

Uniqueness of the CHURCH AGE

Colossians 1:18

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18 **He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. He is the beginning**

He of course refers to Jesus the Christ
is absolute status and keeps on being...

beginning you are ready for this one: look at John 1:1 where the same word is used of JESUS CHRIST **1 In (the) beginning was the Word, JESUS CHRIST and the Word JESUS CHRIST was with God, and the Word JESUS CHRIST was God.**

In this context, *the **BEGINNING*** is used to refer to JESUS CHRIST as the ***first cause***; that is JESUS CHRIST is the first cause of the church. JESUS CHRIST is not only the supreme ruler of the church as **'the head'** but He is the **first cause**; that is, He is the origin of the Church.

Because of His Resurrection, Ascension and Session He is the **cause** for the church coming into existence.

From Him the Church receives life!

Colossians 1:18

18 **He is the firstborn from (out from) the dead**

- 1 This refers to the physical death of JESUS CHRIST and His physical resurrection. The physical death of Christ is emphasized over the Spiritual death of Christ when Resurrection is at issue.
- 2 JESUS CHRIST is the first person in all history to receive Resurrection. Others, like Lazarus, were resuscitated. He triumphed over death by rising out from death.
oh, death where is your victory?
- 3 The Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST gives Him the place of the first born, which carries with it three privileges:
 - (1) **Rulership** –
He is the head of the body...the Church.
 - (2) **Priesthood** –
He is the final Chief Priest of the church and we share His priesthood.
 - (3) **Double Portion** –
of receiving both Jewish and Gentile believers
(Isaiah 53)
- 4 That **Jesus was the first born from the dead, to be resurrected,** means that others would now follow Him.
We,
each and every believer,
have the assurance of resurrection
because of the Resurrection of JESUS CHRIST.

5 Something else wonderful about this phrase:

first born, out from the dead means that He and only He gives life to the dead.

This is why **He is the Only Savior**. He is not just a Savior, but He is the **ONLY SAVIOR**. Every time someone you love dies, let there be a peaceful smile in your soul, knowing that at the Resurrection they will be given life eternal. (and you also will be given eternal life)

Verse 18 sets up the Threefold Description of JESUS CHRIST and the Church.

- 1 **The Head** — Holy Spirit is in full and final Authority
- 2 **The Beginning** — He is the origin of the Church.
- 3 **The First born from the dead** — Out of His resurrection the Church came alive in history.

so that introduces a purpose clause of all the declarations about JESUS CHRIST

He Himself will come Aorist Middle Subjective introduces a purpose clause: and the verb ***GINOMAI*** means to become something you were not before.

Before this, JESUS CHRIST existed simply as God! (John 1:1) now with His death and resurrection He has become something else to the Church.

to have first place in everything. The Aorist Tense means He always will be the first. The Middle Voice tells us something else about JESUS CHRIST; in the Middle Voice the subject is benefited by the action of the verb. Here JESUS CHRIST is benefited by becoming the head of the Church. And the Subjunctive Mood introduces the purpose clause: That He becomes Preeminent!!

By the way, this is what He should be in your life...

Preeminent

No matter what is going on in your life or in the world,
JESUS CHRIST should have paramount importance
in every decision you make,
He should guide every thought you have.

Preeminent in all things First place—preeminent in every area of the Church and, therefore, in your life.

Colossians 1:18

18 **He (JESUS CHRIST) is the head of the body, the church; and He, Himself is the beginning, or the first cause the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. Preeminent in all things** (All things in the world, in the Church and in your life.)

1 The moment you believe in JESUS CHRIST as Savior you are entered into the Body of Christ — that is, the Church.

2 It is the design and purpose of God the Father that JESUS CHRIST has Preeminence in the church.
As far as God is concerned
JESUS CHRIST is Preeminent.

3 Now: What about you? Is JESUS CHRIST Preeminent in your life? Not just by what you say, but by what you do?

‘Actions speak louder than words’. Whether JESUS CHRIST is Preeminent in your life is determined by every area of your life. What you do with our time, with you money, your consistency in the study of His Word.

