

“Complete In Christ”
Colossians 2:9-23
11/26/23
Message 6

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “Complete In Christ”

- **Illustration – Attempted Hijacking**

- **Personal Illustration**

- The Year 1987
 - Only a few months old in the Lord
 - Had questions about the Jewish people killing Jesus – Confused on the subject
 - I was Working one day at the BK –
 - Small group of guys come in – were talking they say they are Christians
 - I am like this is cool – so am I
 - Well, they were talking about how the Jewish people killed Jesus and the church has replace Israel
 - At this point I Had no idea what they were even talking about
 - A Co-working (believer) warned me to stay away from them – BAD Doctrine
 - At the time I did not understand – I was still a bit new and confused
 - Looking back on it –

- This co-worker potential saved my faith from being hijacked by bad people
- **This is Paul's Concern**
 - That the Colossians Would have their faith hijacked by
 - FALSE Teaching
 - Bad Ideas

• **This was the Problem in Colossae - False Teaching – Bad Ideas**

- **Remember Epaphras**
 - Has made his way to Paul to inform him of the problems
 - The Problem –
 - False Teaching and Bad Philosophy was hurting this young church
- **KNOWN as - The Colossian Heresy**
 - **It was the combination of several religious systems.**
 - Jewish Legalism (Col. 2:16-17)
 - Oriental Mysticism (Col. 2:18-19)
 - Greek Asceticism (Col. 2:20-23)
 - Gnosticism (Col. 2:1-23)
 - **Brief Review of Gnosticism**
 - A Dualism regarding Spirit and Matter
 - Gnostics assert that Matter is Inherently Evil
 - But the Spirit is good.
 - As a result

- They believe anything done in the body, even the grossest sin, has no meaning because real life exists in the “Spirit Realm Only!”
- They also claim to possess an “Elevated Knowledge”
 - Gnosticism comes from the Greek word Gnosis which means
 - “To Know.”
 - But they claimed - A “Higher Knowledge / Truth”
 - Of Course this was only known by a certain FEW
 - (Special People who have arrived)
 - A higher knowledge
 - Not from the Bible
 - But acquired on some mystical higher plane of existence.
 - A Redefinition of Words / Terms
 - They would CHANGE the Meaning of Words
 - Many of the terms used in Gnosticism are used by Paul
 - It is very possible that the Gnostics stole their terms from Paul and the Scriptures.
 - It is also very likely that Paul was trying to attack their heresy and speak the truth about these terms

- Taking the correct definition of these words back!

- **Last Week – Review**

- We will look at 9 Powerful Principles to Being –

- ROOTED, BUILT UP, & ESTABLISHED

- In order that they would stand strong against False Teaching

- Be Encouraged vs. 1-2a
- Be Knit Together v. 2b
- Be Knowledgeable v. 2c-3
- Be On Guard v. 4
- Be Orderly & Steadfast v. 5
- Be Walking v. 6
- Be Rooted, Built Up, Established v. 7
- Be AWARE vs. 8-9
- Be Complete v. 10

- **This Morning 5 POWERFUL Truth in Being Complete In Christ**

- Be Circumcised In Heart vs. 9-12
- Be Complete In Christ vs. 13-15
- Be Free From Man Made Laws vs. 16-17
- Be Careful vs. 18-19
- Be FREE In CHRIST vs. 20-23

Be Circumcised In Heart vs. 9-12

- **First: In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead v. 9**

Colossians 2:9 (NKJV)

9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

- **1st Breakdown Words**

- Dwells – Greek: Katoikeo

- Means: To settle; inhabit; to be “at home”
- Fullness – Greek: Pleroma (Play-RO-ma)
 - Means: That which is (has been) filled
 - A word the Gnostic misused – a god who was not physical
 - A Level to attain to
- Godhead – Greek: Theotes –
 - Means: Deity; the state of being God
- Bodily – Greek: Somatikos
 - Means: Bodily, corporally
- **2nd Purpose To Counter - Gnosticism**
 - Docetism - A doctrine found in Gnostic writings.
 - It is the teaching that Jesus did not have a physical, fleshly body.
 - They thought that Jesus was just a spirit being.
 - John (who also wrote against Gnosticism) writes

1 John 4:3 (NKJV)

3 and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

- Paul say's Fullness
 - Word of God = “Fullness”
 - The sum total of all that God is

- ALL of His being and attributes.
- A BOLD declaration – JESUS is GOD - LORD
- **Nothing needs to be added to Christ because He already is the very fullness of God**
- **3rd Jesus IS LORD**
 - Since all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus
 - This verse Separates the TRUTH of God’s Word vs. CULTS
 - A Test for False Teaching vs. Truth
 - “Where does it put Jesus Christ—Where does it put His person and His work?”
 - Does it rob Him of His fullness?
 - Does it deny either His deity or His humanity?
 - Does it affirm that the believer must have some “new experience” to supplement his experience with Christ?
 - If so, that teaching is wrong and dangerous.

