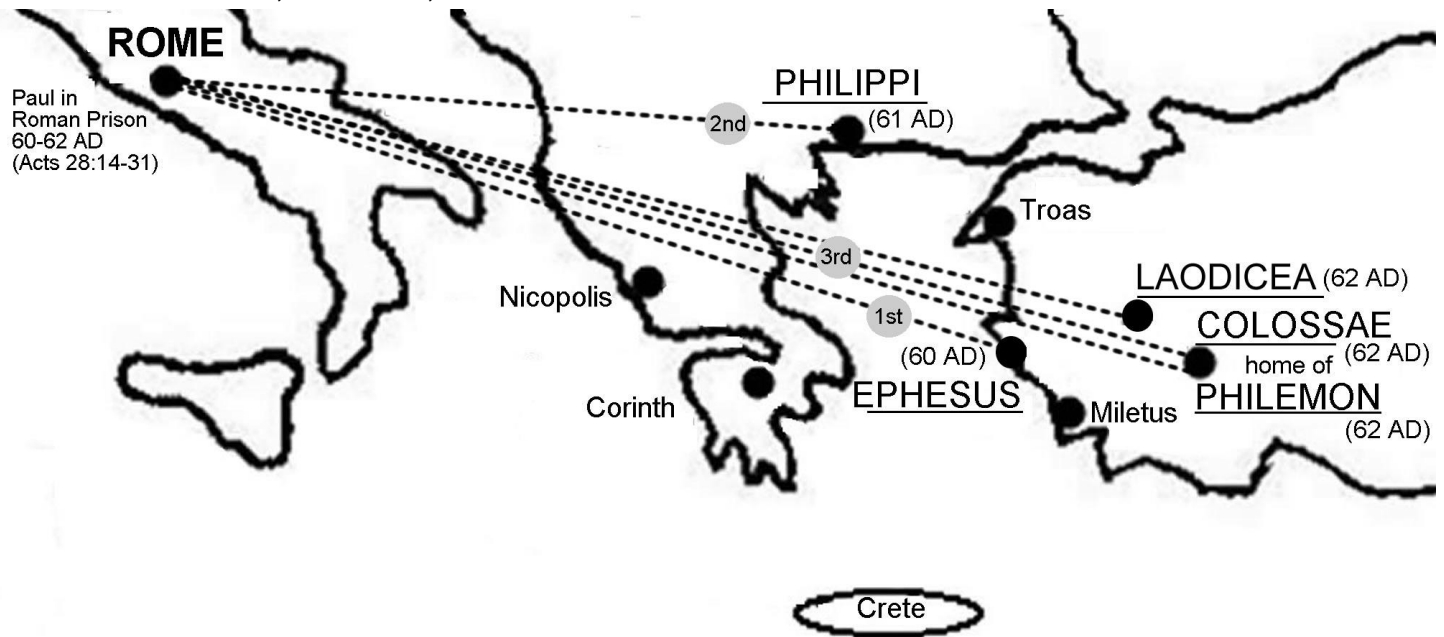


# Prison Epistles (60-62 AD) – Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon

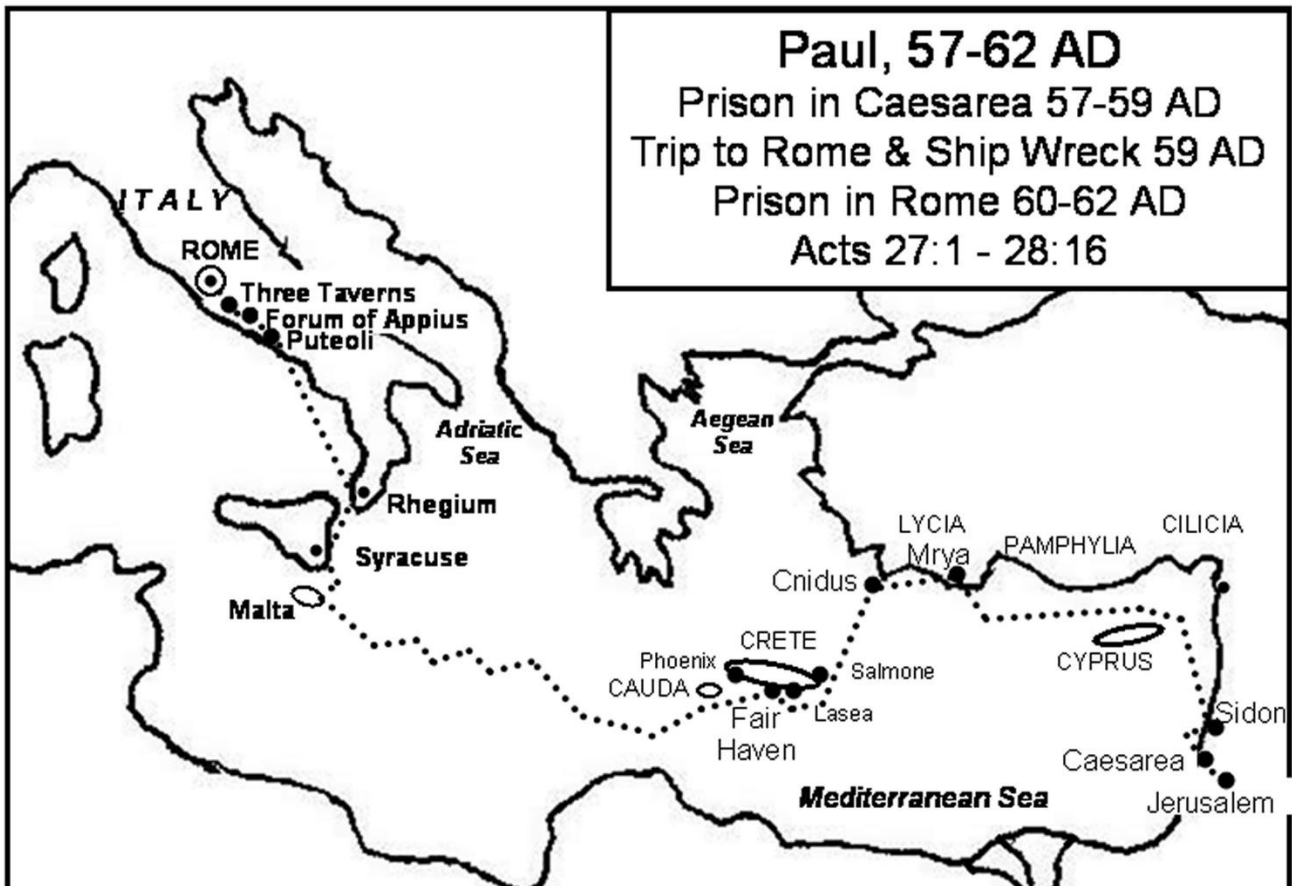
60 AD – Ephesians

61 AD – Philippians

62 AD – Colossians, Philemon, Laodicea



## Paul in Rome Acts 28:14-31.



## Ephesians - 60 AD

- Prison
  - 3:1 – “For this reason I, Paul, a **prisoner of Christ Jesus** on behalf of you Gentiles.”
  - 4:1 – “I therefore, a **prisoner for the Lord**, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.”
  - 6:19-20 – “(Pray) also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an **ambassador in chains**, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.”
- Visit/Communication/News
  - 6:21 – “So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, **Tychicus** the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything.
- Gift/Support

## Philippians - 61 AD

- Prison
  - 1:7 – “It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my **imprisonment** and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.”
  - 1:12-18 – “I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole **imperial guard** and to all the rest that my **imprisonment** is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my **imprisonment**, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the **defense of the gospel**. The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my **imprisonment**. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.
  - 2:17 – “Even if I am to be poured out as a **drink offering** upon the **sacrificial offering** of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.
- Visit/Communication/News
  - 1:27 – “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.”
  - Timothy - 2:19, 24 – “I hope in the Lord Jesus to send **Timothy** to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you... I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.
  - Epaphroditus – 2:27-30 – “I have thought it necessary to send to you **Epaphroditus** my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less

anxious. So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.”

