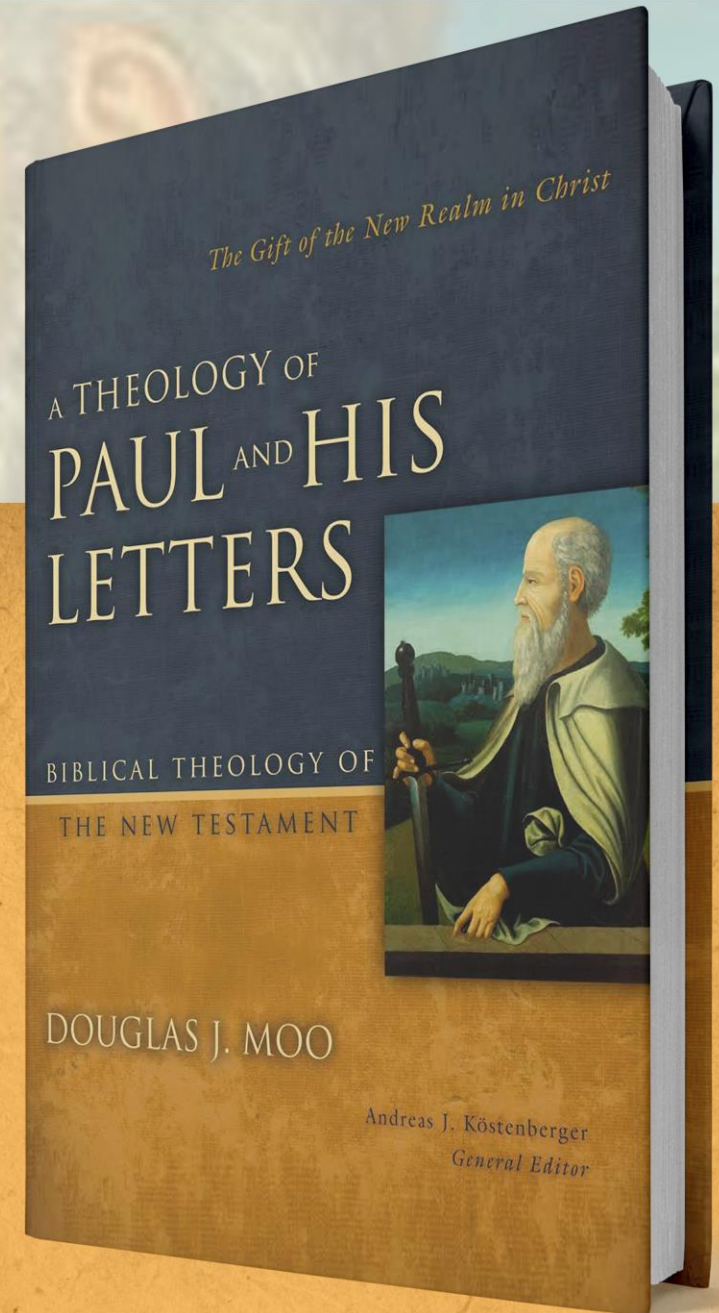
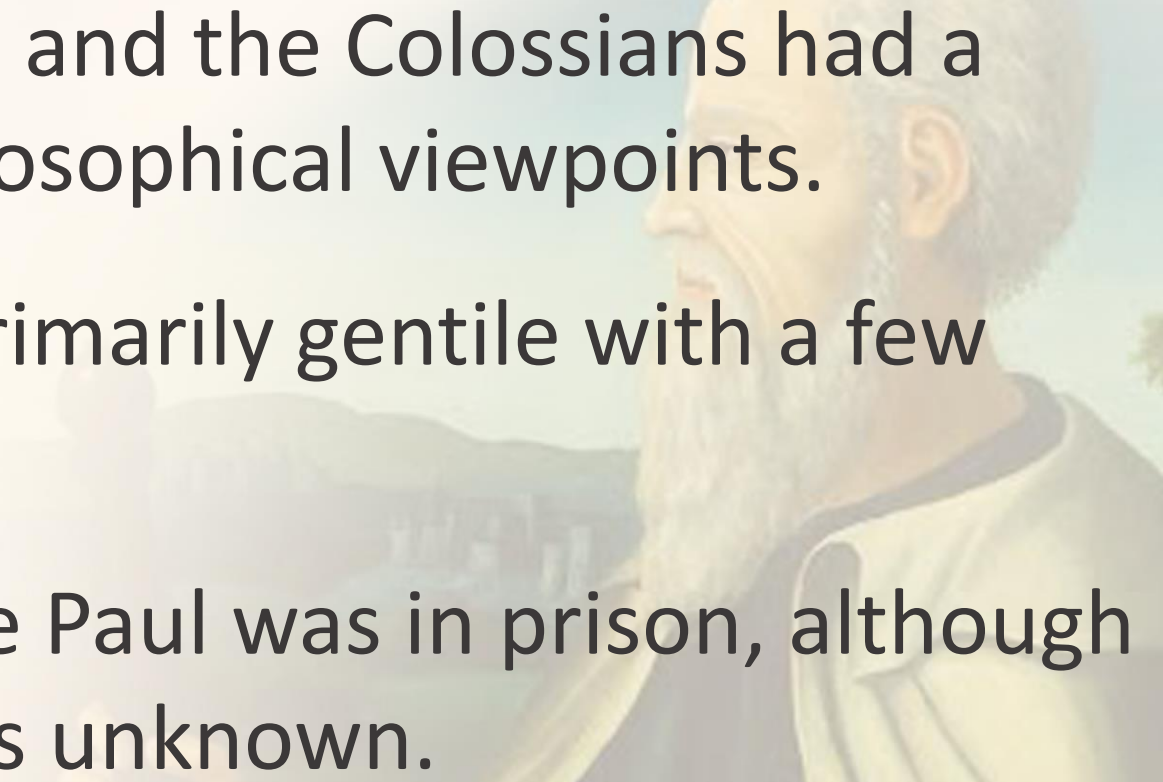


