

Great Commission



Baptist Church

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher



The Supremacy of Christ: The Book of Colossians

October/November 2016



Great Commission Baptist Church
Adult Sunday School Lesson
Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

Lesson I

Date: October 2, 2016

Lesson Scriptures: Colossians 1:13-18

Lesson

He is Lord

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(Colossians 1 vs. 13)

B. His Redemption

(Colossians 1 vs. 14)

C. His Resume

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D. His Recognition

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Lesson I

Date: October 2, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1:13-18

Lesson Outline

- A. His Rescue (vs.13)
- B. His Redemption (vs.14)
- C. His Resume' (vs.15-17)
- D. His Recognition (vs.18)

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He is Lord

Thus, it is critically important that we never stop ringing the bell of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, including the deity of Jesus, the virgin birth of Christ and His bodily, literal, resurrection from the dead. In an age when psychology is replacing Bible-preaching in our churches, and entertainment is replacing the power of God, the Doctrine of Christ cannot be stressed enough.

What is the “DOCTRINE OF CHRIST?” It is the doctrine that Jesus is the only way to Heaven—by His virgin birth, sinless life, vicarious (substitutionary) death, burial, bodily resurrection, ascension, High-priestly intercession, and coming again for us to take us to Heaven. The doctrine of Christ is the teaching of salvation alone in Christ, which is THE TRUTH about Jesus Christ, as taught in the Word of God. The FOUNDATION of our Christian faith is JESUS CHRIST. The foundation has already been laid, so you cannot lay another foundation. The price for your sins have been paid in full. YOU ARE A SINNER, and unless you accept Christ's payment for your sins, you will spend eternity burning in the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15).

Beware of the false teaching in most churches today, which says that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone; but you also have to stop sinning to get saved, and commit your life to Christ, surrendering fully to Christ's Lordship. This is like a passenger in a car giving the driver contradictory directions, telling the driver to turn right and left at the same time. Either salvation is by grace or it is by works, but it cannot be both. We learn this truth in Romans 11:6, “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”¹

¹<http://www.thoughts-about-god.com/reflecting/#more>



Lesson I
Date: October 2, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1:13-18

Lesson Aim: Believers will be thankful that God have redeemed them through Christ and has forgiven them of their sins through His blood . To realize that Christ is the Head of all things and in Him all things are complete.³

¹⁻²Commentary originated by Rev. Terrence Howard, TH.M.
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³Earline Franklin

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Colossians 1:13-14 (KJV)

¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: ¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

Colossians 1:13-14 (NIV)

¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

He is Lord

A. His Rescue

(Verse 13) In this verse, Paul is still praying to the Father and he says, “who”. This “who” is God the Father, who has delivered us. This word “delivered”, means to rush, draw or rescue and it takes on the idea of a current. Like that of a flowing stream. Now this word “power” means authority or jurisdiction. Paul is saying here that God has rushed us from the authority of darkness. God has drawn us out from the jurisdiction of shadiness. No longer does darkness have authority or control over us because we have been rescued and then translated. This word “translated” means to transfer or exchange. We have been rescued and transferred into the kingdom, realm or reign of his dear Son. The Son in whom God loves. We have been rescued from ruins to royalty. Our lives were on the way to be ruin, but His Son came to our rescue and now we are able to share in the inheritance that God has for us, who he has adopted in the family of faith. The inward change that makes us fit for our place in the light is accompanied by an equally radical change in the conditions under which we live (Matt. 25:34).¹

B. His Redemption

(Verse 14) In this verse we see that Paul transitions about talking about God who rescued and now he is focusing on Jesus as he says, “In whom we have redemption”. Redemption in the N.T. has almost wholly lost its primary sense. It originally meant the regaining of an article put in pledge by repayment of the loan for which it was given in pledge; or the taking title through payment of a stipulated sum to a piece of family property which was in danger of being alienated; or securing the release of captives or of booty in return for a money payment. In Jewish usage, however, it had come to mean the deliverance of God's people, whether the storied deliverance from Egypt in the days of Moses, or the deliverance from Assyrian or Babylonian captivity which the prophets had proclaimed;(next pg)²



Lesson I
Date: October 2, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1:13-18

Kingdom of God: The “kingdom of God” is evidently a more comprehensive term than the “kingdom of heaven” and embraces all created intelligences, both in heaven and on earth, who are willingly subject to God and thus in fellowship with Him. The “kingdom of heaven”—more precisely the “kingdom of the heavens”—is a term descriptive of any type of rulership God may assert on the earth at a given period.⁴

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⁴ New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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Colossians 1:14-15 (KJV)

¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins: ¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Colossians 1:14-15 (NIV)

¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

He is Lord

B. For the Conscience

(*Verse 14*) looking beyond these historic events, it was used of the messianic deliverance for which the nation hoped. Deliverance can be summed up as the forgiveness of sins. For the sins of men are the chains which keep them imprisoned in "the realm of darkness"; and these chains are broken when God "translates us into the kingdom of the Son of his love." It is in "the Son of God's love" that we have this deliverance. Christ is the key figure in our redemption. The passage which follows teaches that Christ holds this key place in the economy of redemption because of the unique relationship in which he stands to God and to the created universe; in every respect the Creator and the creation are linked together in him. Thus the knowledge of Christ as Redeemer unfolds itself in the understanding of his place as "firstborn of all creation." No lesser view of his person is adequate to the greatness of the salvation, which God has accomplished in us and for us through him (Ps 32:1-2).¹

C. His Resume'

(*Verse 15*) Jesus is the image of God. The word for image was used in Paul's time for likenesses placed on coins, portraits, and for statues. It carries the idea of correspondence to the original. It is the nearest equivalent in ancient Greek to our modern photograph. Jesus is the perfect representation of God. This verse and others (John 1:18; 1 Tim. 1:17) tell us that God is invisible. Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God." Heb. 1:3 tells us that the Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being.²

Not only is Jesus the perfect picture of God, but he also holds the highest rank in the universe. Jesus is the firstborn over all creation. Firstborn is a term of rank more than it is a word of time (Ps. 89:27). The right of the firstborn was the right of privilege and priority. It was the honored position in the family. In the case of the patriarchs, we know that the honored position didn't always go to the first son born in time. Jesus is the firstborn—the highest rank—in all of creation.³



Lesson I
Date: October 2, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1:13-18

Principalities and Powers:
 By using the expression "principalities and powers," Paul was referring to the hierarchy of supernatural agencies, such as angelic beings, who worship and serve the Creator of the universe. Some commentators have divided this hierarchy into five categories, namely thrones, principalities, powers, authorities, and dominions.³

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³ Tyndale Bible Dictionary.

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Colossians 1:16-17 (KJV)

¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Colossians 1:16-17 (NIV)

¹⁶ For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

He is Lord

C. His Resume'

(Verse 16) False teachers use verse 15 (especially in the KJV) to teach that the Lord Jesus was a created being. Error can usually be refuted from the very passage of Scripture which the cultists use. That is the case here. This verse states conclusively that the Lord Jesus is not a creature, but the very Creator. In this verse we learn that all things—the whole universe of things—were created not only by Him but through Him and for Him. Each of these prepositions conveys a different thought. First of all, we read that by Him all things were created. Here the thought is that the power to create was in His Being. He was the Architect. Later in the verse we learn that all things were created through Him. This speaks of Him as the Agent in creation. He was the Person of the Godhead through whom the creative act was performed. Also, all things were created for Him. He is the One for whom all things were created, the goal of creation. Paul goes to great lengths to emphasize that all things were created through Christ, whether things in heaven, or things on earth. This leaves no loopholes for anyone to suggest that although He created some things, He Himself was created originally.¹

(Verse 17) Paul says, "He is before all things," not "He was before all things." The present tense is often used in the Bible to describe the timelessness of Deity. The Lord Jesus said, for instance: "Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58). Not only did the Lord Jesus exist before there was any creation, but also in Him all things consist. This means that He is the Sustainer of the universe and the Source of its perpetual motion. He controls the stars, the sun, and the moon. Even while He was here on earth, He was the One who was controlling the laws by which our universe functions.²



Lesson I
Date: October 2, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1:13-18

Questions:

1. How did God deliver us from the kingdom of darkness?
2. According to Colossians 1: 12-14 , how can people have their sins forgiven and be a part of Christ's kingdom? How does this differ from the view of many today?

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²Earline Franklin

Questions by Earline Franklin

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Colossians 1:18 (KJV)

¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

Colossians 1:18 (NIV)

¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

He is Lord

D. His Recognition

(Verse 18) The dominion of the Lord Jesus not only covers the natural universe, but it also extends to the spiritual realm. He is the head of the body, the church. All believers in the Lord Jesus during this dispensation are formed into what is known as the body of Christ, or the church. Just as a human body is a vehicle by which the person expresses himself, so the Body of Christ is that vehicle which He has on earth by which He chooses to express Himself to the world. And He is the head of that body. The head speaks of guidance, dictation, control. He occupies the place of pre-eminence in the church. The expression, "the firstborn from the dead", here again we must be careful to emphasize that this does not mean that the Lord Jesus was the first to rise from the dead. There were cases of resurrection in the OT as well as in the NT. But the Lord Jesus was the first to rise from the dead to die no more, He was the first to rise with a glorified body, and He rose as the Head of a new creation. His resurrection is unique, and is the pledge that all who trust in Him will also rise. It proclaims Him as supreme in the spiritual creation.¹

Summary: Paul indicates that all prayers should be filled with thanksgiving. We should be thankful that God has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light(v12) ; has delivered us from the kingdom of Satan and redeemed us through Christ; has forgiven us of our sins through His blood. We should be grateful that Jesus Christ is the creator and sustainer of all things and the head of the church. As such we should exalt Him by putting Him first in our lives and following his directions by being obedience to His Word so that our lives are complete in Him.²



Lesson II

Date: October 9, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1:19-23

Lesson Outline

A. The Plan of Reconciliation (vs.19-20a)

B. The Provision of Reconciliation (vs.20b-21a)

C. The Point of Reconciliation (vs.21b-23)

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The Supreme Reconciliation

The common definition of reconciliation as it relates to relationships is (1): 1. The restoration of friendly relations. 2. The action of making one view or belief compatible with another.

