

Colossians 1:5 Commentary

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CHRIST IS ALL IN ALL
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Christ Preeminent in All Things Supreme Lord - Sufficient Savior			
Colossians 1	Colossians 2	Colossians 3	Colossians 4
Supremacy of Christ		Submission to Christ	
Doctrinal and Corrective		Practical and Reassuring	
What Christ Did For Us		What Christ Does Through Us	
Christ Our Lord		Christ Our Life	Christ our Love

Christ the Head of the Body	Christ the Lord of the Universe	Christ the Head of the Home	
Instruction	Warnings	Exhortations	Reminders
Reconciliation	Creation	Submission	Conversation
His Person and Word		His Peace and Presence	

Colossians 1:5 [because](#) of the [hope laid up](#) (PMPFSA) for [you in heaven](#) of which [you previously heard](#) (2PAAI) in the [word of truth](#), the [gospel](#) (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: [dia ten elpida ten apokeimenen](#) (PMPFSA) [humin en tois ouranois](#), [hen proekousate](#) (2PAAI) [en to logo tes aletheias tou euaggeliou](#)

Amplified: Because of the hope [of experiencing what is] laid up (reserved and waiting) for you in heaven. Of this [hope] you heard in the past in the message of the truth of the Gospel,

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

Lightfoot: while you look forward to the hope which is stored up for you in heaven as a treasure for the life to come. This hope was communicated to you in those earlier lessons, when the Gospel was preached to you in its purity and integrity—

Phillips: We know that you are showing these qualities because you have grasped the hope reserved for you in Heaven - that hope which first became yours when the truth was brought to you. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Young's Literal: because of the hope that is laid up for you in the heavens, which ye heard of before in the word of the truth of the good news,

BECAUSE OF THE HOPE LAID UP FOR YOU IN HEAVEN: [dia ten elpida ten apokeimenen](#) (PMPFSA) [humin en tois ouranois](#):

- 1 Pet 1:3,4 Ro 8:18 Ps 31:19 Mt 6:19,20 Col 1:23,27; Acts 23:6; 24:15; 26:6,7; 1Cor 13:13; 15:19; Gal 5:5; Eph 1:18; 2Thes 2:16; Heb 7:19; 1Pet 3:15; 1Jn 3:3
- [Colossians 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A DIVINE "LAY AWAY PLAN"

Because of the hope - This states the cause or reason of their love. **NIV** adds "the faith and love that spring from the hope..." What does this imply? HOPE is the root of FAITH (the plant) and of LOVE (the fruit). In other words a believer's hope or confidence in what God will do in the future leads to a greater faith or trust in God and a deepening of love for others.

Heard before - Only here in the New Testament, not in Septuagint, and not frequent in classical Greek. It is variously explained as denoting either an undefined period in the past, or as contrasting the earlier Christian teaching with the later heresies, or as related to Paul's letter (before I wrote), or as related to the fulfilment of the hope (ye have had the hope pre-announced). It occurs several times in Herodotus in this last sense, as 2:5, of one who has heard of Egypt without seeing it: 5:86, of the Aeginetans who had learned beforehand what the Athenians intended. Compare 8:79; 6:16. Xenophon uses it of a horse, which signifies by pricking up its ears what it hears beforehand. In the sense of mere priority of time without the idea of anticipation, Plato: "Hear me once more, though you have heard me say the same before" ("Laws," vii., 797). I incline to the more general reference, ye heard in the past. The sense of hearing before the fulfilment of the hope would seem rather to require the perfect tense, since the hope still remained unfulfilled. (Vincent)

Brian Bell - Paul places **hope** last, because he saw **faith** and **love** springing from it. How does the hope of heaven cause faith & love to come forth? a) As pagans, the colossians had been "w/o hope and w/o God in the world" (Eph 2:12) Then came the Gospel

from Epaphras! Hope is "laid up" (stored away, put away for one's use) which referred to a Royal Persian custom. Hellenistic rulers would lay up in store goods for faithful servants. As **Spurgeon** reminds us, "we can labor w/o ever a present reward for we look for a reward in the world to come." **Faith** rests on the past; **love** works in the present; and **hope** looks towards the future." ([Colossians 1](#))

Moule emphasizes the dynamic force of hope in a believer's life - "**That blessed hope**," full of Christ, and the object of an intensely united expectation, gave special occasion, by its nature, for the exercise alike of the **faith** and the **love** just mentioned....The interaction of the three great graces has many different aspects. **Faith**, which alone accepts Christ, and so unites us to Him, is indeed the antecedent in the deepest sense to both the others, and their abiding basis. But in the experience of the life and walk of grace, **faith** itself may be stimulated by either or both of the sister-graces; and so on. Meanwhile "**hope**" here, strictly speaking, is not the subjective grace but its glorious object, the Return of the exalted Lord to receive His people to Himself. See e.g. Php 3:20 ([Colossians 1 Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges](#))

Hope (1680)(*elpis* from *elpo* = to anticipate or welcome) in Scripture is **not** the world's definition of "*I hope so*" (albeit there are a few rare exceptions, e.g., Acts 27:20) Instead, **hope** is defined as a desire for some future good with the expectation of obtaining it. **Hope** is always an expectation of something good as well as descriptive of something for which we must wait. **Hope** is the opposite of despair. Hope is the absolute assurance that God will do good to us in the **future!** **Hope** as the world typically defines it is a desire for some **future** occurrence of which one is **not** assured of attaining. The ancient world did not generally regard hope as a virtue, but merely as a temporary illusion. Historians tell us that a great cloud of hopelessness covered the ancient world. Philosophies were empty; traditions were disappearing; religions were powerless to help men face either life or death. People longed to pierce the veil and get some message of hope from the other side, but there is none outside of Christ.

