things whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

-1-19 has “in him” whereas the verse at hand begins with “through (*dia*) him” where *pleroma* (it’s situated in Christ) engages in the process of reconciliation, *apokatallasso* meaning to exchange hostility for friendship or to restore an original state of affairs.

-Note the two prepositions: *apo-* and *kata-* or from and according to prefaced to the root of *apokatallasso* meaning to change or exchange. Such an exchange takes place both upon (*epi*) earth as well as in (*en*) heaven. The aim: that Christ’s blood through his crucifixion makes peace, *eirenopoieo*.

1-21: And you, who once were estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds,

-Paul turns attention to his audience, the first time since 1-12, calling the Colossians estranged, hostile and doing evil: *apallotrioo* with the preposition *apo-* indicative of from.

-*Exthros* or enemy-like with the noun *dianoia* (also thought, intention, purpose; *dia-* as through & *noos* or mind...through-the-mind) and *poneros* as also painful, grievous.

1-22: he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death in order to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him,

-*Apokatallasso* or reconciled as in 1-20 pertains to those two categories of people in the previous verse. The “body of flesh” and mention of death as related to human corporeality seem intended to show that Jesus Christ was truly human, not some kind of phantom. Also “now” backs this up.

-The result of this *apokatallasso* is to present the Colossians in a three-fold condition, the verb being *paristemi* or literally to stand beside or in the vicinity of, *para-* plus *histemi* (cf. 1-11)

-The three states relative to the Colossians: *hagios* (cf. 1-4), *amoros* and *anegkletos*. The last applies to no legal charge being brought against a person. The preposition *katenopion* means over against, opposite or in the sight of.

1-23: provided that you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel which you heard which has been preached to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

-The two small words *ei ge* opening this verse are vital because they set up a condition relative to being holy, blameless and irreproachable of the last verse.

-The verb *epimeno* or “continue” with its preposition *epi-* (upon) suggests a sustained remaining (*meno*) with respect to faith.

-The three adjectives are: 1) the verb *themelioo* meaning to lay the foundation, 2) *edraios* referring to the structure whose foundation has just been laid and 3) *metakineo* (with *me*, the negative) or to move from one place to another, *meta-* as after. They pertain not just to the gospel but its hope.

-Apparently the Colossians have heard the gospel preached or *kerusso* which means proclaimed as by a herald.

-Such heralding is done to every *ktisis* or creature which involves the whole of creation, not just humans.

-Paul as *diakonos* (cf. 1-7) or minister engages in this *kerusso* or heralding.

1-24: Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,

-Paul speaks as a minister or *diakonos* (cf. previous verse) where for the sake of the Colossians he rejoices in his sufferings, the verb being *chairo* and the noun *pathema* signifying the result of an action.

-Also in his flesh or *sarx* (used in 1-22 with reference to Christ's *sarx*) he makes up for what Christ had suffered, *antanapleroo* consisting of the root *pleroo* (to fill) with two prepositions, *anta-* (over against) and *ana-* (on, upon).

-*Thlipsis* or affliction of Christ implies a crushing; compare with *pathema* belonging to Paul.

-The verb *antanapleroo* as applied to Paul compensates for the lack or *husterema* in Christ's afflictions, that is, for his *soma* (body; cf. 1-18) the church. The verb is prefaced with two prepositions, *anti-* and *ana-*, against and on or upon.

1-25: of which I became a minister according to the divine office which was given to me for you to make the word of God fully known,

-“Of which” refers to Paul as a *diakonos* or minister (cf. 1-24) in accord with (*kata*) literally the “dispensation of God,” *oikonomia*, this word consisting of *oikos* (house) and *nomos* (custom, law).

-*Eis* or into as literally “into you.”

-*Pleroo* or to fill (cf. 1-9) with reference to the *logos* (cf. 1-5) of God, word as expression.

1-26: the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to his saints.

-Here *musterion* (hidden purpose or counsel) is equivalent to *logos* of the previous verse, hidden for ages or *apokrupto* which contrasts with *phaneroo* or to be clear.

