

Christ for me, in me, through me

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-5 Larry: Camp. Counseling. Young Adults. REAL.
- B. Slide6 Baby Dedication 3rd (AL): Lizarraga Family. *Gideon*.
- C. Slide7 JM7
 1. Our guest speakers this year are **Don Brewster**, the founder of *Agape International Missions* (AIM), a non-profit organization that works to help girls caught in the sex trade in Cambodia. And **John Cotton Richmond**, the founding Director of the *Human Trafficking Institute in Virginia*. We are incredibly privileged to have these gentlemen with us this year. [Domestic & Int]
 - a) Moving from shock & outrage to active engagement.
 2. Join us *next Sun* from 3-5pm at **Children at Risk** to help us plan.
 3. Streamline this yr: We'll have **8 Exhibitors**. **1 workshop** offered 2nd & 3rd from our *Task Force* (sharing recent facts about Riv Cnty) [Fighting with Hope!]
- D. Slide8 Prayer: read MLK quote.

II. Slide9 Intro: Christ for me, in me, through me

- A. Explain Teaching Plan: Col in 4 weeks. Then, 7 week series on the 7 *I Am* statements leading up to Easter.
- B. Col was written during Paul's imprisonment in Rome. Acts 28:30[4 prison epist: Phlp. Eph. Col. Phile]
- C. Where the book of **Romans** tells us how to enter into fellowship w/christ, **Eph's & Col's** tell us how to abide therein.¹
 1. 1st we come *out of bondage*, then we are brought *into the banqueting house*.
 2. Eph's & Col's represent the *highest, fullest, richest* presentation of Christianity.
- D. Relationship to Ephesus - Out of **95** vss in **Col's**, **78** have a marked resemblance to **Eph's**
 1. Difference: In Ephesus the primary subject is **the Church**; while in Colosse the primary subject is **Christ**.
- E. **Epaphras** was one of Paul's converts while he was in Ephesus (3 yrs) founded the church.

¹ Griffith Thomas; Colossians; pg.7

- F. **Chapters 1, 2** are **doctrinal** & present **Jesus** as the preeminent *Creator, Savior, & Lord*. **Chapters 3 & 4** are **practical** & show how the believer works out the preeminence of Christ in daily living.

III. Slide10 **THE GREETING (1,2)**

- A. (2) Destination of letter - **Colosse**, & **Laodicea**(see 2:1, & 4:16).
- B. Slide11,12 3 cities were near each other: **Laodicea, Colosse, & Hierapolis**.
1. Like the 3 holes on a bowling ball, these 3 cities lie in Asia Minor (Turkey).
 2. **Laodicea** - very **rich** & thus very **independent**.
 - a) Notorious for its **earthquakes**. It was destroyed a number of times, each time it rebuilt itself w/o the help of Rome.
 - b) Slide12b That's why **John** wrote to them in Rev. 3:17 *Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.*
 - c) Slide12c In **Hierapolis** there was famous **Hot-springs**, & **Colosse** was known for its **pure Cold water**. So Jesus uses the analogy w/**Laodicea**, situated between the 2, *because you are lukewarm, & neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth* (3:16)
- C. All **3 cities** started out with **equal importance** then:
Laodicea became the **political** center; **Hierapolis** became the **trade** center; **but Colosse** was only **a small struggling town...that never made it**.
1. Lightfoot said, **Colosse** was the most *unimportant* town to which Paul ever wrote a letter.
 - a) An **unimportant town** maybe, **but** surely not an **unimportant people**.

IV. Slide13a **FAITH, HOPE, LOVE (3-8)** [1 of Paul's run-on sentences vs.3-8]

- A. Slide13b **Thanks** - With the exception of *Galatians*, Paul's letters always commenced w/ **thanksgiving**.
- B. With **thanksgiving** came **prayer**. Like the **2 wings** of a bird which are required to enable it to **soar** into the sky. [pigeon & blk cat at Morro Bay doc. Broke 1 wing. Describe u?]
- C. **3 reasons** are given for his thanksgiving & prayer: **Faith** in Christ Jesus; **Love** for all the saints; & **Hope** laid up in heaven.

1. Paul's *Trusty Triad* constitute the true Christian Life.
 - a) **Love** is greatest because *God is Love*. **Faith** is **trust** that rests upon **evidence** & leads to **action**. **Hope** is **confidence** in the future.
 - b) **Slide13c Faith** rests on the **past**; **love** works in the **present**; & **hope** looks towards the **future**.

