

Colossians: Jesus Our All In All

Colossians 2:6-15

Colossians 2:6

(KJV) As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

(NIV) So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him,

Paul here simply exhorts the Colossian believers to keep in mind the original Gospel which they had received through Epaphras, and which Epaphras had received through Paul:

1Corinthians 15:1-4

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

How easy it would be for these new Christians to be lured off course by the false teachings of the Gnostics - teachings attuned to their flesh.

Proverbs 4:27 *Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.*

For those of us who follow Jesus today, we can safeguard our minds and hearts from falsehood by meditating on the Word of God day and night:

Psalm 1:2

But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

A large part of developing discernment is comparing what we are hearing from the outside with God's Word's which we have hidden on the inside:

Acts 17:11

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Incoming thoughts that do not line up with the Word of God must be taken captive, discarded, and replaced with the clear truth of Holy Scripture:

2Corinthians 10:5

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Beloved, make this your practice, and watch your discernment grow greatly!

Colossians 2:7

(KJV) Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

(NIV) rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

ρίζω; rhizoō; *hrid-zo'-o* - to root (figuratively *become stable*): - root.

Oh, to be *rooted* dear Christian! Think of the psalmist in Psalm 1:

Psalm 1:3

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

And how much glory God receives when we bear much fruit for Him!

John 15:7

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

The real key here is our hearts, isn't it? As we know from the the parable of the seeds, the condition of our hearts determines the effectiveness of God's Word in our lives:

Matthew 13:1-9

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear."

The better way to live, beloved, is to hide the Word of God in our hearts:

Psalm 119:11 *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

Not only does God's Word keep us from sin, it is our best offensive weapon against evil attacks and false teaching:

Ephesians 6:17

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

To build upon, to grow, all begins with deep roots! Paul is in full encouragement mode with his use of power words like *rooted, built up, stablished, abounding*. How could the Colossian

believers not be excited to follow Jesus with cheerleaders like Paul exhorting and praying from the bleachers?

An important detail in the Book of Colossians is how visible these new believers made the invisible God. Their light and their love so shone that the neighbouring regions were able to see Jesus in the Colossian believers, and were pointed to Him!

Matthew 5:16

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

How important to God it is that we let the light of Christ shine in our lives in the way we live and the way we love:

Matthew 5:14

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

The overflow of thankfulness (Colossians 2:7 b) for what the Gospel has done in our hearts and lives should be evident to all those around us. They will also see in us supernatural strength that keeps us resilient against trials, temptations, falsehood, and storms.

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Sometimes it's nice to simply write down all those things that God has provided for us, or that He is working in our hearts. Make a list, and don't stop, along these lines. Follow up with grateful prayer!

Colossians 2:8

(KJV) Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

(NIV) See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

In this verse, Paul moves from encouragement to warning. The Gnostics tried to add their secret knowledge to the Gospel rather than allow the Gospel to affect them. Beloved, we need to leave the word of God alone so that it can do its empowering and probing work via the Holy Spirit!

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Approaching God's Word with presuppositions, agendas, and an evil intent to use it to control and manipulate hearers is how false teachers pervert truth in favour of tyranny! So, whether it

is sowing half-truths, practicing religious ritual, or pitching a false Gospel altogether, we all need to consistently test the spirits to see if they are of God. (1 John 4:1)

You may have observed, even amidst today's celebrity preachers and teachers, that the focus always ends up on *them*. Their teachings, their talk, their walk are all self-glorifying. And God's Word has much to say about false teachers and shepherds who are self-willed and who care not for the flock entrusted to them:

Jeremiah 23:1-4

Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore, thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

How passionate the Good Shepherd is about His sheep:

John 21:15-17

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.

And those who have been called, including Paul, knew that they would be held accountable by God for maintaining Spirit-filled love and care for God's own.

The flavours of false teaching always taste like the world. Because these teachings are borne of the flesh and self, they ring true to our flesh, and these teachers are then able to amass myriad followers who love the world more than they love God:

2Timothy 4:3

For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

1John 2:15-17

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

We are His, beloved! Separated off from the world for God's delight, God's use, God's glory alone.

2Corinthians 6:14-18

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." Therefore, "Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." And, "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

Christian, come away, then, and be separate! And when a false teaching looms on the horizon, you will be able to test it and discard it straight away if necessary.

Colossians 2:9

*(KJV) For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
(NIV) For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,*

Paul comes up against the Gnostic belief that matter and flesh were evil, and therefore a holy God could never, would never reside in sinful human flesh.

Colossians 2:10

*(KJV) And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:
(NIV) and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.*

Paul exhorts here that the Colossian believers are complete in Jesus, and need nothing that the Gnostics offer. In fact, believers in Jesus already have the fullness of his being, and all authority and power over the elemental spiritual forces in the world that produce deception and falsehood. In addition, we as believers have the hope of glory living in us! (Colossians 1:27b)

Beloved, it does not get better than this:

Colossians 1:15-20

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: What specific attributes of Christ most encourage you, and by meditating upon them could revive a part of your walk with Him today?

Colossians 2:11

(KJV) In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

(NIV) In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ,

This supernatural event occurred in the new Colossians believers, and in each Christian, at the moment of salvation. No longer chained by sin, we each have been freed and marked as God's children in Christ, born again to bear fruit and proclaim victory over Satan, the flesh, and the world. Hallelujah!

Hebrews 10:19-25

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Words of encouragement indeed!

Colossians 2:12

(KJV) Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

(NIV) having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

Paul again reminds the Colossian believers that they are new creations in Christ:

2Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Did you hear that? That is the voice of the Holy Ghost, Who inspired all Scripture, whispering to you today, beloved, that your old life has been forever buried with Jesus, so that His resurrection life can live in you, and through you, forever!

Colossians 2:13

(KJV) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

(NIV) When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,

This other Scripture immediately comes to mind:

Romans 5:8

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Pretty affecting, isn't it? When I cared not for Jesus, and constantly offended Him in my sin, He died for me on a cruel cross, waiting for the moment I would accept His death and resurrection as my own.

Believer in Christ, make this your prayer today:

Oh God in heaven, I don't have words to express my indebtedness to You for the cross today. No words...I bow my head and my heart to you. You have purchased me, just like you purchased Apostle Paul, just like you purchased those precious Colossian believers. All glory to You God, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Colossians 2:14

(KJV) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

(NIV) having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

Whenever you tell a person they can't, or they shouldn't, *they will!* The law, far from being a set of rules and regulations (which it is in its most raw form) exposes sin and points out our need for forgiveness, for a Saviour. The law stands immovable and convicting against every man, woman, and child throughout history. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

Enter the cross...

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Colossians 2:15

(KJV) And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

(NIV) And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

This spectacle and shameless display of God's grace, mercy, and power through Jesus on the cross means that no one is without excuse:

Romans 1:18-32

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew

God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Mark 15:39

And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

Yes He was. Yes He is.

- Reverend Darren McClelland