

Colossians 2:6-10, "Rooted in Truth"

11.17.19

As you are turning to Colossians chapter 2, you will notice that I have two plants to the side here. You'll notice that one looks really good and the other one...well...not so good. Might you possibly say that something is dreadfully wrong with the wilted-looking plant? Absolutely you would. For there is something dreadfully wrong with that plant. I know what's wrong with the plant...it has something to do with the root system, and I'll reveal that later in the message.

For now, I'll tell you that the Title of today's message is: "Rooted in Truth." For the last several weeks we've been trying to teach about that which is "True vs. False." It's hard to tell when you look at this:



But, when you define the truth...it sticks out as plain as day. See the **RED!**

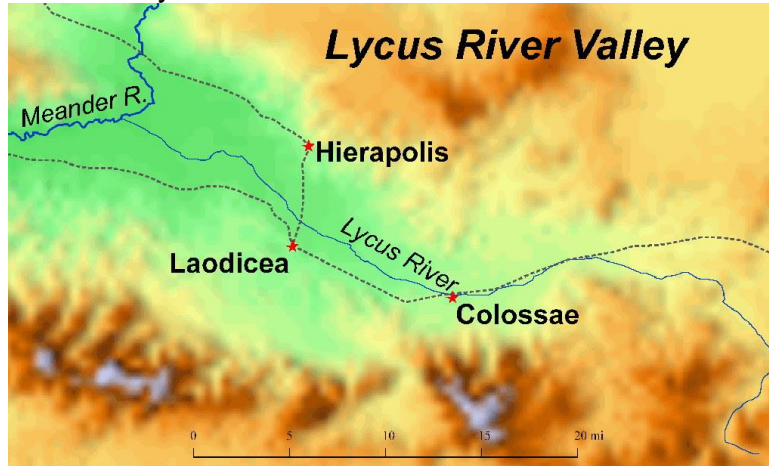


Today, we're going to see the truth, as we see how to be "Rooted in Truth."

Colossians 2:6-10

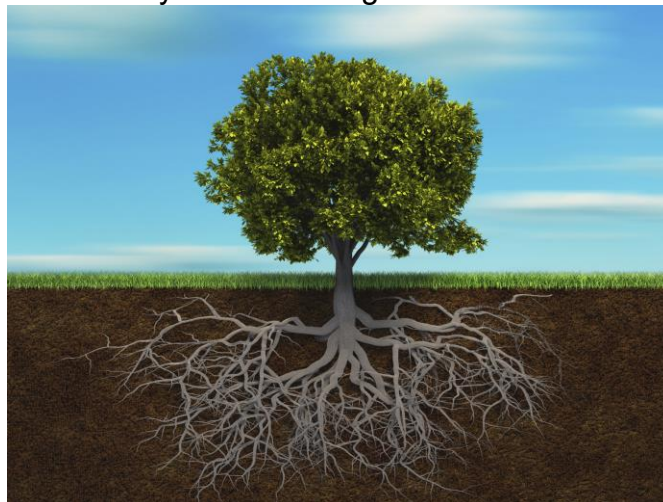
⁶Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. ⁸See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits^[a] of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

We saw last week how the Apostle Paul was struggling mightily to make certain the Colossian believers did not fall for the false doctrine that was being taught in Colossae. You will remember our map of the Lycus River Valley.



Hot water from the Hot Springs in Hierapolis and cold water from the Lycus River flowing from Colossae came together in Laodicea, making the water lukewarm, which is nasty...to the point that Jesus said in the book of the Revelation...I will spit you out of my mouth...in other words, I want nothing to do with a lukewarm person. The point is...when you or I are neither hot or cold...when we don't rely on moral truth...we will become lukewarm and ineffective for Jesus.

Listen carefully church, the important thing about any teaching is its origin. Does it come from truth...from God...or from man? In other words, where did it begin? Where is it rooted? Take a look at this tree. Take a look at that root system...It's huge isn't it!



Did you know that for most trees...their root system below the ground is as wide or wider than the tree is tall and wide above the ground? So, what you see above the ground is a mirror image of what's below the ground. It takes that kind of root system to adequately nourish the tree.

The root-system is ALL IMPORTANT to a tree or a plant. We all know that the life of any tree or plant is in its roots. The nature of what the tree or plant is feeding on from its roots will determine the quality of health of that tree, of that plant. The healthier, firmer, deeper and more nourished the roots...the healthier and more fruitful the tree or the plant. And the same is true for Christians.

