

## COLOSSIANS LESSON NOTES / TALKING POINTS / #1

Colossians 1.9-23

**THE GOSPEL'S POWER****I / INTRODUCTION**

**This is Lesson 1 in our current course on Colossians.** This is one of the Pauline letters written by Paul from Rome during his imprisonment there described in Acts 28.

Actually, Paul wrote four letters written during this time of imprisonment: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon. Here are some specific references to his imprisonment in those four letters:

1. Ephesians – ch 3.1 & 6.20
2. Philippians – ch 1.7, 12-19
3. Colossians – ch 4.3, 18
4. Philemon – vv 1, 9-10, 21-23

**SIDENOTE:** When we get to Philemon, we will also see another connection between that letter and this letter to the church at Colossae.

- Both of these letters were sent to the same church / compare Colossians 4.9 with Philemon 8-17.
- Paul sends greetings and a charge to Archippus in Colossians 4.17.
- Archippus is named again in the letter to Philemon in vv 1-2.
- So Archippus appears to be probably a pastor of one of the cluster of churches in Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis / see Colossians 1.1-2 & 4.13.

**II / A GOOD, SIMPLE OUTLINE OF THIS LETTER**

**But, for now, back to Colossians. This is our 1<sup>st</sup> lesson from that letter.**

**Here is a good simple outline to Colossians [from the ESV Study Bible]**

1. Greeting / 1.1-2
2. Thanksgiving / 1.3-8
3. Prayer / 1.9-14
4. Praise to Christ / 1.15-20
  - 4.1. Christ is Lord of creation / 1.15-17
  - 4.2. Christ is Lord of redemption / 1.18-20
5. Reconciliation of the Colossians to God / 1.21-23
6. The Apostle Paul's labor for the Gospel / 1.24 - 2.3
  - 6.1. Paul's suffering and stewardship of the mystery / 1.24-28
  - 6.2. Paul's labor for the Colossians / 1.29 – 2.3
7. The dangerous teaching at Colossae / 2.4-23
  - 7.1. Warning about a deceptive teaching / 2.4-8
  - 7.2. Help for the danger: resources in Christ / 2.9-15
  - 7.3. Additional warnings about the teaching / 2.16-23
8. The proper focus: Christ and the life above / 3.1-4
9. Instructions on living the Christian life / 3.5 – 4.6
  - 9.1. Dealing with sins of the past / 3.5-11
  - 9.2. Putting on the virtues of Christ / 3.12-17
  - 9.3. Living in the Christian household / 3.18 – 4.1
  - 9.4. Persistence in prayer / 4.2-4
  - 9.5. Good behavior toward those outside the community / 4.5-6

**10. Personal greetings and instructions / 4.7-17****10.1. Remarks about the messengers carrying the letter / 4.7-9****10.2. Greetings from Paul's associates / 4.10-14****10.3. Greetings to the Christians in Laodicea / 4.15-17****11. Letter closing / 4.18****III / HOW THE CHURCH AT COLOSSAE WAS ESTABLISHED**

**This church at Colossae was not founded by Paul. But it was established during Paul's 3-year ministry at Ephesus [see Acts 19.10 & 20.31].** It appears that Epaphras may have come to Ephesus during Paul's ministry there, was saved and became a believer, returned home to Colossae, preached the Gospel there in his home-city, and gathered the church. Paul refers to the ministry of Epaphras among them in **Colossians 1.5-8**, and then again in **ch 4.12-13**. [Paul will also refer to Epaphras in **Philemon, v 23**, except in that reference, he will call Epaphras "*my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus.*"]

**IV / PREEMINENT THEME[S] OF COLOSSIANS****THE PREEMINENT THEME OF COLOSSIANS IS CHRIST:**

- **The Deity of Christ / ch 1.15-20**
- **The preeminence of Christ / ch 1.18**
- **The sufficiency of Christ / ch 2.9**

This is an over-simplification of all the many themes Paul will introduce and draw out in great detail. But, at the same time, it is not an over-simplification, because when we consider these simple themes together, they will encompass everything we must believe about Christ and His Gospel and how our faith in Christ excludes every other subject or practice that we must believe and live by.

**V / MAJOR PROBLEM[S] AT COLOSSAE**

This brings us then to the major problem[s] that occasioned the writing of this letter. The main and major problem can be summed up this way: there were teachers of false doctrines and practices who had either risen up in the church or had come into the church from the outside. The membership of the church appears to have been composed of both Gentile believers who had been saved from the pagan practices that were prominent in that city AND believers who had come from a Jewish background.

As you read through this letter, you will very quickly pick up that there are a number of other religious beliefs, influences, and practices that were being preached and presented as being necessary supplements to the Gospel of faith in Christ alone or even superior to the Gospel of simple and sole faith in Christ.

They were being presented as a supplemental and superior 'knowledge' and 'wisdom' that you must believe and practice in addition to your faith in Christ. A 'deeper' wisdom or knowledge, if you will.

For example, Paul alludes to and names these false teachings in these warning statements:

- **ch 2.4** / I say this in order that no one may delude you with *plausible arguments*.
- **ch 2.8** / See to it that no one takes you captive by *philosophy and empty deceit*, according to *human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world*, and not according to Christ.
- **ch 2.11** / In him also you were *circumcised* with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ...

- **ch 2.16-23** / Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of *food and drink*, or with regard to *a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath*. 17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. 18 Let no one disqualify you, insisting on *asceticism* and *worship of angels*, going on in detail about *visions*, puffed up without reason by his *sensuous mind*, 19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God. 20 If with Christ you died to the *elemental spirits of the world*, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to *regulations*— 21 *“Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”* 22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to *human precepts and teachings*? 23 These have indeed *an appearance of wisdom* in promoting *self-made religion* and *asceticism* and *severity to the body*, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

**Go back now to section IV of these Lesson Notes: PREEMINENT THEME[S]... Every one of these extraneous teachings that were being presented and promoted are not just a distraction from the preeminence, Deity, and sufficiency of Jesus Christ and His Gospel, but they are a denial of that Gospel.** That’s why Paul is so adamant and insistent that CHRIST IS ALL & CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT for all things! **“But Christ is ALL, and in ALL!” ~ch 3.11**

If we add any other philosophy, so-called ‘wisdom,’ teaching, methodology, or practice to the preaching of Christ and His Gospel, then we have not just neutered the Gospel of its saving power, but we have denied that Jesus Christ and His Gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone that believes. And we have denied, demoted, and relegated Jesus Christ and His fullness of the Godhead bodily to a mere ‘starting block’ status. And we have denied that our salvation from our sins has been finished and sufficed in His death on His Cross and His resurrection again from His death! [see **ch 1.20 & 23**]

**ch 1.28 / Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.**

**ch 2.9-10 / For in Him the whole fullness of Deity dwells bodily,  
<sup>10</sup> and you have been filled in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority.**

#### VI / NOW...TO OUR TEXT PASSAGE...

**I really wanted to set up the opening text passage by showing us what problems Paul will address throughout the rest of the letter. If you know where he’s going, then you better understand why he starts out the way he does.**

#### **NOTE Paul’s emphasis on THANKING GOD / vv 3 & 12**

- The Gospel which we believe and by which only we are saved is the gift of God [v 3 ff] and the work of God in our hearts [vv 12-13]

#### **NOTE Paul’s emphasis on PRAYER / vv 3 & 9**

- He emphasizes that he is praying for them because only God can open our minds and hearts of understanding to receive the **wisdom in Christ** we must have to [1] know the plan of God and [2] refute the deceitful ‘wisdom’ that is offered by all the false teachers who would deny the sufficiency of Christ and His Wisdom.

