

THE FOREST HILL NEWS

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Forest Hill

Church of Christ

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VISIT US SOON!

Sunday:

Bible Study..... 9:30 A.M.
Morning Worship.. ...10:30 A.M.
Evening Worship..... 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday:

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

HOME OF

MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

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Volume 32

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Number 11

PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

Barry M. Grider

[Editor's Note: The following material was presented by the editor at the 2003 Lubbock Lectures, conducted by the Southside church of Christ, Lubbock, Texas. This annual program takes place each October and is capably directed by brother Tommy Hicks. For a copy of last year's volume, *The Revelation Of The Mystery: An Introductory Survey of the New Testament*, or previous lectureship books, you may write brother Hicks at 5208 89th Street, Lubbock, TX 79424.]

INTRODUCTION¹

Jesus Christ is all man needs today. The question regarding man's spiritual dilemma are answered in Him. He is the hope of the world. Jesus alone is man's only Savior. Through His atoning blood at Calvary every man can receive forgiveness of sins. The church He purchased with His blood is "big enough" for all those who desire salvation.

Jesus alone provides access to the Father in heaven. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto he father, but by me" (Jn. 14:6). Like a divine lawyer, our Lord pleads our case before the Father. "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 Jn. 2:1). Since sin alienates man from God (Isa. 59:1-2), Christ reconciles man to God (2 Cor. 5:18,20). He makes peace between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). What does Jesus consider His highest priority today? "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). Simply stated, Jesus is:

Heaven's bread for man's hunger
Heaven's water for man's thirst
Heaven's clothing for man's nakedness
Heaven's justification for man's condemnation
Heaven's grace for man's sin
Heaven's hope for man's despair

While all that has been stated thus far, both Biblical and otherwise, demands more explanation by the student of God's word, all that has been said is biblically accurate. It is certain that many religious people claim that Jesus is their Savior; yet refuse to be obedient to His will. Such individuals, many of whom do not realize it, in effect, are rejecting Him.

Yet, Jesus is all man really needs. He is the all-sufficient Savior. This realization is pertinent to a study of the book of Colossians. The book was written to counter the efforts of false teachers who denied His deity and, who, while not totally rejecting the teachings of Christ, desired to intermingle His perfect system with the philosophies of men (Col. 2:8). Such heresy calls to one's mind those who deny the exclusiveness of Christianity in today's pluralistic world. The fusing together of elements of Christianity, Judaism, and paganism was identified as the "Colossian heresy." (continued on page 4)

THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL LECTURESHIP
MARCH 28—APRIL 1, 2004
THEME: "SIN AND SALVATION"
MEMPHIS SCHOOL OF PREACHING

SUNDAY, MARCH 28, 2004

9:30-10:20 A.M. Is The World Really Lost Without The Gospel?
Billy Bland
 10:30-11:30 A.M. What Is Sin? **Barry Grider**
 6:00-7:00 P.M. Heaven: Eternal Home Of The Saved **Paul Sain**
 7:00-8:00 P.M. The Savior's Invitation **Curtis A. Cates**

MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2004

8:30-8:50 A.M. CHAPEL (Forest Hill): His Name Is Jesus
Paul Meacham
 9:00-9:50 A.M. Forgiveness **Bobby Liddell**
 10:00-10:50 A.M. What Does It Really Mean To Be Saved?
David Sain
 Class 1: The Sin Of A Self-Centered Life (Women's Class)
Corinne Elkins
 Class 2: The Works Of The Flesh And The Fruit Of The Spirit
Tom Larkin
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Ye Must Be Born Again **Perry Cotham**
 Class 1: The Sin Of Perverted Worship **Mark Reynolds**
 Class 2: Without Shedding Of Blood, There Is No Remission
Terry Mabery

11:50-1:10 P.M. LUNCH

1:10-2:00 p.m. Calvinism And Neo-Calvinism **Dub McClish**
 Class 1: Sins Of A Prayerless Life (Women's Class)
Annette B. Cates
 Class 2: What Is Repentance? **Dale Hubbard**
 2:10-3:00 P.M. The Sin Of Fear **Ronney Hayes**
 Class 1: Sins Against The Home **Toney Smith**
 Class 2: Salvation Is By Grace, But Not By Grace Only
Victor Eskew
 3:10-4:00 P.M. Open Forum **Garland Elkins**
4:00-7:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
7:00-7:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 7:30-8:30 P.M. The Origin Of Sin **Wendell Winkler**

TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2004

8:30-8:50 A.M. CHAPEL (Forest Hill): Except Ye Be Converted
Randy Chambers
 9:00-9:50 A.M. Cases Of Conversion **Flavil Nichols**
 10:00-10:50 A.M. Sin Keeps The Church From Growing
Johnie Scaggs
 Class 1: The Sin Of An Adulterous Marriage (Women's Class)
Dorothy Mosher
 Class 2: Sins Against The Church **John Moore**
 11:00-11:50 A.M. The Seed Line Of Salvation
Keith A. Mosher, Sr.
 Class 1: The Angels That Sinned **Andy Cates**
 Class 2: Does The Body Sin While The Spirit Does Not?
Kenneth Gossett

11:50-1-10 P.M. LUNCH

1:10-2:00 P.M. The Work Of The Holy Spirit And Salvation
David Brown
 Class 1: Sin's Deceitful Appeal (Women's Class)
Jane McWhorter
 Class 2: An Analysis Of "The Sinner's Prayer"
Jason Roberts
 2:10-3:00 P.M. **SEMINAR FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND SUPPORTERS**
 2:10-3:00 P.M. The Common Salvation **Harrell Davidson**
 Class 1: Sins Of Indifference And Neglect **Stacy Grant**
 Class 2: The Cost Of Salvation **David Watson**
 3:10-4:00 P.M. Open Forum **Garland Elkins**
4:00-7:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
7:00-7:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:30-8:30 P.M. The Second Coming, Resurrection, and Judgment
Winford Claiborne