How are your roots today? What are you feeding on in your life? What are you drawing into yourself? Is it healthy? Is it good? Is it growing you or poisoning you? This was the exact question the Apostle Paul was seeking the answer to for the Colossian church. Look at verse 6...

Colossians 2:6

⁶Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.

Many of us...if not most of us here this morning claim to be followers of Jesus, but are we walking in Him? Are we following His footsteps...His teachings...His principles? How firmly are we rooted in Him? How established in the faith are we? Is Jesus the ROOT and CENTER of our lives? Or might our root be bound up in our children, or our careers, our hobbies, our possessions, pursuit of wealth? What motivates us? That's where we are drawing up sustenance, nourishment, into our roots...

Jesus wants us to bear fruit for Him...but, to do that...we've got to walk in Him...take nourishment from Him...and we do that through His Word and through fellowship with Him through prayer, as His Spirit bears witness with our spirit. Listen, for us to bear fruit that pertains to life and godliness, we must be rooted in Jesus. You see, if the root of the life is holy below the ground, the life will be holy above the ground...where people can see...they can see good fruit.

Remember our sign...



We're to be pointing people to the Detour Sign of Jesus! Like our delivery guy last week.



When I was lost in downtown Charlotte on those 1-way streets, he showed me exactly the way to the building I was trying to get to, and I didn't deviate from what he told me. He knew the way.

Listen, Jesus is the WAY! Are you following Jesus today? If you are, then you'll be rooted in Him.

Colossians 2:7

⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

That's a great verse of Scripture! I love the words: **Rooted, Built-up, Established, Taught, Thanksgiving.** Great...descriptive words of the Christian life! Where do you trace your spiritual heritage? Your spiritual ancestry? Who was instrumental in leading you to Jesus? Was it a grandparent? A parent? A SS teacher? A pastor? A friend? If you are born again, you have a spiritual heritage and you have someone who likely took you under their wing and disciplined you. They watered you? They gave you sunlight? They fertilized you with the truth of God's Word? Be thankful!

The Apostle Paul reminded Timothy of his spiritual heritage...it was his mother and grandmother who raised him and Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:14-15...

2 Timothy 3:14-15

¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Be thankful for your spiritual heritage and continue to follow to Jesus.

Yes...there's two plants sitting over there... One is flourishing and the other one, for all intents and purposes is DEAD. **What happened to the wilted plant?** That's verse 8.

Colossians 2:8

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

Now that phrase, “take you captive,” is a military phrase. It literally means to haul off as a prisoner of war...or to take as the spoils of war. Paul is saying... “Don’t let Satan lure you back into the false system of teaching and the ways of thinking that were part of his army...his domain...the darkness from which you were delivered from.” Remember from last week...where does all knowledge and truth come from? Jesus...

Colossians 2:2-4

²that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.

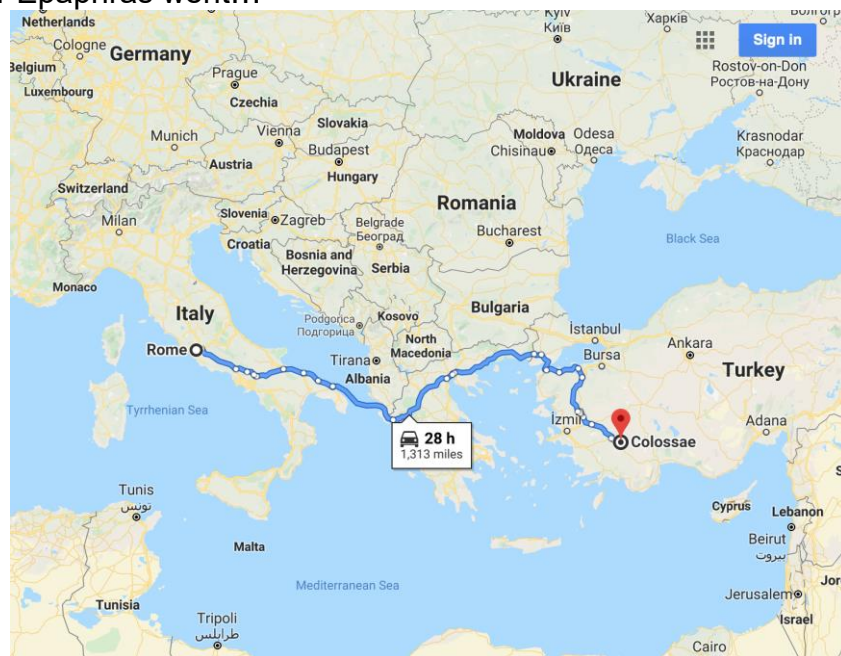
What are these arguments? They are philosophies...empty deceit...human traditions...and they all come from one place: SATAN, the Father of Lies. Look at verse 8 again and notice the last phrase...

