

5/30/99

Colossians 2:1-10

Paul has declared his love and service to the Colossians and laid some foundational truths regarding their faith.

The person of Christ is the visible form of the invisible God and Creator is who has redeemed them and made them one with God, the mystery among the Gentiles, Christ in them, the hope of glory.

Paul now moves into chapter two and begins to deal with the Colossian heresy directly.

Remember the doctrinal section is covered from chapter one to three. Col. 1:15-3:4

And the heart of the heresy in chapter two. Col. 2:8-23

2:1-3 Paul's communication of his concern.

2:1 Paul's personal concern.

- 1) He desired for them to know his conflict over them.
 - a) The term conflict "agona" is an athletic term, the root is "agon" we get our word agony, identifying the

arena of the day of wrestling and running.

- b) The apostle's agony was in line with his call just mentioned, to warn and present every man perfect in Christ, even to the point of exhaustion and striving "agonizomai" by the Spirit of God, as well as by praying for them. Col. 1:28-29, 9

* Paul speaks of all the concern over all the churches that came upon him daily. 2Cor. 11:28

- 2) His conflict was for Colosse and Laodicea who was called lukewarm by our Lord. Rev. 3:14-22
 - * Without doubt also for Hieropolis. Col. 4:13
 - a) Paul includes all who had not seen his face in the flesh.
 - b) Paul is writing to those who had not seen Paul's face, implying that he had not been there to the Lycus valley.
 - c) Paul reveals his Shepherd's heart in contrast to a hireling. Jn. 10

2:2 The object in Paul's mind.

- 1) That their hearts may be encouraged.
 - a) The word encouraged "parakaleo" means to call to one's side to comfort or exhort, in the context it does not mean to comfort but rather to prompt

them to be strengthen in heart and draw from Christ and not hesitate.

- b) The heart refers to the intellect, emotions and the will of man, the center of personality.
- c) In this case in view of the danger of the deception!

2) That they may apply what is available to them.

- a) Having been knit together in love.
 - 1)) The unity is of the Holy Spirit that resided in them. 1Cor. 13; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:3
 - 2)) The binding of the body together is the Spirits doing. Col. 2:19; 3:14; Eph. 4:16
- b) Having attained the full and complete assurance by understanding the knowledge “epignosin” of the mystery of God which is Christ and “in Christ”. vs. 3, 9, 10; Col. 1:27
 * Personal and individual increased knowledge! Eph. 3:16-21

2:3 The treasure of God’s resources.

- 1) In Christ they are hidden, all wisdom and knowledge.
 - a) The word “hidden” is the counterpart to “mystery”. vs. 2
 * The idea is not concealed but stored up in Christ!

b) “All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” is the counterpart of “All the riches of the full assurance of understanding. vs. 2

* Perhaps even the Jewish influence of the tuned mystical through ritual asceticism. Col. 2:16-23

- 2) The false truth being taught was that Christ was not sufficient and they needed added wisdom and knowledge out of the treasure chest of secret knowledge.
- 3) The interesting thing is that even though one may be a Christian, these treasures of wisdom and knowledge are not automatically but must be sought out and applied.

2:4-7 Paul’s explanation for their concern.

2:4 The reason of the communication.

- 1) The apostle did not want the Colossians to be deceive.
 - a) The word deceived “paralogizetai” means to reason alongside, to beguiled, enticed and lead astray by such false reasoning.
 * This word appears only one other time, for self deception of the hearer. Ja. 1:22

b) The method is by persuasive words “pithanologia” which means by fast talking and smooth words.

Paul warned the Corinthians also.

1Cor. 2:4-5; 2Cor. 11:1-3, 13-15

2) The method is persuasive words.

a) Words that convincingly deceive.

b) Power evangelism, inner healing, imagery, Shepherding doctrine, Christian psychology, the doctrine of little gods, health and wealth and new age, little gods doctrine. Acts 20:30; 1Tim. 4:1; 2Pet. 2:1-3; Tit. 1:10-11

2:5 Paul's commendation of them for their faithfulness to Christ.

1) Despite his being in prison and absent in body he was present in spirit, his heart burned for them in his thoughts and prayer. Col. 1:3, 9

2) He was rejoicing in their present walk.

a) Seeing their good order “taxin” a military word to describe their well arrayed lives as soldiers of the cross despite the spiritual attack.

b) Seeing the steadfastness “stereoma” describing their solid and firm state of their faith in Christ, also a military word.

3) If the Colossians are doing so well, why then is Paul so adamant?

a) Because the false teachers are persistent in their attempt to deceive and cheat them. vs. 4

b) Because they are men of flesh and vulnerable.

* Much like a father would warn his virgin daughter against the persistent attempts of men to seduce her through persuasive words, though still a virgin. 2Cor. 11:2-3

c) Because he is a true father, he does not wait till the damage if done, for it is much more joyful and less painful to prevent the damage than to deal with repairing the damage!

2:6-7 Paul's exhortation in view of his concern.

1) In view that the Colossians had actually received Christ, they were to walk or abide by their choice and go forwards in Him. vs. 6

a) They had received “paralambano” to take to oneself and appropriate for oneself.

b) The Christ, “Messiah”, the anointed of God.

c) Jesus, the man like any other with a physical body.