-*Hagios* (cf. 1-22) or saints receive this manifestation.

-A contrast of time: *aion* (era, epoch) and *nun* or ages and now.

1-27: To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

-“To them” refers to *hagios* of the previous verse and has the verb *gnorizo* implying getting acquainted. *Hagios* applies to the Colossians who are themselves Gentiles.

-*Musterion* consists of riches of glory or *doxa* (cf. 1-11), another way of putting “Christ in you.”

-*Doxa* is used a second time with respect to hope, *elpis* (cf. 1-5).

1-28: Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man mature in Christ.

-*Kataggello* or proclaim in an official sense (*kata-* or according to prefaced to *aggello* or to announce); compare with *kerusso* of 1-23.

-Two parts of *kataggello*: 1) *noutheteo* meaning to correct through instruction and 2) *didasko* or teaching in wisdom (*sophia*, cf. 1-9).

-The result of this twofold process: present or *paristemi* (cf. 1-22)...to stand-beside or *para-*...not just as mature or *teleios* (that which tends toward completion) but as in Christ.

1-29: For this I toil, striving with all the energy which he mightily inspires within me.

-“For this” or literally as “into (*eis*) this” serves to bring Chapter One to completion.

-*Kopiao*: to work in a wearisome sort of way.

-*Agonizo* is an intensification of *kopiao* and is done with energy or *energeia*, effective working, *ergos* or work prefaced with the preposition *en-* or in. It is used with the preposition *kata* or in accord with.

-*Energeo*: root of *energeia* or that in action.

- *Dunamis* (cf. 1-11) or the capacity to accomplish something; compare with *energeia*.

Chapter Two

2-1: For I want you to know how greatly I strive for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not seen my face,

-*Agon*: a struggle in the sense of a contest and implies strenuous, athletic exertion. Paul does it for both those in Laodicea and those who have not seen him but certainly heard of him or have read his letters.

2-2: that their hearts may be encouraged as they are knit together in love, to have all the riches of assured understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, of Christ

-The object of *agon* is *parakaleo* which is the root *kaleo* to call or to summon prefaced with the preposition *para-*, beside or near.

-*Sumbibazo*: the root *bibazo* or to lift up, exalt prefaced with the preposition *sum-* or with, here in *agape* (cf. 1-13).

-*Plutos* or riches consist of full assurance of understanding, the two nouns being *plerophoria* and *sunesis*, full assurance and as noted in 1-9, a uniting or union (i.e., the preposition *sun-* or with), that which pertains to our faculty of comprehending

something quickly.

-The *mysterion* (cf. 1-26) of God is presented here as Christ himself and is associated with knowledge or *epignosis* (cf. 1-10), literally as a knowing-upon (*epi-*). This noun is governed by the preposition *eis*, or “into knowledge-upon.”

2-3: in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

-*Apokruphos* or hidden is an appropriate word associated with *mysterion* which applies to treasures consisting of both *sophia* (cf. 1-28) and *gnosis*, wisdom and knowledge.

2-4: I say this in order that no one may delude you with beguiling speech.

-*Paralogizomai*: the root *logizomai* or to estimate or calculate prefaced with the preposition *para-* or beside suggesting leading astray in speech.

-*Pithanologia*: speech (root is *logos*) which is persuasive. *Pithanos* is an adjective meaning calculated or probable.

2-5: For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

-A contrast between *soma* and *pneuma* (cf. 1-24 and 1-8 respectively), body and spirit with the verbs *apeimi* (*apo-* or from) and *eimi*.

-Paul’s object of rejoicing (*chairo*, cf. 1-24): *taxis* and *stereoma* or good order (no adjective in the Greek) and firmness, both of which are literally “of the into (*eis*) Christ faith in you.”

2-6:As therefore you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so live in him,

-A correspondence between *paralambano* and *peripateo* (cf. 1-10) or receiving and living with respect to Jesus. Note the two prepositions prefaced to the verbs, *para-* or beside and *peri-* or around, here as to walk around.