V. Slide14a **PRAYER REQUESTS (9-14)**

A. Here's one of the greatest passages on *Prayer Requests*.

1. CFD Moule writes, Prayer makes 2 great requests: It asks for the *discernment* of God's will & then for the **power** to perform that will.
2. Often we seek God's will, but when we find it...do we do it?

B. Slide14b **Knowing** God's will (9,10)

C. His first request: **that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will.**

1. In prayer we're **not** trying to **make God listen**, but **making ourselves to listen** to Him.
2. In prayer we are not trying persuade God to **do** something, but to find out what He wants **us to do**.
3. Often we pray to God, *Thy will be changed*, instead of, *Thy will be done*.
4. So, the 1st object of prayer is to **listen not speak**.
 - a) And thus *knowing His will* we'll be able to, walk worthy, please Him, & bear fruit.
5. To do this we need the **power** to do so.

D. Slide14c **Doing** God's will (11)

E. Life's greatest problem is not to **know** what to do, but **doing it** (putting it into action).

1. We need **Power** & it comes by **Prayer**.
2. If God only told us **what to do**, this would be frustrating. But He not only tells us **His will**, He also **empowers** us to **do it**.

F. Through **Prayer** then, we obtain **Knowing God's will** & we receive **the power** to be able to accomplish it.

G. (12) The rest of this section speaks of **the Father** (12,13) & **the Son** (14-20).

- H. The Father **Qualified us** due solely to **God's Grace**.
- I. **Conveyed us - Transferred**, brought us over.
1. A word used in the ancient world when one empire took over another. They would transfer it *lock, stock, & barrel* to the conquerors land.
- J. So we're transferred **from** what, **to** what? 4 ways:
1. **Slide14d Transferred from Darkness to Light** (13a)
 2. **Transferred from our Enemies Kingdom to the Kingdom of the Son** (13b)
 3. **Transferred from Incarceration to Redemption** (14a)
 4. **Transferred from Condemnation to Forgiveness** (14b)
 - a) **Forgiveness**, no longer as a **condemned criminal**, **but** a **lost son** that's **come home**
- K. Now let's read the most **Christological statement** in the NT.
1. **Christ for me** (which is my substitution & sacrifice).
Christ in me (which is my sanctification & satisfaction).
Christ through me (which is my service & sufficiency).² [read 15-20]

VI. Slide15a **CHRIST FOR ME (15-20)** *which is my Substitution & Sacrifice*

- A. (15) **Image** - Copy. In Greek thought **an image** shares in reality what it represents.³
1. The word contains the idea of **representation & manifestation**.
 2. Christ is the perfect likeness of God.
 3. He is the **visible** image of the **invisible** God.
- B. **Slide15b** (15) **Firstborn** is a term of **honor** & means *the highest, of first rank & importance*.
1. Jesus was **prior to** all creation; is the **highest in** creation; & He is the **highest** of all who were raised from the dead.
- C. **Slide15c** (16,17) Notice the prepositions: **by** Him; **through** Him; **for** Him; **in** Him.
1. **Christ Himself is:** the **instrument** & **cause** of creation (**by**); the **mediating agent** (**through**); the **purpose** (**for**); & the **sustaining power** (**in**).
- D. He **created** all things (16); He **sustains** all things (17); He will **reconcile** all things (20)

² J. Sidlow Baxter; Awake My Heart; pg.173

³ Linguistic Key to the Greek N.T.; pg.567

- E. (17) **In Him all things consist** - to hold together, to cohere.
1. *He is the principle of cohesion in the universe.* (Lightfoot)
 2. Jesus holds all things together, **not** only the **largest** things in the universe, **but** also the **smallest** things at the molecular level.
- F. (18) **Preeminence** - (Moule) **A Savior not quite God is a bridge broken at the father end.**
- G. Story of **substitution & sacrifice**.
1. During the 17th century, **Oliver Cromwell**, Lord Protector of England, sentenced a soldier to be shot for his crimes. The execution was to take place at the ringing of the evening curfew bell. However, the bell did not sound. The **soldier's fiancée** had climbed into the belfry and clung to the great clapper of the bell to prevent it from striking. When she was summoned by Cromwell to account for her actions, she wept as she showed him **her bruised and bleeding hands**. Cromwell's heart was touched and he said, *Your lover shall live because of your sacrifice. Curfew shall not ring tonight.* [Daily Bread]
 - a) **Slide15d** God the Father must have told Jesus after the cross, *Your lover shall live because of Your sacrifice.* [*Don't ever measure God's love for you from your love to Him*]
- H. **#1 Christ For Me** (which is my **substitution & sacrifice**).