Colossians 2:8

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

Listen, a person will either become a victim of human wisdom, human reason, human logic, that’s pushed from Satan’s kingdom, or a person will become complete in Jesus...in His wisdom and His knowledge. That’s the choice of every human being. You see, today you are either choosing the way of Jesus and the wisdom of Jesus or you are choosing Satan and his ways. **But, here’s the thing...we can so easily be deceived**, and that’s the point. We might think we’re following Jesus, but for many...they’re actually following Satan’s system of thinking on so many issues of the day.

So how do you know if you are being tricked? Well, it’s what you’re taking in... It’s what’s coming up from the roots. Church, this is the entire point of the book of Colossians and why Epaphras, one of the Elders, went to Rome in the first place. And folks, this wasn’t a journey to town from here...Look how far Epaphras went...



1,313 miles... 28 hours by car! Can you imagine walking that? This was a big deal! That's how important this was! He was scared to death the people were going to go right off the cliff of deception. Right through the Detour sign...

You know Church...think about it, what should we expect out of Satan? Do we actually believe Satan's going down without a fight. He hates God and He hates us! And so, he seeks to deceive. What is he actually fighting against? The truth! He wants to blur it... He wants to compromise it. But, that's poison. Listen, for millennia, in every city, in every culture, in every country, Satan has sought (and still does) to pervert the truth... Satan always seeks to take down the church, by infiltrating with false doctrine, DECEIT. That's the word that was used in verse 8. DECEIT.

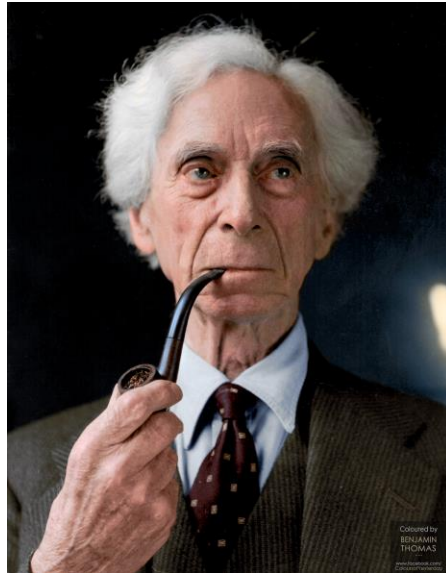
That word DECEIT in the Greek means: "to beguile or trick." Here's a picture of the literal meaning:



A worm on a hook is a way to beguile or trick a fish. The worm hides the hook...it's not what the fish expects. And that's what false teaching does. That's what the worldly philosophies are. It's a baited hook...you think it's going to be wonderful; it turns out to be deceiving, deadly!

Let's think about PHILOSOPHY for a minute. We're told in verse 8 NOT TO BE TAKEN CAPTIVE BY PHILOSOPHY. You know throughout history, mankind has pursued an understanding of why we're here? What is the purpose and meaning of life? We have sought to unravel the great mystery of where we've come from and where we're going. And so, through the centuries, there have been many, many solutions offered by many, many different philosophers. You have Plato and Aristotle and Socrates. Literally, there have been tens of thousands of philosophers throughout the ages and they all have a philosophy as to the meaning of life. But whose right? What is the truth?

I did a little study on some contemporary philosophers of the last 200 years. Have you ever heard of this man?



