

Colossians 1 - Doctrine: Christ's Preeminence Declared in the Gospel Message and Redemption; All Things Held by Him; He is the Beginning & Fullness

I. Supremacy of Christ (Col 1:1—2:23)

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Colossians 1

I. Supremacy of Christ (Col 1:1—2:23)

(1) Introduction

(A) Greeting (1:1-2)

(a) Writer (1:1)

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

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

1 From: Paul, an apostle of the Messiah Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother.

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother,

(b) Recipients (1:2a)

(c) Greeting (1:2b)

2 To the saints and faithful brothers *and sisters* in Christ *who are* at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

2 To: The holy and faithful brothers in Colossae who are in union with the Messiah.

May grace and peace from God our Father be yours!

2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(B) Thanksgiving (1:3-8)

(a) General expression of thanks (1:3)

3 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

3 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

3 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, praying always for you,

3 We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

(b) Reason for Thanksgiving (1:4-5a)

(i) Their faith (1:4a)

(ii) Their love (1:4b)

4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints;

4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints;

4 because we have heard about your faith in the Messiah Jesus and the love that you have for all the saints,

4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,

(iii) Their hope (1:5a)

(c) How the realities were produced (1:5b-8)

(i) Word of truth of the gospel (1:5b-6a)

5 because of the hope reserved for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel

5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel

5 based on the hope laid up for you in heaven. Some time ago you heard about this hope through the word of truth, the gospel

5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

(ii) Grace of God in truth (1:6b-8)

6 which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is bearing fruit and increasing, even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *it* and understood the grace of God in truth;

6 which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as *it has been doing* in you also since the day you heard *of it* and understood the grace of God in truth;

6 that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and spreading all over the world, so it has been doing among you from the day you heard it and came to know the grace of God in truth.

6 Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:

7 just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,

7 just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,

7 You learned about this gospel from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of the Messiah on your behalf.

7 As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8 and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

8 and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

8 He has told us about your love in the Spirit.

8 Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

(C) Prayer (1:9-14)

(a) Prayer that believers are filled with knowledge (1:9)

9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard *about it*, have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

9 For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

9 For this reason, since the day we heard about this, we have not stopped praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the full knowledge of God's will with respect to all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

(b) Knowledge leads to a fourfold walk (1:10-12a)

(i) Bearing fruit for every good work (1:10a)

(ii) Increasing in the knowledge of God (1:10b)

10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

10 so that you might live in a manner worthy of the Lord and be fully pleasing to him as you bear fruit while doing all kinds of good things and growing in the full knowledge of God.

10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

(iii) Being strengthened (1:11)

11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all perseverance and patience; joyously

11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

11 You are being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might, so that you might patiently endure everything with joy

11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

(iv) Giving thanks (1:12a)

(c) Five reasons for thanking the Father (1:12b-14)

(i) Qualified us to share in the inheritance of the Saints (1:12b)

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

12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

12 and might thank the Father, who has enabled us to share in the saints' inheritance in the light.

12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

(ii) Delivered us from the dominion of darkness (1:13a)

(iii) Transferred us to the kingdom of his dear son (1:13b)

13 For He rescued us from the **domain of darkness**, and **transferred us** to the **kingdom of His beloved Son**,

13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

13 God has rescued us from the power of darkness and has brought us into the kingdom of the Son whom he loves,

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

- "...domain" - *exousia*, this is another *de jure / de facto* distinction in this verse...we have not yet been rescued from the "domain of darkness" factually because we're still on earth, living in Satan's domain

— The moment we put our faith in Christ, we are no longer under Satan's domain (1 John 5:18). This is our legal (*de jure*) identity. However, in reality today, factually (*de facto*), we still wrestle with Satan (Eph 6:12).

— How can 1 John 5:18 state that Satan does not touch me, but then Eph 6:12 says I'm in a wrestling match with the devil? — You can harmonize this supposed contradiction if you understand the *de jure / de facto* distinction...legally (*de jure*) 1 John 5:18 is absolutely true, however on a factual basis (*de facto*), we're currently in a wrestling match with Satan.

