

Paul's Epistle to the Colossians

Prescript, 1.1-2

(Author, recipients, greeting)

A. **Letter opening**, 1.3-23

(Inclusio: *την ελπιδα . . . ην προηκουσατε, της ελπιδος . . . ου ηκουσατε*; vv. 1.5, 1.23)

1. Thanksgiving, 1.3-8
(Its expression, occasion, and ground)
2. Prayer report, 1.9-14
(Its character, content, and intended result)

Christ Hymn of Praise, 1.15-20

3. Thematic statement, 1.21-23
(The letter's three themes in reverse order)

B. **Body middle**, 1.24-4.6

(Paul's apostolic commission, persevering in the face of false teaching, and leading holy lives)

1. Personal matters, 1.24-2.5
(Inclusio: *χαρω . . . εν τη σαρκι μου, τη σαρκι απειμι . . . χαρων*; vv. 1.24, 2.5)
 - a. General: his divine commission, 1.24-29
(Begins with *vuv* formula: his mandate, message, and motivation)
 - b. Particular: his present concern, 2.1-5
(Begins with disclosure formula: an encouragement, warning, and reassurance)[Transition, 2.6-7]
2. Theological matters: False teaching, 2.8-23
(Characterized by the indicative mood; deceptive philosophy, religious rituals, ascetic practices)
 - a. Statement, 2.8
 - b. Contrast, 2.9-23
 - 1) According to Christ, 2.9-15
 - 2) According to human origin, 2.16-23[Transition, 3.1-4]
(Corrective: "Set your minds on things above...")
3. Practical matters, 3.5-4.6
(Characterized by the imperative)
 - a. Vice-virtue lists, 3.5-17
(Two vice lists of five each, one virtue list of five, and a supplementary section)
 - b. Household code, 3.18-4.1
(Exhortations to wives, husbands, children, fathers, slaves)
 - c. Evangelism, 4.2-6
(Advancing the gospel)

Closing, 4.7-18

(Greetings, a final charge, and signature)