CHAPTER 10

Colossians

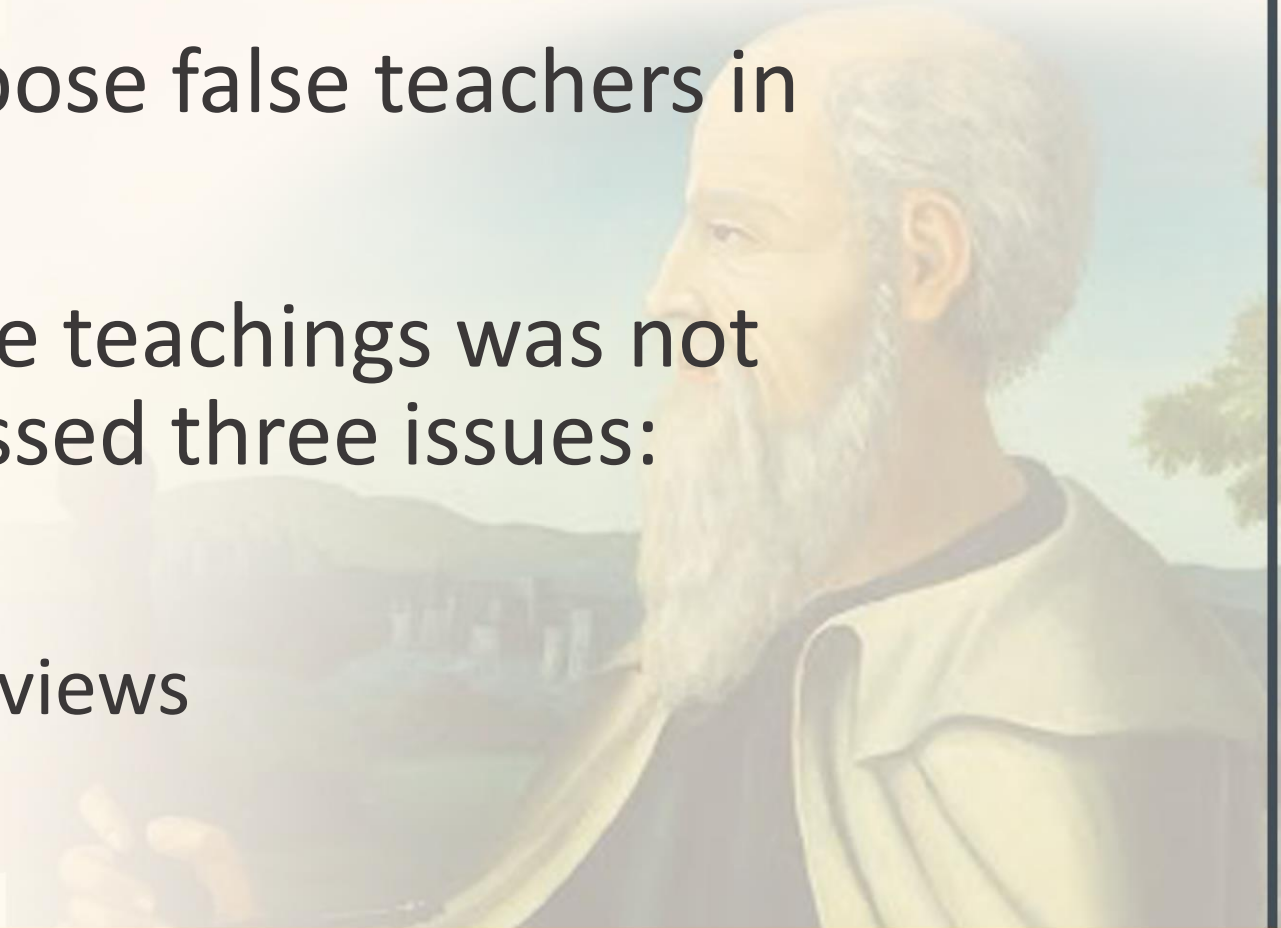


Locating the Letter

- Colossae was in Asia Minor, and the Colossians had a variety of religious and philosophical viewpoints.
 - The church was probably primarily gentile with a few Jews.
 - The letter was written while Paul was in prison, although the specific imprisonment is unknown.
