

LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS

RELEVANT CITIES
COLOSSAE, HIERAPOLIS, LAODICEA

LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

RELEVANT CITIES (SOUTHERN GALATIA)
PISIDIA, LYSTRA, ICONIUM, DERBE



PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

- City
- One of the "Seven Churches" (Rev. 2-3)
- ← Paul's route

The Setting of Colossians / c. A.D. 62 / Paul wrote his letter to the Colossians during a time of imprisonment, probably in Rome. The church at Colossae was likely established during Paul's third missionary journey as he ministered for three years in Ephesus. It appears that Paul did not personally establish the church there, but instead a Colossian named Epaphras traveled to Ephesus, responded to Paul's gospel message, and returned to share the good news in Colossae. [Crossway Bibles. (2008). *The ESV Study Bible* (p. 2291). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.]

COLOSSAE.

A city of Phrygia on the Lycus River.

Location and Archaeology: Colossae was a city in the province of Phrygia located in the Lycus Valley within Anatolia, or Asia Minor, about 120 miles east of the major port city of Ephesus (Arnold, *Colossians*, 73). Today this is part of southwestern Turkey. In the first century AD, Colossae was a small agrarian town. However, in the 5th century BC, Colossae was a thriving economy, known especially for its unique textiles and wool (Moo, *Colossians*, 26).

The eventual demise of Colossae was linked to the construction of a trade route in the third century that went west of Colossae to Laodicea (Wilson, *Biblical Turkey*, 194). Eventually Laodicea became a prominent city, and Colossae turned into a rural community. Thus, in the first century Colossae was a rather insignificant city in the Roman world (Arnold, *Colossian Syncretism*, 4).

Colossae was a small town overshadowed by two nearby cities, Laodicea and Hierapolis. Paul mentions Laodicea and Hierapolis at the end of his letter to the Colossians (Col 4:13), which suggests a connection between the Christian communities in these cities. Colossae was located 11 miles southeast from Laodicea, which explains why Paul could end his letter to the Colossians by asking them to greet brothers and sisters from Laodicea (Col 4:15). Paul also asks them to exchange the letter he had written to them for the letter he wrote to the Laodiceans (Col 4:16).

[Dunne, J. A. (2016). *Colossae*. In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.]