— Just as *exousia* is making a *de jure / de facto* distinction in terms of our relationship to Satan in Eph 6:12 (Cf. 1 John 5:18), Col 1:13 is making the same point. Legally, my citizenship is in the coming kingdom, but I'm not factually residing there yet.

— Once you understand how the Holy Spirit has used the *de jure / de facto* distinction, particularly in Paul's Prison Epistles, you can understand how in God's mind we already reside in the kingdom, while at the same time the kingdom is not currently present.

- "...darkness" - the kingdom of light vs. kingdom of darkness. Paul here rules out the whole system of aeons and angels that the Gnostics placed above Christ. It is Christ's Kingdom in which he is King. He has moral and spiritual sovereignty.

— Paul seems to be contrasting the realm or sphere of the new age—light, with that of the present age, the evil sphere or authority (*exousia*) of darkness. Elsewhere this evil sphere is equated with the power of Satan (Col 2:15; Luke 22:53; Acts 26:18; Eph 2:2).

— It is interesting that the Hebrew of *erev* and *boker* ("evening" and "morning") in Genesis profiles each step of the Creation going from darkness to light; the Gentiles parallel is to reckon their days from "midnight" to "midnight"...

- "...transferred us" - this word was used to describe the deportation of a population from one country into another

— According to a casual reading of this verse, upon our salvation by grace, we are transferred out of the domain of darkness into the kingdom of His beloved Son. Paul made

a similar statement in Acts 26:17-18.

— History records the fact that Antiochus the Great transported at least 2,000 Jews from Babylonia to Colossae. It speaks of a physical transport of people.

— Although believers may have been delivered *legally* from Satan's authority (1 John 5:18), they have not been delivered *in fact* and in present experience. In the same way, believers have been transferred judicially into the Kingdom of our Lord before its establishment.

- "...kingdom of His beloved Son" - it's possible that Paul is referring to God's Universal, not Theocratic, kingdom because he contrasts it with Satan's kingdom ("domain of darkness")

— Both Satan's kingdom and God's Universal kingdom are both in operation on the earth today

— It's even more plausible that Paul is using a *de jure* / *de facto* distinction: Paul is saying that legally (*de jure*), we are transferred from Satan's kingdom to become citizens of His future kingdom, but we have not yet (*de facto*) inhabited that kingdom, because the kingdom isn't here yet

— See [The Coming Kingdom 69 Kingdom Now Passages: Col 1:13](#) for more information about this verse, parallel verses, and the *de jure* / *de facto* distinction.

(iv) Given us redemption (1:14a)

(v) Given us forgiveness (1:14b)

14 in whom we have **redemption**, the **forgiveness of sins**.

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

14 through whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

- "...redemption" - *apolytrōsis*, have I been redeemed already, or is my redemption still future? Yes (both). Scripture uses my redemption in both tenses, present and future.

— Because of Jesus' sacrificial death, we have been released from bondage, our sins have been forgiven, redemption has already occurred, but there is still more bondage we'll be relieved from in the future (Cf. Rom 8:23)

- "...forgiveness of sins" - and, because we have been forgiven, we can forgive others

— The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant makes it clear that an unforgiving spirit always leads to bondage (Matt 18:21-35)

- Although believers currently possess legal redemption (*apolytrōsis*), they have not yet received redemption in its fullness. Notice the following passages that use this same word "redemption" (*apolytrōsis*) to depict the future reality of the believer (Luke 21:28; Rom 8:23; Eph 1:13-14; 4:30).

Thus, if believers can be said to be positionally and legally liberated from Satan's authority and redeemed, despite the fact that these truths are not present factual realities, then why

cannot be the same said for the believer's relationship to the kingdom that is mentioned in the very same context? As is the case with both redemption and freedom from Satanic authority, believers are also legally and positionally citizens of a kingdom that will not be manifested upon the earth until a future time period.