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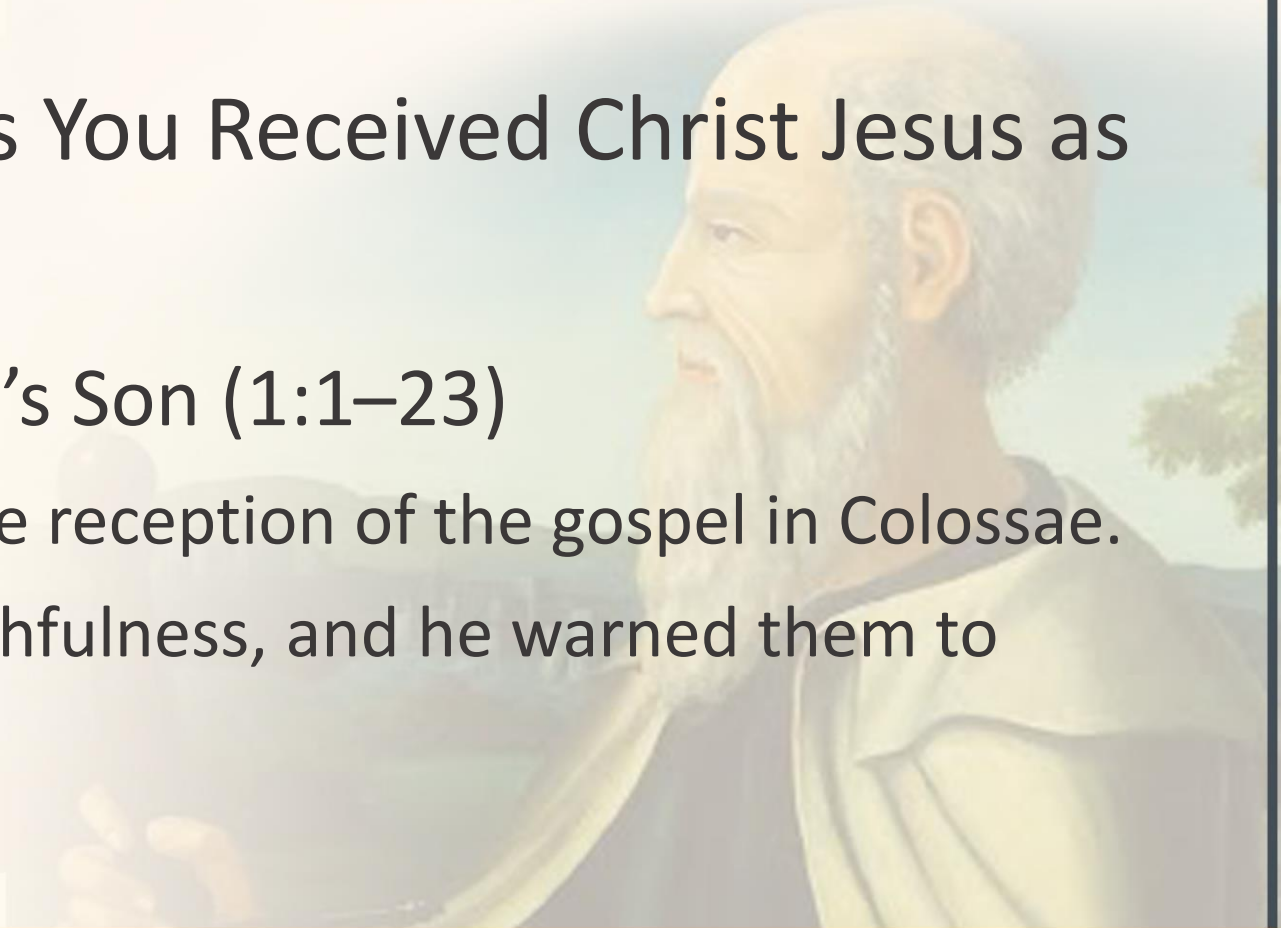
Isolating the Issues

- Paul wrote the letter to oppose false teachers in Colossae.
- The exact nature of the false teachings was not mentioned, but Paul addressed three issues:
 1. Language of “fullness”
 2. Promotion of Jewish-like views
 3. Denigration of Christ

