COLOSSIANS...23/3/95

1. Note syllabus additions...schedule note and class changes

2. General discussion of Colossians Background material...

   --Locate city..tell of its history, commerce, demise, collapse 61 or 64

   --How church started....

   Note relitions setting:

   Worship of Artemis, Cybele, nature and fertility deities. Zeus, Isis, Men..background to Mithros p. 4...Martin

      Paul in Ephesus...Philemon...Epaphras......

      Not sure otherwise

   --From where is letter written...

      Classic View...Roman imprisonment (contrast with Philippian letter)

      Others: Caesarea

      Martin: Ephesus...proximity to church (see Philemon letter) (vying with lions)

      It would make the letter earlier (between 54 and 57) rahter than later or closer to the collapse of Colosse

   --Gnosticism....

      --How religious groups start..what sort are predictable (blackboard)

      --synchretism is the big idea along with idealism and activity.

      --Gnosticism..a proto sort at Colosse, no doubt. Characteristics: asceticism, light/darkness/ impresonal deity, hierarchies, necessities of teachers...assimilation of other ideas.

         --Great thrust on knowledge: Note that it puffs up:
           Knowledge sources: learning
                               experience
                               observation.
                               pragmatic action
                               second hand relation...
            it is attractive and the desire to repeat a knowing experience is very great (discuss some modern affairs) But remember that knowledge is not an end in itself.

            Gnostic overtones in the Colossian letter.

      --Ebionites (poor) --three groups and later diversions

      --Elkesites (Elexai)...not a distinct sect but a school of thought and in that sense an influence.-strong astrology role.

   --Authenticity, authorship

      --Martin deals with concepts

      --Authenticity challenge depends on form/criticism ideas

3. Some points in overview:

   How was Paul qualified to deal with the problem at Colosse?
   What is the point (contribution) of each section of the book?
   What special emphases do you observe in the Book?
   What items do you think seem to be lacking?
   How does the letter work to fulfill 1:28