We see from this definition that the words restoration and compatible are part of reconciliation. However, the root of reconciliation is the word conciliation, which is the action of stopping someone from being angry. When we have reconciliation, it means that we restore our relationship to one that enables us to be compatible and friendly with one another again.

In the Old Testament the word reconciliation is the Hebrew word *kapar*, pronounced *kaw-far'*. This is one of the most theologically significant words in the Bible. In addition to reconciliation, *kapar* is also translated into English words such as *forgive*, *purge away*, and *merciful* as well as a few others. By far, the most commonly translated word for *kapar* is the English word *atonement*.

When the word *atonement* is broken down to its historical parts (*a-tone-ment*) it means a condition without tension. When Christ died on the cross for us, He removed the tension between us and God (Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21.) His shed blood, reconciled the conflict between us and the Father. With this in mind, reconciliation has its Biblical foundation in the atonement of Christ.¹

¹<http://www.thoughts-about-god.com/reflecting/#more>



Lesson II
Date: October 9, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1:19-23

Lesson Aim: To have a grateful attitude toward God that our justification is an accomplished fact. And we will show our gratitude by standing firm in the faith, grounded and settled.³

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Colossians 1:19-20 (KJV)

¹⁹ For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;
²⁰ And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

Colossians 1:19-20 (NIV)

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,
²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

The Supreme Reconciliation

A. The Plan of Reconciliation

(Verse 19) This word “plan”, means to set up, arrange or a strategy. The passage says, “For it pleased the Father”, The little word for explains why Christ will have first place in everything. God wanted his fullness (meaning “completeness” or “totality”) to live (meaning “live permanently”) in Christ. Paul wanted to explain to the Colossians that Christ is God’s dwelling place; therefore, Christ is divine, sovereign, and preeminent. Christ perfectly displays all the attributes and activities of God: Spirit, Word, wisdom, glory. Fullness, was the very term used by the Gnostics for the totality of so-called divine emanations, or intermediary beings, which they believed controlled people’s lives. One beliefs of the Gnostics were, that the divine could have no essential union with what is earthly and human, could not suffer and die as Jesus had done, and that therefore the divine nature could have dwelt in Jesus only for a time, entering into him at his baptism, and leaving him before he underwent the humiliation of human suffering and death on the Cross.¹

Gnostic heretics taught that Christ was a kind of "halfway house" to God, a necessary link in the chain. But there were other, better links on ahead. "Go on from Him," they urged, "and you will reach the fullness." "No," Paul answers, "Christ is Himself the complete fullness!" By this statement, Paul was refuting the Greek idea that Jesus could not be human and divine at the same time. Christ is fully human; he is also fully divine. Nor is there more than one God; this one God, in all his fullness, resides in Christ. Christ has always been God and always will be God. All of God (nxt pg).²



Lesson II
Date: October 9, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1:19-23

Reconciliation:
 Reconciliation, therefore, means that someone or something is completely altered and adjusted to a required standard (Romans 5: 6-11). By the death of Christ the world is changed in its relationship to God. Man is reconciled to God, but God is not said to be reconciled to man. By this change lost humanity is rendered savable.⁴

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⁴ New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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Colossians 1:19-20 (KJV)

¹⁹ For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;
²⁰ And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

Colossians 1:19-20 (NIV)

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,
²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

The Supreme Reconciliation

A. The Plan of Reconciliation

(Verse 19) (including his attributes, characteristics, nature, and being) indwells the Son. When we have Christ we have all of God in human form. Any teaching that diminishes any aspect of Christ—either his humanity or his divinity—is false teaching.¹

(Verse 20a) This verse begins with, “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross”. To make peace through His blood means to cause God’s enemies (Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:21) to become, by faith, His friends and His children (Eph. 2:11-19). consider what this reconciliation means for humanity. There can be no peace between sinful humans and a holy God. Because people are born into sin, they cannot become good enough to be acceptable to God.²

B. The Provision of Reconciliation

(Verse 20b) The verse then says, “by him to reconcile all things unto himself;”. This reconciliation was accomplished through Christ’s blood on the cross. “Reconciliation” means reestablishing a relationship, causing a relationship to become friendly and peaceable when it had not been so. Because Christ is Creator and Sustainer of everything, his death on the cross provided reconciliation for everything. But what did Paul mean by “everything”? We know that Paul understood salvation to be something accepted or rejected by humans, who are given the choice (2 Thess. 1:5-10). The scope of God’s reconciliation is universal—it is offered to all people. But reconciliation is accomplished only for those who accept Christ as Savior (2 Cor. 5:17-18).³



Lesson II
Date: October 9, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1:19-23

Natural: that which men have in common with animals; thus the “natural body” (1 Cor. 15:44,46), and equivalent to “flesh and blood” (1 Cor. 15:50). In the expression the “natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit” (1 Cor. 2:14), the meaning refers to the unregenerate man governed by his sensuous nature with its subjection to appetite and passion.⁴

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Colossians 1:21-22 (KJV)

²¹ And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

²² In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight:

Colossians 1:21-22 (NIV)

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation--

The Supreme Reconciliation

B. The Provision of Reconciliation

(*Verse 21a*) Paul gave the reason why we need reconciliation. The believers in Colosse had, at one time, been far away (separated, estranged) from God and they were his enemies. Their thoughts and behaviors had revealed, not apathy or ignorance, but hostility toward God because of sin. They were strangers to God's way of thinking. Wrong thinking leads to sin, which further perverts and destroys thoughts about him. When people are out of harmony with God, their natural condition is to be totally hostile to his standards.¹

C. The Point of Reconciliation

(*Verse 21b*) Paul then says, “yet now hath he reconciled”. Paul reminds the Colossians that reconciliation in their case was already an accomplished fact. Before their conversion, the Colossians had been Gentile sinners, alienated from God and enemies of His in their minds because of their wicked works (Eph. 4:17-18). They desperately needed to be reconciled, and the Lord Jesus Christ, in His matchless grace, had taken the initiative.²

(*Verse 22*) He reconciled them in the body of His flesh through death. It was not by His life but by His death. The expression the body of His flesh simply means that the Lord Jesus effected reconciliation by dying on the cross in a real human body (not as a spirit being, which the Gnostics claimed Him to be) (Heb. 2:14-16), where Christ's Incarnation is declared a necessity in order (nxt pg)³



Lesson II
Date: October 9, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1:19-23

Questions:

1. How do you continue in the faith grounded and settled?

2. Our aim says that our justification is an accomplished fact. What does this mean to you?

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³Earline Franklin

Questions by Earline Franklin

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Colossians 1:23 (KJV)

²³ If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Colossians 1:23 (NIV)

²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

The Supreme Reconciliation

C. The Point of Reconciliation

(*Verse 22*) to effect redemption. The Gnostic concept denied this.¹

(*Verse 23*) The Scriptures also teach, as in this verse, that true faith always has the quality of permanence, and that one who has really been born of God will go on faithfully to the end. Continuance is a proof of reality. Of course there is always the danger of backsliding, but a Christian falls only to rise again (Prov. 24:16). He does not forsake the faith.²

Summary: When Jesus paid the penalty for our sins on the cross, peace was made between God and the sinners. Sinners were reconciled when Christ made peace between God and man who was alienated from God. Now a person has the opportunity to come to Him and be redeemed. Christ want to present the believer as justified therefore as holy, faultless and beyond reproof to God. Since you have been justified, does this encourage you to continue in the faith, grounded and settled.³



Lesson III

Date: October 16, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1:24-29

Lesson Outline

A. The Attitude of Paul’s Ministry (vs.24)

B. The Author of Paul’s Ministry (vs.25-27)

C. The Activity of Paul’s Ministry (vs.28-29)

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Paul’s Ministry

The supposed Christian religions of this world are not in the business of helping their followers overcome sin. Their ministers do not teach people to extract spiritual leavening—sin—from their lives (I Cor. 5:6-7).

Although many well-intentioned, zealous people worship within these worldly religions, the average worshiper has no intention of humbling himself before God. He has no desire to purge carnal hatred, prejudices and greed from his life.

Why? “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:7-8).

To most, religion is merely a social tradition or a consuming hobby. In contrast to the one true Church founded by Jesus Christ, false Christianity does not lead its followers from sin. It does not teach the way to obey God’s laws or develop His holy, righteous character.

Only God’s true ministers guide His people—in His Church—to come out of the world and overcome sin. God uses His ministry to help Christians build godly character and qualify to rule nations in His soon-coming kingdom. This world’s ministers must follow the dictates of their flock—or face unemployment. Only ministers who preach smooth, non-condemning sermons keep their positions. They quote secular sources to gently admonish their congregation about acquiring some admirable character trait. But correction from God’s Word is not tolerated. The congregation will only listen to “smooth things” from the pulpit.¹

¹<http://www.thoughts-about-god.com/reflecting/#more>



Lesson III

Date: October 16, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1: 24 - 29

Lesson Aim: 1. To gladly suffer for the sake of sharing the gospel so that others may hear, believe, turn to Christ and be redeemed. 2. To realize that God enables those who respond to His call in obedience to accomplish His will.³

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³ Sis. Earline Franklin

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Great Commission Baptist Church

Adult Sunday School Lesson

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

Colossians 1:24 (KJV)

²⁴ Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

Colossians 1:24 (NIV)

²⁴ Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.