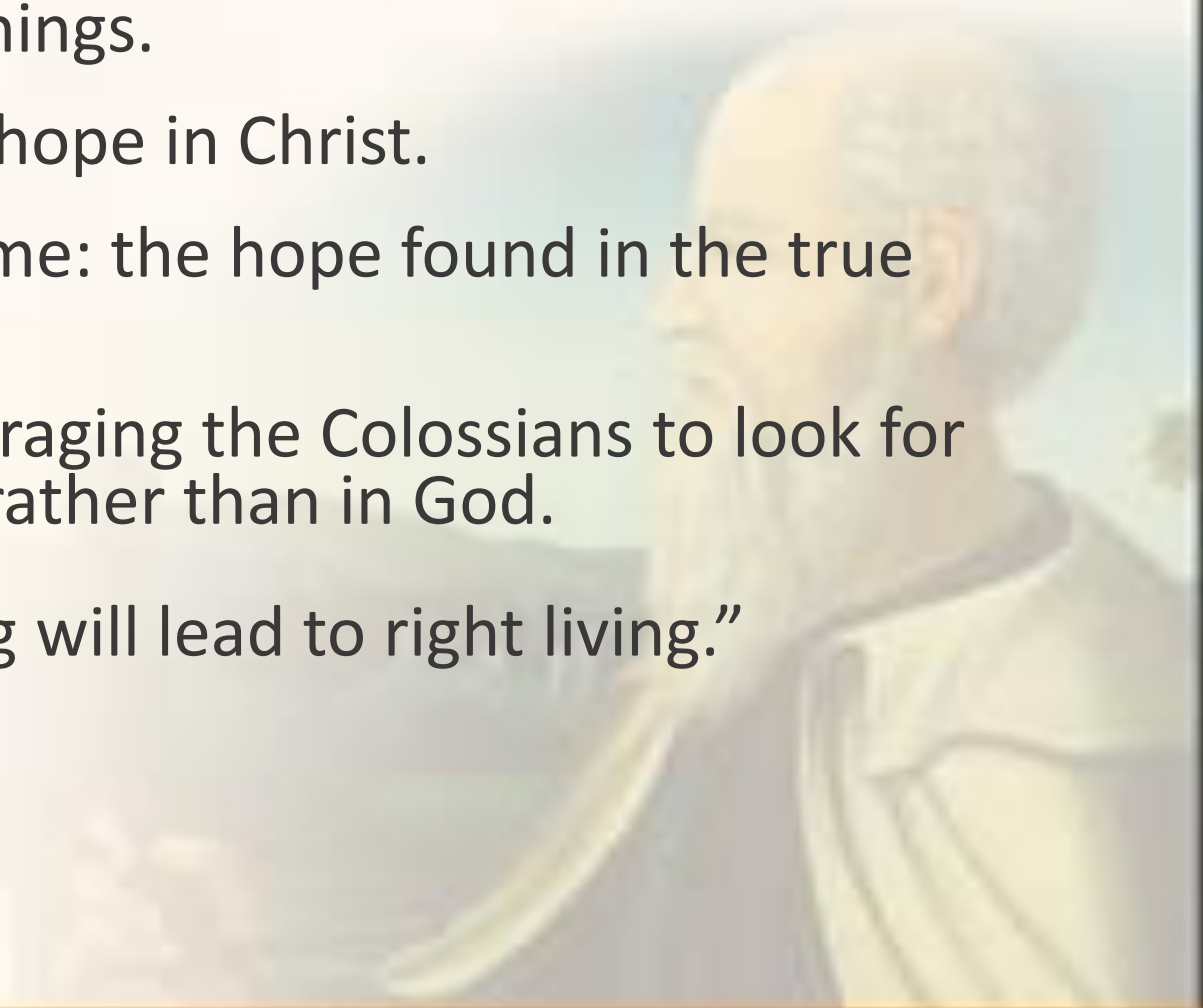


Analyzing the Argument

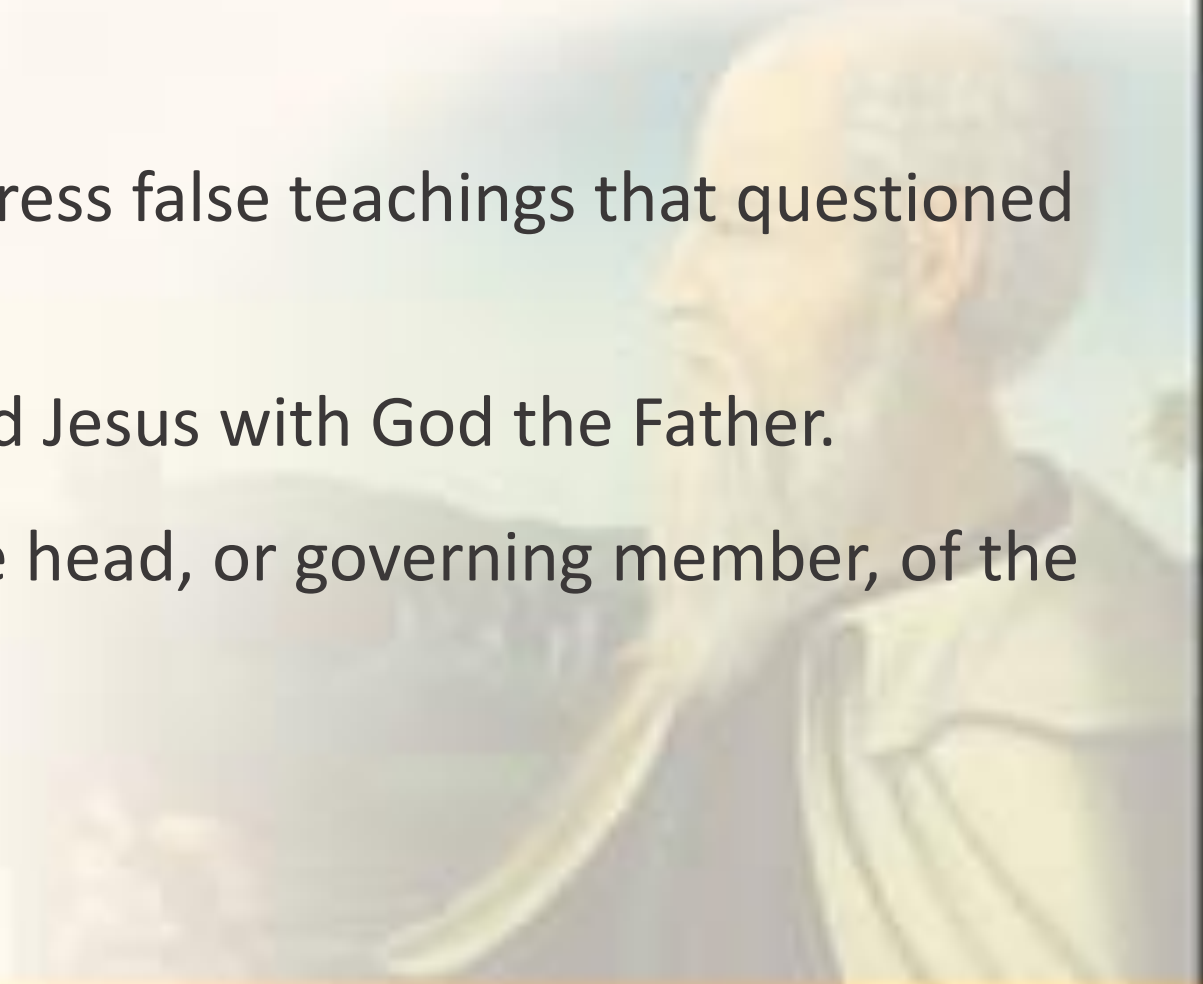
- The Letter Opening: “Just as You Received Christ Jesus as Lord” (1:1–2:5)
 - The Powerful Gospel of God’s Son (1:1–23)
 - Paul began by focusing on the reception of the gospel in Colossae.
 - He thanked God for their faithfulness, and he warned them to remain faithful.