• **Second: And you are complete in Him v. 10**

Colossians 2:10 (NKJV)

10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

- **1st Complete In HIM**
 - Complete –
 - Greek: Pleroo

- Means: To make full, to make complete in every particular, to render perfect

- **Perfect Participle – Done in the past but results continue into the present.**

- **Paul says that this is a fact to be enjoyed, NOT a status to be achieved.**

- When a person is born again into the family of God, he is born complete in Christ.

- **Spurgeon gives a good definition of our completeness**

- 1st Complete without the aid of Jewish ceremony
- 2nd Complete without the help of philosophy
- 3rd Complete without the inventions of superstition.
- 4th Complete without human merit.

- **2nd Head of all principality and power v. 10b**

Colossians 2:10 (NKJV)

10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

- Jesus Christ is the creator and ruler of the universe and all its spiritual beings
 - Principality and power describes ranks of angelic beings, either faithful or fallen angelic beings
 - (Romans 8:38, Ephesians 1:21, Ephesians 3:10, Ephesians 6:12).
 - Paul here declares Jesus' authority over all spirit beings.

- **Third: In Him you were also circumcised v. 11**

Colossians 2:11 (NKJV)

11 *In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,*

- **1st Circumcised**

- Greek: Peritemno
- Means: To cut around; to circumcise
 - Circumcision was a ritual that started with Abraham (Gen. 17).
 - It involved cutting a certain piece of the male anatomy.
- **It was an Outward Sign –**
 - It was to be a sign with Abraham
 - All his male descendants that they were going to follow God
 - BY Cutting the foreskin away
- **Spiritual Sign**
 - To show what had taken place on the Inside Spiritual Sign
 - Spiritually it was signified death to the flesh
 - A putting aside of the evil, corrupt, unregenerate nature of man
 - A walking with God
- **Unfortunately...**

- The Jewish people became occupied with the literal ceremony
 - BUT neglected its spiritual meaning
- The Religion was more important than the Relationship
 - They saw it as a MAN - Made Attempt to be right with
 - To achieve favor with God through ceremonies and good works
 - They were saying in effect that there was something in human flesh which could please God.
- **2nd Circumcision made Without Hands**
 - **Physical circumcision is not what we are talking about here**
 - BUT rather that Spiritual Circumcision
 - **Note - Most of the Colossian Christians**
 - Were Gentiles who had never been physically circumcised.
 - Paul assures them that they were indeed circumcised in a spiritual sense
 - Which is even more important than physical circumcision.
 - **The circumcision Made Without Hands.**
 - What the verse is teaching is this
 - **Every believer is circumcised by the circumcision of Christ!**

- The circumcision of Christ refers to His death on the cross of Calvary.
- The thought is that when the Lord Jesus died
 - The believer died also.
 - He died to sin (Rom. 6:11)
 - To the law, to self (Gal. 2:20)
 - To the world (Gal. 6:14)
- **Made without hands**
 - The sense that human hands can have no part in it by way of merit.
 - Man cannot deserve or earn it.
 - It is God's work

• **Sixth: By the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism v. 12**

Colossians 2:12 (NKJV)

12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

- **1st Buried With Him In Baptism**
 - Buried with
 - Greek: Sunthapto (“with” + “bury”)
 - Means: To bury together with
 - It's a picture of you being buried with someone else.
 - Baptism –

- Greek: Baptisma –
- Means: immersion, submersion
- **2nd Raised with –**
 - Raised With
 - Greek: Sunegeiro (“with” + “raise”)
 - Means: To raise together
 - Just as circumcision was meant to be a picture, so was baptism.
- **3rd What Baptism Symbolizes**
 - As you are lowered in the water,
 - It’s a picture of you being “buried with Him”, dying with Him.
 - OLD man is NOW Dead
 - Sins Forgiving
 - As you are raised out of the water
 - It’s a picture of you being raised with Jesus.
 - New man is ALIVE
 - Brand New in Christ
- **4th Through FAITH**
 - Faith – Greek: Pistis
 - We are Saved by Grace through Faith.

