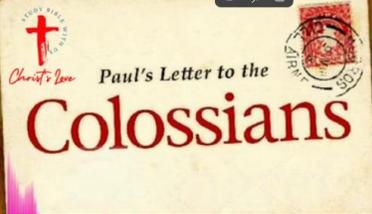


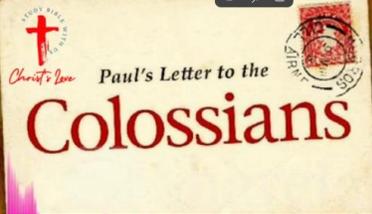
# Prison Epistles

Epistle	Approximate Date	Place Written	Notes
Colossians	AD 60–62	Rome	Sent by Tychicus & Onesimus
Ephesians	AD 60–62	Rome	Sent by Tychicus
Philemon	AD 60–62	Rome	Sent by Onesimus
Philippians	AD 61–62	Rome	Mentions Caesar's household



# Colossian Heresy

- The Colossian heresy was a complex combination of false teachings in the early church at Colossae, combining elements of legalistic Judaism (Sabbath, dietary laws, circumcision), mysticism (angel worship, visions, asceticism), and early philosophical ideas (Gnosticism), all diminishing the supreme sufficiency and deity of Christ, Paul's response in the book of Colossians emphasized Christ's preeminence as Creator and Head of the Church, warning against these human traditions and worldly philosophies
- Paul does not deal with the issues in a direct manner as he did in other letters therefore:
- Our understanding of the heresies can only surmized by looking at the contents on Colossians Chapter 2.



# Colossian Heresy

**Diminished Christology:** Downplayed Jesus' fullness and superiority, suggesting He wasn't enough for salvation.

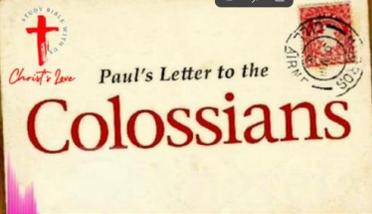
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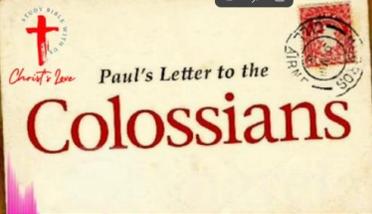
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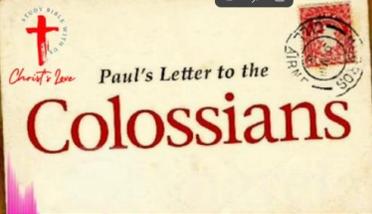
# Colossian Heresy: warning about fine-sounding arguments

- **COL 2:1** I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at **Laodicea**, and for all who have not met me personally. <sup>2</sup> My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may **have the full riches of complete understanding**, in order that **they may know** the mystery of God, namely, Christ, <sup>3</sup> in whom are hidden all the **treasures of wisdom and knowledge**. <sup>4</sup> **I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments**. <sup>5</sup> For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ is. NIV



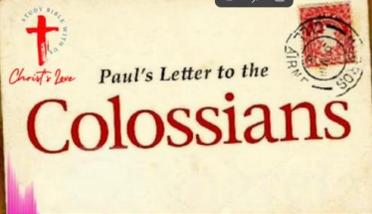
# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:6** So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, <sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. NIV
- **COL 2:6** Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, <sup>7</sup> having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established <sup>1</sup>in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and* overflowing <sup>1</sup>with gratitude. NASB1995



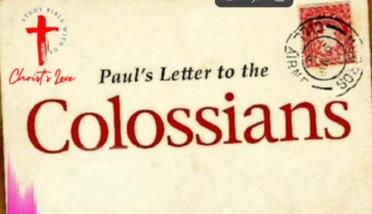
# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:6-15** Section Heading
- **Spiritual Fullness in Christ**
- **Plato then Gnostics separate the creator God so far removed from earth that there is no way to interact. Theories would push that Jesus was an apparition.**
- **A fuller explanation will be covered later as time permits.**
- **Note the deity and superiority of Christ and the phrase he existed in bodily form.**



# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:8** <sup>8</sup> See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and **deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.** NIV



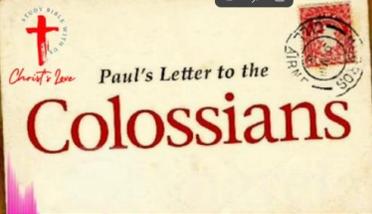
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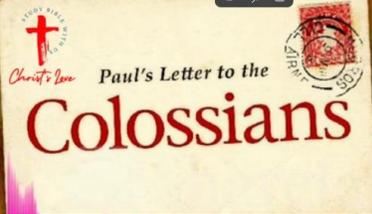
**Syncretism:** Blended Jewish practices, pagan philosophy, and mysticism into a "fuller" path to God.

