

Week 4 – Colossians 2:6-15

Living Rooted to Christ, unswayed by false gospel

Recap from last week

So last week we consider the Mystery of God as we read Colossians 1:24 – 2:5. We were reminded of the hope found in the gospel message. Through Jesus, we've been given understanding to the mystery of God. People of all nations can put their trust in Him and He lives in every believer. We can embrace the challenge Paul gives to the Colossians to pursue maturity. We can stand firm in our faith and grow in knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. We can begin by internalizing the truth that Jesus is in us—we don't have to strive to earn salvation or God's approval. Instead, we obey from a place of love and an intimate relationship with God.

We took away possible actions for the week ahead. Jesus reigns supreme over all creation. We live under his supremacy. His rule changes everything for us. We now live in His kingdom—the kingdom of light. We've been freed from sin and death and have been presented as holy before God. We owe our lives to Jesus for what He's done for us.

We took away possible actions for the week ahead.

Pray: Pray the truth that Christ is in you and that this truth would settle into your heart and mind.

Write: We would consider the difference between what it's like to live with the Christ-and-mem against living with Christ in us.

Ask: Talk to someone you consider a mature Christian, and understand what God has used to mature them.

Study: Read John 15 (the Vine and the branches) and take note of the attributes of Christ that appear in the text, praying that God would grow in us the characteristics of Jesus.

Encourage: Share the truths discussed in the passage encouraging us that Christ is in us by talking about the mystery of God.

Remember that each of you can access the participant's guide via our website. Also my transcript of this bible study will be available on the website for you to download. If you go into Latest News, you will see a Category for the Colossians Bible Study.

Straight after the study, before you do anything else, it would be great if you could take 10 mins to stop and using the reflection space to consider how it has impacted you today. And then into this week ahead to do something about it, so the final section called 'Live it out' gives you ideas on how you can live out the passage we have studied.

Introduction

Today we are consider that as Jesus has brought us from death to life and triumphed over every authority, we can now live rooted in Christ and we should therefore not be swayed by any false gospel (which the believers in Colossae were in danger of adopting). So today, like other weeks, our study should change how we think about this topic, it should change our hearts, and if should change our lives :

Head Change: That we know we've been brought from death to life by the power of Jesus and we can now live in a way that reflects His authority.

Heart Change: That we feel confident in the truth of the gospel so that we can stand firm in Christ without being persuaded by a false gospel.

Life Change: We we live a life that reflects the new life we've been given in Christ with a strong foundation in Him.

Describe one of your favorite commercials. What makes that commercial compelling?

Example - SHAKE & VAC advert

Would you say you're persuaded by every advertisement you see?

It's sometimes easy to be persuaded to do something or to change something about our lives. Advertisers bank on that happening.

Advertising expenditure in the United Kingdom is expected to grow to £24 billion in 2021. They are that convinced by the influence it has on the general public.

In this portion of Colossians, Paul cautions the Colossian church to not be led astray by false teaching. Instead, they should find their foundation in Jesus and His gospel.

Let's read Colossians 2:6–15.

[VIDEO begins at 01:12]

Discuss

So there were 4 main phrases that came from the video that we are going to explore further today – they were Follow-up, Foundation, Fullness, and Finished work. We are going to be able to see these from different sections of the reading :

Read Colossians 2:6–7

So Paul urges the Colossians to “live your lives” in Jesus. He uses that phrase often in his books to mean that Christians should continue to walk in their faith (Galatians 2:20, Romans 12:1, 2 Cor 5:17). This is the follow-up stage. It's not about holding on to something that happened to us at a point in time, when we gave our lives over to Jesus, and then we settle into a mode of thinking that everything's done. It's an ongoing active process. We have to live each and every day in Jesus. We continue to keep in step with Jesus after choosing to follow Him, all by His grace through faith.

So last week we talked about building a spiritual maturity, and today we are talking about living our lives in step with Jesus. What does that look like on a daily basis in your actions, and thoughts? And what can cause this to slip?

ACTION – It might be worth taking these 2 verses (6,7) and having them printed somewhere for us to be reminded of it each day.

Verse 7 talks about being rooted and built up in Him. The hidden things we do are what mature us as His followers. As we are built up in our faith, Paul also says that we give thanks. **Why is it so important to walk our lives, rooted in Christ, in thanksgiving?**

Read verse 8.

As we've already discussed in this study, the Colossians were being led astray by what Paul calls a "hollow and deceptive philosophy." Paul was concerned that they were being wrongly influenced that there was a secret insider way to get more access to God. Paul wrote to remind the Colossians of their foundation found only in Jesus and His gospel, not in any secret society.

If we were to read this verse in the Greek, we would find out that Paul is introducing a little pun into his use of words. He says 'take care that nobody takes you captive. This phrase 'takes captive' is *sylagogon* and it is very close to the word for Synagogue. Why would he need to do this? Well if we consider his writings to the Galatians he is conscious that the Jewish Zealots had told the new converts that in becoming Christians they had only got half of what they needed. They now needed to complete their experience by being circumcised and to keep the law of Moses. Paul had argued that this was a complete misunderstanding. They would be buying into a system which wouldn't do them any more good. Colossae wasn't that far away from Galatia. Most towns or areas would have had a synagogue, and Paul was worried that they would fall captive to influences that would suggest their new found faith was not enough. It was an empty deceit built on traditions. Everything must align to Jesus and Jesus alone. Whatever new idea someone comes up with, the acid test is this – does it have Jesus, the Lord, as its centre and focus? If not, be very careful.