The hope that is laid up - Paul uses the **present tense** to emphasize that our hope is **continually** laid up, which signifies that our hope is being kept safe, secure, sure (He 6:18-note, Heb 6:19-20-see **note** on hope as an anchor - **Are you experiencing "rough waters," being "storm tossed" in your Christian life? Then take some time and do a study on your Blessed Hope**). As **F F Bruce** once said "We are refugees from the sinking ship of this present world order, so soon to disappear; our hope is fixed in the eternal order, where the promises of God are made good to His people in perpetuity."

Hope is a saint's anchor which is the end of a long chain of God's precious and magnificent promises (**"the word of truth"** [Col 1:5, 2Ti 2:15, James 1:18] from the non-lying God [Titus 1:2]) which holds us steadfastly and securely to God's throne and our eternal home. No man need ever fear about his future when his hope is laid up in heaven.

Vincent - Peter is fond of this word also (see 1Pet 1:13, 21; 3:5, 15), which, in classical Greek, has the general signification of **expectancy**, relating to evil as well as to good. Thus Plato speaks of living in evil hope ("Republic," i., 330); i.e., in the apprehension of evil; and Thucydides, of the hope of evils to come; i.e., the expectation or apprehension. In the New Testament the word always relates to a future good. In the New Testament the word signifies both the sentiment of hope and the thing hoped for. Here the latter. Compare Tit. 2:13; Gal. 5:5; Heb. 6:18; also Rom. 8:24, where both meanings appear. Lightfoot observes that the sense oscillates between the subjective feeling and the objective realization.

Keathley - "Laid up" is the present continuous tense of *apokeimai*, "to put away, store" (cf. 2 Tim. 4:8). Though centered in the person of Christ Himself (1:27), the place of storage is heaven, a place of security and protection where the corruption and sin of this present world cannot touch it. Peter gave a three-fold description of this. It is (1) a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (2) a hope that is an imperishable, undefiled, and an unfading inheritance, and (3) that is kept by the power of God (see 1Pet. 1:3-5 and Matt. 6:19-20). This includes the whole of our salvation—being in God's presence at home with the Lord immediately after death, eternal glory, a future resurrected body at the resurrection of the just, and eternal rewards (2 Tim. 4:8). In other words, the "hope laid up" includes all that goes with the gift of eternal life and the blessings of the eternal state according to the many promises of Scripture. Here is a hope that cannot be compared to any earthly hope no matter how exquisite. The point we must not miss is that when Christians live by a **faith** that resides in Christ, that **faith** will produce **love** for others that may result in losses and crosses, but the Christian's **expectation** (hope) goes far beyond this life into the eternal future. **Read** about our "eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison" in 2Cor 4:14-18-note) ([Paul's Gratitude for the Colossians Col. 1:3-8](#))

HOPE: GOD'S "LAST WORD"

Barclay - That **faith** and **love** (Col 1:4) depend on the **hope** that is **laid up** in heaven. What exactly does Paul mean? Is he asking the Colossians to show **faith** in Christ and **love** for men only for the hope of some reward that is going to come to them some day? Is this "pie in the sky"? There is something much deeper than that here. Think of it this way. Loyalty to Christ may involve a man in all kinds of loss and pain and suffering. There may be many things to which he has to say goodbye. **The way of love may seem to many to be the way of a fool. Why spend life in selfless service? Why not use it "to get on" as the world counts getting on? Why not push the weaker brother out of the way?** The answer is--because of the **hope** that is set before us. (Ed: Biblical hope is

a truth that motivates holy living and loving - cp 1Jn 3:2-3). As **Moule** puts it, that "hope is the certainty that, in spite of the world's ways, God's way of love has the **last word**."...The Christian **hope** is that God's way is the best way and that the only real peace, the only real joy, the only true and lasting reward are to be found in it. Loyalty to Christ may bring trouble here--but that is not the **last word**. The world may laugh contemptuously at the folly of the way of love--but the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisdom of man. The Christian hope is the confidence that it is better to stake one's life on God than to believe the world. ([Colossians 1 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

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- [Christ Jesus Our Hope](#)
- [Are You Looking for the Blessed Hope?](#)
- The Blessed Hope: Part 1
- The Blessed Hope: Part 2
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- [Thoughts on a "Maranatha Mindset"](#)

Laid up ([606](#)) (**apokeimai** from **apó** = from, away + **keimai** = to lie, to be laid up, to set away) means to put something away for safekeeping, to store away in a place for preservation (secular usage referred to money laid up or hidden). In the present verse **laid up** speaks of the the totality of glorious, eternal, blessing that awaits each believer in the life to come.