As Peter exhorts us: **2 Peter 3:18**

but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen

4 Many Christians are going to be bewildered, put in fear because their eyes and hopes are related to this world.

**KEEP YOUR EYES SET
UPON JESUS THE CHRIST.**

5 If you are alive, as long as you are alive, God has a purpose for you, and that purpose is centered on His Son, your Savior and your Friend.

- 6 JESUS CHRIST, being preeminent in your life, does not come just because you want Him to be preeminent. It demands first that you live in the Filling of the HOLY SPIRIT; then you abide in His Word and then you are being led of the HOLY SPIRIT to make decisions in your life based on the preeminence of JESUS CHRIST.
- 7 As a believer in JESUS CHRIST and member of the body of Christ you will never find inner happiness in this life, through the things on this earth.

**We have studied when the CHURCH AGE began.
Now let us take a brief look at
the uniqueness of the CHURCH AGE.**

Uniqueness of the CHURCH AGE

- 1 The Uniqueness of the CHURCH AGE is based on the Glorification of JESUS CHRIST's Incarnation. (Philippians 2)

Two deaths on the cross:

1st Spiritual death

> paying the price for the redemption of all mankind.

then

2nd Physical death and Resurrection,

> making it possible for Imputation of +R (Perfect Righteousness) to everyone who believes.

This is followed by His Ascension into the Third heaven, and finally being seated on the Throne of God.

NOW WITH THE
GLORIFICATION OF JESUS CHRIST
BY GOD THE FATHER,
THE CHURCH AGE CAN BEGIN.

2 By His death (Spiritual Death)
He validated the New Covenant.

By His death (physical)
He abrogated the Old Covenant.

3 Every believer of the CHURCH AGE actually lives in the
Holy of Holies.

This was accomplished at two stages:

First:

JESUS CHRIST entered the *Holy of Holies*; not the one here on earth but the one in heaven. He was able to enter into this heavenly *Holy of Holies* because of His two deaths on the cross and Resurrection. He, as the eternal High Priest, could enter the *Holy of Holies*.

Second:

And then because of the absolutely unique Baptism of the

Holy Spirit we now enter the Holy of Holies because of our position in Christ.

Hebrews 10:19 -20

19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, (that is by His Spiritual Death on the cross.)

20 by a new and living way (the New Covenant) **which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,**

- 4 Throughout all the Old Testament no one was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies except the High-Priest, and then only once a year with the blood (life) of sacrifice.

But now in the CHURCH AGE every believer, no matter race or life's status, lives in the Holy of Holies because of the believer being in Union with JESUS CHRIST by the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

- 5 When JESUS CHRIST died on the cross the veil that enclosed the Holy of Holies was torn in two, opening access to God to all people, Jew and Gentile.

Matthew 27:51

And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

- 6 The uniqueness of the CHURCH AGE means a New Covenant authorizing a new Priesthood. Every believer in the Church Age is a Priest because of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit putting every believer in Union with JESUS

CHRIST and we share His Priesthood.

What this means to you personally each day is that you represent yourself. You pray to Him and go to Him personally and individually. You do not need some other person, some priest, etc. You have access to God the Father because of who you are in Christ. This is the Uniqueness of the Church Age. Never before has every the believer been his own priest.

7 So the CHURCH AGE is unique for the following reasons:

- 1) Indwelling of the Third member of the Godhead the Holy Spirit
- 2) Indwelling of the Second member of the Godhead, JESUS THE CHRIST, the Son of God.
- 3) Every believer of the Church is a Priest with access to the *Holy of Holies*.
- 4) Completed canon of Scripture.
- 5) The believer does not live under Mosaic Law? He lives under the New Covenant which abrogates and supersedes the Mosaic Law. (Galatians 3:15-29)
- 6) Every believer in JESUS CHRIST, throughout all the CHURCH AGE is in Full Time Christian Service and, therefore, lives in the Intensified Stage of the **ANGELIC CONFLICT**. Every believer represents God on earth and is an Ambassador of Christ. This is the only age or dispensation where God is represented by

everyone who believes in JESUS CHRIST as Messiah Savior. (This is why the universal Indwelling of the Holy Spirit was not necessary until this unique age of CHURCH AGE.