- 4:2-3 – “I entreat **Euodia** and I entreat **Syntyche** to agree in the Lord. Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with **Clement** and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.”
- 4:22 – “All the saints greet you, **especially those of Caesar's household.**”
- Gift/Support
  - 1:5 – “Because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”
  - 2:25 – “Send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need.”
  - 4:10-18 – “I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. 11 Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned, in whatever situation I am, to be content. 12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me. 14 Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. 15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. 16 Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. 17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. 18 I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

## Colossians - 62 AD

- Prison
  - 4:3-4 – “At the same time, pray also for us, 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**— that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.”
  - 4:18 – “I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my **chains.** Grace be with you.”
- Visit/Communication/News
  - 1:7 – “just as you learned it from **Epaphras** our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf.”
  - 4:7 – “**Tychicus** will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord.”
  - 4:7-17 – Paul greets or mentions nine people:
  - 2:1 – **Laodicea** – “For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at **Laodicea** and for all who have not seen me face to face,”

- 4:16 – **Laodicea** – “And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from **Laodicea**.”
- Gift/Support

## Philemon - 62 AD

- Prison
  - Vs. 1 – “Paul, a **prisoner** for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother”
  - Vs. 9 – “yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you—I, Paul, an old man and **now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus**.”
  - Vs. 10 – “I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I became **in my imprisonment**.”
  - Vs. 13 – “I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during **my imprisonment for the gospel**.”
  - Vs. 23 – “**Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus**, sends greetings to you, and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.”
- Visit/Communication/News
  - Vs. 22 – “At the same time, **prepare a guest room for me**, for I am hoping that through your prayers **I will be graciously given to you**.”
  - Vs. 23 – “**Epaphras**, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, and so do **Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke**, my fellow workers.”
- Gift/Support
  - Vs. 7 – “For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the **hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you**.”
  - Vs 18-20 – “I, Paul, write this with my own hand: I will repay it—to say nothing of **your owing me even your own self**. Yes, brother, **I want some benefit from you** in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ.”

## Laodicea - 62 AD

### **Christ Described:**

#### **Ephesians 1:18-23 –**

“Having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of **his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.**”

#### **Philippians 2:1-11 –**

“So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in

full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in **Christ Jesus**, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

### **Colossians 1:15-23 –**

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.”

### **Colossians 2:8-16 –**

“See to it that no one takes you ***captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world***, and not according to **Christ**. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. **He** disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”

<b>EPHESIANS</b>	60 AD
<p><i>"To make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery . . . " 3:9</i>  <i>"This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church." 5:32</i></p>	
<p><b>Author:</b> Paul  <b>Written From:</b> Rome in prison  <b>Sent To:</b> Church in Ephesus</p>	
<p><b>Purpose:</b> To provide doctrine that brings understanding into the mysteries of Christ and the church. This understanding enhances continued maturing of the believers and prevents the development of false doctrine in higher levels of theology.</p>	
<p><b>Theme:</b> The glorious mysteries of the church, which is the body of Christ</p>	
<p><b>Basic Outline:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctrinal Chapters 1-3 – What is true? What should we know? As the church, who are we?</li> <li>• Practical Chapters 4-6 – What should we do? What is expected? What is the church capable of?</li> </ul>	

<b><i>In Christ</i> or <i>With Christ</i> Appears 35 Times in Ephesians</b>	
1:1	"the faithful in Christ"
1:3	"every spiritual blessing in Christ"
1:4	"chosen in Christ"
1:5	"adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ"
1:6	"freely given us in the One he loves"
1:7	"in him we have redemption"
1:9	"purposed in Christ"
1:11	"in him we were made heirs"
1:12	"hope in Christ"
1:13	"included in Christ when you heard the word of truth"
1:13	"marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit"
2:5	"made us alive with Christ"
2:6	"raised us up with Christ"
2:6	"seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus"
2:10	"created in Christ Jesus to do good works"
2:21	"in him the whole building is joined together"
3:6	"partakers of the promise in Christ"
3:12	"in him and through faith in him we may approach God"

Chapter one describes the vast spiritual blessing that is ours in Christ. Paul offers a prayer of thanksgiving for the Ephesian believers and also prays for them that "the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you."

Chapter two recounts their previous condition of being dead in sin but now they have been made "alive with Christ", and also how God has "seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus". The Gentiles have been joined with the Jews in God's eternal plan.

In chapter three Paul explains the mystery of the church age. Paul's service in his ministry is to reveal and "make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery." Paul then prays again for the Ephesians "to know this love that surpasses knowledge."

In chapter four Paul leaves the topic of what God has done through his glorious act of salvation in Jesus Christ and begins to discuss how we should “live a life worthy of the calling you have received.” Paul describes Christian character and the unity of the church. To help the believer become all that he has been called to be, God has placed gifts in the church to help the believer and the church mature. The believer is to stop living as a Gentile and begin living in light and truth.