Paul's Ministry

A. The Attitude of Paul's Ministry

(Verse 24) This word "attitude" mean a position, stance, feelings or mind-set. In his effort to keep believers from falling prey to the seductive sounds of false teaching, Paul tells us the truth about authentic ministry. It involves suffering. Its aim is maturity, its hard work. Sitting in his prison in Rome and suffering for his faith, Paul was able to say I am glad even as he suffered. Paul was honored to be suffering, and he rejoiced at what God was doing in the churches and in the believers who were gaining courage and faith by watching Paul's example. Perhaps the false teachers had pointed to Paul's imprisonment as proof that his leadership and his teachings were in question. Paul explained that, instead, his imprisonment proved the truth of his words, and he could rejoice in that imprisonment knowing that it was all part of God's plan, for his body, the church.¹

Paul believed that Christ's suffering on the cross alone paid for believers' salvation from sin (Rom. 3:23-25, 1 Cor. 1: 18-31, Gal. 1:4). While we know what Paul did not mean by these words, we must consider several interpretations regarding what he did mean. What Paul suffered, Christ suffered, because Paul was a member of Christ's body on earth. What Christ began as suffering with his persecution and rejection on earth, all believers complete in his continuing body on earth. This view seems most likely because it stresses that the cause of the suffering would be the extension of the gospel to all the world. Paul shared the suffering of the Messiah as he brought the Messiah's message to the world. Jesus had warned his followers to expect affliction (John 15: 20-21). This suffering would not be limited to Paul. By identifying themselves with Christ, all believers would face affliction. Not all would face imprisonment, as Paul did, but all would have varying degrees and kinds of suffering.²



Lesson III

Date: October 16, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1: 24 - 29

Dispensations:

“management of a household,” hence English “economy”). A dispensation is an era of time during which man is tested in respect to obedience to some definite revelation of God’s will. Seven such dispensations are recognized and they are innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace and the kingdom.³

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³ New Unger’s Bible Dictionary

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Adult Sunday School Lesson

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

Colossians 1:25-26 (KJV)

²⁵ Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; ²⁶ *Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

Colossians 1:25-26 (NIV)

²⁵ I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness-- ²⁶ the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints.

Paul’s Ministry

B. The Author of Paul’s Ministry

(Verse 25) Paul explained that God had given him the responsibility of serving his church by proclaiming his message in all its fullness to you Gentiles. When Paul was commissioned by God, the focus of his ministry was made clear—he would go to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). Paul was keenly aware of who had commissioned him, to whom he had been commissioned, and what he had been called to do. Paul’s ministry among the Gentiles was to fully make known the word of God and to bring the preaching of the word of God to completion. Without Paul’s ministry concerning God’s plan for Christ and the church, God’s word, the revelation of his will, would be unfinished. The heresy in Colosse focused on mystical knowledge, and only a few could find the “fullness of knowledge” needed for inclusion in their special group. Thus, when Paul wrote of making God’s word fully known to all the believers, he was pointing out once again that God’s word is for all people. They could have all the wisdom they needed to be saved and to grow in Christ.¹

(Verse 26) Making God’s word fully known meant revealing a message that had been kept secret for centuries and generations past. This message was hidden, not because only a few could understand it, but because it was hidden until Christ came. With Christ’s coming and the beginning of Christianity, that message is no longer hidden; it has been revealed to those who believe, that is, his holy people. God’s plan was hidden from previous generations, not because God wanted to keep something from his people, but because he was going to reveal it in his perfect timing.²



Lesson III

Date: October 16, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1: 24 - 29

Tychicus: (“fortuitous”). One of Paul’s fellow laborers. He is first mentioned as a companion of the apostle during a portion of Paul’s return journey from the third missionary tour (Acts 20:4). He is there expressly called (with Trophimus) a native of Asia Minor; but while Trophimus went with Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 21:29), Tychicus was left behind in Asia, probably at Miletus (Acts 20:15,38).³

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Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

Colossians 1:27-28 (KJV)

²⁷ To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: ²⁸ Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Colossians 1:27-28 (NIV)

²⁷ To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.

Paul’s Ministry

B. The Author of Paul’s Ministry

(*Verse 27*) God’s hidden message is not a puzzle to solve; instead, it is like a treasure chest filled with the riches and glory of Christ, and the message is that the riches are available to the Gentiles. These words would have been joyful to Paul’s Gentile audience, that God was pleased to offer salvation to them. They did not need to acquire some secret knowledge in order to find God; God had reached down to them because he wanted to save them. God made the secret available to Jews and Gentiles alike, and the secret is Christ lives in you. Jews and Gentiles will have that oneness in Christ’s body because God had planned from the beginning of time to have Christ live in the heart of each person who believes in him. The indwelling Christ gives believers assurance that they will share in his glory in his eternal Kingdom.¹

C. The Activity of Paul’s Ministry

(*Verse 28*) The word we includes Paul and his coworkers, particularly Epaphras and Tychicus who served the Colossian church. Paul and his coworkers were telling the Good News about Christ, who at present was dwelling in them as well as in the Colossian believers, making all of them one body awaiting a glorious future. Their proclaiming of Jesus Christ included both warning and teaching. The word warn (also translated “admonishing”) connects with repentance and refers to a person’s conduct and heart attitude.²



Lesson III

Date: October 16, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1: 24 - 29

Questions:

1. Paul gave his personal testimony about his suffering for the gospel. What is your testimony?

2. Paul responded in obedience to God's call on his life. How are you responding to God's call?

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Adult Sunday School Lesson

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Colossians 1:29 (KJV)

²⁹ Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Colossians 1:29 (NIV)

²⁹ To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

Paul's Ministry

C. The Activity of Paul's Ministry

(Verse 28) Teach is connected to faith and doctrine and refers to a person's intellect. Paul needed both, and all the wisdom God had given him, especially when dealing with false teachers.¹

(Verse 29) We are to grow up into spiritual maturity so that we cannot be enticed by false teachings. God makes this possible only through a personal relationship with Christ. This relationship with Christ, empowered by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, helps believers grow in faith and maturity until the day when Christ returns. Paul worked very hard for this goal. His task was not simple. He struggled against false teaching, persecution, and questions about his qualifications. He bore heartache and concern on behalf of the churches because he had his goal always before him. Paul did not struggle with his own strength alone, however. He depended on Christ's mighty power that worked within him. Paul needed God's supernatural power, and God supplied it.²

Summary: Paul suffered for righteousness so that the church could be established. He demonstrated to us that if we are going to live for God, if we are going to take a stand for righteousness, you will find that you will suffer in some way. Today God's men and women are passed by for earthly honors while others (athletes, politicians, and others) are praised. Knowing that you are pleasing God and being obedient to His Call is far greater than earthly praise. Knowing that God worked mightily in him to get out the gospel that sinners could be saved and to build them up in the faith was fulfilling to him. We as believers should be doing the same thing today.³



Lesson IV

Date: October 23, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2:1-5

Lesson Outline

A. The Intensity of Paul's Concern (vs.1)

B. The Heart of Paul's Concern (vs.2-3)

C. The Motivation behind Paul's Concern (vs.28-29)

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Paul's Concern

I would go a step further to say, "It should not surprise us that society in general has moved away from the Truth of Scripture, when we believers spend so little time focused upon said Truth." We make excuses for not setting daily time aside for Scripture and prayer.

Decisions are made a hundred times a day without considering God's Word. We act according to the emotions of a situation instead of pushing beyond them and firmly grasping hold of Scripture's instruction. Dismissing the Truth as too difficult, we do as we please. So why does it come as a surprise to us that Truth is no longer accepted as absolute? Why are we trying to blame others for the current state of affairs and consequences, when we have played as much if not a greater part in bringing them about? One of Scripture's basic truths is we cannot continue to rebel against God's Truth and expect His blessing. But, it takes training and effort to become a fruit producer. Paul encouraged his followers to train and become better, more Spiritually fit. We too need to train and continuously strive to become more as a Christ Follower.

I run, but I do not find satisfaction in keeping the same pace and running the same distance every time. I want to run faster and farther, to get better, to become more effective.

The principle is the same with Christ Following. We should strive to become more — not because we want the recognition, but because we want to be the best we can in and for Christ.

It takes discipline. It takes dependence.

¹<http://www.thoughts-about-god.com/reflecting/#more>



Lesson IV

Date: October 23, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2: 1 - 5

Lesson Aim: To be able to distinguish truth from deceit. To know that Christ is all knowledge and all that one need in life.³

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Colossians 2:1 (KJV)

¹ For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

Colossians 2:1 (NIV)

¹ I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally.

Paul's Concern

A. The Intensity of Paul's Concern

(Verse 1) The spiritual welfare of the believers was being jeopardized by the intrusion of false doctrine. Paul speaks of his concern for the spiritual welfare of the believers because of this problem. Paul expresses his distress about the spiritual welfare of the believers. They were being attacked by the crafty error of Gnosticism, and Paul was distressed about the affect this error could have on the believers and here expresses his heart's "conflict" about the spiritual welfare of these believers. The passage then says, "I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you". Paul wanted the believers to know how great his concern was for their spiritual welfare. False teachers do not suffer for their disciples, but Paul's statement says he was indeed suffering in his spirit for the peril to the believers' welfare.¹

In mentioning his conflict or struggle, Paul again uses the noun "agon" from which we get "agony". The word originally was derived from the place where the Greeks assembled for their Olympic games, a place where they agonized in wrestling and footraces, where they fought to win. Paul had been agonizing, fighting for the Colossians with everything he had. What makes this truly remarkable is that he had never once personally visited them or their neighboring churches. Aside from Epaphras, Philemon, and perhaps a few others he had met in Ephesus, he had never seen the Colossians. He had no idea what the people looked like, he knew nothing of their personalities; yet he agonized for them. Why this strain for people he had never seen? Because he was God's "chosen instrument" to bring the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). But there was even more, for Paul and the Colossians shared the same relationship with Christ. He was also their spiritual father because he had won them through Epaphras. All of these elements contributed to his dynamic, agonizing struggle, and perhaps his persecution as well. (He was in prison when writing this letter.) Wherever Paul went, there was conflict: riots in Ephesus, beatings in Philippi, stoning in Lystra, shipwreck at sea, dangers everywhere. Paul bared his heart in 2 Cor. 1:8.²



Lesson IV

Date: October 23, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2: 1 - 5

Laodicea: A city of Asia Minor situated in the Lycos valley in the province of Phrygia, and the home of one of the Seven Churches of Rev. 1:11. Distinguished from several other cities of that name by the appellation Ad Lycum, it was founded by Antiochus II (261-246 BC) of Syria, who named it for his wife Laodike, and who populated it with Syrians and with Jews who were transplanted from Babylonia to the cities of Phrygia and Lydia.³

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³ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

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Colossians 2:2 (KJV)

² That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

Colossians 2:2 (NIV)