2-7: rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

-Three participles: *rhizo*, *epoikodomeo* and *bebaio*, the second with the preposition *epi-* or upon prefaced to the verbal root consisting of *oikos* (house) and *demo* (to build)...to build a house upon, if you will. All three have been taught (*didasko*, cf. 1-

28) as by Epaphras is a minister or *diakonos* of Christ (cf. 1-7).

-*Perisseuo* or to abound: the preposition *peri-* or around prefaced to the root *seuo* (to rush or shoot along), here with respect to *eucharistia*.

2-8: See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit according to human tradition according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ.

-*Blepo* or to see in the sense of being cautious with regard to becoming a prey or *sulagogeo*, to become booty.

-*Philosophia* and *apate* or fraud which is *kenos* or empty, vain, the two here being more or less equivalent.

-*Paradosis* or tradition, literally as a handing down or beside (*para-*) “of men.”

-*Stoicheion*: any first thing from others belong in accord with a series or composite whole, here as related to *kosmos* (cf. 1-6) or the universe.

-The *kata* or in accord with relative to *stoicheion* is in contrast to the *kata* with regard to Christ who takes the place of *stoicheion*.

2-9: For in him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily,

-*Katoikeo* (cf. 1-19) is the verbal root for house (*oikos*) and prefaced with the preposition *kata-*, in accord with. Such dwelling is with regard to the fulness of divinity as it pertains to Christ in bodily fashion, *somatikos* (adverb). *Pleroma* (cf. 1-20) and *theotes* are the nouns.

2-10: and you have come to fulness of life in him who is the head of all rule and authority.

-Fulness here is the participle *pleroo* (cf. 1-24; compare with *pleroma* in the previous verse);

-“Of life” isn’t in the Greek text.

-*Kephale* or head (cf. 1-18) with respect to *arche* and *exousia* (cf. 1-18 and 1-13 respectively).

2-11: In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ;

-*Peritemno* and *peritome*: to circumcise and circumcision, both prefaced with the preposition *peri-* or around.

-*Acheiropoitos*: made without hands.

-Such circumcision in Christ is equivalent to putting off the body of flesh or *sarx* (cf. 1-24), the verb being *apekduasis*, an un-clothing (*apek-* or *apo-* and *ek-*, apart from and from).

2-12: and you were buried with him in baptism in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead.

-A contrast of two verbs with the preposition *sun-* (*sug-*) or “with” prefaced to them, *suntapto* and *sugeigero*. Although one is below and the other is above, the *sun-* or being with Christ unites them. The former is associated with baptism in Christ and the latter with being raised (*egeiro*) with Christ.

-*Energeia* or working (cf. 1-29) of God which is equivalent here with *egeiro*.

2-13: And you, who were dead in trespasses and the un-circumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

-This is the fourth verse in a row where Paul speaks directly to the Colossians, i.e., “you.”

-Dead with regard to trespasses and un-circumcision or *paraptoma* and *akrobustia*. The former has the preposition *para-* or beside prefaced to the root meaning a fall or calamity. The latter means a foreskin.

-Despite this two-fold type of death, God made the Colossians alive with (*sun-*) Christ, the verb *sun-* or with prefaced to *suzpoopoieo*; i.e., a double *sun-*.

-*Charizomai*: to grant a favor with regard to *paraptoma* mentioned a second time.

2-14: having canceled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

-*Exaleipho*: to wash over or to wipe away, the preposition *ex-* or from prefaced to the root *aleipho*, to prepare the skin for gymnastics. The object of the verb is *cheirophon* or literally handwriting.

-*Hupenantion* or opposite, over against with reference to *dogma* or decree.

-*Airo* means to set aside the *cheirophon* which is equivalent to nailing it to the cross.

2-15: He disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in him.

-*Apekduomai*: to strip off (*apo-*) clothes, the two objects being *arche* and *exousia*, both found in 2-10. I.e., Christ made both naked.

-Once made naked, the two are made a public example. The verb *deigmazo* means to expose along with *parresia* which fundamentally means free speech by a citizen of a city state.

-*Thriambeuo*: to lead in triumph with the victorious commander at the head of his troops and captured enemies.