Views driven by pagan gods, teaching of Plato which seeded the foundations of Gnosticism.



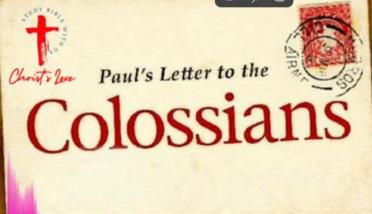
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- **COL 2:9** For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, <sup>10</sup>and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. NIV
- The teaching here is in the positive frame as instead of the negative.



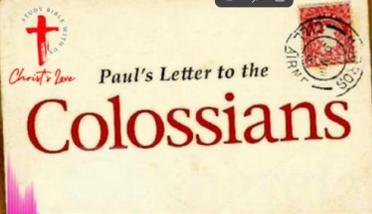
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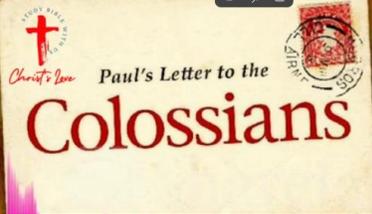
# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:11** In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by **the flesh was put off** when you were circumcised by Christ, <sup>12</sup> having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also **raised with him through your faith** in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. NIV
- More teaching in the positive with repletion of the death to life transition thoughts that are pervasive in both Colossians and Ephesians.



# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:13** <sup>13</sup> When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, <sup>14</sup> having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. NIV
- More teaching in the positive with repletion of the death to life transition thoughts that are pervasive in both Colossians and Ephesians.
- **Diminished Christology:** Downplayed Jesus' fullness and superiority, suggesting He wasn't enough for salvation.
- **Legalism** Demanded adherence to Jewish laws (circumcision, food/drink rules, festivals)

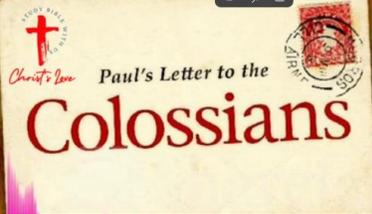


# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:15** And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.<sup>[NIV]</sup>

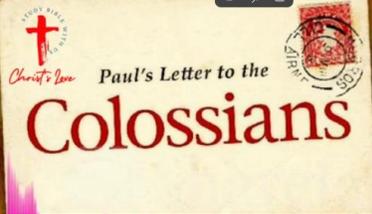
**Mysticism:** Promoted worship/veneration of angels as intermediaries and emphasized secret knowledge or visions. Past the first definition, mysticism includes the occult, astrology, things similar to voodoo and for now we will lump in the worship of any pagan god.

**Syncretism:** Blended Jewish practices, **pagan philosophy**, and mysticism into a "fuller" path to God.



# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:16-23** Section Heading
- **Freedom From Human Rules**
- **Rules coming from Judaism, Pagan, and Mystic beliefs are plaguing the Colossians with excess baggage.**
- **Not recognizing what is baggage and not dealing with it a large portion of the heresy.**
- **Baggage is a severe diversion drawing the minds and actions of the Colossians into worthless pursuits .**



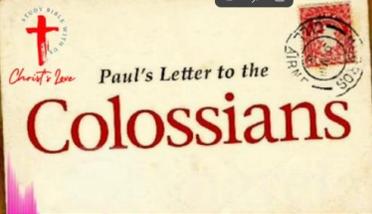
# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:16** Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. <sup>17</sup> These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. [NIV]

**Legalism** Demanded adherence to Jewish laws (circumcision, food/drink rules, festivals)

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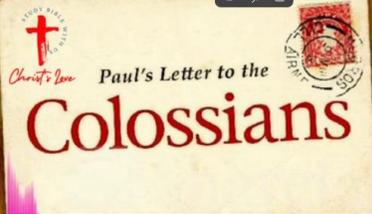


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The Jewish rituals have been reduced to a shadow as these were merely a stepping stone to the Christ.