² My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,

Paul's Concern

B. The Heart of Paul's Concern

(Verse 2) Paul tells how to avoid being deceived. These verses contain the elements which add up to a loving, learning community. Paul's goal is that believers be encouraged in heart which happens as they are united in love, and as they are settled in their understanding of the truth. This word "comfort" can either mean "encouraged, cheer up" or "encourage, strengthen." Within the context of this letter, the idea of strengthen fits best, since there is no hint of sadness or distress for which the Colossians need comfort. They need strength to equip them to stand strong against the error they face. Strengthening takes place as believers are united in love. United in love translates a Greek participle and could be rendered "by being united in love" (nasb) rather than "and united in love" (niv). The imagery of united is that of a body being held together by ligaments to make a strong unit. Unity and solidarity create strength. False teaching is naturally divisive. A person left alone, with no support, is much more vulnerable than a cohesive unit. What creates unity? Love! Concern for one another. Relating to one another as brothers and sisters, with loyalty and support. When we are united in love, we will be strengthened in heart. Then we will have assurance in understanding. A loving, learning community will produce believers who are settled in their understanding of the truth. Believers who link themselves with fellow believers, who care for one another, and who grow in their understanding of Jesus Christ will stand a good chance of remaining stable and confident.¹

What does Paul mean when he says that they may know the mystery of God... and of Christ? He is still referring to the truth of the church—Christ, the Head of the Body, and all believers members of the Body. But the particular aspect of the mystery which he has in mind is the headship of Christ.²



Lesson IV

Date: October 23, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2: 1 - 5

Mystery: The NT use of the term “mystery” has reference to some operation or plan of God hitherto unrevealed. It does not carry the idea of a secret to be withheld, but of one to be published (1 Cor. 4:1); “secret things,” NIV). Paul uses the word twenty-one times. The term mystery, moreover, comprehends not only a previously hidden truth, presently divulged, but one that contains a supernatural element that still remains in spite of the revelation.³

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Colossians 2:3-4 (KJV)

³ In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

Colossians 2:3-4 (NIV)

³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.

Paul's Concern

B. The Heart of Paul's Concern

(Verse 3) Understanding has a very definite object: Jesus Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. In contrast to the false teachers at Colosse, who said that wisdom and knowledge were hidden away in mystical experience and higher knowledge, Paul says that all wisdom and knowledge are hidden, or deposited, in Christ. He is all we need. We will never mine all the treasure found in a full knowledge of Jesus Christ (Eph. 3: 9). The heart of Paul's concern was that the Colossians would grow ever more toward Christ. He was concerned for their minds, and that is why the bulk of the first chapter presents such a heady picture of Christ. But he was also concerned for their hearts, because the journey involved a heart's love for Christ and fellow-believers.¹

C. The Motivation behind Paul's Concern

(Verse 4) Paul was motivated to say all of the above because he was concerned that the Colossians were being led astray. In this verse, we read, "I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments." The Gnostics' clever arguments could easily lead astray those who were not knit together in brotherly love and thus fully enjoying the treasures of Christ's wisdom and knowledge. It was an important warning in Paul's day, and it is equally *apropos* today when the means of persuasion are so highly developed. We are subject to space-age subtleties which the apostle could never have imagined. For our souls' sake, there must be a deep, growing knowledge of Christ and a love among us! False teaching promotes itself through "smooth talk," but it's still just "high sounding nonsense." We need to be careful of lies that come all dressed up in persuasive speech when all they do is hide naked error. That is exactly what heretics always do. They argue from probabilities and build a system of teaching on deductions. On the other hand, if a man is preaching the truth of God, then he does not need to depend on such things as eloquence or clever arguments. The truth is its own best argument and, like a lion, will defend itself.²



Lesson IV
Date: October 23, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 2: 1 - 5

Questions:

1. How often do you ask Jesus for wisdom that is hidden in His Word? Do you think you need to seek him more? If so, how will you commit to doing it?

2. How has your knowledge of scripture helped you to turn away from deceptive teaching?

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Colossians 2:5 (KJV)

⁵ For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

Colossians 2:5 (NIV)

⁵ For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

Paul's Concern

C. The Motivation behind Paul's Concern

(Verse 5) This verse shows how intimately aware the Apostle Paul was of the problems and perils facing the Colossians. He pictures himself as a military officer looking over the assembled troops as they stand ready for inspection. The two words order and steadfastness are military terms. The first describes the orderly array of a company of soldiers, whereas the second pictures the solid flank which is presented by them. Paul rejoices as he sees (in spirit though not in body) how the Colossians were standing true to the word of God (Heb. 6:9).¹

Summary: In order to grow in Christ, we need to read and study the Word of God daily. We must immerse ourselves in it and live by it. It is easy to gravitate toward falsehood when we do not know the truth. It is said that those who are trained to identify counterfeit money are first trained to become familiar with the genuine money. Then they are able to recognize what is false. Therefore, it is with God's truth and with falsehood. Christ is all one needs in life. Nothing should be added to Him. Christ is the truth.²



Lesson V

Date: October 30, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2:6-9

Lesson Outline

A. The Precept for Their Walk (vs.6)

B. The Power for Their Walk (vs.7)

C. The Peril for Their Walk (vs.8-9)

Great Commission Baptist Church
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Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

The Walk of the Believers

Lord's exhortation to us in Matthew 5:38-48 is to be generous in our behavior toward everyone. Beware of living according to your natural affections in your spiritual life. Everyone has natural affections— some people we like and others we don't like. Yet we must never let those likes and dislikes rule our Christian life. "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another" (1 John 1:7), even those toward whom we have no affection.

The true expression of Christian character is not in good-doing, but in God-likeness. If the Spirit of God has transformed you within, you will exhibit divine characteristics in your life, not just good human characteristics. God's life in us expresses itself as God's life, not as human life trying to be godly. The secret of a Christian's life is that the supernatural becomes natural in him as a result of the grace of God, and the experience of this becomes evident in the practical, everyday details of life, not in times of intimate fellowship with God. And when we come in contact with things that create confusion and a flurry of activity, we find to our own amazement that we have the power to stay wonderfully poised even in the center of it all.

The example our Lord gave us here is not that of a good person, or even of a good Christian, but of God Himself. "...be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." In other words, simply show to the other person what God has shown to you. And God will give you plenty of real life opportunities to prove whether or not you are "perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." Being a disciple means deliberately identifying yourself with God's interests in other people. Jesus says, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35).¹

¹<http://www.thoughts-about-god.com/reflecting/#more>



Lesson V

Date: October 30, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2: 6-9

Lesson Aim: To affirm that Christians need to be rooted and grounded in Christ and to grow in Him .To understand that when we are not rooted in God’s Word and in Jesus our Lord, we can easily be fooled by false teaching.³

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Colossians 2:6 (KJV)

⁶ As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him:

Colossians 2:6 (NIV)

⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him,

The Walk of the Believers

A. The Precept for Their Walk

(Verse 6)

This section of the letter resumes the theme of Col. 1:15, which was interrupted to allow Paul to justify his intervention by explaining the nature and scope of his ministry. He now begins to show his readers the consequences, which follow from their participation in the cosmic work of reconciliation accomplished by Christ. Verse 6 is connected in thought with the affirmation and the warning of Col 1: 21-23: "You, who once were estranged... he has now reconciled... in order to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him, provided that you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast." Now he urges them to this very stability and steadfastness, reinforcing his plea with a fresh statement of the pre-eminence of Christ and the vital relation with him into which they have entered. Once they have received him as Lord, Christ becomes the foundation and vital center of all existence for them.¹

This verse says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord" This word "received" is used elsewhere in the N.T. in the sense of "receive as transmitted," "receive from teachers" (Gal. 1:9;Phil. 4:9), or more generally, "receive by revelation" (1Cor. 11:23). This is part of the meaning here—the words are an appeal to the Colossians to hold fast to the teaching about Christ as they have received it from Epaphras, and to found their whole life upon it; this thought is reinforced by the phrase "just as you were taught" in the next verse. But with the personal object here, the verb must include the further thought of "receive into the heart," so that the words become an appeal to the *experience* of the presence of Christ, which was the beginning of a new spiritual life for the Colossians. They have received, not a system of ideas that might become a subject of debate, but a person to whom they must now be loyal. Live or walk. This word "walk", mean the whole tenor of the moral life. The maintenance of this personal fellowship with the Christ whom they have received in the gospel is the sure protection against the allurements of a false doctrine that would bring them into subjection to other spiritual powers.²



Lesson V

Date: October 30, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2: 6-9

Thanksgiving: A duty of which gratitude is the grace. This obligation of godliness is acknowledged by the universal sentiment of mankind; but as a Christian grace it has some blessed peculiarities. It is gratitude for all the benefits of divine Providence, especially for the general and personal gifts of redemption.⁴

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⁴ New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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Colossians 2:7 (KJV)

⁷ Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Colossians 2:7 (NIV)

⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

The Walk of the Believers

B. The Power for Their Walk

(Verse 7) Paul first uses an expression from agriculture, then one from architecture. The expression rooted refers to what took place at the time of our conversion. It is as if the Lord Jesus Christ is the soil and we find our roots in Him, drawing all our nourishment from Him. This emphasizes, too, the importance of having our roots deep, so that when opposing winds blow, we will not be moved (Matt. 13:5,20,21). Then Paul switches to the figure of a building. Built up in Him. Here the Lord Jesus is suggested as the foundation, and we are being built on Him, the Rock of Ages (Luke 6:47-49). We were rooted once for all, but we are being built up.¹

This passage then says, "And established in the faith". The word established might also be translated "confirmed," and the thought is that this is a process that goes on continuously through the Christian life. The Colossians had been taught the fundamentals of Christianity by Epaphras. As they continued on in the Christian pathway, these precious truths would be continually confirmed in their hearts and lives. Conversely, 2 Peter 1:9 indicates that failure to progress in spiritual life results in doubt and loss of the joy and blessing of the gospel. Paul concludes this description with the words abounding in it with thanksgiving. He does not want Christians to be coldly doctrinal, but he wants their hearts to be captivated by the marvelous truths of the gospel so that they in turn will overflow in praise and thankfulness to the Lord.²