#### **NOTE Paul’s emphasis on WISDOM & KNOWLEDGE / v 9**

- All the treasures of God’s WISDOM & KNOWLEDGE are contained in Christ and revealed to us by the Gospel / **ch 2.1-3**

**So here’s what Paul prays for them:**

- **vv 9-11 / I pray that you will be filled with God’s Wisdom in Christ – and live in every way a life that works out that Wisdom in all of your conduct. So filled with this Wisdom in Christ that you won’t have any mind or faith left to listen to or receive any other so-called ‘wisdom.’**
- **vv 12-13 / I pray that you will give thanks to God with me for His glorious and complete redemption and deliverance from your sins – the forgiveness of your sins. God has delivered you from all dominion to sin and false teaching – “the domain of darkness.”**

**Jesus Christ, in all the fullness of His Deity, is God’s Wisdom and Provision for our redemption and reconciliation to Him – we need nothing more or else!**

- **v 15 / Jesus Christ is GOD having been revealed and manifested in His human body and flesh**
- **v 16 / Jesus Christ is CREATOR of all things**
- **v 17 / Jesus Christ is PRE-EXISTANT to all things...and He holds all creation together – He rules over all creation and makes everything that has been created function, work, and run**
- **v 18 / Jesus Christ is the HEAD of His body, the church AND ONLY HE IS! ... that He may be PREEMINENT IN EVERYTHING!**
- **v 19 / Jesus Christ EMBODIES IN HIS PERSON the fullness of the Very God**
- **v 20 / Jesus Christ RECONCILES all things to God – both on earth and in Heaven – by making PEACE through the Blood of His Cross**

**God’s reconciliation of you to Himself demands that you hold fast to Christ and your faith in Him and NOT be ‘shifted away’ by the luring attractions and influences of false teachings of so-called ‘wisdom’ that are NOT given to you in Christ and preached to you by His Gospel**

- **v 21 / Before you heard and received the Gospel, you were alienated from God – and even hostile to Him – and expressed that enmity and hostility by your sins and evil deeds**
- **v 22 / BUT GOD has reconciled you to Himself through the death of Christ and the blood of His Cross to belong to Him and make you sufficiently acceptable and holy through your faith in Christ. This includes both your justification [being declared righteous and acceptable to God through faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ] and your sanctification [being transformed in your lifestyle and conduct into the likeness of Christ]**
- **v 23 / BUT you must continue to hold on to and live in the Wisdom and Power of Christ as He has been proclaimed to you in the Gospel ... and which you have heard from us and you have believed.**

**JESUS CHRIST – AND ONLY JESUS CHRIST –  
IS THE WISDOM OF GOD AND THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.  
AND HE IS SUFFICIENT!  
YOU NEED NOTHING MORE OR OTHER!**

**“I have no other argument; I need no other plea!  
It is ENOUGH that Jesus died – and that HE DIED FOR ME!”**

## COLOSSIANS LESSON NOTES / TALKING POINTS / #2

Colossians 1.24 – 2.5

**THE GOSPEL'S GOAL****I / INTRODUCTION****The theme of our lesson is: THE GOAL OF THE GOSPEL.**

In other words:

- What does the Gospel do?
- What is the end purpose of the Gospel?
- Why did God give us His Gospel, and what is His GOAL for our receiving it and living by it?

So we'll look at that theme from two perspectives which will mesh into one:

[1] What is God's GOAL for the Gospel? and

[2] what was Paul's GOAL for the Gospel.

And what we'll see is that Paul's GOAL for the Gospel was the same as the GOAL God had for the Gospel when He gave it to Paul to minister to the Colossians ... and to us.

- **GOD'S GOAL FOR THE GOSPEL:** to reveal the riches of His Grace that He has given to us IN CHRIST, vv 26-27 [which Paul will call 'the mystery' – more on that later...]
- **PAUL'S GOAL FOR THE GOSPEL:** to proclaim Christ and His Gospel and present everyone back to God mature in Christ, vv 28-29

**Let's begin this lesson at the end...**

I want to open this lesson in maybe an unconventional and unusual way – by going to the last verse in this lesson passage. Here's the question: *'Why did Paul say the specific things he said in this lesson passage?'* He will answer in ch 2.4, **'I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments...'**

**The crisis in the church: false teachers and their 'plausible arguments'...**

We spent considerable time in our last lesson setting up the occasion for Paul's writing this epistle to the Colossian church. The church was being infiltrated and influenced by false teachers who were trying to distract the church away from the wisdom of the Gospel of Christ. Paul calls their teachings 'plausible arguments' [literally, persuasive words] because they were trying to make their false philosophies sound so enticing and persuasive. They were trying to sound reasonable and convincing ['plausible'].

**A false 'wisdom' and 'appearance of wisdom'...**

They were couching and presenting everything they were trying to 'delude' the Colossians with as 'wisdom' [see 2.23]. And they were trying to persuade the church that their so-called 'wisdom' was a higher 'knowledge' and deeper 'wisdom' than they had heard, received, and believed in the Gospel.

That's why Paul uses the word 'wisdom' six times in this epistle [1.9; 1.28; 2.3; 2.23; 3.16; 4.5]. All but the ch 2.23 reference will refer to the true wisdom of God found and contained in Christ and in the Gospel.

But the 'so-called wisdom' that the false teachers were presenting was a fleshly, worldly 'wisdom' that came from their own pagan and secular philosophies – and NOT REVEALED TO US BY GOD IN CHRIST IN THE GOSPEL! We must see this, get this, and understand this!