2-16: Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.

-*Krino* or to pass judgment with regard to eating and drinking as well as other religious festivals.

2-17: These are only a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

-*Skia* or shadow with reference to the contents of the previous verse. In contrast to *skia* we have the verb *mello* or about to be with regard to the body of Christ, *soma* (cf. 2-5) being in the Greek text.

2-18: Let no one disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, taking his stand on visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind

-*Katabrabeueto*: to decide against (*kata-*) someone or to pass judgment.

-*Tapeinophrosune*: the adjective *tapeinos* or humbled prefaced to the verbal root *phronema* or mind, spirit.

-*Threskeia*: worship and implies the cult or ritual that goes with it, here with regard to angels.

-*Embateuo*: to frequent or investigate, here concerning what one has seen (*horao*).

-*Phusioo*: to blow or puff up without cause as a result of one's mind being sensuous rendered literally as "by the mind of the flesh," *noos* and *sarx* (cf. 1-21 and 2-11 respectively).

2-19: and not holding fast to the Head from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

-*Krateo* as to hold fast also as to be strong, to prevail and here applies to *Kephale* (cf. 1-18) or Christ which is attached to the body (*soma*, cf. 2-17). Physically speaking

the body provides nourishment to the head whereas here it's reversed: nourished and knit together or *epichoregeo* and *sunbibazo*. Note the two prepositions prefaced to each verb, *epi-* or upon and *sun-* or with: nourished-upon and knit- with, if you will.

-*Auxano* and *auxis* or to grow and growth, the verb suggestive of increase in power and strength which here comes from God (genitive case, 'of God').

2-20: If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe, why do you live as if you still belonged to the world? Why do you submit to regulations,

-A rhetorical question which continues through vs. 22, not expecting an answer by designed to put the Colossians on the spot.

-A contrast between dying and living: elemental spirits and the world or *stoicheion* and *kosmos* (both in 2-8), the latter reading literally as "in the world.

-*Dogmatizo*: to issue a decree and as in this case, to be subject to a decree; verbal root of *dogma* (cf. 2-14).

2-21: "Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch"

-Three senses in reference to *dogmatizo* of the previous verse.

2-22: (referring to things which all perish as they are used) according to human precepts and doctrines?

-The three overly strict commands of the previous verse and lead to destruction which here is rendered as "into corruption to use," *phthora* and *apochresis*.

-*Kata* or according to with respect to precepts and doctrines which are human, *entalma* and *disaskalia*.

2-23: These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting rigor of devotion and self-abasement and severity to the body, but they are of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh.

-The human precepts and doctrines of the previous verse appear to be like wisdom, the noun *logos* commonly as word as expression and *sophia* (cf. 1-25 and 2-3 respectively).

-Both promote the following three: 1) rigor of devotion or *ethelothreskia*, literally as self worship, 2) self-abasement or *tapeinophrosune* (*tapeinos* or humble, lowly cf. 2-18) and 3) severity or *apheidia* (*phaidomai*: to spare, to be merciful).

-Nevertheless, human precepts and doctrines are worthless when it comes to restraining sensual indulgence which reads literally as “not in a certain honor toward (*pros* or direction toward-which) restraining of the flesh.” The words here are *time*, *plesmone* or a filling up with regard to *sarx* (cf. 2.18) or flesh.

Chapter Three

3.1: If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

-“If” is a condition which may or may not apply though most likely presented in a kind of rhetorical sense.

-*Sunegeiro*: *sun-* or with meaning participation in what has happened immediately after Christ’s resurrection.

-Because *sunegeiro* is located above, if you will, there what lays above is to be sought, that is, *ta ano* with the verb *zeteo*. Such seeking implies not having found everything on that plane even though Christ is there at (literally ‘in’) God’s right hand.

3.2: Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

-*Phroneo* or to have understanding happens once the *sunegeiro* if vs. 1 has happened. Paul warns against a *phoneo* of what’s *epi tes ges*, upon the earth in contrast to *ta ano*.