VII. **Slide16a CHRIST IN ME (21-27)** *which is my Sanctification & Satisfaction*

- A. (22) **To present you holy, blameless, above reproach .**
1. **Slide16b John Flavel** - *It is easier to cry against 1000 **sins of others**, than to kill one of your own.*
 2. **Thomas a' Kempis** said, *"Be not angry that you cannot make **others** as you wish them to be, since you cannot make **yourself** as you wish yourself to be."*
- B. (23) **Hope** is a **foundation** on which you stand when all around you is **shaking**.
1. The city of Colosse was located on an *earthquake* area, so Paul's admonition was especially meaningful to them. *Not moved.*
 2. False teachers were trying to shift their foundation.

3. Paul pointed them to Jesus Christ who was: **Savior** (13,14); **Eternal God** (15); **Creator** (16,17); & **Head of the church** (18).

a) What a perfect foundation for our **Hope**.

C. (27) **Christ in you** = hope of glory.

1. **Heaven** is more than a **destination**; it is a **motivation** because *Christ lives within us*.

2. It is a **living hope** (1 Pet. 1:3) that affects how we **think** & **act all day long**.

3. Because **Christ** is **within us**, we need not fear what is **ahead of us**.

4. In the Messianic prophecies of the OT there are many & varied aspects of the coming Christ, **but nowhere** are we told that He would **indwell** His people.

a) The verse right above this reveals this was part of the *divine mystery*, the sacred secret, hid for ages & generations...**but now**, the *proverbial cat* is let out of her bag.

D. **Slide16c Christ for me** is my only **acceptable standing** before God.

Christ in me is my only **true victory** over sin.

Christ through me is my only **real power** for spiritual ministry.

VIII. **Slide17a CHRIST THROUGH ME (28,29)** *which is my Service & Sufficiency*

A. **Him we preach** - So its not only **what** we preach, but truly **whom** we preach.

1. **Slide17b**The theme of Christianity is **not a theory**, **not a set of rules**, **not simply a code of morals**, **not even just a system of truth**; **but a living Person**.

B. **To this end - To what end?** Presenting every man **perfect** (28) [sp. mature. adv stage of sp develop]

1. Here is Paul's *specific object*, his *definite aim*. Why he *preaches, warns, teaches, strives, labors, & works*.

C. **Perfect? You mean sinless? No way...men & women are being perfected.**

Moses stuttered. David's armor didn't fit. John Mark was rejected by Paul. Timothy had ulcers. Hosea's wife was a prostitute. Amos' only training was fig-tree pruning. Jacob was a liar. David had an affair. Solomon was too rich. Jesus was too poor. Abraham was too old. David was too young. Peter was afraid of death. Lazarus was dead. John was self-righteous. Naomi was a widow. Paul was a murderer. So was Moses. Jonah ran from God. Miriam was a gossip. Gideon and Thomas both doubted. Jeremiah was depressed

and suicidal. Elijah was burned out. John the Baptist was a loudmouth. Martha was a worry-wart. Noah got drunk. & Moses had a short fuse. None of these saints were sinless.

1. Slide17c Perfection - never means *sinlessness*, but instead always refers to **maturity, ripeness of character & experience**.
2. From the moment of our conversion we are to **make progress** until we all arrive at **the full ripeness** of our position in Christ.
 - a) Slide17d Eph.4:13msg until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ.
3. Being **perfected** is a process. Its movement forward must be **intentional**. Its 3-stages: *connecting, growing, serving*. We 1st connect with God & others. Then as **connecting believers** we become **growing believers** by deeper spiritual growth. And **growing believers** should become **serving believers**. Movement forward must be **intentional**.

D. In Christ Jesus - We **start** with *Christ in us*, & **end** being, *in Christ*.

E. Every man - notice 3x's. (28 - find *your* name here)

1. Every man/everybody - the doors are flung wide open & **all** are invited to enter
 - a) This universality of the gospel. *All nations, all capacities, rich & poor, old & young, respectable & outcast, peer & peasant*. Because amid all the *differences* there is the same sin, same heart, same need, & therefore the same salvation.

F. Christ **For** Me. Christ **In** Me. Christ **Through** Me.

G. Slide18 F. B. Meyer used to say, *In all His people Christ is present. In some he is prominent. In a few He is pre-eminent.*

[Which of these classifications would you put your name by?]