**II / LET'S DEFINE AND UNDERSTAND 'THE MYSTERY'**

Again, before we get into the text, the theme that Paul is going to expand on is found in this word he uses: **'the mystery.'** He will use this word four times here in Colossians:

- **1.26** – ‘the mystery hidden for ages and generations **but now revealed** to His saints’
- **1.27** – ‘the riches of the **glory of this mystery**, which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**’
- **2.2-3** – ‘to reach **all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**’
- **4.3-4** – ‘pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the Word, **to declare the mystery of Christ**, on account of which I am in prison – **that I may make it clear**, which is how I ought to speak’

### What is this ‘mystery’?

So – let’s understand clearly what Paul means for us to understand by this word ‘mystery’...

When we usually talk about or understand ‘mystery,’ we think in terms of the Hardy Boys, or Nancy Drew, or Agatha Christie, or Sherlock Holmes / Arthur Conan Doyle. In that sense, a mystery is an elusive, evasive, cloudy, foggy riddle seeking an answer or solution that you’ll have to figure out or solve ... if you can! It is a riddle that is shrouded in dark and cloudy secrecy and it is difficult or impossible to understand or explain.

### That is NOT what God means when He reveals to us His ‘mystery’ in Christ!

A very brief and simple definition of God’s mystery is: **A GOD-REVEALED TRUTH.**

Here are some aspects to help us understand God’s mystery: [by the way, this is a prominent word Paul uses also in **Ephesians 1.9 & 3.2-11**]

- **God’s mystery is a Divine Truth known only to God – and only God can reveal it.** [see also **Ephesians 3.9**]
- **God’s mystery is a Divine Truth that only God can reveal – and GOD HAS REVEALED! ch 1.26-27**
- **God’s mystery was not previously known by us as fully and clearly ... AS God has now revealed it. ch 1.26 [see also Eph 3.4-5]**
- **Previously we did not know God’s mystery ... but now we do. ch 1.27**

## III / THE GOAL OF THE GOSPEL

So now let’s see how Paul explains **THE GOSPEL’S GOAL** – both God’s **GOAL** in giving us the Gospel and Paul’s **GOAL** in proclaiming it as he did ...

### THE MINISTRY OF THE MYSTERY

#### verse 24

1. We are ‘ministers’ of the Gospel.
  - 1.1. Note how Paul ends **v 23** by calling himself a minister [diakonos] of the Gospel: ‘**of which [the Gospel] I, Paul, became a minister**’
  - 1.2. ...and then repeats this word in **v 25**, ‘**of which I became a minister**’
2. We must commit ourselves to God to be faithful witnesses of His Gospel as He has given it to us – regardless of the personal cost, **v 24**
  - 2.1. QUESTION: what does Paul mean by ‘**I am filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions...**’
  - 2.2. His sufferings for Christ on behalf of the saints are NOT atoning or redemptive sufferings.
  - 2.3. Christ’s sufferings to redeem us and reconcile us to God are not lacking in sufficiency or efficacy. see **ch 1.13-14 & 19-20**

2.4. Rather, Paul's sufferings are the sufferings that Christ had called and appointed him to endure because of Paul's identification and association with Christ – and his commitment and faithfulness to proclaim Christ.

2.4.1. See what Christ had called Paul to suffer in **Acts 9.15-16**.

2.4.2. Paul had willingly committed to share in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings for him in **Philippians 3.10-11**.

**2.5.** Jesus has likewise called us to be willing to suffer – and even die – for the sake of our following Him. [**Luke 9.21-26; 14.27 et al**]

#### verse 25

1. Paul's ministry was a '**stewardship**' or charge that God had entrusted to him and commissioned him to fulfil.
2. Our ministry is simply '**to make the Word of God fully known**'
3. Pay close attention here:
  - 3.1. our only GOAL and calling is TO PREACH THE WORD OF GOD!
  - 3.2. AND, we will also note here that THIS GOSPEL MYSTERY IN CHRIST IS BEING PROGRESSIVELY REVEALED ALL THROUGHOUT THE OLD TESTAMENT!
4. The '**Word of God**' IS 'THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST AND HIS GOSPEL'! [as Paul will go on to explain in v 26] as it was progressively revealed in all the types and shadows of the OT – and now fully and clearly revealed in the Gospel.

#### verse 26

1. The mystery [Divinely-revealed Truth] was hidden for past ages and generations as God was preparing the world – and us – for the full revelation of His salvation redemption IN CHRIST!
2. God's purpose and grace is now REVEALED TO US IN CHRIST AND HIS GOSPEL!

#### verse 27

1. God chose in His Divine Wisdom to '**make known**' now to us – IN CHRIST – how great and gracious His covenant blessings are!
2. His gracious blessings are especially revealed and given to US GENTILES!
3. What is specifically revealed now – that was not so clearly revealed in previous ages and generations – is that CHRIST IS IN US! And His being in us is our assurance and hope of all the glory that God has prepared for us in Heaven ... forever!

#### verse 28

1. **Here is THE GOAL OF THE GOSPEL: We proclaim CHRIST! – and ONLY CHRIST!**
2. As we proclaim CHRIST, we are warning and teaching everyone **IN ALL WISDOM**. ALL the Wisdom that God has given us, revealed to us, and commanded us to believe and trust in is IN CHRIST!
3. That means that all the other so-called 'wisdom' that is being presented to you by the false teachers is NOT the Wisdom that is IN CHRIST! That is the 'warning'!
4. THE GOAL OF THE GOSPEL is to teach and instruct us that ALL of our salvation, sanctification, growth, completion of our faith, character, and conduct is ALL IN CHRIST ... WHOM WE PROCLAIM!
5. Don't be deluded, deceived, or 'shifted away from' Christ by any other teaching!

#### verse 29

1. Paul's GOAL IN THE GOSPEL is expressed in these words: '**For this I toil...**'
2. '**Toil**' is hard, exhausting, often-painful, sacrificial work. Paul was giving all the energy of his life to serve as Christ's minister of the Gospel to all those Christ had sent him to proclaim Christ to.

3. The word that Paul uses here for **‘struggling’** is from *‘agonia’* which is where we get our word *‘agony.’*
  - 3.1. When it is used like this in verb form, it means: *‘to enter a contest; contend in gymnastic games; to contend with adversaries, fight; to contend, struggle, with difficulties and dangers antagonistic to the Gospel’* [Thayer].
4. It also includes, not only the physical struggles and painful labors, but also the concurrent *struggling with God in our praying* for the same works to be accomplished by God [see also **Epaphras in ch 4.12**].
5. We must also understand that we are NEVER alone in all of our struggles and prayers; nor are we left to struggle and agonize in our own strength and resources.
6. God supplies all the necessary energies and strength that we need and exercise. God is the One who makes everything work and produce the desired fruit and GOAL!
7. **“For this I toil, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works within me.”**

### ch 2.1

1. Paul returns again to use the word *‘agonia’* when he appeals to the saints in Colossae and Laodicea to listen to his warnings and teachings.
  - 1.1. Laodicea was a close-by neighboring city [see ch 4.16 and also Revelation 3.14-22]
2. He had not seen them face to face – Epaphras had been their founding evangelist, pastor, and teacher – but still he struggles for them because he loves them...
3. ...but more than his loving them, he wants them to receive the saving, all-sufficient mystery and Wisdom IN CHRIST that God has given him to proclaim to them.