- d) The Lord, the Master, the article eliminates all rivals, the preeminent One.
 - e) They were to walk in Him, all that He represented and was after the teaching of the gospel they had received, a worthy walk to please God. Col. 1:10
- 2) In view of the command, the walk is described. vs. 7
- * This is what Paul was praying for and now commands them to do! Col. 1:10
 - a) Having been rooted “rizoomai” is perfect passive, when they received Christ, once and for all.
 - * As a tree to bring fruit. Eph. 3:17
 - b) Building up “epoikodomeo” is present tense, marking continuance to be grow in stability, in Him, not secret knowledge.
 - * As a building unmovable!
 - c) Being established “bebaioo” is also present tense and has the idea of being strengthened daily as confirmation, describing the outcome of the first two, in the faith, the body of truth they had been taught, implying permanence.
 - d) Abounding “perissuo” means overflowing habitually in the doctrine taught and thanksgiving, present tense. Col. 1:7, 23, 3, 12; 3:15; 4:2

2:8-10 Paul’s confrontation of the insufficiency of philosophy.

* Remember this is the heart of the epistle identifying the heresy. Col. 2:8-23

2:8 The description of the heresy.

- 1) The warning is beware “blepete” be constantly looking out, it is a plain warning to be cautious and the indicative mood identifies it as a real dangerous situation not hypothetical. Phil. 3:2
 - a) Each person is responsible for his or her own stand against deception or the deception.
 - b) The warning is “anyone”, no specific person is named.
- 2) The goal is to cheat you, “sulagogeo” means to plunder you, make spoil of you, take you captive or kidnap.
 - a) The word regularly was used for taking a captive in war as booty, depicting the false teachers as me-stealers, spiritual kidnapers.
 - b) Men are taken captive at Satan’s will. 2Tim. 3:6
 - c) Men make merchandise of God’s people. 2Pet. 2:3
- 3) The method is through philosophy and deceit.
 - * The article precedes it, identifying the specific false teaching at Colosse as

- well as to identifying both nouns, philosophy and deceit.
- a) The word philosophy “philosophias”, is made up of two words, “phileo” and “sophia”, the love of wisdom, the only time it appears in the New Testament. Acts 17:18
 - b) The word deceit “apates” has the idea of bait to trick someone, seeking to accomplish deceitful delusive trickery by speculation about God's truth that captivates man and blinds him to the truths of God.
 - c) The word empty “kenos”, describes the quality of the content , it is empty hollow, fruitless and void.
 - * Though the noun deceit identifies the method and content, it is also the goal of their philosophy!
 - 1)) To the Greeks philosophy was the highest effort of the intellect and virtue. 1Tim. 6:20
 - 2)) There is a sharp contrast with “all the treasures stored up in Christ! vs. 3
 - c) The character of the philosophy is three-fold.
 - 1)) It is sourced in the traditions of men, things they have invented through time to interpret human existence and purpose.

- a) In this case the Jewish, Gnostic and pagan traditions.
 - * The Kabbala was the mystical theology of the Jews which meant, the reception or received doctrines, tradition.
 - b) Jesus pointed to the traditional teaching of the Pharisee on the Sermon on The Mount, “You have heard said”, and then He gave the true authority, “But I say to you”. You teach the traditions of men for the doctrine of God.
- 2)) It is sourced in the basic principles of the world “stoicheia”, things in a row, the ABC’s of the world learning.
- 3)) But the phrase also is used for the physical elements of the world and supernatural powers, which could very well apply in our context. Gal. 4:3; 2Pet. 3:10
- 4)) The consistent mention of spirit powers in the letter verifies the intended meaning. Col. 1:15-18; 2:10, 15, 18
- 5)) It is not sourced in Christ, all are inferior to divine revelation, being love of wisdom of empty deceit based on human origin and reasoning!

* There is much syncretism that goes on in the church at times!

2:9-10 The proclamation of the sufficiency of Christ.

2:9 The first reason is that Jesus is the God-Man and they do not teach that truth.

- 1) For in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily.
 - a) The term fullness “pleroma” which later was identified with the Gnostics, means the sum total of deity, divine power and attributes. Col. 1:19
* It dwells “katoikei” as a permanent residence or home, present tense!
 - b) Godhead “theiotes” bodily is a phrase that is found only this one time in the New Testament emphasizing that He was God, deity in a human body, bodily form, the every essence of God. Rom. 1:20
 - 1)) Refuting the false idea that physical matter and God who is Spirit could not be one. Jn. 1:1, 14; Phil. 2:6
 - 2)) Refuting the need of intermediates between God and man, apart from Jesus.

- 3)) The author to the Hebrews says regarding Jesus, “A body have You prepared for Me”. Heb. 10:5
- 4)) The Godhead dwelt in Christ before the incarnation, in dwelt in Him during His bodily form and after He returned to heaven. Phil. 2:6-7

- 2:10** The second reason is that a person is complete in Him which they deny.
- 1) The word complete “pleeroo”, verbal form of “pleroma” means to level up, to cram, used of fulfilling the scriptures. Matt. 1:22; Col. 1:9, 25; 2:10; 4:12, 17
 - a) The tense is called a periphrastic perfect which has the strongest connotation, “You have been made full, you are full now and continue to be full in Him”. Linski
 - b) The word never implies nor communicates perfection in Christ or sinlessness but rather adequate, fit or outfitted.
 - 2) “In Him” you have all you need for salvation, sanctification and glorification.
 - a) You need nothing apart from Christ, no special knowledge, works of merit God, nor other mediators, for there is nothing wanting a person who is “in Christ”. Eph. 3:19

- b) In Him, In whom, with Him. vs. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
- c) He has given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness. 2Pet. 1:3-4
- 3) Christ is the Messiah and the head of all principalities and powers.
 - a) He as head is in control of all rule and authority, be it man's or angelic, both good and evil.
 - b) He as head is not subject to anything nor limited in any way, for He created all things and all things consist in Him. Col. 1:16-17
 - c) He as head is the source of all life.
 - d) He is the head of the church, having the preeminence having resurrected out from the dead. Col. 1:18
- * For this reason Thomas said to Jesus, "My Lord and My God". Jn. 20:28