
COLOSSIANS: CHRIST PREEMINENT

Session 9 | Colossians 2:13-23 | Dr. Randy White

Verses 10-15 were included in the session 8 outline.

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."

Standing on the Shadow | vv. 16-23

- Verse 16 –
 - The key word is **therefore**.
 - If vv. 14-15 had not been accomplished and revealed, then v. 16 would be out of order.
 - Each of the things mentioned in v. 16 relate to the Law. This is the Law that was blotted out in v. 15, thus the **handwriting of ordinances that was against us** is the Mosaic Law.

- Verse 17—
 - The human heart is quick to go to "shadows" rather than the substance of freedom in Christ.
- Verse 18—
 - The Greek καταβραβεύω [katabrabeuo] **beguile** is used only here in the NT.
 - The root word [brabeuo] is "to rule or control" (used in sports, such as an umpire).
 - The prefix [kata] takes the root to its extreme.
 - Therefore, the word is "overextended control."
 - The best picture would be an umpire who overextends his control of the game beyond the rules of the game, and defrauds you of the prize.
 - (Note that the word **reward** is not actually in the text, but is used by extension and interpretation of the Greek word.)
 - These things describe the one who would attempt to **beguile you of your reward**:
 - **voluntary humility** - literally, "it is his will to be humble." The sense of the words is a false humility (one based on self-righteousness).
 - **worship of angels** - literally, "worship of messengers." It could be that this person worships angels or that he worships the prophets rather than the One the prophets pointed to. Note that the Greek θρησκεία [threskia] is the word for *religion*, not *worship*.
 - **intruding...** - the word implies "going into detail" when the person doesn't really know the facts. This person is inherently **vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind**.
 - One who is **not holding the Head**, who is Jesus Christ.
- Verse 20—
 - This question gets to the heart of the matter of sufficiency and completeness in Christ.
 - If we are sufficient in Christ, there are no **rudiments of the world** or **ordinances** which will make us "more complete" or "more sufficient."
- Verse 23—
 - **Will worship** - This unique phrase is built on two Greek words-
 - θρησκεία [threskia] - religion (see v. 18)
 - θελω [thelo] - a person's will / desire.
 - Therefore, the things of the Law have a **shew of wisdom** in "make-believe religion that satisfies man's desire."