- 7) The glorification of a member of the human race, JESUS CHRIST Himself, and the interruption of the Age of Israel (*which will continue after the Rapture of the Church*) leads to something unique, the Intensified stage of the **ANGELIC CONFLICT** during the dispensation of the church.

You are in it...so get with it!!!

**Before we move on,
be sure we see the Glorification of JESUS CHRIST.**

1 First, His relationship with sin. Verses 13-14

**2 His relationship with God. Verse 15
HE REVEALS GOD.**

**3 His relationship with all creation. Verses 15-17.
CREATOR OF ALL THINGS.**

**4 His relationship with the Church. Verse 18.
ORIGINATOR AND HEAD.**

The Angelic Conflict is so very interwoven in this entire section of the glorification of JESUS CHRIST (Verses 13-20). And the most important stage of this conflict is JESUS CHRIST being seated at the Right Hand of God. I don't want you to ever forget just how important His being seated at Right Hand of God is in the Spiritual Warfare.

1 It was prophesied in the Old Testament:

Psalm 110:1

The LORD (God the Father) **says to my** (King David) **Lord:** (JESUS CHRIST: God the Father said this to JESUS CHRIST) **“Sit at My right hand** (on my throne here in third heaven) **Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”**

2 Being seated at the Right Hand of God His Father was the comfort of JESUS CHRIST while on the cross bearing the judgment of the guilt of the entire human race.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, (The list of the heroes of faith in chapter 11) **let us also lay aside every encumbrance** (distractions in the world: material or people) **and the sin which so easily entangles us,** (every believer has a pattern of sin that easily entangles us) **and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,** (growing in the Knowledge of JESUS CHRIST and glorifying JESUS CHRIST in our lives.)

2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, (here is our focus in life) **the author and perfecter of faith,** (our battle in life is walking by faith, not by sight) **who for the joy set before Him** (JESUS

CHRIST) endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Here is the triumph of the **ANGELIC CONFLICT.**

3 JESUS CHRIST sitting at the Right Hand of God, is a demonstration of the Omnipotence of God Himself.

Ephesians 1:19-20

19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places,*

4 Because JESUS CHRIST is right now seated at the Right Hand of God in the Third Heaven, because of this, we are to seek those things that are above, not the things here on earth.

Colossians 3:1-2

1 Therefore if you (since you) have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

- 5 JESUS CHRIST being seated at the Right Hand of God, promoted Him above angels.
- Hebrews 1:3**
And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
- Hebrews 1:13**
But to which of the angels has He ever said, “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET”?

- 6 JESUS CHRIST is our High Priest because He sits at Right Hand of God.
- Hebrews 8:1**
Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,
- We are rightfully so occupied with JESUS CHRIST at His incarnation at Christmas time.
- We are rightfully so occupied with JESUS CHRIST at His crucifixion and resurrection on Resurrection Sunday and throughout the year.

But oh, people, He is not here, He is not on that Cross, **He has risen and now sits on the throne of God, at the Right Hand of God...**

therefore, we should constantly think of Him and where He is right now and fix our eyes, our thinking on who He is and Where He is.

Colossians 1:19

For (introduces the grounds upon which all that was declared in verse 18 are founded)

it was *the Father's* (this is not in the original manuscripts but placed for smoothness of the text)

good pleasure (Aorist Active Indicative of a compound Greek verb made up of the prefix meaning *well, good* plus the verb meaning **to think**: *to be well pleased, to think it good*. It means to think well of something, that this is not only right and good but adds the force of being well pleased with it.

for all the fullness to dwell in Him, (in JESUS CHRIST)

for all the fullness (with this the Holy Spirit moves right into the Theological battle against gnostic thinking.)