3.3: For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

-Both *sunegeiro* and *phroneo* are bound up with death or more specifically, death to *epi tes ges*. It’s equivalent to being hidden with Christ in God, *krupto*->*sun*->*en*.

3.4: When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

-*Phaneroo* or to appear with regard to Christ as “our life” and with regard to the Colossians. Both are associated with glory or *doxa* (cf 1-27). Compare this future appearing with having been raised and setting one’s mind on things above mentioned several verses earlier.

3.5: Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire and covetousness which is idolatry.

-*Nekroo* or to put to death literally “things upon (*epi*) the earth” and which are in contrast to *ta ano* or “things above.”

3.6: On account of these the wrath of God is coming.

-*Orge* or wrath as well as disposition, natural impulse and anger. Here *orge* refers to divine judgment.

3.7: In these you once walked when you lived in them.

-“These” refer to fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire and covetousness of vs. 5.
-*Peripateo* (cf. 2-6) literally means to walk around (*peri-*).

3.8: But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander and foul talk from your mouth.

-*Apotithemi* or to take off (*apo-*) from oneself, one of which is *orge* which, of course, differs from divine *orge* in vs. 6.

3.9: Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices

-*Pseudo* or to lie also means to be false (here literally ‘into or *eis* one another’) which is part of the old nature or “man.”
-*Praxis*: or practices which have been put off, *apekduomai* (*apo-* and *ek-* or off and from prefaced to *duo* or to strip off clothes. Thus *apekduomai* is an intensification of *duo*.

3.10: and have put on the new nature which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

-*Enduomai*: the *en-* or “in-ness” of this verb contrasts with the double off, if you will, of *apekduomai* in 3-9.
-“Nature” isn’t in the Greek.
-*Anakaioo*: to renew; the preposition *ana-* suggests that which is above or upon.
-This renewing-upon is with respect to knowledge or *epignosis* (cf. 2-2), the preposition *eis* (into) being used.
-*Eikon* or image with the preposition *kata* or in accord with and refers to the creator

or God the Father.

3.11: Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

-Contrast the new nature with the eight categories of people listed here which boils down to Jew and Gentile.

-A double “all,” if you will, with respect to Christ and everything and everyone else.

3.12: Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness and patience,

-The small word “then” (*oun*) takes into account that the Colossians had paid close attention to Paul’s words thus far.

-*Enduomai* (cf. 3-10) or to clothe oneself with the following five: 1) *splagchnon* or literally, intestine with *oiktirmos* or feelings, 2) *chretotes* or goodness, honesty, 3) *Tapeinophrosune* (cf. 2-18), 4) *prautes* or submissiveness and 5) *makrothumia* or literally long suffering, *thumos* as in 1-11, meaning soul, spirit, the principle life as well as the seat of emotion and appetite.

3.13: forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you so you also must forgive.

-In addition to the five qualities of the previous verse we have two more: 1) forbearing and forgiving, *anechomai* or to put up with someone and *charizomai* or to be gracious. The latter is more important insofar as it involves the Lord directly.

3.14: And above all these put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

-*Agape* (cf. 2-2) is the most important quality to *enduomai* or put on (cf. 3-12).

-*Sundesmos* or bond (*sun-* as with) and *teleiotes* or perfection, maturity. These two words read literally as “bond of perfection.”

3.15: And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

-*Eirene* or peace (cf. 1-2) as belonging to Christ is to rule *brabeuo* or to make a decision not unlike an umpire. Thus peace will function as an arbiter.

-Two prepositions, *eis* and *en*: the former as literally “into which” and the latter as “in one body.”

-*Eucharistos*: thankful which is added not so much as an after-thought but summary.

3.16: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

-*Logos* (cf. 2-23) of Christ who is *Logos* whom Paul urges the Colossians to let not just dwell in themselves (*en* or in with the same preposition prefaced to *enoikeo*) but to do so *plousios* also as abundantly.

-The indwelling of the *logos* by the *Logos* enables the four following: 1) *didasko* or to teach (cf. 2-7), 2) *noutheteo* or to admonish (cf. 1-28) and 3) *ado* or to sing.