### ch 2.2-3

1. The mystery of God IS CHRIST HIMSELF and revealed IN CHRIST and in His Gospel.
2. Receiving, believing, knowing, and trusting IN CHRIST ... AND CHRIST ALONE will:
  - 2.1. encourage us – the false philosophies and so-called *‘wisdom’* will only confuse and delude us
  - 2.2. knit our hearts together in love – because all our hearts will be knit together with our common love for Christ and faith in Him – the false philosophies will only turn us against each other in competing *‘wisdoms’*
  - 2.3. give us Christ’s Wisdom to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery
3. ...because **God’s mystery IS CHRIST – CHRIST HIMSELF AND HIS GOSPEL**
4. ...and **IN CHRIST ARE HIDDEN** [that is, secured, treasured, and contained] **ALL THE TREASURES OF WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE!**

### ch 2.4-5

1. We return again to where we started this lesson: why Paul has said all that he has said in this passage
2. The false teachers who were trying to infiltrate and influence their church to believe that there was some other *‘higher knowledge’* or *‘deeper wisdom’* that was NOT IN CHRIST AND IN THE DIVINELY-REVEALED MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL were only deliberately trying to **‘delude’** them with attractive and intriguing so-called *‘wisdom’* – *‘pull the wool over their eyes’*
3. These **‘deluding’** and deceiving teachings were only human *‘wisdom’* lies that would only destroy their confidence IN CHRIST and their full-faith commitment to Him.
4. Paul was absent from them in body, but his spirit was full-presence with them...
5. ...and he rejoices that they will continue to firmly believe IN CHRIST!

**GOD HAS FULLY REVEALED HIS OWN DIVINE WISDOM IN CHRIST!  
DON’T FALL FOR ANY OTHER SO-CALLED ‘WISDOM’ –  
HOWEVER ATTRACTIVE OR PLAUSIBLE IT MAY SOUND OR APPEAR TO BE!**

## COLOSSIANS LESSON NOTES / TALKING POINTS / #3

Colossians 2.4-15

**THE GOSPEL'S FORGIVENESS**

**The theme of our lesson is: THE GOSPEL'S FORGIVENESS.**

**Complete and sufficient forgiveness of all our sins is found only through faith in Christ and His Gospel – having been accomplished by His finished work of redemption and reconciliation on the cross. see vv 13-15. See also ch 1.12-14 & vv 20-23**

**I / INTRODUCTION & MAKING THE CONNECTION**

**HERE ARE SOME OF THE TRUTHS THAT PAUL HAS ALREADY ESTABLISHED IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPHS LEADING UP TO THIS LESSON...**

- **NOTE: Paul is establishing the all-sufficiency that is found IN CHRIST.**
  - **And, as such, He is Supreme, Preeminent, and Sufficient for all things pertaining to the salvation God has graciously given us IN HIM.**
  - **Our receiving Him and trusting Him excludes and cancels out any and all other influences, philosophies, and practices that pretend to add something to Him and His salvation.**
1. **ch 1.13 / God has delivered us from the domain of darkness [sin] and has transferred by faith in Christ into His Kingdom – in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**
  2. **ch 1.15-18 / Jesus Christ is God, having been manifested in His humanity, flesh, & body – and He is the very Creator of all other authorities and powers, and He is preeminent over them all. The church must recognize Him as such.**
  3. **ch 1.19-20 / The fullness of the very God dwells in Christ, and God has reconciled us to Himself through the blood of His cross.**
  4. **ch 1.21-23 / Since God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ, we must not be 'shifted away from' our faith in Him that we have received and confessed when we heard and believed His Gospel.**
  5. **ch 1.24-27 / The Gospel which we preached to you and which you have received and believed is the 'mystery' [revealed Truth] which God has revealed in all of 'the Word of God' [specifically the progressive revelation of the Old Testament] and now IN CHRIST and His Gospel.**
  6. **ch 1.28-29 / This is THE CHRIST and His Gospel which we preach and proclaim. CHRIST Himself IS 'all wisdom' and is sufficient for our salvation and continuing sanctification.**
  7. **ch 2.1-3 / We struggle [agonize] in all our prayers for you and ministry toward you that you will understand, receive, and trust in God's 'mystery,' WHICH IS CHRIST, IN WHOM are contained, treasured, and secured ALL THE WISDOM & KNOWLEDGE of God. YOU NEED NO OTHER, AND YOU MUST NOT LISTEN TO OR FOLLOW ANY OTHER!**

**II / WHY HE HAS SAID EVERYTHING HE HAS SAID UP TO THIS POINT**

***4I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.***

1. This was the danger and crisis of Truth and faith they were facing
2. These false teachers who were infiltrating and influencing the church were intentionally trying to 'delude' them with other 'arguments,' philosophies, and teachings about their so-called higher knowledge and deeper 'wisdom' by which they could atone for their sins, obtain forgiveness of their sins, and a 'deeper,' more spiritual walk with God.

<sup>5</sup> *For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.*

1. “I am not there with you in body, but I am there with you in spirit and in my struggles with God in prayer for you...”
2. “And I want to rejoice with you as you continue in your commitment to the Gospel and the immovable faith you have IN CHRIST.”

### III / “HERE ARE MY CONTINUING INSTRUCTIONS TO YOU CONCERNING HOW YOU SHOULD “STAY YOUR FAITH” IN CHRIST...”

**1 / You must continue your walk with Christ the very same way you first began your walk with Him = BY RECEIVING HIM!**

<sup>6</sup> *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,*

<sup>7</sup> *rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*

1. NOTE: the ‘as’ and ‘so’ = meaning ‘in the same way.’
  - a. Q: How did you begin your life IN CHRIST?  
A: You received Christ Jesus the Lord! ...in all of His fullness of Deity and His sufficiency for all your needs: Lordship, Redemption, Forgiveness of sins, Reconciliation, Peace with God by the blood of His Cross, All Wisdom and Knowledge
  - b. Q: How do you continue in your ‘walk’ [conduct and practice] with Christ?  
A: By continuing to receive Him, IN CHRIST! Go back and read Paul’s prayer for them in **ch 1.9-13**
    - i. *‘rooted IN HIM’* = this is a past, perfect, continuing effect ‘having been rooted IN HIM’
    - ii. *‘built up IN HIM’* = CHRIST is our complete and sufficient Foundation for all continuing growth
    - iii. *‘established in the faith IN HIM’* = IN CHRIST is our only Strength and Security
    - iv. *‘abounding in thanksgiving IN HIM’* = see **ch 1.12**