Wuest - Paul speaks of this hope "which is laid up for you in heaven." "Laid up" is the perfect participle of **apokeimai**, made up of **keimai**, "to lie," as in the sentence, "The book lies on the table," speaking of its position, and **apo** "off, away from." Thus, the compound verb means "to be laid away, to be reserved, put to one side," metaphorically, "to be reserved for one, awaiting him," used with the dative of the person involved. The perfect participle gives, "the hope which has been laid away in times past with the present result that it is reserved for and awaiting you." Lightfoot translates, "which is stored up." Vincent quotes Bishop Wilson, "Deposited, reserved, put by in store out of reach of all enemies and sorrows." This hope is laid up in heaven, all of which means that the saints will enjoy it in the future life. There are treasures in heaven earned by the saints while on earth (Matt. 6:20), our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20), and we have an inheritance reserved for us in heaven (1Pet. 1:4).

Vincent - **apokeimai** is *laid away*, as the pound in the napkin, Luke 19:20. With the derivative sense of *reserved* or *awaiting*, as the crown, 2 Tim. 4:8. In Heb. 9:27, it is rendered appointed (unto men to die), where, however, the sense is the same: death awaits men as something *laid up*. Rev., in margin, *laid up for*. Compare treasure *in heaven*, Matt, 6:20; 19:21; Luke 12:34. "Deposited, reserved, put by in store out of the reach of all enemies and sorrows" (Bishop Wilson).

There are only 4 uses of **apokeimai** in the NT...

[Luke 19:20](#) And another came, saying, 'Master, behold your mina, which I kept **put away** in a handkerchief

2 Timothy 4:8 (note) in the future there is **laid up** for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Comment: Here **apokeimai** means to reserve as award or recompense and in secular Greek **apokeimai** was in fact a common term in honorary documents expressing appreciation for a sense of civic or other communal responsibility.

Hebrews 9:27 (note) And inasmuch as it is **appointed** for men to die once and after this comes judgment.

Comment: Here **apokeimai** is used figuratively to express the certainty of the Divinely ordained future of every living being. It is "securely laid up"! And the lie of reincarnation cannot change this certain outcome.

W. H. Griffith Thomas writes that "This **hope** is said by St. Paul to be **laid up** for believers "in the heavens," and the verb is particularly worthy of notice because of its use elsewhere. Thus, a crown of righteousness is said to be "**laid up**" for those who love Christ's appearing (2Ti 4:8-note, ASV), while it is also recorded that it was "**laid up**" for men once to die (He 9:27-note). Another solemn contrast is drawn in our Lord's parable of the pounds, where the unfaithful servant "laid up" his master's gift instead of using it (Luke 19:20). In two Old Testament passages, moreover, it is declared that the Lord has "laid up" His goodness for those who fear Him (Ps 31:19-note) and "sound wisdom for the righteous" (Pr 2:7). No Christian life, then, is complete which does not include in it this forward look of joyous certitude toward a bright future, for **hope** as a grace is not a mere spirit of what we call hopefulness, or a natural buoyancy of temperament. It is a distinctly Christian virtue, the result of union with God in Christ; and it has for its immediate object the Lord Jesus at His glorious appearing, and for its ultimate, eternal and exhaustless substance the glories of heaven and God as our all in all." ([Back to the Bible](#))

Apokeimai is used twice in the **Septuagint (LXX)** - Genesis 49:10 and **Job 38:23** (Which I **have reserved** [Hebrew = chasak = keep back, deep from oneself; Lxx = apokeimai] for the time of distress, for the day of war and battle?)

In the Sermon on the Mount, where **Jesus** commands his listeners "**Lay up** (**present imperative** = command to do this throughout your entire life! What a "treasure chest" awaits the person who obeys Jesus' command) (**thesaurizo** - our English Thesaurus = a collection of words) for yourselves **treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in or steal for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Mt 6:20, 21-note)

Peter reminds his readers going through various trials that they have "an **inheritance** which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, **reserved** (**tereo**) in heaven for you (1Pe 1:4-note).

Passages in Hebrews allude to that hope **laid up** in the future...

Heb 11:16 But as it is, they desire a better [country], that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.

Heb 13:14 For here we do not have a lasting city, but we are seeking [the city] which is to come.

In heaven (literally in the heavens) - **Heaven** is where Christ is, thus heaven is where our **hope** is and ultimately our **HOPE** is not a PLACE but a PERSON, "Christ Jesus our hope", "the hope of glory" (1Ti 1:1; Col 1:27-note).