The passage then says, "and overflowing with thankfulness." A healthy Christian walk spills over with gratitude and praise. We are not talking about the mindless mouthing of cliches. Paul is not talking about mindless piety, but praise deep in the soul. Thankfulness is a good test of our spiritual state. A thankless spirit betrays a life which is no longer focusing on the greatness of Christ. It is looking down, not up. Thankful hearts herald spiritual health. The life which is all influenced by thanksgiving will be pure, strong, happy, in its continual counting of its gifts, and in its (nxt pg)³



Lesson V
Date: October 30, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 2: 6-9

Philosophy: This term is used in Gk. writings of either zeal for, or skill in, any art or science or other branch of knowledge. It occurs only once in the NT to describe the theology of certain Jewish Christian ascetics who busied themselves with refined and speculative inquiries into the nature and classes of angels and to the ritualism of the Mosaic legislature and the traditional Jewish regulations respecting practical living.³

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³ New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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Adult Sunday School Lesson

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

Colossians 2:7-8 (KJV)

⁷ Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. ⁸ Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Colossians 2:7-8 (NIV)

⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.
⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

The Walk of the Believers

B. The Power for Their Walk

(*Verse 7*) gifts, and in its thought of the Giver, and not least happy and beautiful in its glad surrender of itself to Him who has given Himself for and to it. The noblest offering that we can bring, the only recompense which Christ asks, is that our hearts and our lives should say, We thank thee, O Lord.¹

C. The Peril for Their Walk

(*Verse 8*) We must first understand that Paul was not putting down philosophy. Philosophy simply means "love of wisdom." Everything that had to do with theories about God, the world, and the meaning of human life was called philosophy, both in the pagan and Jewish schools of the day. Both Judaism and Christianity are philosophical because they make holistic claims about the nature of reality and set values to guide life. What Paul was warning against was a dangerous philosophy made up of both elements of Judaism and Greek Gnosticism. Greek Gnosticism taught that a person must work his or her way up a long series of lesser gods, called emanations, before reaching the ultimate god. Here, false Jewish teachers combined Hebrew rites and ascetic regulations with their philosophy, as a better way to move up the spiritual ladder. Paul warned, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy." The phrase, "take you captive" means to carry off, as prisoners were led away by victorious armies. Cultic teaching asserts a death-like grip on its followers, and few come out of it. Paul is saying, stay away from false teaching if you value your life.²



Lesson V

Date: October 30, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2: 6-9

Questions:

1. How does our completeness in Christ refute false teaching?

2. Why is it important to encourage and equip people with the truth of God's Word. How are you doing this?

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²Earline Franklin

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Colossians 2:9 (KJV)

⁹ For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Colossians 2:9 (NIV)

⁹ For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,

The Walk of the Believers

C. The Peril for Their Walk

(Verse 9) He is more than merely God-like. He is more than simply overflowing with the character of God. Rather: The essence of God, undivided and in its whole fullness, dwells in Christ in His exalted state, so that He is the essential and adequate image of God. This statement that "in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form" forever blasts the Gnostics' idea that the fullness came through the emanations and angelic mediators. We can see the fullness of God in his work in the heavens and creation around us. But in Christ we see the face of God. Christ is the sole Temple of Deity in whom the divine glories are stored. How can we go anywhere else but to him? This truth is great in itself. It ought to steel us against being taken captive by deceitful, empty philosophies.¹

Summary: In today's lesson Paul voices a caution, warning his readers to be aware of those who were slick talkers who could be persuasive even with falsehood, making it look like the truth. It is a lesson for us today. Whenever we hear new and persuasive teachings, we should test them against scripture. Nevertheless, in order to withstand the false teachings around us, we need to be rooted and built up in Jesus. This takes deliberate action on our part to be established in the truth of the Word.²



Lesson VI

Date: November 6, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2:10-15

Lesson Outline

A. The Fullness in Christ
(vs.10)

B. The Figures of Christ
(vs.11-12)

C. The Forgiveness in Christ
(vs.13-14)

D. The Freedom in Christ
(vs.15)

Great Commission Baptist Church
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The Work Saving Believers

The natural life itself is not sinful. But we must abandon sin, having nothing to do with it in any way whatsoever. Sin belongs to hell and to the devil. I, as a child of God, belong to heaven and to God. It is not a question of giving up sin, but of giving up my right to myself, my natural independence, and my self-will. This is where the battle has to be fought. The things that are right, noble, and good from the natural standpoint are the very things that keep us from being God's best. Once we come to understand that natural moral excellence opposes or counteracts surrender to God, we bring our soul into the center of its greatest battle. Very few of us would debate over what is filthy, evil, and wrong, but we do debate over what is good. It is the good that opposes the best. The higher up the scale of moral excellence a person goes, the more intense the opposition to Jesus Christ. "Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh...." The cost to your natural life is not just one or two things, but

everything. Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself..." (Matthew 16:24). That is, he must deny his right to himself, and he must realize who Jesus Christ is before he will bring himself to do it. Beware of refusing to go to the funeral of your own independence.

The natural life is not spiritual, and it can be made spiritual only through sacrifice. If we do not purposely sacrifice the natural, the supernatural can never become natural to us. There is no high or easy road. Each of us has the means to accomplish it entirely in his own hands. It is not a question of praying, but of sacrificing, and thereby performing His will.¹

¹<http://www.thoughts-about-god.com/reflecting/#more>



Lesson VI
Date: November 6, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 2: 10 - 15

Lesson Aim: Students will stand firm on their faith, realizing there is no need to argue against the false/dangerous philosophies and heresies, if you just present the truth of Jesus Christ.³

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³ Emma Stevens

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Colossians 2:10-11 (KJV)

¹⁰ And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

¹¹ In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

Colossians 2:10-11 (NIV)

¹⁰ and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. ¹¹ In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ,

The Work Saving Believers

A. The Fullness in Christ

(Verse 10) The apostle is still trying to impress on his readers the all-sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the perfect standing which they have in Him. It is a marvelous expression of the grace of God that the truth of this verse should follow that of verse 9. In Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and the believer is complete in Him. This does not mean, of course, that the believer is indwelt by all the fullness of the Godhead. The only One of whom that was ever true, or ever shall be true, is the Lord Jesus Christ. But what this verse teaches is that the believer has in Christ all that is needed for life and godliness. Spurgeon gives a good definition of our completeness. He says we are (1) Complete without the aid of Jewish ceremony. (2) Complete without the help of philosophy. (3) Complete without the inventions of superstition. (4) Complete without human merit. This One in whom we are complete is the head of all principality and power. The Gnostics were greatly taken up with the subject of angels. Mention of this is made later on in this chapter. But Christ is head over all the angelic beings, and it would be ridiculous to be occupied with angels when we can have the Creator of angels as the object of our affections and enjoy communion with Him.¹

B. The Figures of Christ

(Verse 11) Circumcision was the typical rite of Judaism. It is a minor surgical operation in which the knife was applied to the flesh of the male child. Spiritually it signified death to the flesh, or a putting aside of the evil, corrupt, unregenerate nature of man. Unfortunately, the Jewish people became occupied with the literal ceremony but neglected its spiritual meaning.²



Lesson VI

Date: November 6, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2: 10 - 15

Circumcision: The ceremony of circumcision consisted in cutting away the foreskin, i.e., the hood or fold of skin covering the head of the male organ. This is generally done by means of a sharp knife, but in more primitive times sharp stones were used (Ex. 4:25; Joshua 5:2, "flint knives"). As a rule this act was performed by the father (Gen. 17:23), although it might be done by any Israelite, and, if necessary, women as well (Ex. 4:25), but never by a Gentile. In later times the operation was, in the case of adults, performed by a doctor.³

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Colossians 2:11-12 (KJV)

¹¹ In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: ¹² Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Colossians 2:11-12 (NIV)

¹¹ In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

The Work Saving Believers

B. The Figures of Christ

(Verse 11) In trying to achieve favor with God through ceremonies and good works, they were saying in effect that there was something in human flesh which could please God. Nothing could be further from the truth. In the verse before us physical circumcision is not in view, but rather that spiritual circumcision which is true of everyone who has put his faith and trust in the Lord Jesus. This is clear from the expression the circumcision made without hands. What the verse is teaching is this: Every believer is circumcised by the circumcision of Christ. The circumcision of Christ refers to His death on the cross of Calvary. The thought is that when the Lord Jesus died, the believer died also. He died to sin (Rom. 6:11), to the law, to self (Gal. 2:20), and to the world (Gal. 6:14). (This circumcision was "made without hands" in the sense that human hands can have no part in it by way of merit. Man cannot deserve or earn it. It is God's work).¹

(Verse 12) Paul now turns from the subject of circumcision to that of baptism. Just as circumcision speaks of death to the flesh, even so baptism speaks of the burial of the old man. Thus we read: Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. The teaching here is that we have not only died with Christ, but we have been buried with Him. This was typified at our baptism. It took place at the time of our conversion, but we expressed it in public confession when we went into the waters of baptism. Not only have we been crucified with Christ and buried with Him, but we have also risen with Him to walk in newness of life. All of this takes place at the time of conversion. It is through faith in the working of God.²



Lesson VI

Date: November 6, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2: 10 - 15

Blot: This word is used in the sense of to obliterate; therefore *to blot out* is to destroy or abolish. To blot out sin is to forgive it fully and finally (Isaiah 44:22). To blot men out of God's book is to withdraw His providential favors and to cut them off (Ex. 32:32; Deut. 29:20; Ps. 69:28).³

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Colossians 2:13-14 (KJV)

¹³ And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; ¹⁴ Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Colossians 2:13-14 (NIV)

¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.

