



LESSON 2

1:2-9 ² *To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.* ³ We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴ because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints— ⁵ the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel ⁶ that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. ⁷ You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, ⁸ and who also told us of your love in the Spirit. ⁹ For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

4.) What are some pictures/illustrations of the growth of the kingdom used in Scripture? (v. 6)
What do these communicate to us?

5.) What was Paul's estimation of Epaphras? What can we learn from his example?

1:9-14 ⁹ *For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.* ¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

1.) What adjective is repeated in verses 9-11? What is the effect?

2.) What are the components and goals of our faith that Paul outlines in v. 9-12?

3.) What was our former condition? What is it now? How did this change take place? (v. 13-14)

1:15-20 ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Notes:

- “Image” (v. 15) = “the exact representation”
- “all things”/“the everything” (v. 16,17,20) = philosophical term for “the universe”
- Once again all/every are used to powerful effect—nothing is exempted here!

1.) How does Paul make it clear that the incarnate Son is not merely the first or foremost creature (as Jehovah’s Witnesses, Islam, and other Arians insist) but is instead fully equal to God and set apart from all created things?

2.) The First Commandment (also Isaiah 40) makes plain that God has no form (he is invisible transcendent spirit) nor is any material thing here to be worshipped. Has God contradicted himself by the incarnation of Jesus?

3.) What does it mean that Jesus is “the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead”? (v. 18)

1 Corinthians 15:20-23 Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³ But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

Hebrews 2:9-10 We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. ¹⁰ In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.

4.) How does verse 19 clarify the relationship and comparative divinity of Father and Son? Are there any other Bible verses that substantiate this truth by speaking in similar terms?

5.) In the light of verse 19, how does verse 20 impress the tremendous price of our reconciliation with God?

1:21-23a ²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— ²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

Notes:

- “his physical body” (v. 22) = lit. ‘the body of his flesh’

- 1.) Paul had already hit on this fact in verse 13! Why bring it up again?
- 2.) In the context of Colossians, why make such ado about Christ's physical/bodily death? (v. 22)
- 3.) Why insert such a conditional warning ("If you continue in faith...") after such a powerful statement of God's saving grace?

1:23b-25 This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. ²⁴ Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. ²⁵ I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— ²⁶ the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints.

Note:

- "I fill up" (v. 24) = "I fill up in place of"

1.) If taken out of context, verse 24 can be open to misinterpretation. Based on what we've already studied what CAN'T these words mean?

Colossians 1:14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:20 through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Colossians 1:22 now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation

Colossians 1:24 ...for the sake of his body, which is the church.

2.) What IS Paul saying about his sufferings?

Acts 9:15-16 But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”

John 15:20 “Remember the words I spoke to you: ‘No servant is greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.”