(2) Exaltation of Christ (Col 1:15—2:7)

(A) Preeminence (1:15-19)

(a) Image of the invisible God (1:15a)

(b) First born over all creation (1:15b)

15 He is **the image** of the invisible God, the **firstborn of all creation**:

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

- In contrast to the Gnostic (and the Muslim) who maintains that God can never be known or understood, we have One who has made God known to us. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us..." (John 1:14).

— It is because man "bears the image of his creator that it was possible for the Son of God to become incarnate as man and in his humanity to display the glory of the invisible God" [Source: F.F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians* by E. K. Simpson and F. F. Bruce].

- "...the image" - the image of God reflects upon the Adam-Christ typology (Gen 1:27; Ps 8; Heb 2:5-18), in which Christ is viewed as the first true man who fulfills God's design in creation. Thus, to be in the image of Christ is the goal of all Christians (Rom 8:28; 1 Cor 11:7; 15:49; 2 Cor 3:18; 4:4; Col 3:10).

— Paul used the word image, which means "an exact representation and revelation." The writer to the Hebrews affirms that Jesus Christ is "the express image of His Person" - Heb 1:3. Jesus was able to say, "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). In His essence, God is invisible, but Jesus Christ has revealed Him to us (John 1:18).

- "...firstborn of all creation" - prior to all creation. (Cf. Letter to Laodicea, Rev 3:14; John 1:1-3; et al.)

[This was interpreted by the Arians to mean "first of a kind," i.e., Christ was the first creature.] The word can have this meaning (Cf. Rom 8:29), but such a reading is not consistent with Paul's theme, which here stresses a Messianic priority and primacy.

— "firstborn" - *prototokos*, 5x: Col 1:15;18; Rom 8:29; Rev 1:5; Heb 1:6. Priority of position rather than origin.

— Jehovah's Witnesses claim that Jesus cannot be God because Scripture declares that He is the first created being. They point to v15, Rev 3:14 & Prov 8:22.

The OT background of the “firstborn” concept reveals the falsehood of the Jews claim that Jesus is a created being. The use of the term in the OT to signify the one who held the birthright took on greater significance when the birthright included the covenant privilege of advancing the promise of salvation through a coming Messianic savior. The term did not mean birth order when it involved this covenantal-redemptive privilege, for none of the patriarchs carrying the covenantally significant birth right was a firstborn son in the sense of birth order. They were firstborn only in the sense of birth right. Ultimately the firstborn son who held the birth right in this covenantal-redemptive sense was the Messiah, Jesus. Jesus is the “firstborn” who brings the hopes and promises of the nation to realization. He is the firstborn who redeems the world (Cf. Ex 4:22). He is the firstborn who rules His Kingdom (all creation) as the son of David (Cf. Ps 89:27; 2 Sam 7:12-14). All previous history pointed to him and waited for him. The “firstborn” is the promised savior Messiah of Israel who rules and reigns over his creation. When Paul called Jesus the “firstborn” in Colossians he was declaring Jesus to be the long hoped for Messianic Savior.

(c) Creator of all (1:16)

16 for **by Him all things were created**, *both* in the heavens and on earth, **visible and invisible**, whether **thrones**, or **dominions**, or **rulers**, or **authorities**—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

16 For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

16 For by him all things in heaven and on earth were created,
things visible and invisible,
whether they are kings, lords, rulers, or powers.

All things have been created through him and for him.

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

- “...by Him all things were created” - including Satan (vs. Mormon view!). Whatever cosmic powers there may be, they have nothing to offer or deny a Christian; in Christ he has all things (Rom 8:38; Eph 1:10).

- “...visible and invisible” - there are two kinds: the four dimensions we experience; and the 6 that we know exist = 10 in total...