Chapter five continues the discussion of walking in the light, making the point that since we are children of God we should be imitators of God. Believers who are still living like the world are called “sleepers” among the “dead”. They are told to “wake up!” The chapter concludes by describing the husband and wife’s attitude toward each other and then compares it to Christ and the church.

Chapter six continues to talk about believers and their roles in society including the family, children, fathers, masters, and slaves. Spiritual warfare is described in detail when the armor of God is identified and detailed. We are told to put this armor on because we will be forced to defend ourselves against Satan’s schemes and are called to advance the kingdom of God in this dark age.

<b>PHILIPPIANS</b>	61 AD
<i>"Being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death." 2:8</i>	
<b>Author:</b> Paul	
<b>Written From:</b> Rome in prison	
<b>Sent To:</b> Church in Philippi	
<b>Purpose:</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Provide information concerning his circumstances (1:12-26);</li> <li>2) Encourage them to live in humility and stay in unity as a church (2:1-11; 4:2-5);</li> <li>3) Thank the Philippians for the financial gift (4:10-18);</li> <li>4) Inform them concerning the return of Epaproditus (2:25-26)</li> <li>5) Warn them about Judaizers and false teachers (3:1-4:1)</li> </ol>	
<b>Theme:</b> Joy and contentment in Christ as a citizen of heaven living on earth.	
<b>Basic Outline:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter one, Paul's circumstances while in chains in Rome</li> <li>• Chapter two, Exhortation and encouragement to the people of Christ to think like Christ</li> <li>• Chapter three, Warning against legalism (Judaizers) and antinomianism (lawlessness)</li> <li>• Chapter four, Paul exhorts the Philippians to live in unity and thanks them for their gift</li> </ul>	

Antony and Octavian (Caesar Augustus) defeated Brutus and Cassius at the Battle of Philippi in 42 BC. Anthony ordered some Roman soldiers to settle in Philippi and it became a Roman colony. The citizens were given the *Italic right* which meant the city had the same rights as a city in Italy which included tax exemptions, Roman citizenship for all its residents and government which operated on Roman law. The city had great advantages as a Roman colony in Macedonia and the people willingly used Latin, the language of Rome, as well as adapting to the customs and governing style of Rome. Paul tells these proud Roman citizens who maintained their status and lifestyle even though they lived outside of Italy, they were "citizens of heaven" (3:20).

In chapter one Paul updates the Philippians on his condition in prison as Acts 28 left him. He is ready to depart and be with Christ but believes it to be more beneficial if he continues on earth. In 2:23-24 Paul indicates he is confident he will be released.

Chapter two is one of the best discussions on the nature of Jesus Christ's deity and humanity. Jesus' humbling himself to serve mankind in order to fulfill God's will is put forth as an example to encourage the Philippians to also humble themselves and seek God's will and not their own. Christ did not use his power or position for himself but for others. The Philippians should also not use their power or position for themselves but instead use it to serve others. The second half of chapter two is used to discuss Timothy and the Philippians' own minister, Epaphroditus, who were sent to serve Paul in prison.

Paul uses chapter three to warn the Philippians against two imposters: legalists and libertines. The legalists were the Judaizers who wanted to promote the Law of Moses and Jewish culture as a means of salvation. Paul calls them "mutilators of the flesh" because of their zealousness for circumcision (3:2). The libertines were an antinomian group who held to the concept that the spiritual life and the physical life were separate. Living sinful, worldly lives was not a problem for them since they were spiritually pure and set apart. Paul clearly describes these as either false or severely confused Christians in 3:19.

In chapter four Paul exhorts the Philippians to continue in peace and unity. He thanks them for the financial gift they have sent. Paul gives us a description of what it means to be content in any and every situation. Independent of the circumstances, Paul says he has learned the secret of contentment and can do everything through Christ who gives him strength.

<b>COLOSSIANS</b>	62 AD
<i>"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy . . . For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form."</i> 2:8, 9	
<b>Author:</b> Paul	
<b>Written From:</b> Rome in prison	
<b>Sent To:</b> Church in Colossians	
<b>Purpose:</b> Defeat worldly philosophies sweeping through Colosse that demeaned Jesus	
<b>Theme:</b> Christ is the fullness of deity and the only adequate source and reason of life.	
<b>Basic Outline:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:1-2:3, Doctrinal – the person and work of Jesus Christ</li> <li>• 2:4-23, The Colosse Heresy – emptiness of worldly philosophies and completeness of Christ</li> <li>• 3:1-4:6, Practical Application – the lifestyle and character of a believer in Jesus</li> </ul>	