-The first two (*didasko* and *noutheteo*) are in all wisdom or *sophia* (cf. 2-23).

-The third is to be done with thankfulness or *charis*, also as grace (cf. 1-6) which is to be situated in one’s heart (*kardia*) and then to God.

3.17: And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

-*Logos* and *ergon* or word and speech (cf. 3-16 and 1-10 respectively). Both are to be carried out in the name of Jesus while giving thanks (*eucharisteo*, cf. 1-3) to the Father through (*dia*) him. Thus being in (*en*) Jesus’ name and through (*dia*) Jesus (a distinction between name and Jesus, if you will) is the proper mode of thanksgiving.

3.18: Wives, be subject to your husbands as is fitting in the Lord.

-*Hupotasso* or to order-under (*hupo-*) is *anekeo* or fitting, the verb meaning to come up to a point, to reach: *ana-* (above, upon) prefaced to *heko* (to come).

3.19: Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

-*Agapao* or to love (cf. 1-7) vs. (not) being harsh or *pikrino*, also to make bitter.

3.20: Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

-*Hupakouo*, literally as to listen-under (*hupo-*) equals pleasing the Lord, *euarestos* (*eu-* adverbial form prefaced to *aresko*, to make good, to appease).

3.21: Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

-*Erethizo*: to excite children results in them becoming discouraged, *athumoeo* or to lack *thumos* which is noted in 3-12 meaning soul, spirit, the principle life as well as the seat of emotion and appetite.

3.22: Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not with eye-service as man-pleasers but in singleness of heart fearing the Lord.

-*Hupakouo*, or to listen-under (*hupo-*) as noted in 3-20 pertaining to children. Such listening-under isn't to be done literally as "in eye services in man pleasers." The two words here are *ophthalmodoulia* and *anthropareskos*: eye + slave and man + pleasing (*areskos*).

-*Haplotes* also as simplicity and frankness located in the heart (*kardia*, cf. 3-16) while fearing (*phobeo*) the Lord.

3.23: Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men,

-The first part is rendered literally as "whatever you do (*poieo*)."

-*Ergazomai* or to work or practice a trade; compare with *poieo*, to do in the sense of to make.

-*Ek psuches* or "heartily," literally as "from the soul" or *psuche*.

-"Serving" is not in the Greek text.

3.24: knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ.

-*Eido* or to know implies recognition of what one is doing has future results. The verb *douleouo* as to serve suggests work as a slave.

-*Apolambano* or to receive, the preposition *apo-* or from prefaced to the verbal root.

-*Antapodosis* and *kleronomia*: receiving from another in return (*ana-*) and reward of inheritance.

3.25: For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

-*Adikeo* as both wrongdoer and wrong done.

-*Komizo* as will be paid back also as to provide for, to preserve.

-*Prosopolempsia*: literally as the accepting of one's face or person (*prosopon* +

lambano).

Chapter Four

4-1: Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

-*Kurios* and *doulos*: master or lord and slave. This relationship (*parecho*: literally as to have beside, *para-*) depends upon the *kurios* realizing (*eido*: cf. 3-24) that a *Kurios* exists in heaven.

4-2: Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving;

-Two words with the preposition *pros-* prefaced to them: *proskartereo* (*kartereo*: to be steadfast) and *proseuche*.

-Note the pair or *gregoreo* (also as to stay awake) as situated in *proseuche* and *eucharistia* (cf. 2-7).

4-3: and pray for us also that God may open to us a door for the word to declare the mystery of Christ on account of which I am in prison

-*Proseuchomai* or to pray (cf. 1-10) with the preposition *pros-* prefaced to it in conjunction with *peri* (around, concerning).

-Mention of a door implies being shut off from the *logos* which Paul wishes to proclaim.

-*Logos* is equivalent to the *mysterion* or hidden purpose, counsel (cf. 2-3) of Christ, reason for his imprisonment.

4-4: that I may make it clear as I ought to speak.

-*Phaneroo* (cf. 1-26): to make clear or manifest.

4-5: Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time.