- He taught that a complete knowledge of the gospel will overcome any desire to follow false teachings.
- Paul emphasized security and hope in Christ.
- He introduced a recurring theme: the hope found in the true message of the gospel.
- The false teachers were encouraging the Colossians to look for fulfillment within themselves rather than in God.
- Paul taught that “right thinking will lead to right living.”

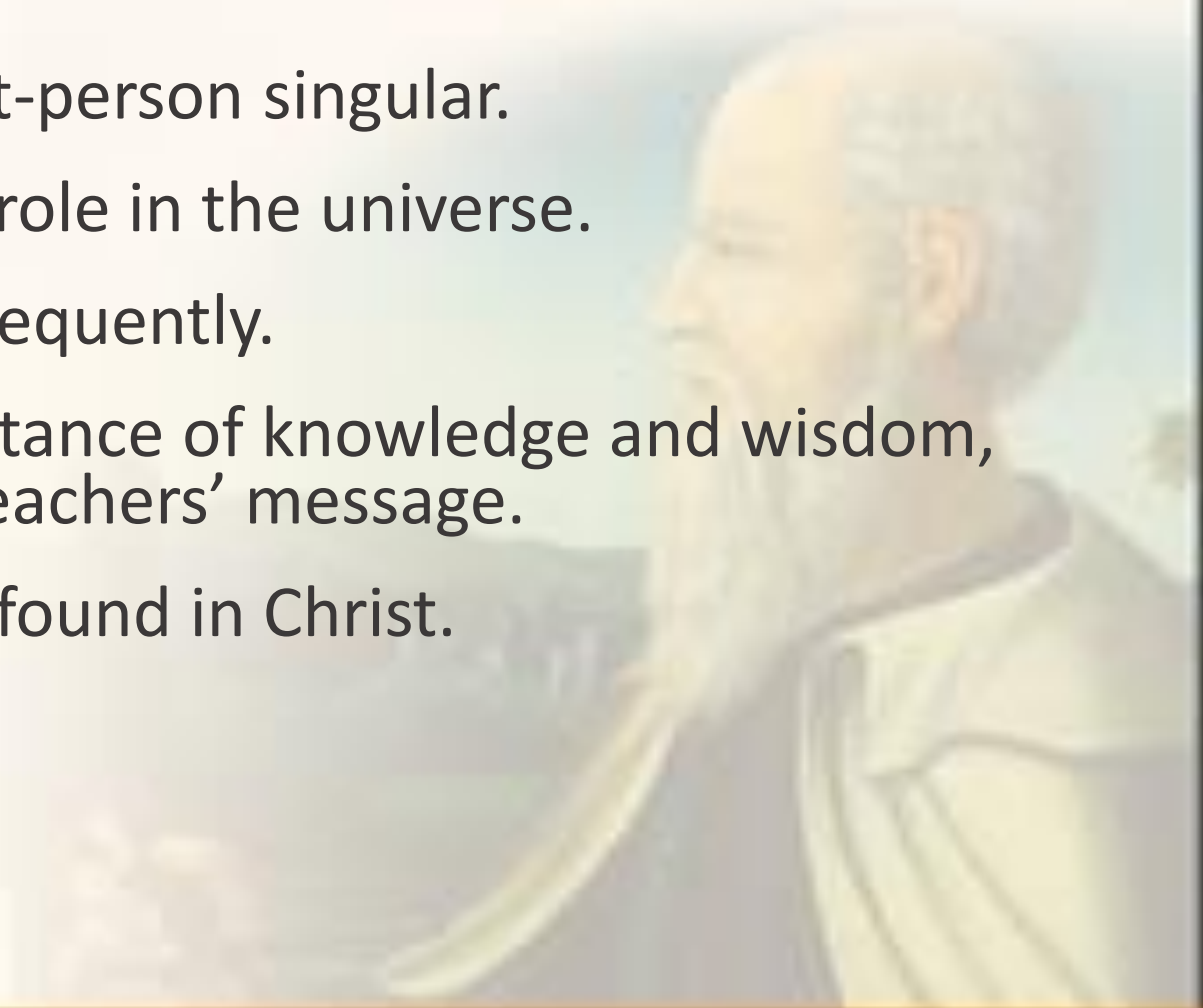


- He used language that may refer to the Israelites' exile and rescue in the Old Testament.
- Paul likely used a hymn to address false teachings that questioned Jesus's role in the universe.
- He used language that equated Jesus with God the Father.
- He also described Christ as the head, or governing member, of the body.