The Work Saving Believers

C. The Forgiveness in Christ

(Verse 13) The Apostle Paul now makes the application of all this to the Colossians. Before their conversion, they had been dead in their trespasses. This means that because of their sins, they were spiritually dead toward God. It does not mean that their spirits were dead, but simply that there was no motion in their spirits toward God and there was nothing they could do to win God's favor. Not only were they dead in sins, but also Paul speaks of the uncircumcision of their flesh. Uncircumcision is often used in the NT to describe the Gentile peoples. The Colossians had been Gentiles. They had not been members of God's earthly people, the Jews. Therefore, they had been in a position of distance from God, and had given full rein to the flesh with its lusts. But when they heard the gospel and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, they had been made alive together with Christ, and all their trespasses had been forgiven.¹

(Verse 14) Jesus not only took our sins to the cross (1 Peter 2:24), but He also took the Law to the cross and nailed it there, forever out of the way. The Law was certainly against us, because it was impossible for us to meet its holy demands. In forgiving all our sins, Christ canceled the record that contained the charges against us. This record was like a handwritten ledger of our trespasses against the law. Humanity could not pay the debt for these offenses, so God wiped out the record of our sin for us by nailing it to Christ's cross. In so doing, our debts were canceled; what stood against us can no longer hinder us. Christ set us free by his sacrificial death on the cross.²



Lesson VI

Date: November 6, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2: 10 - 15

Questions:

1. What should you do when you find yourself wandering away by enticing words?

2. Who do you turn to in all the emergencies of this life?

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²Emma Stevens.

All questions by Emma Stevens

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Colossians 2:15 (KJV)

¹⁵ *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Colossians 2:15 (NIV)

¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

The Work Saving Believers

D. The Freedom in Christ

(Verse 15) Spiritual fullness means complete salvation, full forgiveness, and absolute victory. We have spiritual fullness because of our participation in the conquest of the cross. On the cross a cosmic drama was played out as God, in Christ, battled and gained victory over the powers of evil. Jesus Christ not only paid the penalty to atone for sin, but he also won a decisive victory over Satan and all the host of supernatural beings who were in league with him. The cross was the consummation of a life of conquest of Christ over Satan. As early as (Gen. 3:15), God promised that a conqueror would come to crush the head of the serpent. Satan attempted to destroy Jesus through the efforts of Herod, but he was unsuccessful. Satan attempted to destroy Jesus with his own temptation in the wilderness. Again, unsuccessful. On the cross Jesus consummated his victory to give us the freedom we need.¹

Summary: There are all kinds of gimmicks and systems that are set before us today to enable us to live the Christian life. As Paul delivered a series of warnings against false teachings to the Colossians church to remind them of the Christians' new identity in Christ, he is still reminding us in 2016. These reminders would help resist the arguments of the false teachers and help the church live lives worthy of Christ. Even though the Colossians were doing well spiritually, they had to be on guard against false teaching and remember who they are and what Christ had done for them. The answer to any false and dangerous teaching is to focus on the person and the complete work of Jesus Christ. The church has everything it needs in Him. We must continue to trust Him and trust His Word as we work and fulfill the mission and purpose – to make more followers of Christ. We must be alive in Christ as we keep laboring for the gospel until He calls us home.²



Lesson VII

Date: November 13, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2:16-23

Lesson Outline

A. The Shadows in Worship
(vs.16-17)

B. The Savior in Worship
(vs.18-19)

C. The Subjection in
Worship (vs.20-23)

Great Commission Baptist Church
Adult Sunday School Lesson
Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

The Worship of Believers

Beware of any work for God that causes or allows you to avoid concentrating on Him. A great number of Christian workers worship their work. The only concern of Christian workers should be their concentration on God. This will mean that all the other boundaries of life, whether they are mental, moral, or spiritual limits, are completely free with the freedom God gives His child; that is, a worshiping child, not a wayward one. A worker who lacks this serious controlling emphasis of concentration on God is apt to become overly burdened by his work. He is a slave to his own limits, having no freedom of his body, mind, or spirit. Consequently, he becomes burned out and defeated. There is no freedom and no delight in life at all. His nerves, mind, and heart are so overwhelmed that God's blessing cannot rest on him.

But the opposite case is equally true— once our concentration is on God, all the limits of our life are free and under the control and mastery of God alone. There is no longer any responsibility on you for the work. The only responsibility you have is to stay in living constant touch with God, and to see that you allow nothing to hinder your cooperation with Him. The freedom that comes after sanctification is the freedom of a child, and the things that used to hold your life down are gone. But be careful to remember that you have been freed for only one thing— to be absolutely devoted to your God.

We have no right to decide where we should be placed, or to have preconceived ideas as to what God is preparing us to do. God engineers everything; and wherever He places us, our one supreme goal should be to pour out our lives in wholehearted devotion to Him in that particular work. “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might...” (Ecclesiastes 9:10).¹

¹<http://www.thoughts-about-god.com/reflecting/#more>



Lesson VII
Date: November 13, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 2:16-23

Lesson Aim: Students will understand that Christ is the answer to rituals; more important than how we worship, is that we worship Christ because we are responsible to Christ, not man.³

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Colossian 2:16-17 (KJV)

¹⁶ Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: ¹⁷ Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

Colossian 2:16-17 (NIV)

¹⁶ Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.
¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

The Worship of Believers

A. The Shadows in Worship

(Verse 16) Because Christ had canceled the written code in verse 14 and had disarmed evil powers in verse 15, believers have been set free from legalistic rules about what they eat or drink or what festivals they observe. Although it is most likely that Paul was referring to Jewish laws about diet and festival observances, pagan food laws and celebrations, or a combination of the two, cannot be excluded as a possibility. Paul's point was that the believers should not give up their freedom for legalism. They must not let anyone condemn them by saying that certain actions would exclude them from God's people. If the Colossians submitted to any of the regulations imposed by the false teachers, they would be saying that evil powers still held authority over them. They needed to remember that Christ had set them free.¹

(Verse 17) Paul did not condemn the keeping of some Old Testament dietary laws or observing some of the celebrations. Instead, he condemned doing so in order to somehow earn credit with God. The Old Testament laws, holidays, and feasts were shadows of the real thing. The law pointed to the future—to Christ himself. Anything that is not Christ or found in Christ is, by contrast, a shadow or unreal. At one time these laws were needed as God prepared a nation for himself. These people would be keepers of his laws and ancestors of his Son. The ceremonial and civil regulations of Judaism set God's people apart from the world. Through Christ, however, God was preparing a new people for himself—a worldwide family. What the Old Testament promised, Christ fulfilled. If we have Christ, we have what we need in order to know and please God.²



Lesson VII

Date: November 13, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2:16-23

Angels: By the word "angels" (i.e. "messengers" of God) we ordinarily understand a race of spiritual beings of a nature exalted far above that of man, although infinitely removed from that of God—whose office is "to do him service in heaven, and by his appointment to succor and defend men on earth."³

¹⁻²Commentary originated by Bobby J. Williams Sr., Diploma(SBI) All editing and copying by permission only.

³ Smith's Bible Dictionary: Comprising Antiquities, Biography, Geography, Natural History, Archaeology and Literature.

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Colossians 2:18-19 (KJV)

¹⁸ Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, ¹⁹ And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

Colossians 2:18-19 (NIV)

¹⁸ Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. ¹⁹ They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

The Worship of Believers

B. The Savior in Worship

(Verse 18) Paul draws three conclusions from his declaration of freedom. **THE POWER OF ERROR:** ‘Let no one cheat you of your reward’ (v. 18; NIV: ‘disqualify you for the prize’). To follow error is to be in danger of losing the reward that awaits the faithful in Christ (Matt. 25:21; 2 Tim. 4:7–8;). **THE POSSIBILITY OF PRIDE:** ‘Taking delight in false humility and worship of angels ... vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind’ (v. 18). The ‘spoilers’ made the Colossian believers feel inferior. But in reality they were complete in Christ and lacked nothing for salvation. ‘The worship of angels’ implies that they were being taught that the mediation of angels was a valid and necessary way to approach the Father. ‘The doctrine of angels or of a spirit world was opposed to the sole mediation of Christ, and introduced an intermediate order of beings between God and man’.

(Verse 19). The fundamental problem with the false teachers was that they were not connected to Christ, the head of the body of believers. If they had been joined to him, they would not have taught false doctrine or lived immorally. Just as a limb that is detached from the body loses life, so these false teachers, detached from the body of Christ and no longer under his headship, had lost the most vital connection. The body of Christ can only grow when the believers are connected to one another under Christ.²



Lesson VII
Date: November 13, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 2:16-23

Rudiments: (Gk. *stoicheion*, “any first thing”). Letters of the alphabet, the “elements” (2 Peter 3:10), from which all things have come; “primary principles”; *see* Col 2:8, 20, where reference is made to “the elementary principles of the world” (NASB; “rudiments,” KJV; “basic principles,” NIV).³

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Colossians 2: 20-21 (KJV)

²⁰ Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, ²¹ (Touch not; taste not; handle not;

Colossians 2: 20-21 (NIV)

²⁰ Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you still submit to its rules: ²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"?

The Worship of Believers

C. The Subjection in Worship

(*Verse 20*) Asceticism has to do with the rudiments of the world and not the riches of the kingdom. Earlier we saw the word *rudiments* and learned that it meant "the fundamentals or ABCs of something" (Col. 2:8). In this case, "the rudiments of the world" refers to rules and regulations about foods. As Christians, we are dead to all of this because of our union with Jesus Christ in death, burial, and resurrection (see Rom. 6; Col 2: 12-15)). Though we are *in* the world physically, we are not *of* the world spiritually (John 17: 15-16). We have been transferred into God's kingdom (Col. 1:13), and therefore we govern our lives by His laws and not the rules of men. This is not to suggest that Christians are lawless. A student in a Christian school once told me it was "unspiritual" for him to obey the rules! I reminded him that Christians always respect the authority of those over them (1 Peter 2:11), and that he knew the rules before he arrived on campus.¹

(*Verse 21*) What sort of regulations are these which the elemental forces impose? Completely negative ones: "Don't, don't, don't." There may be a stage in children's development when they must be told not to do this and not to touch that, before they can understand the reasons for such prohibitions. But when they come to years of discretion and can appreciate their parents' point of view, they are able to look at life from a responsible angle and do what is proper without having to conform to a list of prohibitions such as are suitable and necessary for the years of infancy. These would-be guides were trying to keep the Colossian Christians in leading strings; Paul encourages them to enjoy the liberty with which Christ has set them free. the Ephesians. (Rev. 3:1). "Merely negative rules do not avail for the maintenance and growth of Christian life, for life is not offered merely to our acceptance, it is offered to our acquisition. Not abstinence, not indulgence, not mystic immersion into an external symbolism."²



Lesson VII

Date: November 13, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 2:16-23

Summary: today. Following a long list of religious rules requires strong self-discipline and can make a person appear moral, but religious rules cannot change a person's heart. Only the Holy Spirit can do that.³

Questions:

1. What are some rituals you have observed that are still being practiced in 2016?

2. How do these rituals connect and individual to Christ?

¹⁻²Commentary originated by Bobby J. Williams Sr., Diploma(SBI) All editing and copying by permission only.