Moule adds that "The hope is "laid up" there, because He who is its Essence (1 Timothy 1:1; cp. below Colossians 1:27) is there, "sitting at the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1); and our final enjoyment of it, whatever the details of locality may prove to be, whatever e.g. be the destiny of this earth with regard to the abode of the Blessed, will take place under the full manifestation of His presence in heavenly glory. See our Lord's own words, Matthew 6:20-21; Luke 12:34; Luke 18:22; John 14:3; John 17:24. ([Colossians 1 Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges](#))

C H Spurgeon in a sermon on hope says that "Our **hope** ... is special, because it is a **hope** which is laid up for us in heaven, a **hope** therefore which the worldlings care not one whit about. He hopes that tomorrow may be as this day and yet more abundant, but he cares nothing for the land where time has ceased to flow. He hopes for riches or he hopes for fame; he hopes for long life and prosperity; he hopes for pleasure and domestic peace; the whole range of his hope is within the compass of his eye. But our **hope** has passed beyond the sphere of sight, according to the word of the apostle, "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Ours is a **hope** which demands nothing of time or earth but seeks its all in the world to come...Cultivate, then, your **hope**, dearly beloved. Make it to shine so plainly in you that your minister may hear of your hopefulness and joy; cause observers to take note of it because you speak of heaven and act as though you really expected to go there. Make the world know that you have a **hope** of heaven. Make worldlings feel that you are a believer in eternal glory and that you **hope** to be where Jesus is. Often surprise them as they see what they call your simplicity, but what is in truth only your sincerity, while you treat as matter of fact the **hope** laid up for you in heaven. The Lord grant it for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

In **Spurgeon's** exposition he writes "As we read these words (Col 1:1-14), we cannot help noticing how positively the apostle speaks. There are no "hope so's," "trust so's," and "ifs," and "buts"; but it, is all, "it is so," and "it is so." And, beloved brethren, concerning eternal matters, nothing but certainties will suffice for us. Allow uncertainties about your estates if you will, but we must have positive assurance concerning eternal things; and nothing short of this ought to content our spirits. Can we all say, as we listen to these words, "God hath delivered us from the power of darkness; he hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins"?"

MacArthur says that "One result of our **hope** is a willingness to sacrifice the present on the altar of the future. That runs contrary to human nature....The Christian has a different perspective. He is willing to forsake the present glory, comfort, and satisfaction of this present world for the future glory that is his in Christ. ([MacArthur, J. Colossians. Chicago: Moody Press](#))

The Colossian Christians were a heavenly minded people and this future focus gave them a sense of security because anything or anyone deposited in heaven is safe.

Jim Elliot, martyred missionary to the Auca Indians of South America said before his death that "he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose". That is **20-20 "eternal vision"**!

The Christian **hope** reaches into the future, for it is tied up with Christ's second advent. This is why Christians are to love Christ's appearing. Every Christian who lives daily in the anticipation and expectancy of Christ's return becomes a steady, firmly anchored, unwavering soul.

Hope that is anchored in the glories of heaven and in the heavenly One, inspires faith and love for meantime living. In context the

basis of future, heavenly **hope** is the good news of the Word of truth (Ro 15:4-note) Indeed God has the beautiful Name, the "God of hope," Paul writing "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Ro 15:13).

Spurgeon - "Faith" — "love" — "hope" — these are three divine sisters, which should ever go hand in hand. We must never be satisfied unless we see in ourselves and in our fellow-Christians these three delightful fruits of the Spirit of God. Notice the order here, — faith, and love, and then hope. Perhaps the Colossians were a little deficient in this last grace, so the apostle prayed constantly for them, "for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel."

Spurgeon - **"Our hope in Christ for the future is the mainspring and the mainstay of our joy here** It will animate our hearts to think often of heaven, for all that we can desire is promised there. Here we are weary and toilworn, but yonder is the land of rest where the sweat of labour shall no more bedew the worker's brow, and fatigue shall be for ever banished. To those who are weary and spent, the word "rest" is full of heaven. We are always in the field of battle; we are so tempted within, and so molested by foes without, that we have little or no peace; but in heaven we shall enjoy the victory, when the banner shall be waved aloft in triumph, and the sword shall be sheathed, and we shall hear our Captain say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." We have suffered bereavement after bereavement, but we are going to the land of the immortal where graves are unknown things. Here sin is a constant grief to us, but there we shall be perfectly holy, for there shall by no means enter into that kingdom anything which defileth. Hemlock springs not up in the furrows of celestial fields. Oh! is it not joy, that you are not to be in banishment for ever, that you are not to dwell eternally in this wilderness, but shall soon inherit Canaan? Nevertheless let it never be said of us, that we are dreaming about the future and forgetting the present, let the future sanctify the present to highest uses. Through the Spirit of God the hope of heaven is the most potent force for the product of virtue; it is a fountain of joyous effort, it is the corner stone of cheerful holiness. The man who has this hope in him goes about his work with vigour, for the joy of the Lord is his strength. He fights against temptation with ardour, for the hope of the next world repels the fiery darts of the adversary. He can labour without present reward, for he looks for a reward in the world to come. - Morning and Evening

Lehman Strauss has the following article entitled **"Our Only Hope"**

"Now if I sound a bit dogmatic it is because the foundation of my hope is the greatest event in world history, namely, the historical fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Heb. 6:19- note).

The Apostle Peter wrote: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1Pe 1:3- note).

The "us" in this verse refers to believers only. They are possessed of a hope that is stedfast and sure. But the man who has not been born again dare not look far into the future, because he is "without Christ" and is therefore as one "having no hope" (Ep 2:12- note). The new man in Christ is assured of a bright future because of the abundant mercy which God has bestowed upon him, and which is guaranteed to him by Christ's resurrection from the dead. The hope is described by Peter as a "lively" (or living) hope. It is actively alive and is therefore that energizing principle in the Christian that produces hopefulness and optimism. All of the past hopes of man for a better world have been dashed to pieces, simply because Jesus Christ and His Word have not been taken into account. But the Christian hope is operative and vital.