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2004

8:30-8:50 A.M. CHAPEL(Forest Hill): Sin Separates
Barry Kennedy
 9:00-9:50 A.M. The Sin Of Sodom **John Barcus**
 10:00-10:50 A.M. Hell: Place Of Eternal Punishment For Sin
Mark Bass
 Class 1: Saved At Home-Lost At School? (Women's Class)
Irene Taylor
 Class 2: Salvation Of Man Demands The All-Sufficient Word
Gary Summers
 11:00-11:50 A.M. With Whom Do The Saved Have Fellowship?
Kent Bailey
 Class 1: The Hope Of Salvation **Jerri Manasco**
 Class 2: The Futility Of Man-made Attempts To Escape Sin
Paul Vaughn

11:50-1:10 P.M. LUNCH

1:10-2:00 P.M. Is There A Sin Which God Will Not Or Cannot Forgive?
Gary McDade
 Class 1: How Should A Christian Look At Sin? (Women's Class)
Lavonne McClish
 Class 2: The Sin Of Worldliness **David B. Jones**
 2:10-3:00 P.M. Confession Of Sin **Michael Hatcher**
 Class 1: He That Believeth And Is Baptized Shall Be Saved
Lester Kamp
 Class 2: Satan's Steps For Sinful Compromise
Jerry Martin
 3:10-4:00 P.M. Open Forum **Garland Elkins**
4:00-7:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
7:00-7:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 7:30-8:30 P.M. Will God Always Bless America? **George Bailey**

THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2004

8:30-8:50 A.M. CHAPEL (Forest Hill): The Joy Of Salvation
Phillip Brannon
 9:00-9:50 A.M. What Must Brethren Do When A Brother Sins?
Wayne Coats
 10:00-10:50 A.M. Cases Of Non-Conversion **B.J. Clarke**
 Class 1: The Great Physician (Women's Class) **Vada Rice**
 Class 2: Refuting The Error Of "Once Saved, Always Saved"
Dan Cates
 11:00-11:50 A.M. Must One Be A Faithful Member Of The Church Of Christ In Order To Be Saved?
Charles Box
 Class 1: Encouraging And Training Men To Preach The Gospel
Rick Brumback
 Class 2: Is The Law Sin? **Kenneth E. Ratcliff**
11:50-1-10 P.M. LUNCH
 1:10-2:00 P.M. Salvation Is By Faith, But Not By Faith Only
Gary Colley
 Class 1: Sin Brings Sorrow, Pain, And Death (Women's Class)
Celicia Grider
 Class 2: Can One Today Be Saved Like The Thief On The Cross?
Gene Bench
 2:10-3:00 What Does It Really Mean To Be Lost?
Clifford Newell
 Class 1: Partial Obedience Is Disobedience **Steve Wiggins**
 Class 2: Does Man Have A Sinful Nature? **Tim Kidwell**
 3:10-4:00 P.M. Open Forum **Garland Elkins**
4:00-7:00 P.M. INTERMISSION
7:00-7:30 P.M. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
 7:30-8:30 P.M. Sin Is Man's Greatest Problem; Salvation Is Man's Greatest Need
Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

The Colossian heresy, therefore, is to be regarded as one of many attempts to make Christianity an element in some form of composite religion. They had added to the gospel all that was best in Judaism and Paganism. It was Christ plus instead of Christ period. Colossians is Paul's inspired word to show why it ought to be Christ period!—That Christ is absolutely preeminent and absolutely unique.²

THE AUTHORSHIP OF COLOSSIANS

Paul was the undisputed author of Colossians until the nineteenth century. Claims against the apostle's authorship include: 1) the "Christological argument," which according to some "scholars" is not the same literary style found in other of Paul's writings, and 2) what appears in the writing to be an argument against second century Gnosticism, whereas Paul could not have written it because he would not have been alive.

External Evidence

Both the early and later church Fathers considered Colossians to be a genuine Pauline epistle.

Ignatius may refer to 1:23 in his epistle to the Ephesians. The epistle of Barnabas seems to refer to 1:16. Justin Martyr uses the expression "the firstborn of all Creation" several times; and Theophilus of Antioch does so once. Irenaeus says that Paul, in the Epistle to the Colossians, says: "Luke the beloved physician, greets." This statement is found in Col. 4:14. Clement of Alexandria quotes 1:28 in Stomata, as by Paul. He also quotes 3:12,14,15 in Stomata and 4:2-4 in Stomato. Tertullian quotes 2:8 in Prescription Against Heretics and 2:12, 13 in Resurrection of the Flesh. Drigen quotes 2:18, 19 as in Colossians by Paul in Against Celsus. It was in Marcion's Canon, in the old Latin, and the old Syriac, and is recognized in the Muratorian Fragment.³

Marcion, who lived in the second century A.D., accepted only the Pauline epistles as canonical. He included the book of Colossians as an epistle written by Paul.

Internal Evidence

The internal evidence overwhelmingly proves that Paul wrote the book. First, Paul identified himself in the epistle as its author (1:1, 23; 4:18). Second, his known companions and associations are recorded. Among them are: Timothy (1:1), Epaphras (1:7; 4:12), Tychicus (4:7), Luke (4:14), and Demas (4:14). Third, the close association between Colossians and Philemon (a book considered one of the most unquestioned with regard to the genuineness of Paul's writings). There are numerous references in both books concerning Paul's companions (Onesimus and Archippus). Fourth, the personal greetings of his co-laborers in Christ (4:10-14).

(To be continued)

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