

A New Creation

Colossians

by Don Falkos

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Colossae was a city straddling the river in a valley a half-day's walk from the twin cities Heirapolis and Laodicea several days' walk inland from Ephesus on the western coast of Asia Minor. The faithful and loving community of believers in Colossae was under attack.

People had come proclaiming a litany of false teachings, many based in Jewish asceticism, a practice aimed at achieving spirituality through self-denial, extreme abstinence, and meticulous adherence to a number of traditional Jewish festivals and rituals. Conversely, their belief that matter was evil manifested itself in gross immorality. These false teachers claimed Jesus was not a deity, and they promoted the worship of angels. They taught:

- Creation was not carried out by the one, true, purely spiritual God, but by a subordinate.
- Jesus was not physical. He was pure spirit and only appeared to have a body.
- There is a hierarchy of elemental spirits of which Jesus is merely one among many.
- Only a chosen few will ever possess the special knowledge needed to make the transition from the fleshly to the spiritual realm.

But these teachings were empty philosophy and deceitful nonsense. Christ is the visible, material image of the invisible, spiritual God. Through him everything was created, and he holds all creation together. As a new creation he is the head of the body made up of all who believe, all who have been reconciled with God through the blood of Christ shed on the cross.