The Apostle Paul based the authority and dignity of his apostleship on the past and future offices of Christ. He wrote: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope" (1Ti 1:1).

Here our Lord is presented as our Savior and our Hope. The Apostle shares with Timothy, and us, this common possession of hope, a blessing no other religion than Christianity can claim. Christ is the very embodiment of our hope, thus He is the secret of the Christian's strength and victory.

When Paul commended the saints in Colosse, he said: "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you...for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" (Col 1:3- note , Col 1:5- note).

One wonderful thing about our hope is that it is associated with heaven. Possibly this is one reason why the worldling is without hope. Living for the world he cares nothing about heaven. He lives for that which he can see and taste in this world. He hopes for prosperity, pleasure and prominence in this life, thus heaven to him is not real because Christ is not real to him.

Now heaven is not the Christian's hope. The hope is not a place, but a person "Christ in you, the hope

of glory" (Col 1:27- note). This is "the hope of the gospel" (Col 1:23- note). To the saints Paul says, it is "laid up for you." Heaven is where Christ is, thus heaven is where our hope is. The fact that it is "laid up" means that it is safe, secure, sure. No man need ever fear about his future when his hope is laid up in heaven. Our Lord had this in mind when He said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt 6:18, 19, 20, 21-see notes Mt 6:18; 19; 20; 21).

Tell me where your heart is and you have told me where your treasure is. Does Christ have your heart? If so, then your hope is not misplaced. The Colossian Christians were a heavenly minded people and this gave to them a sense of security. And why not? Anything, or anyone, deposited in heaven is safe. The Christian hope reaches into the future, for it is tied up with Christ's second advent. This is why many Christians love Christ's appearing, for when He comes again He will bring with Him a reward for those who have maintained hope in Him. That reward is also "laid up" for us in heaven. Paul testifies to it in the following words: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2Ti 4:7, 8-notes).

Notice the use again of the words "laid up." These words mean the same as "safely deposited." They are used here by Paul autobiographically. This is his final and farewell message. One day back yonder he gave to Christ his heart, he deposited all his treasure in heaven. From that moment on, Paul was a specialist. He said: "This one thing I do...I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Php 3:13, 14-see notes Php 3:13; 14). Until the end, Paul the aged ran the race well. The Lord had had all of him. He kept his eye on the goal. And what was that goal? It was "His appearing." He longed for and loved Christ's return. You see, his hope was "laid up" where his heart was. To him, Christ was everything. His was a sure hope. How sure is yours? (Bolding Added) (**Excerpted from "Our Only Hope" in Bibliotheca Sacra, volume 120, #478, page 135, 1963**) (Bolding added)

OF WHICH YOU PREVIOUSLY HEARD IN THE WORD OF TRUTH THE GOSPEL: en proekousate (2PAAI) en to logo tes aletheias tou euaggeliou:

- Colossians 3:16; Acts 10:36; 13:26; Ro 10:8; 2Cor 5:19; 6:7; Eph 1:13; 1Thes 2:13; 1Ti 1:15; 1Pet 2:2
- [Colossians 1 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

IT DOES MATTER WHAT YOU BELIEVE!

Paul describes the divine nature and power of the Gospel in his letter to the Thessalonians writing that "we also constantly thank God that when you received (paralambano) from us the **word of God's message** (Gospel), you accepted (dechomai) it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the **word of God** (Gospel), which also **performs** (energeo) its work in you who believe. (1Th 2:13-note)

The Word of truth (Same phrase in Ps 119:43, 2Cor 6:7, Col 1:5, 2Ti 2:15, James 1:18) - **The word (logos - word study) of (the = definite article = specific body of) Truth**. In this context **word of truth** is a great definition for the Gospel. The phrase **the truth** is used instead of simply **the word of the gospel** as a hint against the false teachings being promulgated in their midst. There is a true Gospel and there is "different" Gospel, which is really not another (Gal 1:6-9-note)

THOUGHT: Have you heard the true Gospel? Do you tell others the true Gospel? The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the ultimate, eternal reality!

Vincent - The **truth** is the contents of the **word**, and the Gospel defines the character of the truth.

Everett Harrison - The **word of the truth of the Gospel** is closely parallel to a similar statement in Ephesians 1:13 ("message of truth"). If the Gospel were not true, it would not be good news but only cruel deception. It is just possible that here the apostle is glancing by way of contrast at the error which is current at Colossae, which he is soon to attack openly in his letter. In his other controversial epistle he twice refers to the **truth of the gospel** (Gal 2:5, 14). The best way to deal with error is to hold it up to the light of truth which God has revealed. (Colossians: Christ All-sufficient)

Truth (225) (**aletheia** from **a** = indicates following word has the opposite meaning ~ without + **lanthano** = to be hidden or concealed,

to escape notice, cp our English "latent" from Latin = to lie hidden) has the literal sense of that which contains nothing hidden. Aletheia is that which is not concealed. Aletheia is that which that is seen or expressed as it really is

Gospel (2098)(**euaggelion** from **eú** = good + **aggéllo** = proclaim, tell) is literally good news or glad tidings. In secular Greek it originally referred to a reward for good news and later became the good news itself. The word euaggelion was commonly used in the first century as our words "good news" today. The idea then and now is something like this - "Have you any good news (euaggelion) for me today?" This was a common question in the ancient world.