- “...thrones...dominions...rulers...authorities” - these words in the Greek refer to the hierarchy of angelic beings

(d) Sustainer of all (1:17)

17 He is before all things, and in Him all things **holdtogether**.

17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

17 He himself existed before anything else did,
and he holds all things together.

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

- "...hold together" - *sunistemi*, to be compacted together, to cohere, to be constituted with, to be held together

— This is one of the works of Christ during His Present Session. See [Present Ministry of Christ](#) for details on what Jesus is doing from heaven today.

(e) Head of the church through his death and resurrection (1:18)

18 He is also the head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

18 He is also the head of the body,
which is the church.

He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead,
so that he himself might have first place in everything.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

(f) Fullness of deity (1:19)

19 For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

19 For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

19 For God was pleased to have all of his divine essence inhabit him.

19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

(B) Redemption (1:20-23)

(a) Christ's death (1:20)

20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

20 Through the Son, God also reconciled all things to himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, thereby making peace through the blood of his cross.

20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

(b) Our former position (1:21)

21 And although you were previously alienated and hostile in attitude, *engaged* in evil deeds,

21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged* in evil deeds,

21 You who were once alienated with a hostile attitude, doing evil,

21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

- Verses 21-23 are in the Top 10 Most Misinterpreted Verses in the NT. The misinterpretation of this passage has often undermined many believer's assurance of salvation.

(c) Our present position (1:22)

22 yet He has now reconciled you in His body of flesh through death, in order to **present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—**

22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—

22 he has now reconciled by the death of his physical body, so that he may present you holy, blameless, and without fault before him.

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

- "...present you before Him" - often interpreted assuming this refers to entrance into heaven. This is the typical Arminian view, which makes the believer's entrance into heaven dependent on his faithfulness in conduct and to the gospel.

- "...holy and blameless and beyond reproach" - the goal! Achieving this goal in a believer's life depends on their not being moved away from their hope, which they heard and believed in the gospel.

— It's clear that the Colossians had already in fact heard and accepted this hope in the gospel. Thus, the warning here is to not shift away from the position of confidence in their future that they presently enjoyed.

— This passage reminds of Heb 6:18-19, where hope is called an "anchor of the soul," that which brings us into the presence of God.

— The Colossians will reach their spiritual goal only if they remain in this safe harbor firmly anchored to Christ Himself

(d) Promised reward for continued progress (1:23)

23 **if indeed you continue in the faith** firmly established and steadfast, and not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

23 if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

23 However, you must remain firmly established and steadfast in the faith, without being moved from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

- "... if indeed you continue in the faith" - the common Calvinist/Reformed view, which refers back to the "reconciliation" (v21) and the "presentation" (v22, which they believe refers to entrance into heaven), believes that if a "Christian" does not persevere (continue) in faithful conduct and faith in the gospel, it will prove that this person was never really a Christian to begin with.

- "...if" - εἰ (if) + Indicative (past, present, or future) means this is a first class condition, which can also be translated as "since"

— In the Greek first class conditional sentence, the speaker or writer *assumes* that the condition is true (even though it may not be). It expresses the writer or speaker's belief or assumption positively, which is why it is often translated as "since."

- The misinterpretation here is because Calvinism/Reformed Theology is constantly looking for proof-texts for their doctrine of Perseverance of the Saints. They cherry-pick any verse that appears to say a "true" believer must live up to some level of life standard to either maintain their salvation (Arminianism) or prove that they are one of the elect and genuinely saved (Calvinism).

— The correct interpretation of this passage is that the "presentation" of v22 is the referent for "if" (what "if" is referring to). The "presentation" does not refer to salvation/justification or entrance into heaven, but rather the believer's evaluation at the Bema Seat judgment.

— Paul is declaring that faithfulness in conduct and a sure hope in the promise of the gospel will result in a holy, blameless, and irreproachable life at the Bema Seat. Below are five reasons showing this interpretation is correct:

1. Paul consistently and correctly assumes his Colossian audience is saved. He's not writing to "pretend" Christians, those who profess but do not possess salvation, but rather to "saints and faithful brethren in Christ" (1:2) who have a reputation for faith and love (1:3), who have been delivered from the power of Satan into the kingdom of Christ (1:13), and who are redeemed (1:14) and reconciled (1:21). How inconsistent and confusing would it be for Paul to write these things, then make their salvation/justification uncertain and conditional in 1:23?