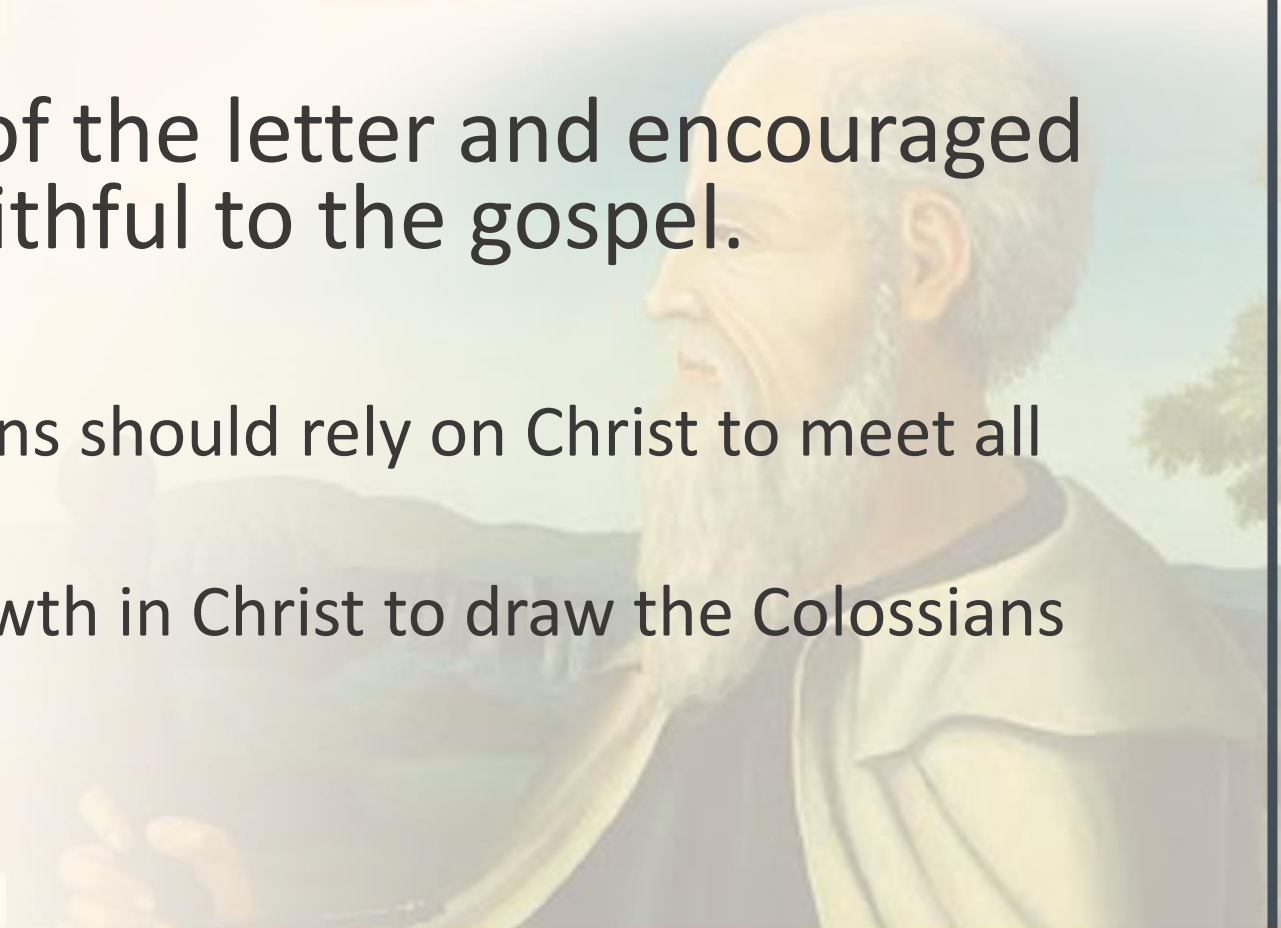
- The Mystery of Christ in Paul's Ministry and Christian Experience (1:24–2:5)

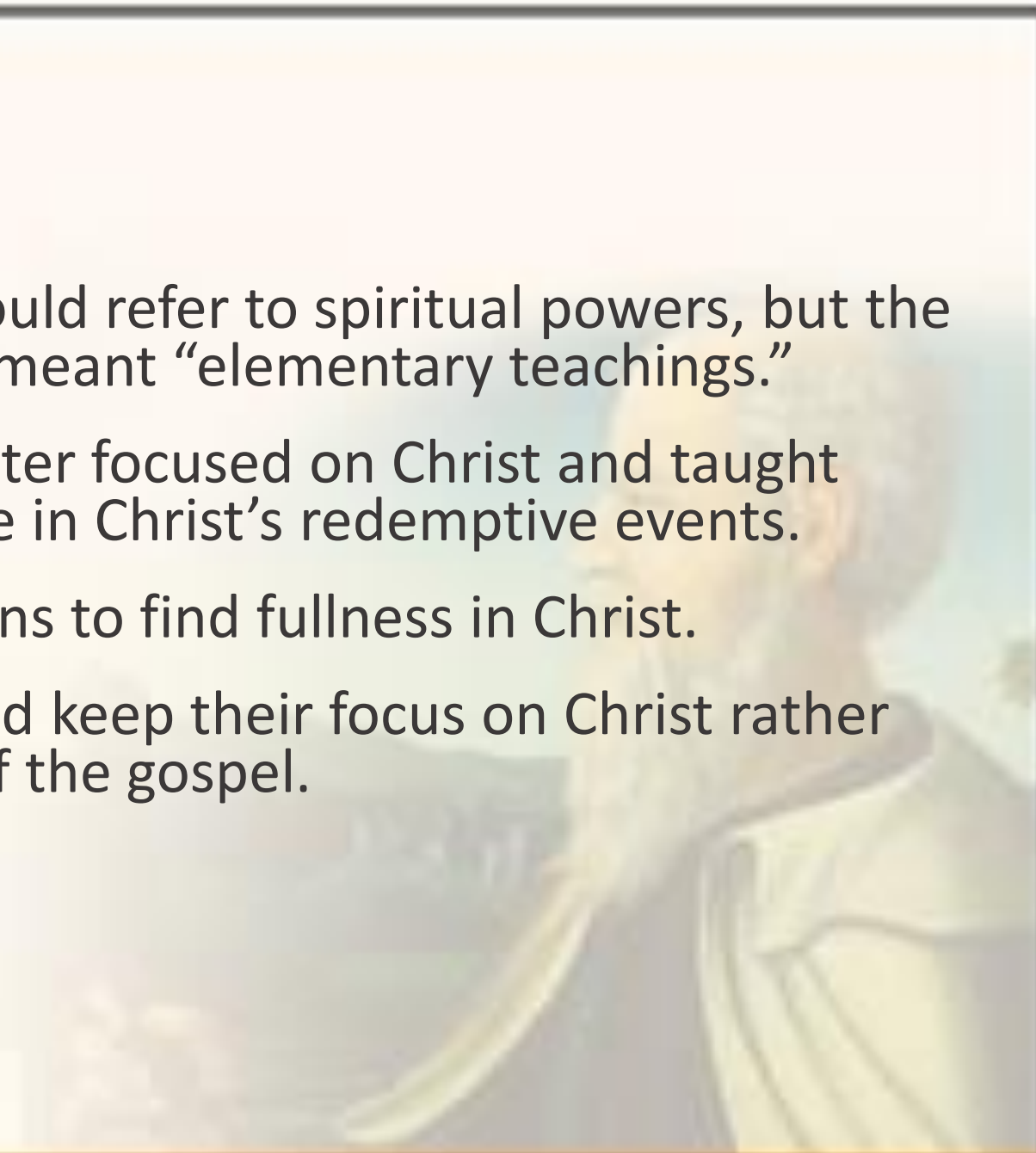
- This section primarily uses first-person singular.
- Paul again focused on Christ's role in the universe.
- He used the term "mystery" frequently.
- He also emphasized the importance of knowledge and wisdom, possibly to counter the false teachers' message.
- He taught that fullness is only found in Christ.