- 1st A Work Of God –
 - No Man can obtain on his own
- 2nd Faith IN
 - IN CHRIST
 - Faith is only as good as the thing we are putting our faith in!
 - Christ is TRUTH – Our Faith is in good hands

Be Complete In Christ vs. 13-15

• First: And you, being dead v. 13a

Colossians 2:13 (NKJV)

13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

○ 1st Paul reminds them of their life before Christ.

- Our sins made us spiritually dead
 - Completely cut off from God.
- Our hearts were consumed by our flesh
 - All we could think about was doing the wrong things.

• Second: He has made alive together with Him v. 13c

Colossians 2:13 (NKJV)

13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

○ **1st Having Forgiven –**

▪ **Forgiven - Greek: Charizomai –**

- Means: To do something pleasant or agreeable, to do a favor to; to grant forgiveness, to pardon

▪ **This word is built on the word for “GRACE” – Greek: Charis.**

- The root idea of Charis
 - Is the idea of a gift
 - Something that has been given to you.

▪ **What has been given to us FORGIVENESS**

- All our SINS
 - Past
 - Present
 - Future
 - Have been forgiven

○ **2nd Lesson - God “Graces” us.**

▪ He gives us the Gift of Forgiveness.

- We should have been the ones dying on the cross
- But He dies in our place.

▪ May We give GRACE – FORGIVENESS Too

Ephesians 4:32 (NKJV)

32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

- **Third: Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us v. 14a**

Colossians 2:14 (NKJV)

14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

- **1st Handwriting –**

- Greek: Cheirographon (“hand” + “writing”)
- Means: Used of a certificate of debt or bond, an “IOU”.
 - When you sign your checks with your signature, you are pledging to pay.
- Referred to
 - The handwritten certificate of debt by which a debtor acknowledged his indebtedness.
 - All people (Rom. 3:23) owe God an unpayable debt for violating His law

- **2nd Requirements –**

- Greek: Dogma
- Means: The rules and requirements of the law of Moses
- The 10 Commandments of God
 - They are the Details of what we owe to God.
- The Jews are obligated to the Law
 - Because that’s what Judaism is all about.
- Gentiles are also obligated to the Law

- Because we know in our hearts that it is the standard of right and wrong (Rom. 2:14).
- God's HOLY Requirements are seen in the LAW
- **3rd Contrary –**
 - Greek: Hupenantios
 - Means: Opposed to, contrary to, an adversary
 - The Law of Moses exposes who we are before a HOLY GOD
 - This is not a pretty picture
- **4th Wiped Out –**
 - Greek: Exaleipho –
 - Means: To wipe off; to obliterate, erase, blot out
 - Paul graphically compares God's forgiveness of believers' sins to wiping ink off a parchment.
- **5th Taken it out of the way**
 - Greek: airo
 - Means: To raise up; carry off
 - The word is a "Perfect Tense"
 - Meaning it has happened in the past and the results continue on to the present.
 - Jesus has taken the things that condemn us out of the way!

• **Fourth: Having nailed it to the cross v. 14b**

Colossians 2:14 (NKJV)

14 *having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

○ **1st Having Nailed**

- The list of debts against me has been nailed to the cross!
- Your debts are not on a list in front of your face.
- They have been raised up and nailed to the cross. - They remain there.
- Jesus died to pay your debts.
- He exclaimed, “It is FINISHED”
 - A phrase that means “the debt has been paid”

• **Fifth: Having disarmed principalities and powers v. 15**

Colossians 2:15 (NKJV)

15 *Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

○ **1st He disarmed principalities and powers.**

- Our Enemy has been disarmed
 - These ranks of hostile angelic beings (Romans 8:38, Ephesians 1:21, Ephesians 3:10, Ephesians 6:12)
 - Don't have the same weapons to use against Christians that they have against those who are not in Jesus.
- We FIGHT – FROM VICTORY NOT FOR VICTORY

○ **2nd Triumphing over them:**

- Paul used similar phrasing in 2 Corinthians 2:14

- Where he had in mind the
 - Roman Victory Parade
 - Where a conquering general led his defeated captives through the streets in triumph.

