



Colossians 2

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Colossians 2:1-5

The core of the identity of Christ, who He is and why He is worthy of all of our worship is because of the great lengths He went to in order to redeem us of our fallen state and back to God, which was done through the person and work of Jesus Christ upon the Cross. This great length is an example for us of a life which is spent in self-humility and laying down our desires to see others come to a saving knowledge of Christ through the good news of His Grace, and to then be strengthened and grown in that knowledge further by His Grace. This Paul explains he contends for, that he's in an intense struggle for to see others come to and be built up in the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Just as Jesus laid aside His comforts and divine rights, Paul laid aside his comforts, and so this is an example for us of the struggle that we must run and compete well in; to self-humble ourselves to see others come to and grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Paul says that we desire this relationship, this fellowship with one another because we realize that it's God's Love that is between us that we are able to grasp the full wealth and assurance that comes from understanding the mystery of God, the Church. All of this is available and possible only through Jesus Christ; Paul writes that because Jesus is everything that he said He was in Chapter 1, therefore he hopes and desires that the Church will grow in all wisdom and knowledge of Him. Just as our hope in our Salvation is not merely in persuasive words, but in power and might through God, we also need to be cautious of persuasive words which offer no substance but only deceive and draw individuals away from Christ and calling out to Him.

Study Questions:

What is Paul contending so hard for?

Who is Paul contending hard for?

What example is Paul giving that every Christian should conduct themselves in?

What did Paul desire would come from himself laying aside his comforts to see others grow?

What attitude should Christians have towards one another?

Where does our excitement for one another within the Church come from?

How are we knit together in God's Love?

Is all love God's Love (Agape)?

What does God have that He desires for every Christian to gain?

Where are the two places God has demonstrated this knowledge of His?

Where is all treasure of wisdom and knowledge hidden?

How do we uncover what God has hidden, Proverbs 25:2?

How can we be deceived?

Was the Gospel given to us by persuasive words?

How does the knowledge and understanding of Christ leave the individual Believer?

Colossians 2:6-8

Because of whom Jesus is and what He has done, Paul here writes the first of four-command statement in Colossians 2. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to pen these Words because these are things The Lord desires to see and completed in us. The letter to the Colossians was a circulatory letter, meaning that it was meant to be circulated amongst all the churches that it reached and to continue passing it on, because of this there is no doubt that this letter is not also meant for and incredibly applicable for the Church today. Paul writes how we walk in Christ, it's by being rooted, built up, and established in our trust in Jesus Christ; then from this our thanksgiving in Jesus and things of Jesus then abounds. In order to walk this out Paul says that there are a few things we need to be cautious and be aware of the empty deceit that comes from the philosophies that lead to empty deceit for point us away from Jesus Christ as our answer and guide but instead towards the traditions of men and principles of this world.

We are commanded and The Lord desires us to walk according to the knowledge and understanding of Christ and to be aware of those things which will direct us away from Christ.

Study Questions:

How is it that we received the good news of Jesus Christ, of our salvation by Grace and Grace alone?

How then should we continue?

What implications does walking imply?

How should our forward progress be marked?

How is forward progress not marked?

What does it mean to be rooted?

When roots are set, do we change the roots?

What does it mean to be built up?

A buildings forward progress is measured by it's building up, how is the Christian forward progress measured?

What does it mean to be established?

How are we taught to be rooted, built up, and establish?

What do these things produce in the Christians life?

We grow by the right nourishment, and how do we make sure we don't intake the wrong nourishment?

What do we need to be aware of in our Christian walk?

What does Paul say marks the things that lead us away from Jesus?

How do we stay away from empty deceits?

Colossians 2:9-15

Who Jesus is, Colossians 2:9 is the clearest statement of who Jesus is in all the Bible, and it's by coming to the knowledge and understanding of this fact that then we are able to know and understand our true identity. We are complete only in Jesus, and everything we do or walk out in is only ever truly successful when we do it in light of who Jesus is. There is a work that happens in our life when we allow the Lord to work in our life and to work a new value system and new priorities because our identity has changed, and it's Jesus who is and does this change. This Paul says is the Circumcision of Christ, not the circumcision of and by our flesh but of Christ. There is a cutting back and pulling away of our old value system and priorities for and so that the identity, priorities, and value system of our new citizenship can be perfected in us. Considering what was before as lost and laying old to the new life which we have in and perfected by Christ Jesus. We handle and address things differently because we have been made new, because we have been made new, we are to then walk in the mind of Christ, a new set of values and a new mind.

The things which once bound us have now been released and conquered, Christ has conquered and completed over the law and rules for being made righteous before God and has disarmed the powers that be which even sought to dissuade Him from completing the eternal will of God. Because Jesus has shed His blood which has covered all, we have the option and opportunity to have the same power which raised Jesus from death to life active inside of us which raises us above the need to complete a list of rules and raises us above having to be held captive to demonic spiritual powers that are. It's in Christ and His life and death to the eternal will of God where we walk out daily this ability, we take the example of Christ upon our life.

