

Colossians: Lesson #46: Complete in Christ
Notes for Parents to Study with Their Children
For Wednesday, October 15th

Read Col. 1:15 – 2:23 (a simplified explanation of the text is supplied at the end of these notes).

Memory Verse: Col. 2:9 “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

Understanding Who Jesus Is

- One of the most basic and most important things we can do as followers of Jesus is to know who He really is. Paul tells us several things about that:
 - ⇒ Jesus is the image of the God we cannot see. An ordinary human being might be able to show us some part of God’s qualities, but because Jesus is the Son of God, He showed us exactly what God was like. Jesus once said, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9) Col. 2:9 says that “in Christ the full measure of deity (God) dwells in bodily form.”
 - ⇒ Jesus has the first-born place over all of God’s creation. Jesus, of course, was born on the earth, but He existed before He came to the earth. John 1:1 says that in the beginning back before the world was made, He was with God and He was God. When it says that Jesus was the “first-born” it is emphasizing how important He was. The “first-born” in an Israelite family would become the next head of their family and would inherit more of the father’s possessions. Jesus has been made the head of all things. He is more important than all of us. Jesus has the first place in everything.
 - ⇒ God the Father used Jesus to create all things. In Genesis 1:26 it says, “Then God said, Let Us make man in Our image...” Heb. 1:2 says that God made the world through His Son. Jesus continues to control the world because Paul tells us here in Colossians 1:17 that “in Him all things are held together.”
 - ⇒ Jesus is also the “head of the body, the church” (Col. 1:18). The church must follow everything Jesus told us to do.
 - ⇒ By dying on the cross Jesus has made us right with God: Because we can by Jesus’ blood be forgiven of our sins, we can be holy and right before God. When we are baptized we are trusting in God to forgive us of all our sins.
- Jesus is all that we need – in Him we will be all that God wants us to be.

We Must Stay Faithful to Jesus

- Paul was proud that the Colossians had done so well and learned so much, but he warned them to keep following the same truth.
- We must always stay in the faith. That means that we must keep going to church, and keep following Christ’s teaching.
- We must never move away from the gospel.

Some People Claimed to Have Secret Knowledge to Get You to Heaven

- Back in Paul's time, some people thought they knew special ways to serve God and go to heaven. They had studied what the world thinks and included some Old Testament laws, too. Some of them claimed to have gotten messages from angels that they worshipped.
- First of all, there weren't any secret things. God revealed everything to His people.
- Now these people who claimed to know secret information, didn't really know anything special. The secrets they thought they had learned weren't really true. It was just their way of feeling important.
- Paul was concerned that some among the Colossians might listen to these people and be led away from the truth.
- That's why Paul reminded the Colossians Christians about who Jesus was and how important He was and how He has taught us all that we need to know to serve God and go to heaven.
- Paul said the most important secret anyone could learn about was Christ. All wisdom, all the things you need to know are found in Him. He was God's real treasure.
- Paul told the Colossians this because he didn't want these people to fool the Christians there at Colossae with their strange ideas.
- He warned them not to let anyone rob them of their trust in what came from Jesus. Don't let people teaching their own ideas affect your heart.
- We shouldn't let anyone talk us into doing things that Jesus hasn't taught us to do. We have to hold fast to Him.

Simplified Explanation of the Text

Jesus Christ, Over All Creation

1:15 Jesus Christ is the image of the God we cannot see, the first-born (in His position) over all creation.

16 He is over all creation because by Him all things were created, things in heaven and things on earth, visible or invisible, whether they are thrones of authority, or realms where they have been give the rule, or those who have high positions, or those who have been given the authority to act -- all of these were created through Him and for Him.

17 And He is before all things and in Him all things are held together.

18 He, also, is the head of the body, the church; He who holds first position above all, He who is the firstborn from the dead, so that in everything He would have the first place.

The Blood of Jesus Brought Reconciliation

19-20 For it was very pleasing to the Father for all the fullness to always dwell in Jesus, and through Him the Father would completely reconcile everything to Himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And this reconciliation was accomplished through the peace made by the blood of the cross.

21-22 And you, who used to be separated from God and enemies in the way you thought about things and in the evil things you did, have now been reconciled by means of the death of Christ's fleshly body so that you can be presented before Him as...

- ...Holy (set apart for God's use),

- Without any spot or blemish that would make us look shameful, and
- Having nothing wrong that we can be accused of.