³Emma Stevens

Questions by Emma Stevens

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Adult Sunday School Lesson

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

Colossians 2:22-23 (KJV)

²² Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? ²³ Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

Colossians 2: 22-23 (NIV)

22. These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings.
 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

The Worship of Believers

C. The Subjection in Worship

(*Verse 22*) The persistent example of legalism in the New Testament was the Old Testament command of circumcision which God intended for the Jews as a sign of faith (Rom. 4:11) but which the legalists wanted to make a condition of grace (Gal.2:21).¹

(*Verse 23*) Paul condemned legalism and mysticism; next he attacked and condemned asceticism. An ascetic practices rigorous self-denial and even self-mortification in order to become more spiritual. Ascetic practices were popular during the Middle Ages: wearing hair shirts next to the skin, sleeping on hard beds, whipping oneself, not speaking for days (maybe years), going without food or sleep, etc. There is a definite relationship between legalism and asceticism, for the ascetic often subjects himself to rules and regulations: "Touch not, taste not, handle not" (Col. 2:21). Certain foods or practices are unholy and must be avoided. Other practices are holy and must never be neglected.²

Summary: Paul's message to the Colossians (and to us today) was not to get caught up in rituals, false teachings, nor worship and praise to themselves, but to focus on faith in Christ alone. Our salvation does not depend on our own discipline and rule keeping, but on the power of Christ's death and resurrection. As we continue to grow in our Christian faith, we must let God's Word be our guide and not the opinions of other people. We must remain connected to Christ, the head of the body of believers. People should be able to see a difference between the way Christians (*that's you and me*) and non-Christians live. To the Colossians, the discipline demanded by the false teachers seemed good, and unfortunately legalism still attracts many people



Lesson VIII

Date: November 20, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 3:1-4

Lesson Outline

- A. Seeking Above (vs.1)
- B. Setting Affection (vs.2)
- C. Waiting His Arrival (vs.3-4)

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Christian Conduct

Jesus did not say to make converts to your way of thinking, but He said to look after His sheep, to see that they get nourished in the knowledge of Him. We consider what we do in the way of Christian work as service, yet Jesus Christ calls service to be what we are to Him, not what we do for Him. Discipleship is based solely on devotion to Jesus Christ, not on following after a particular belief or doctrine. “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate..., he cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:26). In this verse, there is no argument and no pressure from Jesus to follow Him; He is simply saying, in effect, “If you want to be My disciple, you must be devoted solely to Me.” A person touched by the Spirit of God suddenly says, “Now I see who Jesus is!”— that is the source of devotion.

Today we have substituted doctrinal belief for personal belief, and that is why so many people are devoted to causes and so few are devoted to Jesus Christ. People do not really want to be devoted to Jesus, but only to the cause He started. Jesus Christ is deeply offensive to the educated minds of today, to those who only want Him to be their Friend, and who are unwilling to accept Him in any other way. Our Lord’s primary obedience was to the will of His Father, not to the needs of people— the saving of people was the natural outcome of His obedience to the Father. If I am devoted solely to the cause of humanity, I will soon be exhausted and come to the point where my love will waver and stumble. But if I love Jesus Christ personally and passionately, I can serve humanity, even though people may treat me like a “doormat.” The secret of a disciple’s life is devotion to Jesus Christ, and the characteristic of that life is its seeming insignificance and its meekness. Yet it is like a grain of wheat that “falls into the ground and dies”— it will spring up and change the entire landscape (John 12:24).¹

¹<http://www.thoughts-about-god.com/reflecting/#more>



Lesson VIII

Date: November 20, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 3:1- 4

Lesson Aim: Students will see what happens when we choose to let Christ be Lord of our life.³

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³Emma Stevens

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Colossians 3:1 (KJV)

¹ If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:1 (NIV)

¹ Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Christian Conduct

A. The Perplexity of the Trials

(Verse 1) This verse says, “If ye then be risen with Christ”. The apostle having observed in the former chapter, that the believing Colossians were dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, were buried with him in baptism, and were risen with him through the faith of the operation of God. He argues from hence how much it became them to regard a new and spiritual life, and to seek after superior and heavenly things, and treat with neglect and contempt carnal and earthly ones. For he does not here call in question their being risen with Christ, but takes it for granted that they were, and makes use of it as an argument for his present purpose. They were risen with Christ as their head, and as members in union with him representatively, when he rose from the dead; and emblematically in their baptism, when having gone down into the water, and being baptized, they emerged from it; and spiritually in conversion, when they were raised from a death of sin, to a life of grace, by Christ, as the resurrection and the life, the efficient cause of it, and in virtue of his resurrection from the dead: wherefore being thus raised again in every sense, it highly became them to “seek those things which are above.”¹

The better and heavenly country, the continuing city, which is above the heavens, whose builder and maker is God. Christ, who is in heaven, and salvation alone by him without the works of the law; all spiritual blessings, such as pardon, peace, righteousness, life, and glory, which are in heavenly places in him. The doctrines and ordinances, which come from heaven, and are the means of supporting a spiritual and heavenly life; especially that bread of life which came down from heaven, and gives life unto the world, and of which if a man eats, he shall never die, but live forever. The particularly glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life, the crown of righteousness laid up above, the kingdom of God, and the righteousness of it, which are to be sought for in the first place with all affection, earnest desire, care, and diligence, not by or for works of righteousness, but in Christ, and as the gifts of God's grace through him.²



Lesson VIII

Date: November 20, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 3:1- 4

Affection: Affection" occurs in the following senses: (1) In the literal sense: the state of having one's feelings acted upon or affected in some way; bent or disposition of mind, in a neutral sense (the nature of the affection, whether good or bad, needing further description in the context).⁴

¹⁻³Commentary compiled by Rev. Terrence Howard, TH.M. All editing and copying by permission only.

⁴ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

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Colossians 3:1-2 (KJV)

¹ If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. ² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Colossians 3:1-2 (NIV)

¹ Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Christian Conduct

A. Seeking Above

(Verse 1) This verse then says, “Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: which contains other reasons and arguments to engage believers to look upwards, and seek after heavenly things. That as Christ, when he died and rose again from the dead, did not stay long on earth, nor minded the things of the world, but ascended up to heaven, where he now is, and will remain until his second coming. So they, being dead and risen with him, should, in their thoughts, desires, and affections, in the exercise of the graces of faith, hope, and love, ascend heavenwards, like pillars of smoke perfumed with frankincense; and the more should their hearts be where he is, and intent on things above there (Heb. 12:2).¹

B. Setting Affection

(Verse 2) This verse says, “Set your affection on things above”. This word “affection” in the Greek means to exercise the mind. Unless the affections are set on them, they will never be sought after in a proper manner. The word signifies to mind them, and think on them, to favour and approve of them, to be affectionately desirous of them, and concerned for them. For where the treasure is, the heart should be; and as the saints' best things are above, their minds and affections should be there likewise. Their contemplation should be on those things, and their conversation should be in heaven. Nor should they regard anything but what is there, or comes from thence, for they belong not to this world, but to another and better country. Their citizenship is in heaven, and there, in a short time, they must have their everlasting residence; and therefore should seek after, and highly prize and value heavenly things, and set their affections on them.²

Then the verse says, “and not on things on the earth”. not mind earth and earthly things, temporal enjoyments, riches, and honours. Food and raiment, and the necessaries of life, are to be sought after, and cared and provided for, yet not with anxiety and perplexity of mind, in an over thoughtful and distressing manner.³



Lesson VIII

Date: November 20, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 3:1- 4

Tradition: The word is used by Paul in Col.2:8 in a sense apparently different from the two senses above. He warns his readers against the teachings of the false teachers in Colosse, which are "after the tradition of men." it is not certain that the false teachings at Colosse are essentially Jewish in character. The phrase "tradition of men" seems to emphasize merely the human, not necessarily Jewish, origin of these false teachings.⁴

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⁴ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

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Colossians 3:2-3 (KJV)

² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

³ For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:2-3 (NIV)

² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Christian Conduct

B. Setting Affection

(*Verse 2*) nor should the heart be set on those outward things, or happiness placed in the possession of them. Worldly lusts are to be denied, the deeds of the body are to be mortified. Carnal desires are not to be gratified and indulged, provision is not to be made for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts; and particularly the vain philosophy of Jews and Gentiles. The traditions of the elders, the ceremonies of the law, which lay in earthly things, in worldly observances, the difference of meats and drinks, keeping of days, months, and years, new moons, feasts, and Sabbath days. All of these earthly things will deteriorate and disappear, but those things that are heavenly, will be eternal.¹

C. Waiting His Arrival

(*Verse 3*) Paul now provides the basis for his preceding exhortations. The exhortations are based in a past reality, a present truth, and a future expectation. Paul begins with a glance back. He tells believers, you died. Believers have "died to sin" (Rom. 6:2), which means that the believer is no longer under the influence of sin's dominating power. Paul told the Colossians one chapter earlier that they had died with Christ to the basic principles of this world (Col. 2:20), which means that the believer is not subject to the cosmic powers of darkness. The old order of things (slavery to sin and evil forces) is gone. The glance back gives rise to the glimpse now. In the present our life is hidden with Christ in God. The reference to hidden can refer to "safety or secrecy." In fact, both are probably in view. Our life is doubly secure since it is with Christ in God.²

This is a comforting reminder of the truth found in John 10: 28-29: no one can snatch the believer out of Jesus' hand or the Father's hand. The believer is secure. The term hidden (*kekruptai*) can also mean "concealed, unseen." This means that the believer's life is unknown or not understood by the watching world (compare 1 John 3:1-2). The unseen realities will be revealed. Paul now turns his attention to that glorious truth.³



Lesson VIII

Date: November 20, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 3:1- 4

Questions:

1. Do you show excitement as you seek spiritual things?

2. Does your service and conduct earn your salvation?

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²Emma Stevens

Questions by Emma Stevens

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Colossians 3:4 (KJV)