2. This passage, properly interpreted in context, does not make salvation/justification dependent on the believer's performance. Rather Paul here is consistent with his other writings in regards to salvation/justification, which he also emphasized in 1:5-6.
3. It reinforces the concept already found in 1:3-5 that the fruit of hope is sanctification. There, the Colossians are commended for their "faith in Jesus Christ" and their "love for all the saints." This faith and love is "because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven." Hope (as an expression of desire plus expectation, and very close to faith in meaning) stimulates a life of faith toward Christ and love toward others.
4. The goal of Paul's epistle to the Colossians is spiritual maturity, not to qualify one as saved, but rather as complete and mature, "that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (1:28).
5. The concept of being acceptably presented to the Lord is found elsewhere in the NT: 2 Cor 4:14; 11:2; Eph 5:27; 1 Thess 5:23; Jude 24). Rom 14:10 uses the same verb (*paristhmi*) to indicate the believer's appearance before the Lord at the Bema Seat judgment.
6. "In His sight" (which can also be translated "before Him") reminds the believer's accounting before the Lord at the judgment seat of Christ where each believer will be evaluated and rewarded according to his deeds (Cf. Rom 14:10-12; 1 Cor 3:13; 2 Cor 5:10).
7. The qualitative terms "holy, and blameless, and irreproachable" are not used absolutely or forensically, but denote a relative sanctification which is the goal of ministry (1:28). They are used in the same way as the terms for qualifications of imperfect elders and deacons (Cf. 1 Tim 3:1-10; Titus 1:5-9).

(C) Revelation of the mystery of Christ (1:24-29)

(a) Paul's sufferings (1:24)

24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am supplementing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions in behalf of His body, which is the church.

24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

24 Now I am rejoicing while suffering for you as I complete in my flesh whatever remains of the Messiah's sufferings on behalf of his body, which is the church.

24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

(b) Paul's stewardship (1:25)

25 I was made a minister of this *church* according to the commission from God granted to me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out *the preaching of the word of God*,

25 Of *this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching of* the word of God,
25 I became its servant as God commissioned me to work for you, so that I may complete my ministry of the word of God.
25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

(c) Paul's content (1:26-27)

(i) General mystery (1:26)

26 *that is*, the **mystery** which had been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, **but** now has been revealed to His saints,

26 *that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints,

26 This secret was hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints,

26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

- "...mystery" - *musterion*, a secret known only by divine revelation (Dan 2:28-30,47)

— The "mystery" Paul speaks of here is the Church (Cf. Rom 16:25-27; Eph 3:3-9)

— The broad Pauline usage falls into the last category (1 Cor 15:51; Eph 5:32; 2 Thess 2:7); *musterion*, sacred secrets made known to the initiated.

— These divine secrets could never have been discovered by human reason—especially limited by observing a cursed creation (Cf. Eph 3:3,5; Rom 16:25-26; Matt 13...)

- "...but" - not the contrastive "as" as in Eph 3:5, but still a comparative conjunction

— This verse helps us understand Eph 3:5, that the mystery was hidden, but has now been disclosed

(ii) Specific mystery (1:27)

27 to whom God willed to make known what the wealth of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles is, *the mystery* that is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

27 to whom God wanted to make known the glorious riches of this secret among the gentiles—which is the Messiah in you, our glorious hope.

27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

(d) Paul's ministry (1:28)

28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every person and teaching every person with all wisdom, so that we may present every person complete in Christ.

28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

28 It is he whom we proclaim as we admonish and wisely teach everyone, so that we may present everyone mature in the Messiah.

28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

(e) Paul's labor (1:29)

29 For this purpose I also labor, striving according to His power which works mightily within me.

29 For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

29 I work hard and struggle to do this, using the energy that he powerfully provides in me.

29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.