23 This can be so if you always continue on and stay in the faith, solidly on the foundation and firmly settled and not moved out of our place from the hope of the gospel. This is the gospel which you heard, and which was preached to all of God's creation under heaven, which I, Paul, am a servant of.

Paul Worked Hard at Preaching the Mystery

24 And even though right now I am suffering in your behalf (because of preaching the gospel), I still rejoice. I rejoice because in my body I can share on behalf of Christ's body, the church, and fill up anything that was left in Christ's suffering (those things He said we would suffer because of serving Him).

25 This is what I was made a servant for. God gave me the responsibility of stewardship, of watching over and seeing after the other servants in His household. He gave this to me for your benefit so that I would completely carry out His Word.

26 I'm talking about the secret things that were hidden from previous ages and generations, but which are now revealed to the saints.

27 To His set apart people God willing made known the rich glory of this secret among the Gentiles. And this secret is: Christ is even in you Gentiles. He is the hope of your glory!

28 And this is what we preach, warning and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we can present every person as complete in Christ.

29 For this cause I work hard, struggling, fighting and striving with all the strength that comes down from God and works powerfully in me.

2:1 I wish you realized what a great struggle I have had as I preached the gospel for those like you at Colossae and for those at Laodecia and even for those who have never actually seen my face.

2-3 Perhaps if you had seen what I've been through and how important it is, their hearts would be encouraged and that love would glue them together in unity. You have the true riches when you have a good grasp of truth because it makes you more certain and confident.

Keep Strong in the Faith and Don't Let Anyone Mislead You

Some people think they have special secret insights that others don't have, but when you study God's revealed truth it will result in really understanding the most important of all of God's mysterious secrets, and that is Christ Himself. You see, it's in Him that all of God's treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.

4 Now I'm telling you this so that no one will be able to come along pushing their false ideas on you – ideas that would try to get your mind to consider something other than the truth.

5 Even though I can't be there with you in person, I'm still with you in spirit, and am very happy to know that you are orderly in the way you conduct yourselves and stable in your faith in Christ.

6-7 You have done well to receive Christ Jesus the Lord in the way you have, so continue to walk in Him that same way. Your strong roots have made you well grounded. You continue to be built up in Christ. And all this has firmly fixed you in the

faith. So just continue on with the things you been instructed in, because it was that kind of teaching that made you overflow with gratitude.

8 Watch out for anyone that would take you captive and rob you of your treasure. Some teach their useless and deceptive ideas drawing from their love of human wisdom – a wisdom based on ideas men have handed down and having to do with things about the physical world, but their kind of wisdom is not according to Christ.

9 Because in Christ, the full measure of deity dwells in bodily form.

10 And you have been completely filled in Christ, who is the head even over all who rule in high positions and have great authority.

11 It was in Christ that you were circumcised, but Christ's kind of circumcision was done without hands in putting off the body's fleshly sins.

12 This circumcision was done by being buried with Him in baptism in which you were also raised with Him through your faith in the powerful work of God, the same powerful God who raised Jesus from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Christ having shown us the gracious forgiveness of all our transgressions.

Christ Provides What We Need, Not the Regulations of the Law

14 Completely wiping away all the handwritten decrees against us, which were contrary to us, He took it all away from us by nailing it to the cross.

15 God stripped the rulers and authorities of their power and made a public spectacle of them as he triumphed over them in Christ.

16 Because all that you need is found in Christ, don't let anyone decide for you special food regulations about what you should eat and drink. And don't let someone choose what feast day, or new moon, or Sabbath day you should observe.

17 Those were all just shadows cast to show what was to come, but the real body belongs to Christ.

Since Christ Supplies Us, Don't Let Such People Be Your Judge

18 Don't allow any of these people to become an umpire over your life – an umpire that rules in such a way that would keep you from winning a victory. Such people love to practice a false form of humility while really they are inflated in their own fleshly minds without any good reason for having such pride. They worship angels and go into things they have not seen.

19 But what they don't do is hold fast to Head, Jesus Christ. It is from Him that the entire body is supplied with what it needs. It is He who holds all the joints and ligaments together. He grows us with the kind of growth that comes from God.

20-21 So if you have died with Christ to all these things that are so much a part of what the world is, why would you follow the world's ideas as if you lived under their way of thinking. Such human teachings as: "Don't handle, don't taste, don't touch."

22 Those kind of things are destined to ultimately perish since they have to do with the commandments and teachings of men.

23 That all may look like wisdom among those who come up with their own ideas about religion, but when such people do things like treating their bodies with severity to show some false kind of humility, its not going to be of any value in restraining fleshly desires.

