

Established in the Faith

Today we continue our look into Paul's writing in Colossians as we introduce and set the course for our Vision 2023 curriculum and vision plan. Last week we focused on the doctrine of reconciliation. We have been reconciled so that we will be presented holy, faultless, and blameless before him. Since this is the case, our lives are to be characterized by an ongoing perseverance in faithfulness. We must choose to remain in the position God has planted us. In Colossians 2 we find a great summary of what we want to accomplish this year at Cornerstone as we focus on what it means to be rooted. Our lives need to be characterized by strong hearts, loving unity, and a settled understanding of the Word. This will happen as we walk in Him, having been rooted, built up, and established in the faith. This leads to overflowing gratitude!

I. Colossians 2.2-5: Paul's Desire for the Church

A. 2.2a: Strong Hearts

1. I want their hearts to be **encouraged** ... i.e., to "call along side." For the purpose of strengthening, cheering up, or instilling courage. Strong hearts equal powerful Christian life.

B. 2.2b : Joined Together in Love

1. I want their hearts to be ... **joined together** in love, ... with hearts of reconciliation.
2. "Joined together" God holds it all together by love.

C. 2.2c-5: Settled Understanding

1. so that they may have all the riches of complete **understanding** ...
2. Full assurance comes from applying biblical principles to every day life.
3. 2.5: NASB: *For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.*
 - a) "well ordered" and "stable"
 - b) Nowhow do we make it happen?

II. Colossians 2.6-7 - Three Ways to Strengthen Your Stability

A. As you have received ... so live.

1. 2:6a: *You have received Christ Jesus as **Lord**.*
 - a) There is a significance to the way Paul arranges the words. "You have received Christ Jesus, *the* one who is *the* Lord."
 - b) Who is Jesus? See Colossians 1.17-18. *Christians embrace not just a message ... but a Person: Jesus.*
2. 2.6b: *continue to **walk** in him,*
 - a) "Walking" refers to your daily pattern of conduct.
 - b) Emphasis here is to keep on walking. Don't waiver. Don't change.
 - c) 1 John 2:6: *The one who says he **remains** in him should walk just as he walked.*

B. As you were rooted ... be built up.

1. 2:7: **rooted** ... "you have been rooted." "Firmly." (NASB)
2. 2.7: **built up**. present tense, denoting continuous action. What's the result?
3. 2.7: **established**. God is the one who establishes you. Solid; Deep-rooted; strong.

C. As you are established ... be thankful

1. 2:7: *overflowing with **gratitude**.* Active voice.
2. The only thing that comes from ourselves and which can be offered to God is gratitude.

III. As We Close...

A. This is the purpose behind vision 2023.

1. God wants you to follow through. He wants you to be established in the faith.
2. He is committed to finishing what He has started in you.
3. But you need to be willing to walk in Christ.

B. Are you walking in Him?