We have not covered how the book of Colossians was written to combat Gnosticism which was prevalent at the time in history and still influences the thinking of people. This phrase ***all the fullness*** is used in a technical way here inclusive of everything we studied about JESUS CHRIST so far in the first chapter of Colossians. It means fullness to point of completion.

To dwell in Him (to have permanent residence)

Verse 19

Because in Him (in Christ) He (God the Father) had determined with pleasure that all should have permanent residence.

Let us look at why this pleased God!

Isaiah 53:10

But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief (first let us look at the introduction)

But (let us see how this flows from verse 9)

He had done no violence nor was there any deceit in His mouth, (no MAS mental attitude sins, no S/T sins of the tongue, no overt sins... so, nothing should have happened to Him...)

but (but something did happen to Him, something horrible...why?)

But (or) **'except for the fact' that the Lord was pleased to crush Him (YHWH referring to God the Father.)**

Ok, this is theologically pivotal:

This is **not referring to His physical death;**

This is not referring to what the Jews and the Romans did to Him physically – the Romans did the same things to the other two criminals, and have done it to others.

No,

THIS IS OF GOD!

THIS IS SOMETHING THAT ONLY GOD CAN DO!

crush Him (This is the Hebrew *daka* and is used here to refer to the unique death of JESUS CHRIST by God the Father while Jesus was on the cross in the last three hours. There are those who teach that since it was darkness we do not know what happened to JESUS CHRIST on the cross.

Oh Yes We Do! HE WAS CRUSHED BY GOD THE FATHER,
that is, **His soul** was crushed —
in judgment for the sins of the world.

Here is the love of JESUS CHRIST for those whom God the Father Loved—the whole human race. Receiving benefits from the Love of God, you have to believe on JESUS CHRIST. His Love is unconditional but being benefited by His Love is Conditional.

Everyone who is in the lake of fire for all eternity are loved by God the Father but are not benefited by His Love... because they have rejected His Son as Savior. The Prodigal son was loved by his father while out living in a riotous way eating what the swine ate: and was loved by his father ...but he was not benefited by his Father's love.

**JUST BECAUSE THERE IS LOVE,
DOES NOT MEAN
THAT THE OBJECT OF THAT LOVE
IS BENEFITED BY THAT LOVE .**

Now let us look at God the Father's attitude...

He was pleased The Hebrew verb *hapes* meaning to delight in, to have pleasure, to have favor. This is a demonstration of the Love of God for the human race.

Talk about the love of God ...well here it is!

For in this manner, God so loved the world that He gave His only son, that whoever believes in Him will have Everlasting life.

Isaiah 53:10

But the Lord was pleased to crush Him we noted that to crush Him does not refer to what the Romans did to Him. This is a reference to something that only God could do: Spiritual Death.

But now let us look at God the Father's attitude...

He was pleased The Hebrew verb *hapes* meaning to delight in, to have pleasure, to have favor.

10 But the Lord was pleased to crush Him This refers to something that only God can do: Spiritual Death! Most unfortunately few know and understand Spiritual Death. The first Spiritual Death was Adam and Eve in the garden.

Genesis 2:16

16 **The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely;** (First blessing... God gave was food... eat freely)

17 **but (uh oh) from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it dying you will die ”.**

Construction, most translations simply translate this.. **you shall surely die** but constructively this is a Qal Infinitive Absolute... which I know does not mean a thing to most of you... so allow me to simplify this... Infinitive Absolute may be translated as a Participle... so we have **dying** which means this happens as soon as they ate of this forbidden tree, followed by a simply Qal Imperfect. **you will die.**

Let us take a look at what happened in the garden. Adam and Eve did not die physically – they lived hundreds of years. So what does it mean **dying**? **THIS REFERS TO SPIRITUAL DEATH...** they died spiritually. Spiritual Death is the loss of communication — fellowship with God.

Then they received the Righteous clothing from God and at that point became Spiritually Alive. So Adam and Eve were created, brought into existence Physically and Spiritually alive...then they died Spiritually for disobeying God by eating of the forbidden tree.