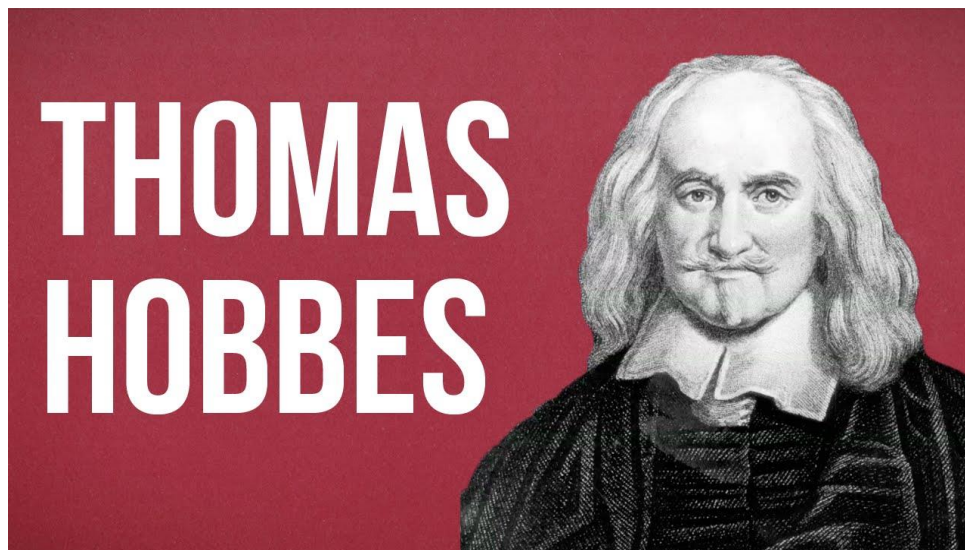
That's British Philosopher, Bertrand Russell. He was considered one of the most brilliant men of the 20th century. Russell described himself as an agnostic in 1947, but later he said this:

“I would say that I am an Agnostic. But speaking popularly, I think that all of us would say in regard to those gods [of this age] that we were Atheists. In regard to the Christian God, I should, I think, take exactly the same line.” Bertrand Russell, British Philosopher

For most of his adult life, Bertrand Russell maintained religion to be little more than superstition and despite any “positive effects,” he said, “largely harmful to people.” He believed that religion served to impede knowledge and foster fear and dependency. He believed religion was responsible for much of the world's wars, responsible for oppression, and misery. He was a member of a humanist organization called the British Humanist Association, until his death. Russell died in 1970. He was 98 years old, and his last words were these:

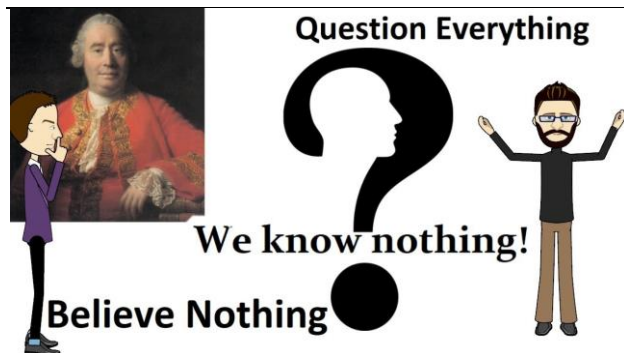
“Philosophy has proved a washout to me.” Bertrand Russell, British Philosopher

A washout, worthless. Lifelong pursuit. Sad isn't it? Where is Bertrand Russell today? See this man...



Thomas Hobbes, famous English philosopher. Happy looking chap, huh? He was an atheist. On his deathbed he said: “I'm about to take a leap into the dark. I shall be glad to find a hole to creep out of this world.” He found a HOLE indeed. What a joyful philosophy, huh?

One more... David Hume...He said:



He was the famous Scottish, atheist philosopher who was a very immoral man. His biographers tell us that he died an agonizing death of cancer in 1776. They tell us that Hume's caregivers at his death said he agonized to the point that he shook the bed and demanded that candles stay lit all night...because he didn't want to be in the darkness and he was so "PANICKY," that he didn't want to be left alone for a single moment. They said, "His lips were filled with cursing and remorse until he died." Hmm...the man who said, "Question everything, believe nothing." Where'd that get him? A panicky...terrifying death!

And so it goes with those who attempt to use their own minds and their own human efforts to attempt to discover the truth. The city of Colossae had its own: Russell's, Hobbs', and Humes... The church at Colossae was in danger of being captured by them...corrupted by them...duped by them.

Listen, the philosophy of this world...the philosophy of Satan's system is an empty illusion...a worm on a hook...and it's a washout! It leaves you on a deathbed without answers. THE TRUTH is found in Jesus Christ alone...WHO ROSE FROM THE DEAD! Again... the point of the letter. The truth is in the revelation of God spoken to humankind clearly and assuredly in Jesus Christ. Paul told Timothy in...

1 Timothy 6:20-21

²⁰ O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called "knowledge," ²¹ for by professing it some have swerved from the faith.

Oh, we've got to get this...verse 8 again...this is repetitious, but it's how we learn:

Colossians 2:8-10

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits^[a] of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰ and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

So, what is the philosophy of our day that's being used to trick us? What's the worm on the hook for us...for our children, today? Well...I know there are a lot of things we could talk about...there are many worms on the hooks of our day... See the worm...again...