The video today encouraged us to filter everything we hear and read outside of Scripture through Jesus. We should ask: Does this idea have its foundation in Jesus and His Word?

When we encounter ideas that are contrary to Jesus and His gospel, we can turn to truth and stand firm instead of going astray. The next two sections of Scripture explain why this is possible. The first section ties to the third word, fullness.

Read verse 9-10

We've already talked about Jesus's divinity back in chapter 1 of Colossians. If Jesus is Lord, then why would anything else be required. If Jesus isn't fully God, then He doesn't have the power to save us. He

had to be both fully God and fully human in order to redeem us through His sacrifice.

Through Jesus—fully God and fully man—we find salvation from sin and death, and we have been filled by him. In Him, we experience the full and complete salvation of God. **Why do you think we're sometimes tempted to think or act as though our salvation isn't enough?**

So here the Colossians were being influenced by two things – circumcision and the Law of Moses. These were the two things that those Jewish Zealots were pushing for in Galatia.

So let's look at circumcision in a bit more details. Read Genesis 17:9-14

So circumcisions was an external sign of that they were part of the covenant people of God.)

Now let's read Romans 2:25-29, and then back to today's passage verses 11 & 12

According to the Romans passage, what was the spiritual significance of circumcision?

To have a heart circumcised by God means to have a heart that is surrendered, obedient, and glorifying to God. When Paul talks about Jesus circumcising our hearts, he's using a relevant image the Jewish people recognized to explain a spiritual reality. Through Jesus we can now enjoy being His covenant people because He made a way for us to be with Him. These verses show how God is the one who secured our salvation through His actions alone. We can't add to it. Paul uses circumcision to explain his point. Circumcision was an external sign of the covenant Israel had with God. But the circumcision Paul talks about in verse 11 is not a physical but a spiritual circumcision. Our flesh, which used to rule us, has been taken off by Jesus. The true circumcision that Paul declares isn't what people do physically to a male body, It's what happens when you are buried with Christ and raised with him through God's power.

In verse 11, Paul uses a word to describe this spiritual circumcision. It doesn't come from something done with human hands, it is done by what God has done for us. In other words, the salvation we receive in Jesus doesn't come by human hands. God Himself saves us, removes the old self, and raises us to new life—all by His power alone.

When we decide to follow Jesus, our old selves die with Him and we're raised to new life. Paul is clear that it's the power of God that both raised Jesus from the dead and brought us to life again.

And so we come to the final point which is the Finished Work of Jesus.

Read verses 13–15.

Not only does Jesus bring us new life, but He also brings the forgiveness of sins. Without Jesus, Paul says we were indebted to God because of our sin. We were guilty. Verse 14 explains that God cancelled our debt by nailing it to the cross.

Through Jesus's death we have been given new life, we are no longer ruled by the flesh, and we're free from guilt before God. Our salvation is a finished work—Jesus did everything necessary to save us.

We still feel the tension because we live in a fallen world. Jesus has not yet returned to restore all things. In the meantime, we faithfully follow Him.

Verse 15 tells us that in addition to all these things, Jesus has disarmed the spiritual authorities that once ruled. When Paul says Jesus made a “public spectacle of them,” he's painting the picture of a Roman practice. When Romans captured an enemy, they'd parade them around, making them look foolish. That's why they mocked Jesus the way they did with the crown of thorns and the robe. So here is Paul, chained in a prison cell, and yet he understands where the ultimate victory comes from - the risen and reigning Jesus.

How could Paul's perspective shape the way you view your present circumstances? What could be different about us and the way we perceive the situations we're in if we remembered Jesus's victory on the cross?

So we don't need anything other than or on top of Jesus. He is the fulfilment of everything and he is Lord over all. If we think of our world today, our own community, and we consider our awareness of the distractions and influences pulling on people, what are those attractions that are most likely to draw new Christians away from the fulfilment they already have in Jesus?

Last Word

When we root ourselves in Jesus and His gospel message, we are able to discern when people and spiritual authorities try to deceive us.

Jesus has overthrown these powers—He triumphed over them through the cross. We've received the fullness of salvation through His finished work. Nothing can undo the work Jesus has done to save us.

This week, let's ask God to deepen our roots in Him. As we close, let's thank Him for what He's done for us.

Living it Out

Pray: Pray God would deepen your foundation in Him and the gospel this week. Ask Him to refresh the gospel message in you.

Give Thanks: Verse 7 of this passage talks about overflowing with gratitude. Write down one thing you're thankful for every day this week and praise God for how He's moved in your life.

Study: Deepen your understanding of the gospel by studying the first eight chapters of Romans. Take your time and write out your thoughts as you go. You are going to read about the power of the Gospel, you are going to see how righteousness comes through faith in Jesus, you are going to learn about justification by faith apart from works, you are going to learn about being released from the law and living a life free from this and a new life of the spirit, and you are going to learn that nothing can ever separate us from the Love of Christ.

Create: Make something this week that reflects the truth that you've been brought from death to life. Place your creation somewhere you'll see it to remind yourself that you're alive in Christ.

Memorize: Memorize Colossians 2:6–7 this week. Write it down and place it somewhere you'll see it throughout your day.