The Letter Body: “Continue to Live Your Lives in Him” (2:6–4:6)

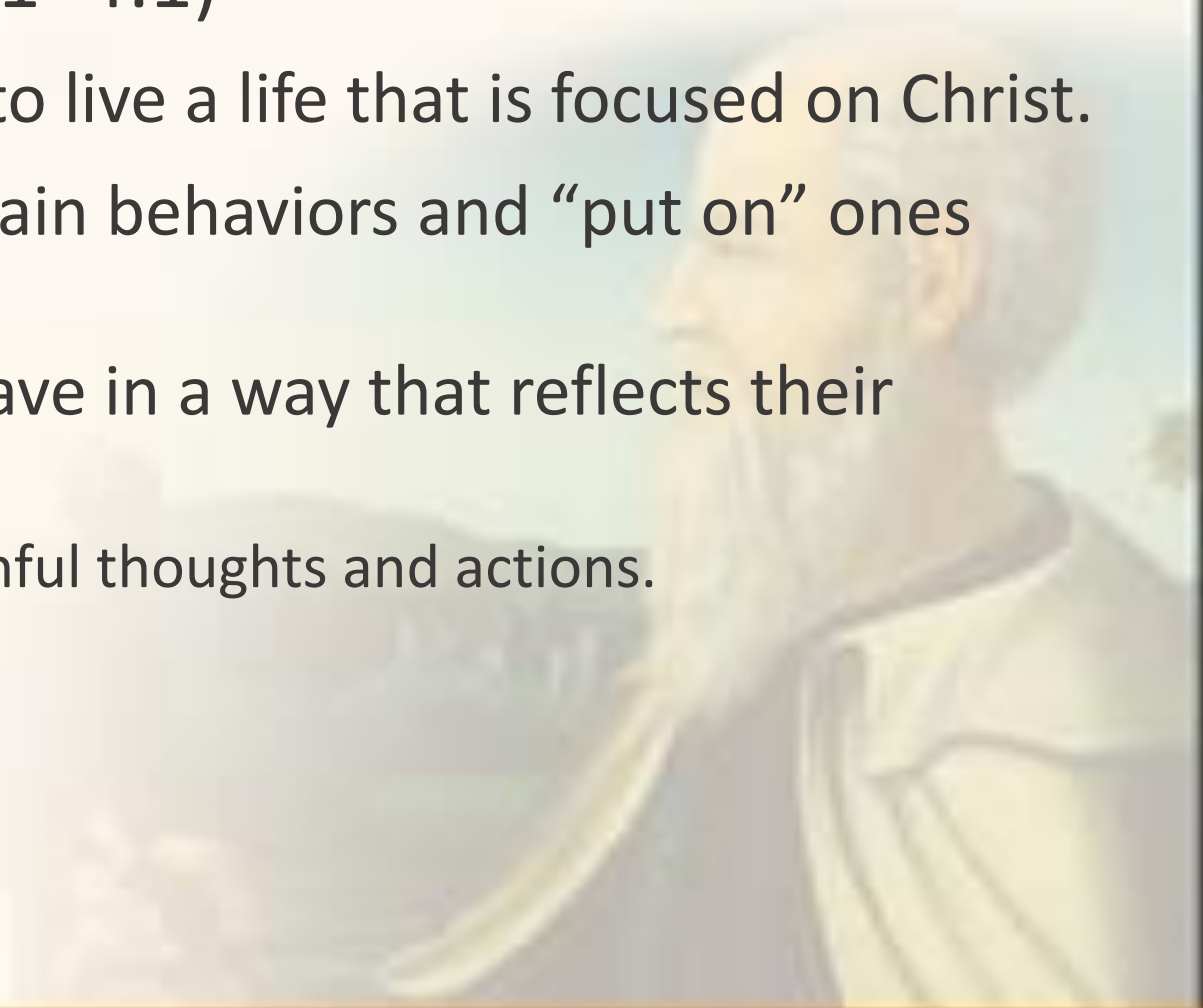
- Paul returned to the focus of the letter and encouraged the Colossians to remain faithful to the gospel.
 - Fullness in Christ (2:6–23)
 - Paul taught that the Colossians should rely on Christ to meet all their needs.
 - He emphasized personal growth in Christ to draw the Colossians away from false teachers.