Study Questions:

Where does the fullness of God dwell?

Where else have we possibly tried to find out about God apart from Christ?

Where are we completed?

Where have we trusted the world, our job, or a level of education to complete us?

What does the circumcision without hands mean?

How are we circumcised by Christ?

When are we made alive with Christ?

If we are forgiven for all our sins, what does not have a hold or control in our life any longer?

What were the hand writings against us?

What was the purpose of the law?

Could the law ever save us?

Can the law perfect us?

Where has the law and the fulfillment and requirements of it been left?

What has Christ done, because we can not do it?

Colossians 2:16-19

Paul here in chapter 2 verses 16-19 give the last two commands of Colossians 2. Paul two statements of let no one judge and let no one cheat you, Paul is passionately telling the Colossians these are actions that cannot be tolerated in the Church and amongst Believers. They must be pushed out with a purpose and directly from amongst the Church, these are non-negotiables for our Christian Faith (Trust) in Jesus Christ and our Christian walk (spiritual growth and maturity). Both of Paul's statements are within the context of let no one "remove from you" the freedom of our sins being removed and atoned for and our Spiritual maturity by Christ and Christ alone, not removing God's Grace but instead placing legal requirements. These things were to point them to Christ who is, and to the shadow or mirrored image; we have Christ, there is no use in keeping these things, there is enrichment in understanding their purpose but not in keeping because we keep Christ.

Paul says next that this will cheat us of our reward of God's Grace, our works and us doing anything to change ourselves and not letting Christ do the work in our lives only cheats us of His perfect work. Jesus is our reward it's not false humility of the Pharisees, worshiping and praying to an intermediary, or using our imaginations about what we think God is like and not going to His Word and to be taught by Him. All these things rob us of His wonder working power in our lives. Our reward is salvation by God's Grace and our spiritual growth is by God's Grace, they're both a gift and there's nothing we can do to obtain perfection, correction, or growth on our own. The idea Paul is getting at with cheating is like a farmer being cheated of the seeds he is planting, he anticipates and desires great things and is promised such great things, but he gets weeds and briars which are good only to be burned.

Paul concludes these 4 commands of his with how we can know what we should and should not hold on to or allow to take our focus. The question in everything is and should be for the Christian, is does this point me to Jesus as the head or away from Jesus and me as the head and decision maker or someone/ something else. We are a new creation in Christ, and we are expected and the Lord desires that we act differently than before He came into our life. There's no secret book, secret course, secret person to pray to, human psychology, etc. but it's all Christ and it's all how He's been revealed to us through His Word and anything which contradicts Him in His Word then it's false and it must be pushed out of our lives immediately.

Study Questions:

What is the context of Paul writing about those in the early Church being Judged?

Who were the Judaizers?

How were they like the Pharisee's that Jesus warned about?

What is the flaw in the Pharisee's thought about how they approach God?

How does completing things in our own strength and our own ways lead someone to be legalistic?

What is the reward Paul is concerned the Colossians will be cheated of?

Why is our identity in Christ which is by His Grace so important for the Christian?

How do we grow in a relationship and understanding of who Jesus?

How do we grow in an understanding of who we are and what Jesus has for us?

Colossians 2:20-23

The conclusion of Colossians 2 Paul lays out a few basic principles for how we continue in the things of Christ and not get distracted and thrown off course. God has placed barriers for us not for our harm but so that we can finish the race and not be disqualified. What happens if a runner wins a race but took a turn through the wrong stretch, they've been disqualified have they not? We'll the same way in our spiritual race, and the same way a course conductor places rope and lanes so that the runner will not be disqualified, the Lord places barriers to help guide and instruct us. These barriers are His Word and the Holy Spirit convicting us of thing to and not to do. The Bible is full of these and as Solomon wrote in Proverbs 25:2 – it is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings to SEARCH out a matter. God has concealed these all throughout His Word and so it's our responsibility to run the race, to grow in relationship with Him and be given turn by turn directions from Him. So in verses 20-23 we see three of these barriers or turn by turn directions.

1. Not subjecting ourselves to regulations which no longer apply v20-21
2. Not indulging ourselves in things which perish with the using v22
3. Things are not always as they appear, so we gain revelation and discernment from staying close to the Head, Christ, through His Word, listening through Prayer, and in regular fellowship with other Christians seeking the same thing. v23

Study Questions:

What are some things we subject ourselves to that have no appearance of Christ?

What things do we indulge ourselves in that take our focus off Christ?

Is there anything in our life which we have sought after that is causing to learn more about that and less about Christ?

Has growing in the knowledge and understanding of our relationship with Jesus and how He sees us become a last thing we do?

How is your identity? Do you have a crisis of not knowing who you are or who to get fulfillment?

You are beloved of God and highly favored, there is nothing that the Lord will not do for you and does not desire to complete in you. There is nothing you can do to change the position of God towards you, absolutely nothing.