Listen...the worm barely covers the hook... What does that mean? It means the most insidious philosophies are those that are very close to the truth. There's SOME truth...but, it's mixed with error...which makes it FALSE. You see, if we're not walking in the ways of Jesus, we're not walking in the truth. And from what I see one of the most insidious philosophies of our day the greatest worm of our day, here in the United States is the pursuit the American Dream.

It's like this...I overheard a conversation the other day...a pastor no less, who said that he was concerned about his son...a young man in his mid-20's, living at home...and he lamented the fact that his son wasn't really following Jesus. Nothing bad, he said. But, he said, he just doesn't have a desire for the things of God...to go to church or to be involved with Christian things. He said, "But...you know...thankfully his mom and I trained him up as a child in the way he should go and one day he'll come back."

No pastor...you quoted that wrong... That's the worm on the hook in American Christianity. That's close to the truth...but, it's not the truth... Proverbs 22:6 is what he was quoting, and here's the truth...

Proverbs 22:6

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

That's different isn't it. It means...you train up a Christian...he'll keep walking that path...his whole life... Oh...that doesn't mean there won't be set backs and hiccups along the way...but, it does mean they'll continue to follow Jesus. This idea that somehow you can raise a kid in a "Christian home" and they're guaranteed to come back to the faith...after sowing their wild oats, that's false theology...that's a worm a hook. It could be that your kid has never been born again.

Here's the kicker...then the Pastor said this, "Well, I guess it's just a stage...I hope he'll meet a girl and settle down. After all, he's got a good education, graduated from college and he's got a good job...he's living home, so he's saving a lot of money...yeah, I hope he'll meet a girl and settle down." I wanted to shout: "Do you think that's the next step, pastor? That's walking with Christ, Pastor?"

You say, "Aren't you being a little hard Pastor Kevin?" Folks, I hear this all the time and I watch it...for so many...they raise their family just like the world and wonder why their kids don't have a desire for the things of God...to walk in Jesus. So many Christians have taken the bait on the hook...the American Dream...education, money, success, get married and settle down...that'll do it...that's the essence of life. No...that's the American Dream and that's part of the Prosperity Gospel, a worm on a hook.

Oh, it's so easy to say that we love Jesus...but He has very little impact on our lives, because we don't have time for Him. And what we're doing is slowly poisoning the plant. You see, we've got to stop displacing Jesus with the stuff of this world...placing success and prosperity above the cross. What if your kid never got a great job...just a good job...what if your kid never made a lot of money...but, enough to keep his head above water...what if your kid never ran a company, but just drove a truck or answered the phone, or swept the warehouse...but THEY followed JESUS with all their heart! What if they walked with Jesus! What if WE walked with Jesus!

What if we actually loved Jesus more than anything? We might start thinking about sharing Him with others... I could then ask us the question: Who's Your One?



We talked about this at the Shoebox Dedication for OCC this past Wed. night. Would we actually be intentional and look at our sphere of influence and share Jesus? Do you have a person that you are seeking to reach for Jesus? Who's YOUR ONE? Someone that you're intentionally praying for and going after? Or maybe we're just too busy taking the bait...and we get satisfied with where we are.

Can I show you what that looks like?



What's wrong with that plant? It's rootbound... It had no place to grow...stuck in that small pot... It needs a bigger vision that itself...it needs a bigger pot...it needs a God-sized vision of life...that goes beyond ourselves and our own little worlds. But, here's the thing...it's going to take some pain. You can't plant a rootbound plant in a bigger pot and expect it to live. You've got to cut the roots and pull them apart...



And folks, that's not comfortable for the plant...but it's necessary. Maybe that's you today...it's time to grow...you're bound up... Would you allow the Holy Spirit to cut you and give you a bigger vision of life than just pursuing stuff... Would you be willing to stop taking the bait?

You see my plant over there? You want to know what killed it? I soaked the roots with this:



Vinegar...and salt, and rubbing alcohol and RoudUp...and I it killed it! I felt terrible about it, actually. All that stuff represents the philosophies of this world... You see, slowly but surely since last Wednesday, I've fed that plant poison and killed it.

As we close...can ask you this question. What are you feeding yourself? Young person? Adult? Mom and Dad, what are you taking into your home...bringing in through the roots? What are taking in as sustenance for you're the roots of your life? Oh, don't take the bait of this world...walk with Jesus and flourish...grow...seek Him...spend time with Him...pursue Him...don't be bound up. Who's YOUR ONE? It's time...it's time to allow the Holy Spirit to cut us...so we can grow... Verses 6 and 7, one last time:

Colossians 2:6-7

⁶Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.