William Tyndale (ca. 1494-1536) - "**Euaggelion** (which we call the 'gospel') is a Greek word, and signifies good, merry, glad, and joyful tydings, that makes a man's heart glad, and makes him sing, dance, and leap for joy."

William Gladstone (1809-1898) - "Talk about the question of the day! There is but one question and that is the gospel. It can and will correct everything needing correction. All men at the head of great movements are Christian men. During the many years I was in the cabinet I was brought into association with sixty master minds, and all but five of them were Christians. My only hope for the world is in bringing the human mind into contact with divine revelation."]

Karl Barth (1886-1968) - "No one is excluded from the Gospel, but many are excluded by the Gospel."

Euaggelion - 76x in 73v -

Mt 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; 26:13; Mark 1:1, 14f; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9; 16:15; Acts 15:7; 20:24; Ro 1:1, 9, 16; 2:16; 10:16; 11:28; 15:16, 19; 16:25; 1 Cor 4:15; 9:12, 14, 18, 23; 15:1; 2 Cor 2:12; 4:3f; 8:18; 9:13; 10:14; 11:4, 7; Gal 1:6f, 11; 2:2, 5, 7, 14; Eph 1:13; 3:6; 6:15, 19; Phil 1:5, 7, 12, 16, 27; 2:22; 4:3, 15; Col 1:5, 23; 1 Thess 1:5; 2:2, 4, 8f; 3:2; 2 Thess 1:8; 2:14; 1Ti 1:11; 2Ti 1:8, 10; 2:8; Philemon 1:13; 1Pe 4:17; Rev 14:6.

NAS = good news(1), gospel(73), gospel's(2).

Barclay - All previous religions could be entitled "guesses about God." The Christian gospel gives a man not guesses but certainties about God.

These first few verses provide an excellent source of "truths" about the gospel. Take some time and make a list of what you learn.

The writers of the New Testament adapted the term as God's message of salvation for lost sinners. **Euaggelion** is found in several combination phrases, each describing the gospel like a multifaceted jewel in various terms from a different viewpoint (from the NASB, 1977):

the gospel of the kingdom (Mt 4:23)

the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (Mk 1:1) because it centers in Christ

the gospel of God (Mk 1:14) because it originates with God and was not invented by man

the gospel of the kingdom of God (Lk 16:16)

the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24),

the gospel of His Son (Ro 1:9-note)

the gospel of Christ (Ro 15:19-note)

the gospel of the glory of Christ (2Co 4:4)

the gospel of your salvation (Ep 1:13-note)

the gospel of peace (Ep 6:15-note)

the gospel of our Lord Jesus (2Th 1:8)

the glorious gospel of the blessed God (1Ti 1:11)

In Ro 16:25, 26 (see **note**) Paul called it "**my Gospel**" indicating that the special emphasis he gave the gospel in his ministry.

If you would like a special blessing, take an afternoon to go through all 76 uses of **euaggelion** in context making a list of what you learn about the gospel. The Spirit of God will enlighten your heart and encourage your spirit in a very special way...and you'll want to share the "good news" with someone because of your "discoveries"!

Related Resources on the Gospel:

- American Church Dictionary [Gospel](#)
- American Tract Society [Gospel](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Gospel](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Gospel](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Gospel](#)
- CARM Theological Dictionary [Gospel](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Gospel](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Gospel](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Gospel](#)
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary [Gospel](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Gospel](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Gospel](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Gospel](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Gospel](#)

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT OUR GOSPEL?

by Rob Morgan

If we all left right now for Africa, there wouldn't be anyone here to maintain the home base, but I do know that the Lord wants us to be a high-impact church that knows how to produce world-changers for Christ. Whether we are serving here or abroad, our lives are to be centered around the Gospel.

The problem is that we don't recognize the Gospel's value as we should. This week I read a story in the newspaper—I didn't clip it out and I can't recall the specifics—but it was something to this effect. A lady got tired of some sketches and drawings in her house. She wasn't fond of them on the wall, and she stored it on the attic, then in the basement, and then behind the furniture; and finally she just gathered them up and took them to the Goodwill store. It was there that a man saw them and instantly recognized them as being very rare and valuable. The store tried to return them to the woman, but she hadn't left any contact information; but in dropping those sketches off, she lost a fortune. She didn't realize the value of the treasure she possessed.

There's a hotel in Indonesia called the Hotel Tugu Bali that bills itself as a museum hotel. The owner is a man who started collecting antiques when he was twenty-five years old. At that time, Indonesians were trying to modernize their lives, and as they bought new things, they tossed out their old furniture, photographs, silver and gold and paintings and artifacts. He said they were tossing out their heritage for the sake of cheap, modern things. Over the years, he had furnished his entire hotel with the things he has collected over a lifetime, and it is every exclusive place that has been featured in magazines like "Architectural Digest."

