

Colossians

Colossians presents Christ's sufficiency and cosmic supremacy while warning a community against practices and powers that would displace that center.



Interpretive reconstruction. The exact departure is reconstructed. Showing one letter avoids claiming that Philemon was carried in the same dispatch.

Date · Confidence: Inferred
c. AD 60–62

Brown's Roman range is AD 61–63; Ephesus and Caesarea remain possible imprisonment settings, and direct Pauline authorship is debated.

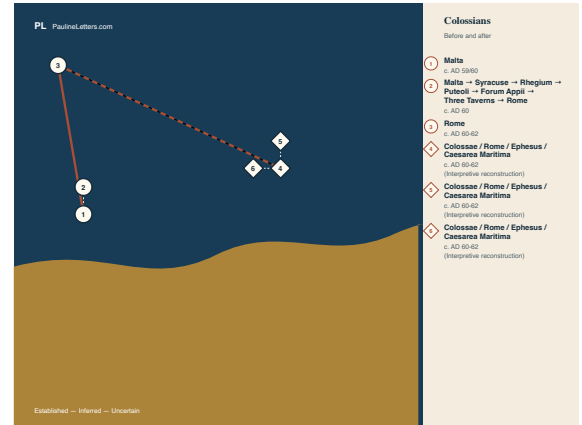
Place · Confidence: Inferred

Traditionally Rome (setting and authorship debated)

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Before and after

- 1 **c. AD 59/60** The storm and shipwreck; all 276 survive; the snakebite; healings on Malta.
Malta · Established
- 2 **c. AD 60** From Malta to Italy and up the Appian Way to Rome; the brothers meet him.
Malta → Syracuse → Rhegium → Puteoli → Forum Appii → Three Taverns → Rome · Established
- 3 **c. AD 60–62** Acts ends with Paul in Rome under house arrest. The prison-letter placements traditionally associated with this period are reconstructions, not claims made by Acts.
Rome · Established
- 4 **c. AD 60–62** Philemon says that Paul is sending Onesimus back to Philemon. Overlapping names with Colossians suggest a connection but do not establish a shared delivery, completed route, or prison city.
· Inferred
- 5 **c. AD 60–62** Ephesians presents union with Christ and Jew–Gentile unity. Direct Pauline authorship, destination, and prison setting are debated.
· Inferred
- 6 **c. AD 60–62** Philippians presents imprisonment as advancing the gospel and includes the Christ hymn. The prison city is debated.
· Inferred



What the text establishes

Established

Colossians presents Christ's sufficiency and cosmic supremacy while warning a community against practices and powers that would displace that center.

The audience is the church at Colossae, known through Epaphras and addressed as a community of believers.

Leading reconstruction

Rome around AD 60–62 is the traditional prison chronology shown here, often linked with Philemon and the closing network of Tychicus and Onesimus.

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Other credible readings

Some scholars attribute Colossians to a close Pauline associate drawing on Paul's thought and network.

Whether directly Pauline or not, the custody setting may be placed at Ephesus or Caesarea rather than Rome.

A ten-minute teaching plan

1. Colossians presents Christ's sufficiency and cosmic supremacy while warning a community against practices and powers that would displace that center.
2. The traditional order clusters Colossians with Philemon near Roman custody, before the post-Acts reconstructions used for the Pastoral Letters.
3. Rome around AD 60–62 is the traditional prison chronology shown here, often linked with Philemon and the closing network of Tychicus and Onesimus.
4. Some scholars attribute Colossians to a close Pauline associate drawing on Paul's thought and network.

Primary texts

Romans through Philemon, World English Bible (public domain).

Acts 7–28, World English Bible (public domain).

Sources

Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Doubleday, 1997). — Chapter 27, "Letter to the Colossians," "General Analysis of the Message"
Brown surveys the letter's argument and occasion.

Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford University Press, 1996). — Chapter 1, "The Chronological Framework," "The Evidence from the Pauline Letters" and "The Evidence from the Acts of the Apostles"

Murphy-O'Connor explains why chronology must weigh the letters and Acts without treating either as a complete timetable.

Scripture references only; no protected Scripture body is included.