

Colossians 2:4-15

Captivated By Christ

Image Church // Living Beyond Sunday: Week 4

Intro

Womens gathering *Coffee and Conversations on September 10th*
10am-12... Church Center app. RSVP!

STARTING POINT is happening right after the service here...

Alright, if you have your bibles go ahead and grab them and turn to the book of **Colossians**... We're in week 4 of our journey through the book of Colossians in our series called **Living Beyond Sunday**...

Colossians 2:4-15

4 I am saying this so that no one will deceive you with arguments that sound reasonable. **5** For I may be absent in body, but I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see how well ordered you are and the strength of your faith in Christ.

Remember what you have here is a church that's been doing really well, but they have been experiencing some pressure by the surrounding community to turn away from the centrality of Jesus...

- **To see Jesus as a thing, not THE thing that their lives are centered around...**
 - To see Jesus as another god among many...
 - There's secular philosophies at play that were prevalent...
 - And to see Jesus and the addition to the law...
- It was a *build-a-bear* theology kind of culture...

And Paul's desire is for the church in the midst of all this is to remain rooted in Christ- *living in light of who He is*...

So Paul's going to continue this theme in **verse 6**: *He says this:*

6 So then, just as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord,

Beautiful picture here... Paul says just as you have *received Christ as Lord*...

- **Receive** means you do nothing, you just accept what's been offered to you...
- **as Lord, or the Lord:** this connects the dots on not only do you *receive* what's been done, but you *surrender* your life to the one who did it!
 - You can't separate the two...

And then he says: continue to walk in him, **7** being rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing with gratitude.

Example: When I was learning to drive...

- Looking at the center line I didn't want to cross
- Dad says look at the direction you want to go...

This is what Paul has been doing with the church... He's not highlighting so much what they shouldn't believe but He's pointing them to where their belief should be grounded...

He wants them to be ***captivated by Christ and compelled by Christ!***

Look at how Paul lays this out he says: ***Continue to walk in Christ***...

- **Rooted in Christ**... Starting point
- **Built up in Christ**... means of growth
- **Established in faith**... way that you continue
 - **Faith:** is you're belief in who Jesus is and what He came and accomplished on your behalf...

And here's the thing I want you to see that Paul does over and over, he highlights that the gospel- the good news of Jesus- ***isn't just what starts the Christian life, it's what we continue in throughout the Christian life***...

You see this in this last part here where Paul says that they should be: **overflowing with gratitude...**

This is key, you can summarize the essence of the Christian life with this word **gratitude...**

- *Gratitude* happens when you receive a gift and it evokes a response in you...

In Christ, we've received the greatest gift through what He accomplished for us... Through His sacrificial saving work that takes you from sinner to son or daughter!

The response to that kind of gift is **gratitude** and it's that gratitude that begins to shape your life...

Example: Been in a life of poverty, bills would bury you, there was no way out... You get given access to a new bank account where there is no end to the amount of money...

- The bills come and when they do there's a moment where you feel the weight of the bill but then you are reminded of the endless amount of money that you now have access to and you smile and you celebrate as you live in the freedom you have received... What you've been given access to has changed your life and the way that you live...

You were buried in your sin, there was no way out- the debt was too great for you ever to pay...

- But Jesus stepped in dealing with your sin giving you access to a limitless supply of grace that never ends...
- You sin, and you feel the weight of that sin- you feel the convection of that sin, but then you're reminded of what you've been given access to, a limitless supply of grace...
- That therefore there is no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus and you rejoice in the freedom you have...

Your response is gratitude as you are *captivated by Christ* and what He's done for you... And the more this happens the more you are built up in Christ and the more established in you become in your faith... The more His grace is reflected in your life...

This is the essence of the Christian life...

Verse 8, Paul continues...

8 Be careful that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit based on human tradition, based on the elements of the world, rather than Christ.

Paul where he's saying watch out for any way of thinking that pulls you away from the centrality of Jesus...

Philosophy in and of itself isn't a bad thing, we can learn a lot even from secular philosophy... Paul's not against philosophy...

- He's against looking to philosophy as a means of salvation or transformation...