I think it's that way with the Gospel. We don't value it as we should, and a lot of people are tossing it out for more modern ideas. But in so doing, they're trading in something of immense worth for cheap modern trends that quickly fade and break and become obsolete.

Today, I'd like to take a look at the subject, "What's So Special About our Gospel," and our text is from the first chapter of the New Testament book of Colossians.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints—the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the Gospel that has come to you. All over the world this Gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf, and who also told us of your love in the Spirit (Colossians 1:1-8, NIV).

The key word in this passage is this wonderful word GOSPEL. Notice how Paul uses it in verses 5 and 6: ...the Gospel that has come to you. All over the world, this Gospel is bearing fruit and growing.

Our English Word Gospel comes from the old Anglo-Saxon term "God's Spell" or "God's Story." The Greek word on which it's based

literally means the “Good Word” or the “Good Message” or the “Good News.” This isn’t a word that was coined by the Apostle Paul; it had a greater originator than him. As we read the New Testament, we find it was the Jesus Himself who introduced this term in the Bible and chose it to summarize and encapsulate Himself and His message. As I searched this out in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, I found that Jesus used the word Gospel exactly four times.

The first time was in Mark, chapter 8. Jesus was in the far north of Israel, in the region of Caesarea Philippi, where He issued a call for people to follow Him with committed lives. He said in verses 34ff: “If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me and for the Gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?”

Notice those words ...for Me and for the Gospel. Jesus was identifying Himself with His Gospel. He is telling us that He Himself is the Good News, the message that our planet so desperately needs. Notice also that the first that Jesus used the word Gospel, it was in the context of calling people to full discipleship and predicting that many of His followers would be called on to lay down their lives for Him and for His Gospel. He was telling us that the Gospel is so important that its value is greater than the value of all of the rest of everything that there is in the world, for what does it profit us to gain the whole world but miss the Gospel. I’m sure you read this week about the people up in Nebraska who won the Powerball lottery. Maybe you read about the bank robbery in England that netted over forty million dollars. Suppose you were given the Powerball lottery, the proceeds from the bank robbery, Bill Gates fortune, and all the rest of the world thrown in to boot. Suppose you owned this entire planet. None of it can compare to the value of possessing this one word—the Gospel. Have you denied yourself, taken up your cross, and decided to follow Him?

The second time Jesus used this word was an interesting follow up in Mark 10:28-29: Peter said to Him, “We have left everything to follow You!” “I tell you the truth,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for Me and the Gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (home, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecution) and in the age to come, eternal life.

Notice again how Jesus spoke of “Me and the Gospel.” He was again fusing together His person and His message. And He again spoke of the commitment we must make to Him and to His Gospel, and to the reality of persecution.

The third time Jesus used this word was in Mark 13, which was His Olivet Discourse near the end of His earthly ministry when He sat on the Mount of Olives and talked about the signs of the times and the end of the age. Here again, He identified Himself with the Gospel and warned of persecution. Mark 13:9ff predicts that the last days of world history will be marked by intense religious persecution against Christians: You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of Me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them. And the Gospel must first be preached to all nations.[1]

The fourth and final time Jesus used this word was in Mark 14, when the woman came with an alabaster box of very expensive perfume and broke the box, pouring the perfume on His head. When some of the people at the reception spoke disparagingly of the woman, Jesus said: Leave her alone. Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have Me. She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. I tell you the truth, wherever the Gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.

There are several things about all this that interest me. As I mentioned, Jesus identified Himself with His Gospel, as though He and the Gospel were virtually one and the same. He predicted that this Gospel of Himself would be preached throughout the world, but He also predicted that those who bore the message of the Gospel would encounter opposition, persecution, and even death. Every time He used the word Gospel, those were the common denominators.

When we turn to the book of Acts, we find to our surprise, while all these things began to come to pass just as Jesus predicted, the actual word Gospel rarely appears. There are a few references to preaching the Gospel, but the actual word itself is used sparingly.

But then, when we turn to the letters and to the writings of the apostle Paul, the use of this word just explodes. It was Paul’s great word that he adopted from Jesus Christ, and he used it seventy-six times in his letters.

He used it to summarize the great message, that Jesus Christ is God Himself who came to earth in the actual person of humanity, that He died for our sins, that He shed His blood for our guilt, that He rose from the dead for our justification, and that we find new life in Christ by trusting in His finished work on the cross.

Paul said on one occasion: I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes... for in the Gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: The just shall live by faith.

So the Gospel is a thing of great value; it's the wonderful message about Jesus Christ; in fact, it is Jesus Christ and the blessings of forgiveness and eternal life He brings to our lives when we are born again by His grace through the simple act of trusting Him as our Savior.

Now with that bit of historical and linguistic context, let's go back to Colossians 1 and notice what our key passage for today tells us about the Gospel.

The Nature of Our Gospel

First, it gives us the nature of the Gospel. It is true. The Gospel is the very word of truth. Notice verse 5 again: ...the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven, and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the Gospel.

And the end of verse 6: ...since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.