And then hundreds of years later they died physically. Everyone after Adam and Eve are born into the world Physically alive but Spiritually Dead. When... if... they believe in the promised Messiah or as we know Him now, JESUS CHRIST, they are born a second time—Spiritually; so they – we – become physically and Spiritually Alive.

Now we drop down in history to JESUS CHRIST. Born of a virgin,

therefore, no ISN Inherited Sin Nature, therefore, born Physically and Spiritually alive. And on the cross, He died Spiritually... then physically.

His dying Spiritually was at the hands of God the Father, who not only Crushed JESUS CHRIST—Spiritual Death, but was pleased to Crush JESUS CHRIST;

Again this verb means **to delight; to have pleasure**. Even though this Jesus, His servant, His Son, was completely innocent of any sin, *it pleased God the Father to crush Him...*

Talk about the Love of God – the Love of God for the human race.

Here is a perfect example of His Love :

In this manner God loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.

Let us change a little to make the point more graphically:

In this manner God loved the world that on the cross He crushed the soul of His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life. When you see it in this vividness, you understand why the only way anyone can be benefited by His Love is to believe on His Son, whom He crushed, and was pleased to crush Him... put Him to Spiritual Death, because He came in contact with sin, the sins of the whole world.

Question:

Why was God pleased to crush His Son on the Cross?

This is answered here in verse 10.

If He would render Himself as a guilt offering (but before we look at this we have one more important phrase) **putting Him to grief. But the Lord** (God the Father) **was pleased to crush His Soul** (His Servant, His Son, Jesus the Christ) **putting Him to grief.**

This is one verb in the Hebrew and it is in the Causative Hiphil—causing Him to sickness or disease—

In 2 Kings 20:1

sick unto death He was crushed and now Spiritual Death is described as sickness unto death...What we are seeing in these two verbs: Crushed and sickness unto death is the effect of sin. **How horrible is sin?** When you and I sin, what happens? This is what sin does... it causes us to be sick to the point of death; spiritual death!

Think for a moment on the choosing of this word – **sickness**. Think how important is the doctor of a small town, think of how many hospitals are in the city... even different kinds of hospitals. Oh, we have come a long, long way in treatment of sickness and diseases from the writing of Isaiah 53 some 2700 years ago. At the time of writing this was a powerful word that grabbed everyone. Well, this is what sin does to us, every time we sin. When we stop walking by Faith and sin, **we die spiritually**, not for eternity, but experientially – in our lives we are physically alive but we are Spiritually Dead... temporally, and all we can do as a dead person is Faith—not confess, not ask for forgiveness, not repent, not feel sorry; all we can do, that will motivate God to make us alive is **Faith**

Where did we learn this? I learned this from Lewis Sperry Chafer *He that is Spiritual...* Chapter 7—Conclusion—where he very effectively points out that our recovery from sin as a believer is patterned after our recovery from the penalty of sin as Unbelievers where the only thing we could do was to believe in JESUS CHRIST. Then Lewis Sperry Chafer points out that that the only thing we could do as carnal a believer was Faith. This time Faith in the one God sent for spirituality—the Holy Spirit. At Salvation—we were Spiritually Dead, and all we could do was to put Faith in JESUS CHRIST... and God acted on that Faith and made us Spiritually Alive. So it is in our daily lives as believers.

People, we must always be aware of what sin does when we sin... it makes us sick unto death, spiritually death as a believer.

This means there is nothing we can do to please God but Faith. This is why, even if we sing, pray, give money, sit in Bible class, etc.,... if we are sick to death—spiritually, the only thing we can do is Faith.

Now the question:

Is Your Faith The Faith God Is Looking For?

Only Faith in the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Godhead.

We saw His cleansing power right from the beginning in Genesis 1:2 where the world was **tohu vah bohue—formless, and void and darkness** – and the Holy Spirit started hoovering over the earth ... then in verse 3 God said let there be light – that is His Son... and the world started its reconstruction or

restoration... and this is what the Holy Spirit does to us as and unbeliever. When we first believe in JESUS CHRIST and then as believers when we walk by Faith in the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 53:10

But the Lord (God the Father) **was pleased to crush Him** (Spiritual Death of JESUS CHRIST) **putting Him to grief—sickness unto death, by sin.**

What is so interesting is that the Great Physician, JESUS CHRIST our Savior, to be our Physician, He had to endure our sickness on the cross.