-*Sophia* and *peripateo* or wisdom and to walk around (*peri-*), 3.16 and 2.6 respectively; here with regard to those who not Christians or those who are *exo* or outside, this prefaced with the preposition *pros*, direction toward-which.

-*Exagorazo*: literally, to buy from (*ex-*) the marketplace with respect to *kairos*, time as opportunity or special event.

4-6: Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer every one.

-*Logos* (cf. 4-3) as speech which here is gracious or literally “in grace” or *charis* (cf. 3-16).

-*Artuo*: to season as well as to prepare.

-The effect of *artuo* is to give a proper answer, *apokrino* (*apo-* or from and *krino*, to separate, distinguish).

4-7: Tychicus will tell you all about my affairs; he is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord.

-Like Epaphras in 1-7 and again in 4-12, Tychius is a minister or *diakonos* who is both *agapetos* (i.e., has *agape*) and *pistos*. His mission to the Colossians is to inform them of Paul’s affairs or literally “to make known (*gignosko*) all things.”

-*Sundoulos*: a *doulos* (cf. 4-1) who is *sun-* or with.

4-8: I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts,

-Mission of Tychius from Paul: to know (*gignosko*, cf. 4-7) his condition, first person plural which implies the to Christians in Rome.

-*Parakaleo* or to encourage, literally as to summon about, *para-* (cf. 2-2).

4-9: and with him Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of yourselves. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

-Onesimus resembles both Tychicus and Epaphras, *agapetos* applied to him (cf. 4-7).

-*Gignosko* as in the previous verse with regard to Paul’s condition in prison.

4-10: Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, receive him),

-Aristarchus is a *sunaimalos* with Paul, a fellow (*sum-*, with) prisoner or more specifically, a prisoner of war.

-*Entole* or instruction, also as commandment.

4-11: and Jesus who is called Justus. These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

-Jesus or Justus is among those who have been circumcised and a fellow worker, *sunergos* (*sun-* or with). Compare with *sundoulos* in 1-7 as applied to Epaphras.
-*Paregoria* or comfort, also as an address or exhortation; *para-* or (to be) beside as prefaced to the verbal root.

4-12: Epaphras, who is one of yourselves, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always remembering you earnestly in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

-Epaphras is mentioned first in 1.7 who greets the Colossians, *aspazomai* also as to salute.
-*Agonizomai* for remembering (earnestly) but more to struggle as in an athletic contest.
-*Teleios* (cf. 1-28) and *plerophoreo*: mature and fully assured, the latter meaning to make full or show in the full. Both are with respect not just to God's will or *thelema* (cf. 1.9) or but it entirely.

4-13: For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

-Paul bears witness concerning Epaphras, *martureo*, with respect to his hard work (*ponos*, trouble usually of a great kind).

4-14: Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.

-*Aspazomai* as in 4-12, Luke being *agapetos* along with Onesimus in 4-9.

4-15: Give my greetings to the brethren at Laodicea and to Nympha and the church in her house.

-*Aspazomai* with regard to the church or *ekklesia*, literally a gathering or calling out (*ek-*).

4-16: And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church

of the Laodiceans; and see that you read also the letter from Laodicea.

-The reading is to be done *para* the Colossians, this preposition almost intimating the same as Paul being *para* or with/beside them.

4-17: And say to Archippus, "See that you fulfil the ministry which you have received in the Lord."

-Archippus is the only person who receives a direct order from Paul concerning *diakonia* or ministry which seems to apply primarily to preaching.

-This *diakonia* (*dia-* or through suggests a full or thorough type of ministry) has been received (*paralambano*, cf. 2-6; *para-* or beside) in the Lord and is to be fulfilled, *pleroo* (cf. 2-10). I.e., *en-* or in follows from *para-lambano*.

4-18: I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my fetters. Grace be with you.

-*Aspasmos* or greeting is derived from *aspazomai* noted several times above.

-*Mnemoneuo* or to remember Paul's imprisonment put in more graphic terms as fetters. *Mnemoneuo* is as if Paul were present among the Colossians who received the letter "with his own hand."

-*Charis* (cf. 4-6) or grace, favor.

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