<b>Christ in Colossians</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christ is the creator (1:16-17)</li> <li>• Christ sustains all things (1:16-17)</li> <li>• Christ is the fullness of Deity (1:15,19; 2:9)</li> <li>• Christ is the head of all principality and power (2:10)</li> <li>• Christ is the redeemer (1:14)</li> <li>• Christ has reconciled us to God (1:20-22; 2:11-15)</li> <li>• Christ is the resurrected One (1:18; 3:1)</li> <li>• Christ is the head of the church (1:18)</li> <li>• Christ is our life (3:4)</li> <li>• Christ is the source of our strength to live the new life (1:11)</li> <li>• Christ is our returning Lord (3:4)</li> </ul>

In chapter one Paul thanks God for the Colossians' faith and prays for their growth. He then describes the glorious person of Christ and richness of his work in redemption. Paul goes on to describe his ministry which includes presenting the fullness of God's word or revelation to believers.

In chapter two Paul goes on the attack to expose some competitive philosophies or heresies that are undermining true Christianity in Colosse. We do not know the specific names or all the details of any of these heretical philosophies, but it appears that errant world views Paul was attacking had these characteristics:

1. Traditionalism which honors man-made customs and rituals of the past with a less than satisfactory understanding of why things are done (2:4, 8)
2. Ceremonialism from some pagan religion (much like that in Judaism) that dictated acceptable food and drink, honored holy days and religious festivals, and practiced circumcision (2:11-17)
3. Asceticism, which is a lifestyle dominated by abstinence from natural activities, foods, or customs in the pursuit of gaining a spiritual or religious goal (2:21)
4. Early Gnosticism and other forms of religion based on secret knowledge (2:18)
5. Angel worship (2:18)
6. Philosophy and man's wisdom outside of God (2:8)

In chapter three Paul establishes some expectations for those who are in Christ and have access to the wisdom and power of Christ. The Christian's life should manifest the Christian's spiritual position in Christ.

In chapter four Paul refers to nine people who are either with him or who are being greeted by him.

<b>PHILEMON</b>	62 AD
"I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains." 10	
<b>Author:</b> Paul	
<b>Written From:</b> Rome, in prison	
<b>Sent To:</b> Philemon, a believer in Colosse	
<b>Purpose:</b> Tell Philemon, a wealthy man and slave owner in Colosse, to accept back his runaway slave, Onesimus, who has become a believer after being imprisoned with Paul	
<b>Theme:</b> Redemption, Restoration, Forgiveness, Imputation	
<b>Basic Outline:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verses 4-7, Paul is thankful and encouraging to his friend Philemon</li> <li>• Verses 8-9, Paul's relationship with Philemon on the basis of authority and love</li> <li>• Verse 10, Paul mentions Onesimus for the first time and calls him "my son"</li> <li>• Verses 11-13, Paul describes how "useful" Onesimus is and that he would like to keep Onesimus with him in Rome.</li> <li>• Verses 14-16, Paul identifies Onesimus as Philemon's property and a useful slave but also as a man and a brother in the Lord.</li> <li>• Verses 17-21, Paul tells Philemon to welcome Onesimus back and to charge anything he owes to Paul's account. Paul reminds Philemon that he owes Paul his very life.</li> <li>• Verse 22, Paul asks Phlemon to prepare a room for him because he plans on visiting when he is released from prison.</li> </ul>	
<b>Memorable Verses:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, yet I appeal to you on the basis of love." 8, 9</li> <li>• "I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains." 10</li> <li>• "I am sending him – who is my very heart – back to you." 12</li> <li>• "He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord." 16</li> <li>• "If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me . . . I will pay it back – not to mention that you owe me your very self." 18, 19</li> </ul>	
<b>Greek Words:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>εὐχρηστος</i> – <i>euchrestos</i> – useful, serviceable, profitable, meet for use, 11.</li> <li>• <i>ἐλλογέω</i> – <i>ellogeo</i> – imput, put on account. This word was a technical term in business used to refer to charging something to someone's account. 18.</li> <li>• <i>σπλάγχνον</i> – <i>splagchon</i> – the inner organs, inward affection, bowels, used to refer to the total person at the deepest levels, 7.</li> </ul>	
<b>Healthy Doctrine:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New man in Christ</li> <li>• Imputation</li> </ul>	