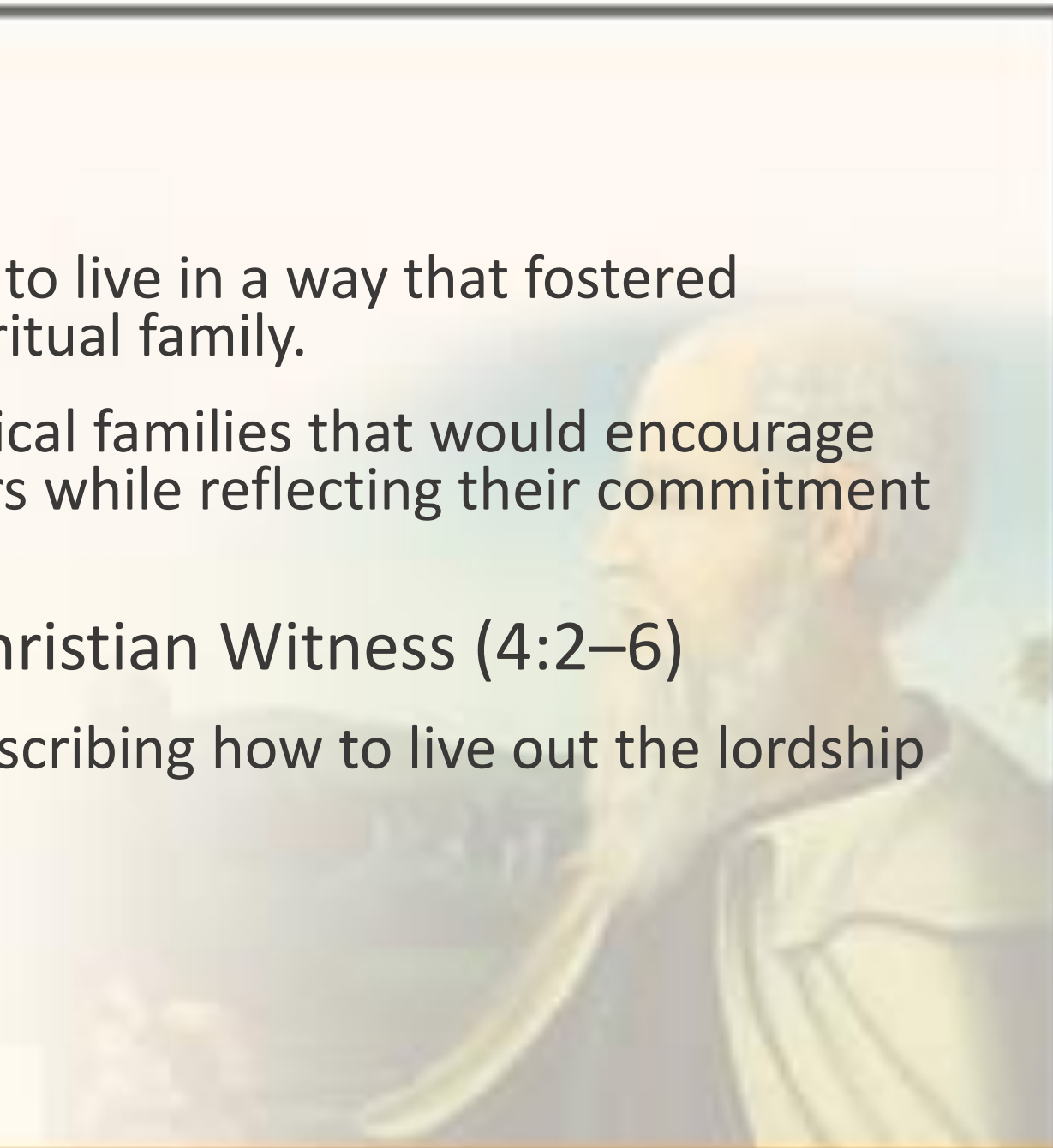


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- “Elemental spiritual forces” could refer to spiritual powers, but the author believed it most likely meant “elementary teachings.”
 - Paul continued to keep the letter focused on Christ and taught that believers must participate in Christ’s redemptive events.
 - He elaborated on what it means to find fullness in Christ.
 - He taught that believers should keep their focus on Christ rather than human interpretations of the gospel.

- Living a Christocentric Life (3:1–4:1)

- Paul explained what it means to live a life that is focused on Christ.
- Believers should “put off” certain behaviors and “put on” ones that are pleasing to God.
- Christians should live and behave in a way that reflects their heavenly identity.
 - This means to “put to death” sinful thoughts and actions.



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- Paul exhorted the Colossians to live in a way that fostered Christian community as a spiritual family.
 - He gave instructions for physical families that would encourage love between family members while reflecting their commitment to Christ.
 - Exhortation to Prayer and Christian Witness (4:2–6)
 - Paul closed the section by describing how to live out the lordship of Christ.

The Letter Closing: Greetings, Plans, and Instructions (4:7–18)

- Paul closed the letter by conveying greetings, requesting the exchange of letters between churches, sending an exhortation to Archippus, and asking for a prayer request.