**2 / You must not allow anyone to ‘take you captive’ or take you back into bondage and slavery to false teachings that are ‘not according to Christ’ – what they are actually doing is ‘robbing you’ and plundering you, stealing the truth of your saving faith away from you.**

<sup>8</sup> *See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.*

1. NOTE how Paul describes these false teachings:
  - a. *‘philosophy’* = ‘love of wisdom’ [‘philos’ = love + ‘sophia’ = wisdom, see v 23]
  - b. *‘empty deceit’* – they are trying to deceive and delude you, but there is nothing there in what they are trying to get you to believe. Their false teachings are empty and void of any saving and sanctifying effect
  - c. *‘according to human tradition’* – everything they are trying to get you to believe and practice comes from their own human ideas and traditions that they have made up themselves. **see for example Matthew 15.1-9 / Human traditions break, violate, replace, ‘make void’ the Word of God as the ultimate authority in what we believe and practice.**
  - d. *‘according to the elemental spirits of the world’* – these false teachers were following the ‘spirits’ of this created world – all of which Christ Himself has created and He is the

preeminent Lord over them all – and yet they were submitting to and following them as the ruling authorities in their beliefs. [He will come back to this in v 20]

- e. ***‘and NOT according to Christ’*** – they did not receive what they are trying to get you to believe from Christ as we taught you, and as you received and believed from us. IT IS NOT THE GOSPEL!

**3 / When you received Christ, you received the ‘whole fullness of Deity’ which dwells IN HIM bodily – and HE IS ALL THE SUFFICIENCY YOU NEED!**

<sup>9</sup> *For in Him the whole fullness of Deity dwells bodily,*

<sup>10</sup> *and you have been filled in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority.*

Why would you be deluded, deceived, robbed, plundered, stolen from, taken into the bondage of the false teachings that originate with merely human traditions and lower elemental spirits of the world [and even the influences of the kingdom of darkness and sin] ... when Christ has filled you and made you complete IN HIM with THE WHOLE FULLNESS OF DEITY?

**4 / Jesus Christ has sufficiently, completely, and forever ‘put off’ and ‘put away’ our sins by His death, burial, and resurrection – which also we have confessed in our baptism. Your baptism is your confession of your faith IN CHRIST – in His death, burial, and resurrection to put away your sin.**

<sup>11</sup> *In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,*

<sup>12</sup> *having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

1. It is obvious here that among the many teachings that these false teachers were trying to lead the Colossian church into was the necessity of being physically circumcised in order to become a ‘whole Christian’ or be accepted by God ... [as well as keeping other Jewish laws and practicing other Old Testament rites, see vv 16-17]
2. In the Old Testament, circumcision was a physical rite that identified the males as being separate from the worldly cultures around them and belonging to the people of God. It was a sign of the covenant relationship they had with Yahweh. **See especially the whole book of Galatians.**
3. But in the Gospel, our exclusive and whole-hearted faith IN CHRIST is our spiritual ***‘circumcision made without hands’*** [see also **Philippians 3.2-3**]
4. PLEASE NOTE: that even in the OT practice of circumcision, their mere act of being physically circumcised did not change their hearts, nor did it, in itself, save them from their sins. But it was a sign and reminder that, as the covenant people of God, they must commit their hearts of faith to God and ***‘put off the body of the flesh.’*** The ‘cutting away’ of their flesh was God’s sign that only by faith in the sacrifices for their sins that God had provided could their sins be atoned for ... or ‘put off’ and ‘put away.’
5. ***‘the circumcision of Christ’*** has given us a spiritual circumcision ***‘made without hands’*** by His death on the Cross and His resurrection again to life.
6. Our baptism is our public confession of our faith in Christ – in His sufficient and finished work of redemption on His Cross and His resurrection again from that death. **HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION HAS ‘PUT OFF’ AND ‘PUT AWAY’ OUR SINS FOREVER!**
7. When we are Scripturally baptized, we are confessing our identification with Christ and the forgiveness of our sins: ***“by putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”***

8. NEITHER circumcision NOR baptism saves us from our sins – but our baptism does show and confess that we have believed IN HIM and His Gospel ... and that we have by our faith IN HIM entered into the saving experience and power of His Gospel.

**5 / Jesus Christ wholly, completely, and sufficiently forgave us ALL our trespasses by His death on His Cross and His resurrection according to His Gospel ... “by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the Cross!”**

*<sup>13</sup> And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,  
<sup>14</sup> by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him.*

1. Our former condition and standing with God is called ‘dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh,’ meaning that we were separated from God, not reconciled with Him, and had no part or share in His covenant mercies.
2. Our sins ‘*stood against us with its legal demands*’ and demanded our condemnation. We justly deserved the legal wrath of a Holy God against our sins.
3. BUT NOW! through the all-sufficient and finished sacrifice of Christ as our Substitute, and by His resurrection again from His death, **“God [has] made [us] alive together with Him, having FORGIVEN US ALL OUR TRESPASSES!”**
4. HOW? Jesus Christ’s perfect righteousness and sinless obedience which He offered to God as our Substitute has ‘paid it all’ and ‘*cancelled*’ our personal sin-debt by paying it Himself!
5. ALL of the blame and punishment that we deserved for our sins was charged to Christ ... AND HE PAID IT ALL IN FULL! PUT IT ALL AWAY!
  - a. **“He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed” ~1 Peter 2.24**
  - b. **“and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all ... by His knowledge shall the Righteous One, my Servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and He shall bear their iniquities ... because He poured out His soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors” ~Isaiah 53.6, 11, 12**
6. It was the custom in their day that when a criminal was crucified, they would write out their indictment and the crimes they were charged with on a placard that was nailed to the head of their cross. **See John 19.19-22.**
7. In God’s eyes and judgment, what was written on Jesus’ placard of indictment was **‘the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.’**
8. When Jesus cried “IT IS FINISHED!” He meant “IT IS PAID IN FULL!” “This He set aside, nailing it to the Cross!”