The shadow world promoted by Plato and the Gnostics is refuted by the reality found in Christ.



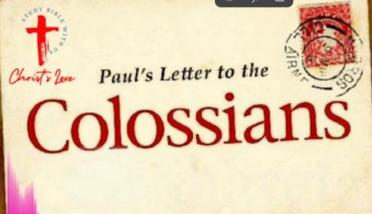
# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:18** Do not let anyone who delights in **false humility** and the **worship of angels** disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are **puffed up with idle notions** by their unspiritual mind. NIV

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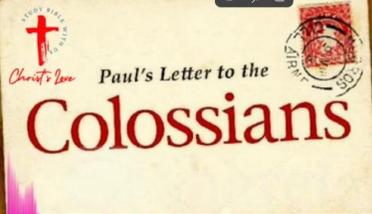
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- Baggage damage. These crazy notions are causing a disconnection with Christ.
- Our social media, and news noise may be damaging.



# Colossian Heresy

- **COL 2:20** <sup>20</sup> Since you died with Christ to the **elemental spiritual forces of this world**, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its **rules**: <sup>21</sup> “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? <sup>22</sup> These **rules**, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. NIV

**Asceticism:** Encouraged severe self-denial and strict rules ("Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch").

**Syncretism:** Blended Jewish practices, pagan philosophy, and mysticism into a "fuller" path to God.

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- **Asceticism**

- The practice of strict self-denial as a measure of personal and especially spiritual discipline : the condition, practice, or mode of life of an ascetic : rigorous abstention from self-indulgence

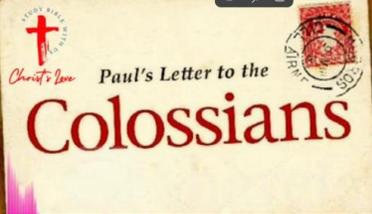
- Fasting

- Celibacy

- Isolation as a Monk

- Flagellation

- Body mutilation



# Colossian Heresy

**COL 2:20** <sup>23</sup> Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their **self-imposed worship**, their **false humility** and their **harsh treatment of the body**, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. NIV

**Asceticism:** Encouraged severe self-denial and strict rules ("Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch").

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# Jewish Heresy John 8:12 -59

- **What happened to the Jewish people?**

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- **What happened to the Jewish people?**
- **John 8:12** When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “**I am the light of the world**. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”
- There are several question and answers that follow in this passage but moving to 8:42

# Jewish Heresy John 8:12 -59

- **What happened to the Jewish people?**
- **John 8:42** Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. <sup>43</sup> Why is my language not clear to you? **Because you are unable to hear what I say. <sup>44</sup> You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires.** He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me!

# Jewish Heresy Matthew 23

- **What happened to the Jewish people?**
- **Matt 23:1** Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: <sup>2</sup>“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. <sup>3</sup>So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. <sup>4</sup>They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

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**Legalism** Demanded adherence to Jewish laws (circumcision, food/drink rules, festivals)

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# Jewish Heresy Matthew 23

- **What happened to the Jewish people?**
- **Matt 23:5** “Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; <sup>6</sup> they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; <sup>7</sup> they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called ‘Rabbi’ by others.
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# Jewish Heresy Matthew 23

- **What happened to the Jewish people?**
- **Skipping ahead it just gets worse**

# Jewish Heresy Matthew 23

- **What happened to the Jewish people leaders?**

**Matt 23:13** “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. <sup>15</sup> “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when you have succeeded, you make them **twice as much a child of hell** as you are.

- **Spiritual Elitism:** Suggested a deeper spiritual knowledge available to an elite few, above ordinary believers.

# Jewish Heresy Matthew 23

- **What happened to the Jewish people leaders?**
- Observations
- teachers of the law and Pharisees take the brunt of the discourse
- Rituals and appearance have become baggage keeping them away from a relationship with God.
- Teaching one thing and doing another is a serious issue.