Before we move on, let us look at all that our Savior – Friend JESUS CHRIST experienced...suffered for us:

The suffering of Jesus Christ from Isaiah 53:

- 1 **He grew up in parched ground** describing the condition of Israel when Christ was born and grew.
- 2 He was despised of people of His own race and country.
- 3 He was forsaken of people of His own race and country.
- 4 People hid their face from Him.
- 5 People did not even consider that He was their Savior.
- 6 He bore our sickness/griefs from sin on the cross.
- 7 He bore our sorrows from pain of sin.

- 8-10 Stricken, Smitten and Afflicted – Spiritual Death by God.
- 11 His soul was pierced through, paying for our sins and this piercing brought about Spiritual Death.
- 12 He was crushed – Spiritual Death, because of our iniquities.
- 13 The chastening that belonged to us fell upon Him.
- 14 He was scourged that we might be healed.
- 15 The judgment for our iniquity fell on Him.
- 16 He was oppressed by man—Jews and Romans.
- 17 He was brutally taken away by both Jews and Gentiles.
- 18 His grave was assigned to be with criminals.
- 19 His Father, our God was pleased to crush Him...
Spiritual Death.
- 20 He endured the sickness of Sin, a man who knew no sin.

So now we have a fuller understanding of why in Colossians 1:19
It pleased God for all fullness to dwell in Him!

Amen

Now, for further comfort:

*While the heavens and the earth will be destroyed
the Bible is unchangeable,
His Word abideth forever.*

*You have more comfort, more stability in the Word of God
than you do in the universe.*

*You can rest in His Faithfulness
of your Eternal existence with Him.*

You have to make up your mind:

Is Christ sufficient for all your needs?

Or do you have to have other things or something else?

**This book is about the Sufficiency of JESUS CHRIST:
to God the Father;
and to you?**

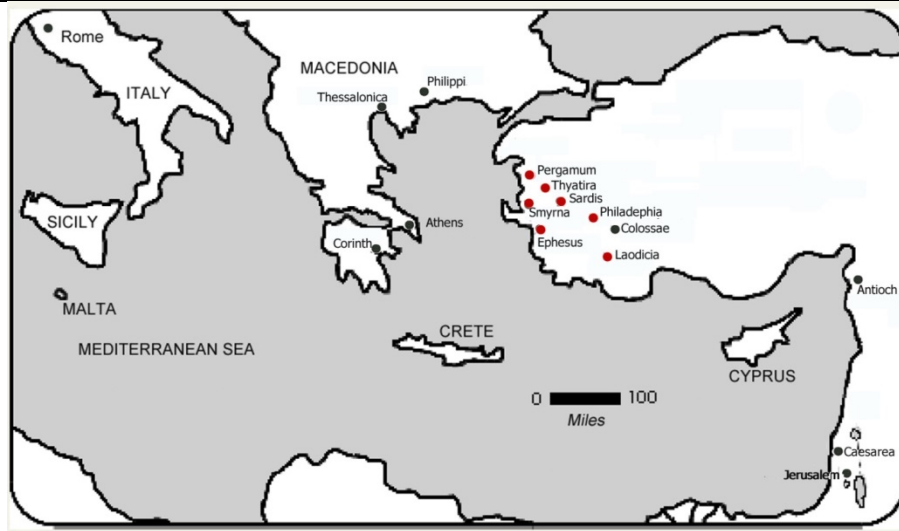
Is the Word of God sufficient for you?

Sufficient to bring you to JESUS CHRIST?

Sufficient to bring you to God the Father?

Is the Word of God sufficient for **SAD** (*Stress, Anxiety, Depression*) in
your life or do you need outside help?

So we learn so much from the true understanding of the Gospel.



*Only one life, 'twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last*