**THE ALL-SUFFICIENT DEATH OF CHRIST ON HIS CROSS HAS:  
FORGIVEN US ALL OUR TRESPASSES  
CANCELED OUR RECORD OF SIN-DEBT  
SET OUR SINS ASIDE / PUT THEM AWAY  
MADE US ALIVE TO GOD IN HIMSELF  
TRUMPHEDED OVER EVERY ACCUSER AND ACCUSATION AGAINST US**

**...AND DISQUALIFIED ANY AND EVERY OTHER ARGUMENT THAN THE GOSPEL!**

## COLOSSIANS LESSON NOTES / TALKING POINTS / #4

Colossians 2.16-23

**THE GOSPEL'S FREEDOM****The theme of our lesson is: THE GOSPEL'S FREEDOM.**

- **Jesus Christ Himself IS THE GOSPEL.**
- **When you have received HIM [ch 2.6-7], you have received THE GOSPEL – fully, wholly, sufficiently.**
- **In Jesus Christ, you have ALL that God requires and ALL you need, not only to be forgiven from ALL your sins, but also ALL you need to live a life that is...**
  - o **“...filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,**
  - o **so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him;**
  - o **bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;**
  - o **being strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy;**
  - o **giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.**
  - o **He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” / ch 1.9-13**

**I / INTRODUCTION & MAKING THE CONNECTION**

**In the opening sections of this epistle, Paul has fully explained and expounded upon the doctrinal teachings of the Gospel. He has majored on one point: JESUS CHRIST IS DEITY, SOVEREIGN, PREEMINENT, AND SUFFICIENT!**

Paul began this section of his epistle in **ch 2.6-7: You must continue to live your Christian life by the same rule you began your Christian life = “AS YOU RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS THE LORD, SO WALK IN HIM...”**

Your ‘walk’ is all the practical activities, exercises, and conduct of your Christian life. Paul will continue to detail how CHRIST is the way we live out all those ‘walk’ conducts in the section that follows this one, beginning in **ch 3.1** – especially as they are lived out in all our relationships with one another.

**BUT** – for now and for this lesson – there are some other warnings we need to receive and pay attention to.

**II / “DANGER, WILL ROBINSON!”**

This expression has become ingrained in our culture for warning someone when they are approaching a dangerous situation. It is taken from a space-fantasy TV program “Lost in Space.” The young main character, Will Robinson, had a robot ‘friend’ who tagged along with him to warn him of dangers which young Will didn’t have the perception to realize for himself.

- **We need to be warned, informed, and on our guard against all the DANGERS we face from false teachers and their influences!**

*<sup>16</sup>Therefore let no one pass judgment on you...*

**Listen to the “Danger!” warnings Paul issues to the Colossians [and to us]:**

**ch 1.23 / “not shifting away from the hope of the Gospel that you heard...”**

**ch 1.28 / “Him we proclaim, warning everyone...”**

**ch 2.4 / “I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments...”**

**ch 2.8 / “See to it that no one takes you captive...and not according to Christ...”**

**ch 2.16 / “Therefore let no one pass judgment on you...”**

**ch 2.18 / “Let no one disqualify you...”**

➤ **In every generation – ours included – there will be movements, groups, teachings that will come along and they will attempt to give us another message, another way to...**

- define the Gospel
- interpret the Gospel
- package the Gospel
- present the Gospel
- apply the Gospel
- implement the Gospel
- empower the Gospel – make it ‘work,’ ‘more effective’

**...but in so doing, what they will do is deny the Gospel of Christ and His Sufficiency.**

**And if you are influenced by their teachings, they will shift you away from Christ and His Gospel and destroy your faith.**

### **III / WHAT WERE THESE SPECIFIC WARNINGS?**

***<sup>16</sup> Therefore let no one pass judgment on you...***

1. This means to claim and exercise authority over you and your faith to tell you what is right and wrong.
2. NO ONE has authority over your faith except JESUS CHRIST!

➤ **Paul will list a number of the specific dangers they were facing**

***...in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.***

1. In this false teaching, the false teachers were trying to persuade them with the ‘plausible argument’ that they must continue to obey all the OT laws that governed their diet, and they must continue to observe all the OT special days and occasions and the rites, rituals, and observances that came with them.
2. In other words, they couldn’t and wouldn’t be ‘full’ and ‘complete’ and ‘sufficient’ in their religious practices and conduct if they didn’t fully comply with all these OT ordinances. If they continued to practice all these, they would ‘work themselves’ into a fuller, deeper Christian life and walk.
3. ***“Don’t let anyone claim and exercise this authority over you and your faith in Christ! Don’t let anyone reserve the authority to themselves to tell you when you have fully complied with the will of God in these matters!”***

***<sup>17</sup> These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.***

1. Weren’t these practices commanded and observed in the OT? Yes, they were...
2. BUT...even in the OT, they weren’t saved just by going through the motions of observing these laws.
3. And ALL the laws and activities of worship in the OT were only ***‘a shadow of the things to come...’*** In other words, every activity in the OT was a picture, a shadow of the ‘body’ that was casting the shadow = CHRIST!

4. The word that Paul uses here for '**substance**' ['but the **substance** belongs to Christ'] is the same word for 'body' that Paul uses 8 times in Colossians. And when Paul speaks of Christ's 'body,' he is referring to what Christ did in His body = that is, THE GOSPEL! [see ch 1.22, 2.17]
  5. Jesus Christ and His Gospel is the 'body' that is casting all the '**shadows of the things to come**' that we see in the OT! The shadows would not be in the OT if Christ and His Gospel is not shining in the NT casting all the shadows backward in the OT!
  6. ALL of the OT laws and ceremonies not only foreshadowed CHRIST, but they also showed those who practiced them how INSUFFICIENT they were without the sacrifices God had prescribed and provided to make them SUFFICIENT. And those sacrifices also were only 'a shadow' of CHRIST!
  7. Why would you continue to live 'in' that shadow of the things to come' when you have received Christ and you are living IN HIM who is casting the shadow backward?
- **But there were also other false religious teachings and practices they were insisting that they must follow in order to grow into a fuller, deeper Christian 'walk' ... and live a 'cleaner' life apart from indulging their sinful desires [see where Paul is headed in v 23]**

➤ **Here's another "DANGER" warning!**

*<sup>18</sup> Let no one disqualify you...*

***insisting on asceticism***

1. Now they're adding on other pagan philosophies that taught that you could purify your 'spirit' by depriving, starving, and punishing your physical body in whatever ways their particular sect required.

***and worship of angels,***

1. Angels also are taught all throughout the OT and NT, but they are never worshiped.
2. Angels are real and they are present, but they are always the messengers and servants of God – sent forth by God on their errands to serve His purposes. [see **Hebrews 1.1-14**]
3. In fact, two times in the Revelation, John was so overcome with awe from the visions an angel showed him, that he fell down to worship the angel who was delivering the message. Both times the angel refused the worship and forbade John to worship him – but rather: "**WORSHIP GOD!**" [see **Revelation 19.9-10 & 22.8-9**]

***going on in detail about visions,***

1. They claimed that they had seen visions that no one else had seen and had access to a superior 'higher knowledge' and 'deeper wisdom.'
2. So, of course, if you wanted to experience these visions or learn about what they had seen, then you'd have to get it from them.

***puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind,***

1. 'Puffed up' is another visual word and image for excessive pride, arrogance, and haughtiness.
2. NOTE: Get where they are getting everything they are trying to force on you, insist that you do, and judge you by? They are getting everything from their own human, earthly, carnal, physical senses = they are making all this up from their own evil minds and imaginations!

➤ **But, they are getting none of this so-called 'wisdom' from CHRIST!**

*<sup>19</sup> and not holding fast to the Head...*

**See ch 1.18 / "And He is the Head of the body, the church..."**

1. As our 'Head,' Jesus Christ is our SUFFICIENT source of life, knowledge, wisdom, and all authority.

2. If you're going to believe and follow all these false teachers and learn to live from them – then you decapitate yourself from Christ who is our Head! Hold fast to your Head!

➤ **Do you want to grow in your Christian life? Here is where all our growth comes from – from CHRIST who is our LIFE.**

*...from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.*

#### IV / LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

➤ **Jesus Christ & His Gospel has liberated you and set you free from the dead slavery to self-made religion – Why would you want to go back to living under its bondage?**

<sup>20</sup> *If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations—*

<sup>21</sup> *“Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”*

<sup>22</sup> *(referring to things that all perish as they are used)*

*—according to human precepts and teachings?*

<sup>23</sup> *These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.*

1. Jesus Christ had died in His own body and flesh to save you, reconcile you to God, forgive you of all your sins, and redeem you alive to God in the new birth [see ch 1.21-23]
2. All of these other man-made religious teachings, theories, and practices are self-constructed from evil spirits using elements of this present physical world – ALL of which Jesus Christ created and rules over.
3. WHY would you ever want to go back to living in these ‘dead’ lifeless beliefs and practices?
4. They cannot and will not save you – nor will they give you the life and strength to gain mastery over your sinful desires and conduct.
5. You are ALIVE IN CHRIST! Don't even think about going back to trying to live as if you ‘still alive in the world’ or by following any of these ‘dead’ religious teachings and practices!

➤ **When anyone tries to ‘pass judgment’ on you and tell you what you must believe and do to be true to the Gospel – WE NEED TO LEARN TO JUDGE THEM BACK!**

➤ **Here is what you need to do to evaluate any and all of the false teachings that will try to ‘delude you,’ ‘kidnap and plunder you,’ ‘pass judgment on you,’ or ‘disqualify you’:**

- They are ‘human precepts and teachings’
- They have only ‘an appearance of wisdom’
- They are ‘self-made religion’
- They are of human origin
- They are not ‘according to Christ’
- They are not taught from Christ or from His Gospel
- They all insist and depend on human effort and works
- They glory in ‘the flesh’ and NOT IN CHRIST

**YOU HAVE CHRIST – AND YOU HAVE BEEN FILLED IN HIM! [see ch 2.10]**

## COLOSSIANS LESSON NOTES / TALKING POINTS / #5

Colossians 3-4

**THE GOSPEL LIVED****1 / A PARABLE [KIND OF] ABOUT SUFFICIENCY**

**I have told you all before that Debbie and I have bought a new car – for the first time in 40 years.** We've always bought used cars, usually already older-model cars that we could afford to buy. And then we owned, not only the car, but also the inevitable repair bills that came with owning an older car. So we have figured that by the time we bought the older model and then repaired it out-of-pocket, by the time we had to replace that one, we had put more money into it than a newer car would have cost us. And maybe the more expensive newer model would have lasted us longer also.

So we decided that since we are older now, it would be wiser to go ahead and buy a new vehicle that we hope will last us for the rest of our lives. If this new car lasts as long as the old ones we're now driving have, it may be the last car we ever have to buy.

**We wanted a car that had the prospect of dependability, durability, and longevity.** So we bought a Honda CR-V that would allow us to pack up and travel to see the kids and family. We also learned from reviews and asking around that a Honda may last for many more miles than we probably plan to put on it. This new car is under warranty, and we bought an extended warranty beyond that. We even bought the color that Debbie fell in love with at first sight – bright metallic red with sparkles in the paint.

We love this new car. It runs and drives great. It is roomy, comfortable, and even has heated seats which is super for Debbie's back and hip pains. It has all the features we want and need and more features on it than we will probably ever use; and we love the features we have learned to use.

**In short, it is more than sufficient.** It meets all our desires and needs – and more. We are happy and satisfied with it.

**Now, let me adjust the story a bit to make a point: suppose we didn't actually have to buy this new car which is more than sufficient to meet all our needs and desires. Let's say that someone actually GAVE us the car – FOR FREE.** All we had to do was to receive the gift by faith in the giver's grace and generosity.<sup>1</sup> And we accepted the giver's grace and received the gift.

**But then some smooth talker<sup>2</sup> comes along and says that our new car given to us by the free grace of the giver – that is more than sufficient for all our desires and needs – was, in fact, NOT sufficient enough.** That he had something more that would work better and in more ways than our free car would; that our freely-given car wasn't sufficient for everything that we want it and need it to do.

**This other car that he is offering has all the appearances that our freely-given car has.<sup>3</sup>** Except that our freely-given car will not be sufficient for our desires and needs without our having this other model he is offering us. **And by his smooth talking and seemingly-reasonable arguments, he persuades us.<sup>2</sup>** And he leads us to believe that this other car is the one that we really need and even want.

**The only catch is: we would have to give up our new car – the one that had been freely-given to us.<sup>4</sup>** We can't have them both at the same time. **And whereas the freely-given car didn't cost us anything [remember, it was given to us freely – we had only to receive it by faith in the grace of the giver], we would actually have to work for this other car.<sup>5</sup>** And we would have to work hard, even beyond our ability to perform, **and the terms and conditions would never be satisfied. What we would be required to do would never be fulfilled and satisfied. It would all be wasted effort.**

**And then, to top it all off – when we got into this other car that we had been persuaded to work for, we discovered much to our dismay – THAT IT WOULDN'T WORK! NOTHING ON THIS OTHER CAR WORKS! It won't even start. It won't go. It is dead from the get-no-go. It will take us nowhere!<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Colossians 2.6-7

<sup>2</sup>Colossians 2.4; 2.8; 2.16-19

<sup>3</sup>Colossians 2.23

<sup>4</sup>Colossians 2.17-20

<sup>5</sup>Colossians 2.20-23

## **2 / THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT PAUL IS WARNING THE COLOSSIANS ABOUT!**

**God has given them Christ! NOT just some things that Christ could give them – NO! God had given them Christ Himself – and with Him ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD! / ch 1.19**

**And Christ is sufficient for all things that God requires and that we need / ch 2.9-10**

**And they had received Christ by faith / ch 2.6-7.** When they received Christ by faith, they received everything they would ever need to be right with God, reconciled to God, redeemed to God – and this same Christ also gives them His own wisdom, power, strength, and life to live every aspect and activity of their lives in ways that are pleasing to God!