Be Free From Man Made Laws vs. 16-17

• **First: So let no one judge you v. 16a**

Colossians 2:16 (NKJV)

16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

- **1st SO**
 - The opening “SO” is important.
 - It connects this thought with the previous thought.
 - Because Jesus won such a glorious victory on the cross
 - We are to let no one judge you in food or in drink or in other matters related to legalism.
 - A life that is centered on Jesus and what He did on the cross has no place for legalism –
 - We are FREE From
 - Man Made Laws
 - The Law of Moses (Jewish Legalism) – in that it was fulfilled in CHRIST
- **2nd Food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come:**

- Food and Drink
 - The Old Testament LAW
 - Special Diet
 - N.T. Testament
 - Special Diet Done away
 - All Food are CLEAN
 - (1 Timothy 4:4-5)
- Festivals, New Moon & Sabbath
 - Festival –
 - The Mosaic Law lists several times a year that the Jews were to appear before the Lord and celebrate the various feasts like Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.
 - New Moon –
 - One of the Jewish laws speaks about a burnt offering that was to be made on the first of every month. (Num. 28:11)
 - Sabbaths –
 - The sixth commandment for the Jew was to honor God on the Sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11).
 - We no longer celebrate the Sabbath because we now worship on the “Lord’s Day” (Revelation 1:10), the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:2; Acts 20:7), the day which commemorates the Resurrection (John 20)

• **Second: Which Are a Shadow v. 17**

Colossians 2:17 (NKJV)

17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

- **1st Were only the shadows.**
 - The real thing Jesus
 - Real righteousness is not going to come from the shadows,
 - But from the real thing – JESUS

Be Careful vs. 18-19

- **First: Taking delight in false humility and worship of angels v. 18a**

Colossians 2:18 (NKJV)

18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

- **1st Let No One Cheat You**
 - Cheat – Greek: Katabrabeuo
 - Means: To decide as umpire against someone; to cheat someone of their rightful prize or victory
 - The word used for “cheat” in verse 8
 - Seemed to paint the picture of “pirates”.
 - Paul is warning the Colossians that when they get seduced into some of these heresies they are being CHEATED from their reward
- **2nd False Humility –**
 - Oriental Mysticism

- By luring them into irrational mysticism.
- By manufacturing a False humility
- Some people make a big show of just how humble they are.
 - And it's fake.
 - If humility is real, nobody has to talk you in to how humble they are.
- **3rd Worship of angels –**
 - Angels NOT GOD – (Touched BY An Angel)
 - Mary NOT God – (Church of ROME)
 - It's easy for man to create a god of his choosing – To make him feel better about his SINFUL condition
- **Lesson**
 - Don't get cheated
 - There is one thing that will bring forgiveness - Jesus.
 - His death on the cross for you is all you need.

• **Second: Intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head vs. 18b**

Colossians 2:18 (NKJV)

18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, **intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,**

- **1st Some Mystical Vison**
 - Gnostics

- Oriental Mysticism
- Mormons
- A Special knowledge – vision

• **Third: From whom all the body v. 19b**

Colossians 2:19 (NKJV)

19 *and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.*

- **1st Not Holding Fast to the HEAD**
 - Jesus
 - The Colossians are running the risk of becoming disconnected to their Head.
 - But when a body is connected to the Head,
 - Then the rest can function.
 - The joints and ligaments can do their thing.
- **2nd The Increase that is from God –**
 - Could it be possible that there is a “growth” or “increase” that is not from God?
 - Yes – Man can draw a crowd – BUT ONLY GOD can SAVE a SOUL
- **3rd Lesson - Stay close to Jesus**
 - Personally
 - As a church

Be FREE In CHRIST vs. 20-23

- **First: Therefore If We Dies With Christ v. 20a**

Colossians 2:20 (NKJV)

20 Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—

- **1st If you died with Christ –**
 - When Christ died, He died for us, in our place.
 - And so, in a sense, we died with Him.
 - His death was a substitution for ours.
 - We NO LONGER LIVE – (Gal. 2:20)

- **Second: You died with Christ from the basic principles of the world v. 20b**

Colossians 2:20 (NKJV)

20 Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—

- **1st Basic Principles**
 - Refer to Rituals and Ordinance
 - These things no longer have a hold on them.
 - Remembering
 - This is the key to living above legalism.
 - Our identification with Jesus

- **Third: According to the commandments and doctrines of men vs. 21-22**

Colossians 2:21–22 (NKJV)

21 “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,”

22 *which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men?*

- **1st Do Not**

- Greek Asceticism
- Disciplining SELF – to obtain a spiritual blessings
- Eating or not eating certain foods do not make you right with God.

- **Fourth: These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom... v. 23**

Colossians 2:23 (NKJV)

23 *These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.*

- APPEARANCE of Wisdom

- But that's about all they have...
- Religion or Relationship
- Self-imposed religion is man reaching to God, trying to justify himself by keeping a list of rules.
- Christianity is God reaching down to man in love through Christ.

Closing

- Paul's Heart – Understand WHO you ARE in CHRIST
- So nothing can CHEAT you from ALL that is in Christ