Paul says something here that's helpful for us to see what this looks like:

Empty deceit: The word deceit is important, **it's any kind of deception that leads away from the truth...** What's interesting is that we get more help on this when we look at the NT... This word is used in connection to **wealth, desire, sin** and **worldly pleasure...**¹

*All 4 of these categories: **wealth, desire, sin** and **worldly pleasures** are undercurrents for worldly philosophy that's claiming that these are the things that you need... These are the things that will satisfy...*

- **Some of you are chasing after these things this morning...**
 - *Appeal...*

¹ Matt. 13:22; Mark 4:19; Ehp. 4:22, Heb. 3:13; 2 Thess. 2:10; 2 Peter 2:13

Other ways empty deceptive philosophy plays out is through:

- **Human traditions:** This is human-imposed rituals that have been added to what God's established and called His people to...
 - I'm not going to get into this because Paul's going to circle back on this again, we'll see that next week...
But
- **Elements of this world:** This is leaning into any worldly elements practicing things that have to do with things in the spiritual realm...

The biggest thing Paul's getting at is leaning into any way of thinking **that doesn't depend on Christ...**

Then watch what Paul does, He comes out of the warning and begins to elaborate on Christ again...

Verse 9: For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ, **10** and you have been filled by him, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

Paul's saying you've been **filled** by Jesus who embodies the fullness of God... Everything it means to be God, Jesus is... He's not a god, **He IS God...**

- And watch this, Paul says **you have been filled by Jesus...** *This is not something that you obtain, but something that you receive...*

And the way that this happens is through the **Holy Spirit**- This is why Jesus left so that the Spirit could fill all those that have received the work of Jesus...

So you have the power of Jesus in you- the power of God in you... And He is over everything- so there's nothing else you need besides Him or in addition to Him! There's nothing you can bring to the table!

- That's captivating!

Now Paul's going to use a specific **OT** element as a means to press against some of the secular philosophies related to subduing the body and/or the pressure to adhere to the law in order to obtain salvation...

Essentially he's driving home the reality that you have Jesus and that's all that you need!!

Verse 11: You were also circumcised in him with a circumcision not done with hands, by putting off the body of flesh, in the circumcision of Christ,

Some of you are like what are we talking about here?

In the OT Physical circumcision was an external sign that identified you with the people of God...

- *Ladies, you dodged this one... I told that to my wife and she said, we have childbirth I don't want to hear it!*

Now don't ask me how they verified this with each other... *Hey man, come here for a second for a circumcision check...*

- *I don't know...*
- *BTW: if you have any additional questions: ask pastor Aaron He has charts and graphs...*

But here's the thing circumcision **Moses** shoes us in **Deuteronomy 10 and 30...** And Jeremiah in **Jeremiah 4:4**, and **9:25** that circumcision is not just about an external action, but that it's designed to point to what ultimately needed to be an internal reality... And that is **the circumcision of the heart...**

Paul's saying that this is what Jesus came to do... That through Christ we have received a circumcision that's not done with hands...

- Paul's talking about the **spiritual circumcision of the heart...**

Let me show you what I mean: ***In circumcision, you physically cut off a piece of flesh and discard it...***

When you trust in Christ, spiritually speaking He takes a part of you, the old you, the sinful you, and he cuts it away and discards it...

Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

This is what Paul's getting at here with the focus on the fact that Jesus is all that you need!! None of your efforts or disciplines matter or are necessary when it comes to salvation... Only Jesus can cut away your heart...

Verse 12: when you were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

What Paul does here is call them to recount their **baptism...**

Watch this connection: God gave **circumcision** to the people in the **OT** as a symbol of their relationship with Him... And in the **NT** God gives His people **baptism** as a symbol of their relationship with Him!

- *Praise God otherwise all of our new member's classes would be all women!*

You need to see how important baptism is in the Christian life...

- It's so important that Paul uses it as a marker and reminder in the midst of the cultural pressure they've been facing to recount their baptism... To remember it... Why? Because of what it is a picture of...

Let's talk about **baptism...** **Baptismo:** *means to dip, immerse...*

Look at what he says: *Buried with Christ in Baptism ...*

When you get baptized you are fully immersed into the water... That's a picture of you identifying with Christ's death, pointing to the reality that the **old you** died with Christ...

And then Paul says. ***you were also raised with Him***... This is the picture we get when you come out of the water- you are identifying with the resurrection of Jesus and the new life that you now have in Him!

Baptism is a tangible expression of **Galatians 2:20** ***I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.***

This is what happens here when we pull out the horse trough... You get in the water and as we're dunking you we say: *buried with Christ in the likeness of His death*, and as we pull you up we say: *and raised to walk in the newness of life!*

And then Paul says that baptism happens ***through faith*** in the work of ***God who raised Jesus from the dead***...

