

Lesson 6

Overflowing with Gratitude

Colossians 2:6-7

Colossians 2:6–7 (CSB)

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

⁷being rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing with gratitude.

Introduction

It could be argued that Colossians 2:6-7 comprises the “thesis statement” of the letter. It is the core exhortation from which everything else flows.

In verses 2-5, Paul stated that the Colossians:

- *Received Christ Jesus the Lord.* He is now the controlling influence in their life.
- Received understanding and knowledge of the mystery of Christ, being thoroughly convinced that He was both God and man ... all sufficient for salvation, etc.
- Possessed the *good order* and *firmness* necessary to withstand attacks on these doctrinal matters.

Steadfastness in Christ naturally leads to a spirit of thanksgiving. Paul asserts that those who are rooted, built up, and established in the faith will overflow with gratitude. This gratitude reflects a heart deeply connected to Christ and His blessings. A grateful heart for all that God has given us in Christ strengthens our grip on the truth we possess. If we find ourselves lacking thankfulness, examining our relationship with God and our hearts is crucial. Gratitude should characterize our lives and the church, manifesting in vibrant, positive, hopeful, and joyous worship.

Overflowing gratitude is a vital measure of our spiritual growth. To be filled with gratitude is to be filled with the Spirit of Christ. Thankful hearts focus on Jesus, constantly remembering that everything we possess is a gift from God. The only thing originating from ourselves that we can offer to God is our gratitude. This thankfulness is the language of joy and dependence, reflecting a life deeply rooted in Christ and His grace.

2:6 – Walk in Him

Since this was the case, Paul challenged them to *walk in Him*. In other words, their daily conduct and attitudes were to reflect Christ.

Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

– 1 John 2:6

Let's return to the first part of verse 6. What does Paul mean when he says they had received Christ Jesus as the Lord? This is a direct comparison to the alternatives offered, identified as plausible arguments in verse 4, and terms like philosophy, empty deceit, and human tradition in verse 8.

Christians have received Christ himself and are to continue *in Him*. This would involve staying faithful to doctrinal teachings and the practice of one's life. In Galatians 1:6-9 and Jude 3, we discover the idea of remaining in the Apostle's doctrine. We must not give heed to the false gospels that have arisen since.

2:7a - Stability

Verse 7 carries along the expectation of stability. Their way of life was to conform to the will of Christ continually. Using the terms *rooted and built up*, Paul wanted theirs to be a faith not easily swayed by the constant stream of false doctrines confronting them. Faith in Christ would give them stability that *nothing could subvert*.³⁴ They would be *established in the faith*.

2:7b - Thanksgiving

All of these would generate within them a spirit of *thanksgiving*. Paul says that those who are rooted in Christ, built up in Him, and established in their faith **will abound** in thanksgiving. When we begin to grasp all we've been given in Christ, we cannot help but shout praise and voice our thanksgiving to God!

The only word in the verse written in the active voice is "overflow." Believers who are firmly rooted, built up in Him, and established in the faith will naturally overflow with gratitude to God (Colossians 2:7). This overflowing gratitude reflects a heart deeply connected to Christ and His blessings.

A grateful heart for all God has given us in Christ strengthens our grip on the truth we possess. If we find ourselves lacking thankfulness, examining our relationship with God and our hearts is essential. Thankfulness should be a defining characteristic of our lives and the church, constantly spilling over into our actions and attitudes. This gratitude will be evident in our worship, making it vibrant, positive, hopeful, and joyous. As Dick Lucas says, to be bursting with thankfulness is a true witness of the Spirit within us. The voice of thanksgiving continually speaks of God's goodness, marvels at His mercy, and expresses joy, recognizing that all we receive is from God and not from our merit.

This overflowing gratitude is a vital measure of the authenticity of our spiritual growth. To be filled with gratitude is to be filled with the Spirit of Christ. Thankful hearts are focused on Jesus, constantly remembering that everything we possess is a gift from God. The only thing that originates from ourselves and can be offered to God is our gratitude. This thankfulness is the language of joy and dependence, reflecting a life deeply rooted in Christ and His grace.

Conclusion

God desires for you to be established in the faith. This means being solid, deep-rooted, and strong, not easily swayed by the world or false teachings. He has provided you with spiritual life and, through the Holy Spirit, aims to make that life abundant and robust. God is committed to completing the work He has started in you, but you must be willing to walk in Christ.

It is only by walking in Him that you are built up. You need to take your spiritual life seriously, not allowing the distractions of life to interfere. Many of you are working diligently and striving to be all you can be. Thank you for the difference you are making in the kingdom. Let us all strive to excel even more.

Are you walking in Christ? There is no other option for eternal life.

For Discussion

How does Colossians 2:6-7 serve as the thesis statement for the entire letter? What are the key elements that Paul emphasizes in these verses?

What does receiving Christ Jesus as Lord mean according to Colossians 2:6? How does this compare to the alternatives presented in verses 4 and 8?

How can we practically “walk in Him” in our daily lives? What specific actions or attitudes reflect walking in Christ?

Paul speaks of being rooted and built up in Christ. How can we ensure our faith remains stable and not easily swayed by false teachings?

How does gratitude play a role in our spiritual growth and stability, according to Colossians 2:7? Why is thanksgiving so crucial in the life of a Christian?

What are some modern-day examples of “philosophy, empty deceit, and human tradition” that Christians must be aware of and avoid?

How does a heart overflowing with gratitude strengthen our grip on the truth we possess? In what ways can we cultivate a more thankful heart?

If thankfulness is lacking in our lives, what steps can we take to examine and improve our relationship with God?

How does an overflowing gratitude serve as a witness of the Spirit within us? What are some examples of how this can manifest in our daily interactions?

How can our church family encourage each other to remain rooted, built up, and overflowing with gratitude? What practical steps can we take to support one another in this?

³⁴ Bruce, F. F. The Epistles to the Colossians, p. 94.