⁴ When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3:4 (NIV)

⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Christian Conduct

C. Waiting His Arrival

(Verse 4) Paul has taken a glance back and a glimpse at the present; his focus now shifts to a gaze ahead. The believer's identification with Christ brings not only a past break with sin and a present security, it also means a glorious future. The believer awaits the time when Christ.. . appears. Appears refers to an open display. When Christ appears [we will] also appear with him in glory. What has been hidden will be revealed.¹

Summary: Paul explains true Christian behavior/conduct – putting on the new self by accepting Christ and regarding the earthly nature as dead. We change our moral and ethical behavior by letting Christ live within us, so that he can shape us into what we *should* be. Day-by-day we must strive to put heaven's priorities into daily practice. We cannot simply say, "*I am a dedicated Christian,*" and then live our life as we please as a great many people are trying to do today. Believing the words in verse 3 – "For ye are dead" means that we should have as little desire for this world as a dead person would have. The Christian's real home is where Christ lives (John 14:2-3). This truth gives us a different perspective on our life here on earth, looking at life from God's perspective and seeking what he desires. The more we regard the world around us as God does, the more we will live in harmony with him and conduct ourselves accordingly. We must not become too attached to what is only temporary. Christ give us power to live for him now, and he give us hope for the future when he will return.²



Lesson IX

Date: November 27, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 3:5-11

Lesson Outline

- A. The Slaying (vs.5-7)
- B. The Separation (vs.8-9)
- C. The Substitute (vs.10-11)

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Adult Sunday School Lesson
Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

The Putting Off, to Put On

Initially we trust in our ignorance, calling it innocence, and next we trust our innocence, calling it purity. Then when we hear these strong statements from our Lord, we shrink back, saying, “But I never felt any of those awful things in my heart.” We resent what He reveals. Either Jesus Christ is the supreme authority on the human heart, or He is not worth paying any attention to. Am I prepared to trust the penetration of His Word into my heart, or would I prefer to trust my own “innocent ignorance”? If I will take an honest look at myself, becoming fully aware of my so-called innocence and putting it to the test, I am very likely to have a rude awakening that what Jesus Christ said is true, and I will be appalled at the possibilities of the evil and the wrong within me. But as long as I remain under the false security of my own “innocence,” I am living in a fool’s paradise. If I have never been an openly rude and abusive person, the only reason is my own cowardice coupled with the sense of protection I receive from living a civilized life. But when I am open and completely exposed before God, I find that Jesus Christ is right in His diagnosis of me.

The only thing that truly provides protection is the redemption of Jesus Christ. If I will simply hand myself over to Him, I will never have to experience the terrible possibilities that lie within my heart. Purity is something far too deep for me to arrive at naturally. But when the Holy Spirit comes into me, He brings into the center of my personal life the very Spirit that was exhibited in the life of Jesus Christ, namely, the Holy Spirit, which is absolute unblemished purity.¹

¹<http://www.thoughts-about-god.com/reflecting/#more>



Lesson IX

Date: November 27, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 3: 5 - 11

Lesson Aim: Students will make a conscious, daily decision to remove anything that supports or feeds deadly desires/behavior, and to rely on the Holy Spirit’s power.³

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³ Rev. Terrence Howard TH.M.

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Colossians 3:5 (KJV)

⁵ Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Colossians 3:5 (NIV)

⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

The Putting Off, to Put On

A. The Slaying

(Verse 5) This word “slaying” means to kill. While Paul opposed the false teachers’ asceticism and regulations, he still forbade certain activities that had no part in believers’ lives. If the Colossian believers were to live as examples of Christ, they had to put to death certain aspects of the sinful earthly things lurking within them—the sinful nature, the old self. Again, Paul was describing the “already” and “not yet” of believers’ lives. Although they had died with Christ and had been raised with him, they were still susceptible to temptation and the evils of the sinful nature.¹

Two sets of sins are listed. The first five refer to sexual sin; the second five to sins of speech. These first five were related to the cultural background of the Colossians and were particularly deadly to the life of the church: Sexual sin- Any form of illicit sexual relationship. The term serves to spotlight forbidden sexual behavior between people or indirect participation as an audience. In contrast to the loose morals of the ancient Greek world, believers ought to show self-discipline and obedience to God in this area. Impurity- Moral uncleanness. Perhaps no sexual act has taken place, but the person exhibits a crudeness or insensitivity in sexual matters. Lust. Evil sexual passion that leads to excessive sexual immorality and perversion. (Rom. 1:26). Shameful desires. Wanting something that is sinister and vile in order to satisfy one’s desires (Gal. 5:16). Greed for the good things of this life, for that is idolatry. Relentless urge to get more for oneself. In this context, Paul may have been focusing on greed for satisfying evil desires and for sexual immorality. The greed is described as idolatry because its focus is on filling desires rather than on God.²



Lesson IX
Date: November 27, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 3: 5 - 11

Blasphemy: to “curse the name of the Lord,” Isaiah 52:5; Rom. 2:24). Sometimes, perhaps, “blasphemy” has been retained by translators when the general meaning “evil-speaking” or “slander” might have been better (Psalm 74:18).⁴

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⁴New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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Colossians 3:6-8 (KJV)

⁶ For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: ⁷ In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. ⁸ But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

Colossians 3:6-8 (NIV)

⁶ Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸ But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

The Putting Off, to Put On

A. The Slaying

(Verse 6) God’s terrible anger refers to God’s judgment on these kinds of behavior. God does not reveal his wrath arbitrarily; his perfect moral nature will not permit sin and wickedness to go unpunished. While wrath occurs at present in the natural consequences of sinful behavior, the final culmination of God’s will comes with future and final punishment of evil. People may try to get around it, but there is punishment for evil for those who have not believed in Christ as Savior.¹

(Verse 7) Paul reminds the Colossians that they once indulged in these sins before their conversion. But the grace of God had come in and delivered them from impurity. That was a chapter in their life which was now covered by the blood of Christ. They now had a new life which empowered them to live for God (Galatians 5:25).²

B. The Separation

(Verse 8) They had been dead in their sins in chapter 2:13, but that all changed when they came to know Christ. Because of their new life in Christ, the believers were to get rid of those things listed above and others listed below. “Get rid of” means to put off or disrobe. The old, filthy clothes must be taken off before the new clothes can be put on. The believer “removes” the old life of sin and “puts on” the new life of Christ. The Colossian believers had experienced this; Paul asked that they act it out in their lives. Not only did they need to deal with sexual immorality in all its variations, they also needed to deal with misused anger that often spilled (nxt pg)³



Lesson IX

Date: November 27, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 3: 5 - 11

Concupiscence: The Greek noun, like the verb from which it comes, meaning "to yearn," "to long," "to have the heart set upon a thing," is determined in its moral quality by the source whence it springs or the object toward which it is directed. Thus, our Lord uses it to express the intensest desire of His soul (Luke 22:15).³

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³ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

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Colossians 3:8-9 (KJV)

⁸ But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. ⁹ Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

Colossians 3:8-9 (NIV)

⁸ But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹ Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices

The Putting Off, to Put On

B. The Separation

(*Verse 8*) over into evil speech. **Anger.** A continuous attitude of hatred that remains bottled up within. This could refer to what is under the surface, while "rage" (below) refers to what bursts out. Anger would destroy the harmony and unity Paul called for among the believers. **Rage.** Outbursts of anger or quick temper for selfish reasons. This could mean continual and uncontrolled behavior. **Malicious behavior.** Doing evil despite the good that has been received. This word is a general term referring to an evil force that destroys relationships. It can mean anything from trouble to wickedness. It is a deliberate attempt to harm another person. **Slander.** Destroying another person's good reputation by lies, gossip, spreading rumors, etc. Malice often manifests itself through slander. **Dirty language.** Crude talk, abrasive language, expletives. Paul admonished the believers that such language must be caught and stopped before it escapes their mouths. These behaviors have no place in any Christian or in any church. Christians must resolutely "put off" these repulsive sins of anger and speech so that they can "put on" Christ's attitudes and actions.¹

(*Verse 9*) The apostle is saying in effect, "Let your state be consistent with your standing." You have put off the old man; now put him off practically by refraining from lies. Lying is one of the things that belongs to the old man, and it has no place in the life of the child of God. Every day in our lives we are tempted to distort the truth. It may be by withholding information on an income tax form, or by cheating on an examination, or even by exaggerating the details of a story. Lying becomes doubly serious when we injure another by a false statement, or by creating a false impression.²



Lesson IX

Date: November 27, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 3: 5 - 11

Summary: This is a straightforward step each day that is as simple as putting on your clothes.³

Questions:

1. If you have made a commitment to Christ, are you remaining true to it?

2. How do you determine what you will put on - your mind, body, and into your spirit each day?

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³ Emma Stevens

Questions by Emma Stevens

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Colossians 3:10-11 (KJV)

¹⁰ And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:
¹¹ Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.

Colossians 3:10-11 (NIV)

¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹ Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

The Putting Off, to Put On

C. The Substitute

(Verse 10) Believers have clothed themselves with a brand-new nature that is continually being renewed. The “new nature” from Christ frees us from sin, sets our hearts on “things above” (3:1), and gives us the hope of eternity. Paul was appealing to the commitment the believers had made, urging them to remain true to their confession of faith. Every Christian is in a continuing education program. Renewal is constantly needed in the believer’s battle against sin and the old nature.¹

(Verse 11) There should be no barriers of nationality, race, education level, social standing, wealth, gender, religion, or power (Gal. 3:26-28; 6:15).²

Summary: Paul dialogue with us today is on how Christians should act *now* in order to be prepared for Christ’s return. Christians should consider themselves dead and unresponsive to sexual immorality, impurity, lust, shameful desires, and greed. Just like diseased limbs of a tree, these practices must be cut off before they destroy us. We must rid ourselves (*the putting off*) of our former life and clothe ourselves (*to put on*) with the new nature given by Christ. Our conduct should match our faith. If you are a Christian, you should act like it. To be a Christian means more than just making good resolutions and having good intentions; it means taking the right actions – *the putting off, to put on*. It takes practice, on-going review, patience, and concentration to keep in line with God’s will. Nonetheless, it can be done.

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