## **3 / NOW WE COME TO THE CONCLUDING SECTIONS OF THIS EPISTLE...**

The primary lesson the Paul is teaching the Colossians – and us – in this epistle is that: **Jesus Christ is SUFFICIENT for all things.**

- **He is SUFFICIENT to GIVE YOU LIFE [ch 1.12, 19-23, 27; ch 2.2-3, 9-15, 20]**
  - **ch 3.1 “Since then you have been RAISED WITH CHRIST...”**
  - **& v 3 “For you have died [see ch 2.20], and your LIFE IS HIDDEN WITH CHRIST IN GOD”**
  - **& v 4 “When Christ WHO IS YOUR LIFE...”**
- **He is SUFFICIENT to LIVE YOUR LIFE [ch 3.1-4, 10-13]**
  - **ch 2.6 “Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, SO WALK IN HIM...”**

## **4 / SO NOW PAUL WILL TEACH US HOW TO LIVE EVERY MOMENT AND EVERY MOVEMENT OF OUR LIVES BY THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL AND THE VERY LIFE OF CHRIST LIVING IN US...**

**ch 3.1 / “Since then you have been raised with Christ...”**

[this is a certain, confirmed ‘if’ = ‘assuming...since’]

### **Three primary activities we must do...**

- **‘...seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God’**  
**Pursue the Wisdom, Truth, and Life that is in Christ & God has given you IN HIM!**
  - ‘seek’ = means ‘want, desire, pursue, reach after, live for, live by’
  - ‘above’ = means ‘in Christ & from Christ, where Christ is’
- **‘Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on the earth’**  
**Focus all of your attention, affections, and activities on Christ – drawing your life from Him!**
  - all of the things we love and value, our desires, interests, ambitions, aspirations should be found in Christ & received from Him

- **‘When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in Glory’  
Live & do everything you do in the hope and expectation of His return!**
  - wait expectantly for Christ to return / we shall be made to be like Him! / see **1 John 3.2-3**

#### **4 / IN THE MEANTIME–HERE & NOW–WHAT WILL A GOSPEL-LIVED LIFE LOOK LIKE?**

**How will we ‘seek those things [Christ] which are above?’**

**How will we ‘set your minds [affections] on things above, not on things that are on earth?’**

- **NEGATIVE / ch 3.5-11: ‘Put to death therefore...’ [since you have already ‘died’ to the power of these sins having the rule, reign, and power over your life / ch 2.20]**

There will be desires and deeds of our lives that are ‘normal, human, physical’ conduct – but they belong to our old life [see v 7]; they are sins that Jesus Christ died to redeem us from; they are those things **‘that are on the earth’**

**We must note and kill every one of them by the power of the Gospel and Christ living in us...**

- 1. sexual immorality [porneia]**
  - 2. impurity**
  - 3. passion**
  - 4. evil desire**
  - 5. covetousness [which is idolatry]**
    - a. the wrath of God is against all these**
    - b. & we used to live in them, but not any longer–WE MUST PUT THEM TO DEATH**
  - 6. anger**
  - 7. wrath**
  - 8. malice**
  - 9. slander**
  - 10. obscene talk**
  - 11. lying**
    - a. in the new birth, we have been born again & re-created in the image of Christ**
    - b. our new identity is CHRIST = HE IS ALL, AND IN ALL**
- **POSITIVE / ch 3.12-14: ‘Put on therefore...’ [these are the graces that God has given us and which now live in us by the indwelling Holy Spirit of Christ / see Romans 13.11-14]**
    - 1. compassionate hearts**
    - 2. kindness**
    - 3. humility**
    - 4. meekness**
    - 5. patience**
    - 6. forbearing with one another**
    - 7. forgiving one another ... as God has forgiven us in Christ**
    - 8. LOVE which binds everything together in perfect harmony**
  - **WE MUST LIVE OUT THE GOSPEL IN THE CHURCH / ch 3.15-17**  
We must ‘put these on’ too, but these are also the exercises and activities we must continually engage in to ‘seek those things [Christ] which are above’ & ‘set your minds [affections] on things above, not on things that are on the earth’

1. **v 15a / ‘Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body’** = this is the peace, unity, harmony, and fellowship that Jesus Christ has called us to, and which we must practice by the all-encompassing rule of LOVE / see v 14
2. **v 15b / ‘Be thankful’** = this is now the 7<sup>th</sup> time Paul has commanded us to be thankful to God [chs 1.3; 1.12; 2.6-7; 3.15-17; 4.2]
3. **‘Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...’** = saturate your mind, soul, spirit, and life with the Word of Christ and live according to all that He teaches and commands us
4. **‘Teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God’** = don’t forsake the assembling of yourselves together with the church; cultivate, practice, and participate in all the means of grace God has provided for us
5. **‘And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him’** = do EVERYTHING you do by following and living under the authority of Jesus Christ – GIVING THANKS TO GOD! / see ch 1.12-14

**5 / PUT TO DEATH ALL THESE SINS AND PRACTICE ALL THESE GRACES IN ALL YOUR RELATIONSHIPS / ch 3.18 – 4.1**

**LIVE BY THE GOSPEL & LIVE OUT THE GOSPEL IN YOUR MOST BASIC, ESSENTIAL, NORMAL, DAILY LIVES – HOME, FAMILY, WORKPLACE**

**Ch 3:18-4:1**

- <sup>18</sup>**Wives**, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
- <sup>19</sup>**Husbands**, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.
- <sup>20</sup>**Children**, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
- <sup>21</sup>**Fathers**, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.
- <sup>22</sup>**Bondservants**, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.  
<sup>23</sup>Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, <sup>24</sup>knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ. <sup>25</sup>For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.
- <sup>4.1</sup>**Masters**, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

**Ch 4:2-6**

<sup>2</sup>**Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.** = pray constantly and continuously for everything, watch expectantly for God to answer, WITH THANKSGIVING

<sup>3</sup>**At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison—** <sup>4</sup>**that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.** = pray especially for your Pastors and teachers

<sup>5</sup>**Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time.** = live out the Gospel in your community, neighborhood, and in all your conduct and relationships with unbelievers. Represent Christ well!

<sup>6</sup>**Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.** = live out the Gospel in all your words and conversations with everyone

**“...AND YOU HAVE BEEN FILLED IN HIM...” – NOW LIVE IT OUT!**