
COLOSSIANS: CHRIST PREEMINENT

Session 8 | Colossians 2:6-16 | Dr. Randy White

AN INSTRUCTION CONCERNING OUR WALK | vv. 6-7

- Verse 6 –
 - The verb **received** is an *active* verb. This is problematic for the Calvinist position which says a person receives Christ Jesus before they have any recognition of Him. This is a necessary corollary to their understanding of Total Depravity. See also 1 Cor. 15:1, Gal. 1:9, Phil. 4:9, and John 1:12 for other examples of "active receiving."
 - The verb has an important adverb: **AS**. How did we receive Christ? We must walk in Him in the same manner.
 - **So walk in him** - This is an imperative command to all who have received Christ.
 - To receive Christ and not walk in Him is to live in sin.
 - To receive Christ by grace through faith and then walk in him by works is also to live in sin.
- Verse 7 –
 - Grammatically, there are four participial descriptions of those who have received Christ and are walking with Him. Three are passive, one is active.
 - ῥιζόω [rhizoo] - having been rooted (perfect passive participle)
 - ἐποικοδομέω [epoikodomeo] - being built up (present passive participle)
 - οἶκος [oikos] - house
 - δῶμα [doma] - roof
 - A complete house, including a roof
 - βεβαιόω [bebaino] - being established or confirmed (present passive participle).
 - περισσεύω [perisseuo] - abounding (present active participle)
 - The first three are related to the teaching, thus the Colossians were **rooted, built up, and established** in the teaching that had been given them. With this (and to accomplish this, they were **abounding therein** (in the teaching) **with thanksgiving**.

A word of warning | vv. 8-9

- **Beware** - This is a command to "look and see." βλέπω [blepo] is translated "see" 90 of 135 times in the New Testament. Because it is an imperative, **beware** is a good interpretation.
- **Lest any man spoil you** - This word is used in the sense of the *spoils* of war. "To the victor goes the spoils," and so we do not want anyone to **spoil you**.
- **Philosophy** - This is the only time the word φιλοσοφία [philosophia] is used in the Bible, and it is used in a negative sense. The word philosopher is used in Acts 17:18, also in a negative sense. It means "a friend of wisdom," which sounds positive, but much of the philosophical world has made wisdom their god.
- **The tradition of men** - One needs to **beware** of the **tradition of men** even if those traditions are church/denomination based. The church has been slow to reject tradition that is based on **philosophy and vain deceit** rather than the Scripture. The Roman Catholic church even goes so far as to raise tradition to the level of Scripture.
- **Not after Christ** - Some are accused of being too focused on the apostleship of Paul, yet Paul is more Christ-focused than any other writer in all the Bible outside the Gospels themselves, and, unlike the Gospels, Paul presents the theological realities of Christ (rather than the physical realities).

- Verse 9 - This is fundamental orthodoxy. Jesus has a body, and in that physical body all the fullness of "Godness" dwells. He is fully God and fully man.

Complete in Christ | vv. 10-15

- Verse 10 - This phenomenal thought is just as much orthodoxy as the truth of v. 9, yet is denied by many in the church today. In practicality, many teach that we are complete in our own works of righteousness, personal holiness, etc.
 - **Principality** - The word ἀρχή [arche] is a word of beginning and rule.
 - **Power** - The word ἐξουσία [exousias] is based on the root ουσία [ousia], which is *wealth / property* (as in Lk 15:12-13). The word is literally, "coming from wealth/property." The word is used of Jesus in Matt. 7:29, speaking of Jesus **as one having authority**.
- Verse 11 – our circumcision
 - The wording here is an example of how the Bible makes it easy to know when it is speaking symbolically. We know when to take something symbolically because the text makes itself obvious!
 - This speaks to being **complete in him** (v. 10). The **circumcision** is defined as the **putting off the body of sins** and is a result of **the circumcision of Christ**.
- Verse 12 –
 - **Buried with him in baptism** - Literally, "having been buried" (a passive participle). This **baptism** speaks to our immersion into the death of Christ, not our water baptism (otherwise baptismal regeneration would be necessary).
 - **Ye are risen with him** - This is also a passive verb, thus our baptism with Him is passive, along with our resurrection.
 - **Through the faith...** - Our baptism and resurrection are *passive* results of our *active faith of the operation of God*.
- Verses 13-15 –
 - The heart of these three verses is that we have been **quicken together with him**. Our previous condition was **being dead in sins and uncircumcision**. There are three activities that Christ has done that are behind our being **quicken**.
 - **Having forgiven you all trespasses** - this was done by Christ's work on the cross.
 - Having blotted out the handwritten decrees that were adverse to us. He did this by **nailing it to his cross**. Thus, in the cross of Christ the law was accomplished and made null, but the revelation of such truth was not given until much later.
 - **Having spoiled principalities and powers**, literally, "having stripped them publically and leading a triumphant [parade], making a show of them."