# Christian Heresy

# Marcion of Sinope 85-160 A.D

- Marcion was a theologian in early Christianity. Marcion preached that God had sent Jesus Christ, who was distinct from the "vengeful" God (Demiurge) who had created the world. He considered himself a follower of Paul the Apostle, whom he believed to have been the only true apostle of Jesus Christ; his doctrine is called Marcionism. Marcion published the earliest record of a canon of New Testament books.
- The practice of Marcionism would last hundreds of years.
- Some identify Marcion as the first Christian heretic. He was excommunicated in 144.

# Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian on Marcion

- **Key Themes Across All Three Writers**
- **Refutation of Dualism:** All three writers reject Marcion's teaching of two gods and defend the unity of God.
- (God of the old testament differs from God of the New Testament)
- **Defense of the Old Testament:** They argue for the validity and continuity of the Old Testament as Christian scripture.
- **Canon Formation:** Marcion's edited canon prompted responses that helped shape the Christian biblical canon.
- **Polemical Tone:** Each writer presents Marcion as a serious threat to orthodox Christianity, often using strong language and detailed argumentation

Plato 428–423 BC, died 348/347 BC)

## **Plato's Spiritual World: The Realm of Forms**

### **1. Two Realms: Physical and Spiritual**

Plato believed reality is divided into two distinct realms:

- **The Physical World:** The world we perceive with our senses—changing, imperfect, and temporary.

- **The World of Forms (Spiritual World):** A higher, non-physical realm containing perfect, eternal, and unchanging "Forms" or "Ideas." These Forms are the true reality; everything in the physical world is merely an imperfect copy or shadow of these perfect Forms. For example, all beautiful things participate in the Form of Beauty, but only the Form itself is truly, perfectly beautiful.

# Plato

## **Plato's Spiritual World: The Realm of Forms**

### **2. The Soul and Its Journey**

Plato taught that the soul is immortal and originates in the world of Forms. Before birth, the soul contemplates these perfect Forms. When it enters a body, it forgets this knowledge, but through philosophical reasoning and recollection, it can remember and reconnect with the Forms. The soul's ultimate goal is to return to the world of Forms, escaping the limitations of the body.

# Plato

## **3. The Allegory of the Cave**

In his famous allegory, Plato describes people as prisoners in a cave, mistaking shadows on the wall for reality. The journey out of the cave symbolizes the soul's ascent from ignorance (the physical world) to knowledge of the true reality (the world of Forms). The highest Form is the Form of the Good, which illuminates and gives meaning to all other Forms.

# Plato

## 4. Tripartite Soul

Plato divides the soul into three parts:

- **Reason:** Seeks truth and wisdom, aiming for the Forms.
- **Spirit:** Associated with emotions and moral courage.
- **Appetite:** Desires physical pleasures. A just soul is one in which reason rules, guiding spirit and appetite toward the good.

the soul, immortality, and the existence of a higher, non-material reality. His ideas influenced later religious, philosophical, and mystical traditions.

# Plato

## **5. The World Soul**

In some works, Plato describes the cosmos itself as having a "World Soul," a spiritual principle that orders and animates the universe, mediating between the world of Forms and the physical world.

### **Why It Matters**

Plato's vision of a spiritual world shaped Western thought about the soul, immortality, and the existence of a higher, non-material reality. His ideas influenced later religious, philosophical, and mystical traditions.

# Demiurge – a subordinate god

- **Demiurge**, in philosophy, a subordinate god who fashions and arranges the physical world to make it conform to a rational and eternal ideal. Plato adapted the term, which in ancient Greece had originally been the ordinary word for “craftsman,” or “artisan” (broadly interpreted to include not only manual workers but also heralds, soothsayers, and physicians), and which in the 5th century BC had come to designate certain magistrates or elected officials.

# Demiurge – a subordinate god

- Plato used the term in the dialog *Timaeus*, an exposition of cosmology in which the Demiurge is the agent who takes the preexisting materials of chaos, arranges them according to the models of eternal forms, and produces all the physical things of the world, including human bodies. The Demiurge is sometimes thought of as the Platonic personification of active reason. The term was later adopted by some of the **Gnostics, who, in their dualistic worldview, saw the Demiurge as one of the forces of evil, who was responsible for the creation of the despised material world and was wholly alien to the supreme God of goodness.**

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