This ***through faith*** piece is important because it shows us two things:

- Baptism doesn't save you... It is a symbol of your faith as you're being baptized you're publicly declaring your faith... You are publicly identifying with Jesus...
- Baptism is like a wedding ring- ring doesn't make you married but it's a symbol of your marriage...

This through faith also shows us ***when*** baptism happens... It happens **AFTER** you've placed **your** faith in Jesus...

- Some of you were sprinkled as a kid- great this was on account of your parents faith- not yours... Their desire was to see you grow up to know and love Jesus...
- The jury was still out though as to whether or not you would have the faith your parents desired for you...

When you are baptized you are publicly identifying with Jesus acknowledging YOUR faith in him to the church and the world!

- You're also embodying and putting on display what's happened to you... ***Sprinkling*** doesn't do this- ***Baptism immersion after conversion does!***

There are some of you that have never been baptized, and today you need to take that ***white note card*** that was in your seat or in the seat back and you need to write your name and email on that card and write ***BAPTISM*** on it and drop it in the bucket when we pass it around later!

- You need to go public with your faith by taking this step of obedience!

There's another group of you that I want to speak to: ***You were baptized by immersion at one point in your life***, maybe when you were a kid or maybe even a year or 2 ago, but you were not actually a follower of Jesus...

You went through the motions of baptism but it didn't mean anything because you hadn't surrendered to Jesus- You didn't actually start walking with Jesus until later...

You need to own that and ***you need to be baptized again*** because your first one meant nothing... It was not a declaration of your faith because you didn't have any and the proof was the years following that baptism where you did your own thing *you didn't die to self!*

And you can't do what Paul's saying here and look back on your baptism as a means to stay the course in your faith... That's not an anchor for you...

There are some of you that have been walking with the Lord for years now that need to take that step of obedience and faithfulness...

You need to get that notecard right now and you need to write ***BAPTISM*** on it... This is not a word thing or a diminishing thing this is something we get to celebrate together!

Verse 13:

13 And when you were dead in trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, You're were dead in your sin... You were consumed by your flesh... But, he made you alive with him and forgave us all our trespasses. **14** He erased the certificate of debt, with its obligations, that was against us and opposed to us, and has taken it away by nailing it to the cross.

GOSPEL

But Jesus didn't just stop with dealing with your sin... *Watch this:*

Verse 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and disgraced them publicly; he triumphed over them in him.

In **verse 10** Paul said that Jesus **is the head over every ruler and authority.**

Paul's showing how Jesus ***flexes*** this headship and authority! This is the ultimate flex!!

Listen, there is a real enemy whose name is satan, there are real demons at his call, and the bible tells us that he's prowling around like a roaring lion.²

*The death of Jesus disarmed Satan is his warfare against God's people...*³

- ***Disarmed:*** Jesus took away the primary and most powerful weapon of unforgiven sin... The way he uses that weapon is condemnation...

² 1 Peter 5:8

³ John Piper, *God holds Satan on a Leash*

Romans 8:1 *Therefore there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus...*

Romans 8:33-34 *Who can bring an accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies. 34 Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is the one who died, but even more, has been raised; he also is at the right hand of God and intercedes for us. 35 Who can separate us from the love of Christ?*

Some of you walked in here overcome by sin, bound by sin, in your guilt, in your shame... You feel the weight of condemnation...

- *Appeal...*

Conclusion [Vamp]

Some of you need to receive freedom in Christ... You've never surrendered... Do that this morning- would you see and believe that He's done everything necessary to save you!!

- If that's you, take that card out and write your name and email and ***I surrender!***

Others of you have been saved but you've not been baptized after your salvation... you prayed a prayer and got dunked but it meant nothing because you didn't actually surrender and you need to be baptized... ***Take out that card and write baptism on it!***

[Slide on the screen] with instructions for Card...

Others of you need to walk in the victory of Jesus free of condemnation! Leaving with gratitude...

- Come back to the gospel- through faith and be ***built up*** in the truths of the gospel this morning!!

Overcome by sin, bound by sin, in your guilt, in your shame... You need to sit at the foot of the cross...

- *There's no power of hell, no scheme of man that could ever pluck you from His hand- until He returns or calls me home here in the power of God I stand!*