The Gospel is inherently and inerrantly true. The Psalmist said, "Forever, O Lord, is Your word settled in heaven." Jesus said that His word cannot be broken. 2 Timothy 3 says that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. The inspiration, infallibility, and inerrancy of the Gospel is based on the omniscience and truthfulness of God who cannot lie, and when we hold the Bible in our hands, we are holding the Gospel of truth.

The evolutionists say that the Bible is wrong about the origin of life.

The entertainment industry says that the Bible is wrong about morals of life.

The cults say that the Bible is wrong about Jesus.

The liberal philosophers say that the Bible is wrong about inerrancy.

The atheists say the Bible is wrong about God.

The De Vinci Code says the Bible is wrong about the four Gospels.

The Social Pundits say the Bible is wrong about abortion, homosexuality, and sexual mores.

The Pluralists say the Bible is wrong about its missionary and evangelizing zeal.

But...

The Bible is right about the origin of life.

The Bible is right about moral standards of life.

The Bible is right about Jesus.

The Bible is right about inerrancy.

The Bible is right about God.

The Bible is right about the four Gospels.

The Bible is right about marriage and sexual restraint.

The Bible is right about its missionary and evangelizing zeal.

This is the Word of Truth, inspired by God; and the Scriptures cannot be broken. That's the nature of the Gospel.

The Content of our Gospel

The second special thing to notice here about our Gospel is its content. What message does the Gospel really give us? Look at the text again, beginning with verse 3:

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints—the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the Gospel....

Paul told the Colossians that they had heard in the Gospel about the hope that is stored up for them in heaven. Here was a little town full of people in west-central Turkey who knew they were going to die, and they had only a vague hope about whether or not there was anything beyond the grave. Their lives were shrouded in a nagging despair. But suddenly they heard the Gospel, and it was like turning on the floodlights on a football field. They heard about the hope that was stored up for them in heaven.

As I pondered this, I couldn't help but think of Jesus' words in John 14, which must have been conveyed to these young Colossian

believers: “I go to prepare a place for you.” Could there possibly be a more comforting and reassuring verse in all the Bible? Jesus said, “I go...,” or literally, “I am going....” In other words, I’m not going to remain much longer on this little, blue planet that I’ve come to redeem. I’m going to lift off from the earth, sail into the sky, disappear in the clouds, and return to My own home of heaven.

But He went on to say, “I am going to prepare a place for you.” Now, all my life I have taken vacations. That’s one thing my dad was good about; he always took us on a summer vacation, even when I was in college and graduate school; and when Katrina and I married, we continued the tradition. We’ve been all over the country and all over the world. But I have never had anyone say to me, “I’m going to travel to our destination ahead of you and get everything ready. I’m going to make sure the accommodations are pleasant. I’m going to check out the restaurants. I’m going to check on the agenda and schedules and attractions. I’m going to buy all our admission tickets, and I’ll make sure the water in the swimming pool is just the right temperature. I’m going to get everything ready for you.”

If someone did that, he would either have to be a very good servant or a very good friend. But that is exactly what Jesus said to us in John 14: “I am going on ahead, in advance, to get everything ready for your arrival here. I am going to prepare a place for you.” This is the hope of the Gospel that is stored up for us in heaven.

The Scope of our Gospel

The third special thing about our Gospel is its scope. Notice this wonderful missionary emphasis in verse 6: All over the world, this Gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God’s truth.

The actual Greek wording here is quite interesting. The Greek uses the words *pan* and *cosmos*. The Gospel is Pan-Cosmos. The word *pan* means all. Do you remember the old Pan American Airlines. It served all the Americas. The Pan American Games are athletic competitions for the Americas. And the word *Cosmos* means universe, although here it seems to have a more limited meaning of the entire inhabited world. The Gospel is Pan-Cosmos in its scope. Jesus said that it would be preached through the whole world to every nation, and then the end would come. That’s the driving motive for our missionary zeal.

The Transmission of our Gospel

And finally, notice the transmission of the Gospel. This tremendous treasure—the Good News of Christ—came to the city of Colosse by the mouth of a little known biblical character named Epaphras. Paul never visited this town, to the best of our knowledge. It wasn’t a large city, and it wasn’t on his circuit. But this man, Epaphras, brought the message to this city.

You don’t have to be well-known. You don’t to be great. You don’t have to be a fine communicator. The Gospel is shared one person at a time, person-to-person, and anyone who knows Christ can share His message with someone else.

Last week while my wife and I were in Georgia, we visited with a couple who had attended our church in the early 1980s, Gary and Teresa Smith. They have a 29-year-old daughter named Heather, who has been highly involved in campus evangelism and has gone on several mission trips. Gary and Teresa told us how Heather had come to know Christ as her personal Savior. Our own daughter, Victoria, was five years old when she gave her heart to Christ and prayed to become a Christian. She was so excited that she witnessed about it to Heather, who was six years old. Heather asked her parents about being a Christian, and the next Sunday she came forward and was saved at the altar. It was a case of a five-year-old winning a six-year-old to Christ—and it was a decision that has made the fundamental difference in her life all these years.

Now if a five-year-old can be the means of leading someone to Christ, don’t you think you and I can do the same? We can if we recognize and understand the exceeding greatness of the treasure we have in Jesus Christ, and if we say, like Paul:

I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of god for the salvation of everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.