

Lesson 13 2 May, 2021

Steadfast in Christ

Lesson Scope: [Colossians 2](#)

References in brackets relate to Lesson Scope unless noted otherwise

Lesson Focus:

In the second chapter of Colossians, Paul continues to point the believers to Christ. Christ is the one “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (2:3). In Him dwells “all the fulness of the Godhead” (2:9), and we are “complete in him” (2:10). All the worldly, pagan philosophies of the Colossians’ day and ours fall far short of what Christ has to offer. The Gospel of Christ is simple but powerful. It has proven its ability to quicken those who are dead in sin. Christ is the source of the believer’s completeness and the only remedy for sin. This conviction is essential for guarding against error.

The apostle uses some descriptive phrases, such as “vain deceit,” “vainly puffed up,” and “intruding into those things which he hath not seen,” to show the emptiness of false teachings. In contrast, faith in Jesus Christ introduces us to the one in whom is all the fullness-of the Godhead; we are complete in Him, and we can be risen with Him. The ordinances referred to in the latter part of the chapter are not church regulations designed to help us keep a safe distance from sin. Instead, these restrictions grow out of a mindset that focuses on a good exterior but does not deal with the will or the condition of the heart.

Lesson Aim: To encourage unwavering faith in Jesus Christ.

Theme Verses:

[Jude 20-21](#). But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Lesson Text:

Walking in Christ

Colossians 2:1-7 ^(KJV) For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; ² That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; ³ In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. ⁵ For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. ⁶ As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him: ⁷ Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Complete in Christ

Colossians 2:8-17 ^(KJV) Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. ⁹ For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. ¹⁰ And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: ¹¹ In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: ¹² Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; ¹⁴ Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; ¹⁵ And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. ¹⁶ Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: ¹⁷ Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

Increasing in Christ

Colossians 2:18-23 ^(KJV) Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things

which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, ¹⁹ And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with the increase of God. ²⁰ Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, ²¹ (Touch not; taste not; handle not; ²² Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? ²³ Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

Questions for Study:

Walking in Christ

1. What does it take for a group to be “knit together in love” (2:2)?
2. How does order promote steadfastness (2:5)?
3. What are some practices in our heritage that stabilize us (2:7)?

Complete in Christ

4. What are some present-day philosophies that would threaten us (2:8)?
5. In what ways are We made complete in Christ (2:10)?
6. What is our part in letting no man judge us (2:16)?

Increasing in Christ

7. How do we know if we are attached to the Head (2:19)?
8. What are the ordinances the Christian is dead to (2:20)?
9. Why should the Christian not need to be “subject to ordinances (2:20)?

Analysing the Passage:

The word order (2:5) means “orderly system or regular arrangement.” This word used along with the phrase “steadfastness of your faith” in verse 5 indicates that the Colossians were not being “tossed . . . about with every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4:14). In verse 7 the word rooted suggests the root system of a tree, which provides nourishment and stability. In facing the changing threats of time, stability is needed as well as a rigorous, thriving spiritual life that is finding one’s needs met in Christ. The word beguiles in verse 4 means “to deceive by false reasoning.” In verse 18 the word beguile carries the thought of an umpire in a game deciding against a player. It is a continuation of the thought begun in verse 16 of being judged. The Colossians were not to be

intimidated by the judgment passed on them by those who were holding to philosophies and traditions of men (2:8).

Principles and Applications:

Walking in Christ

1. A healthy brotherhood bond goes hand in hand with faith in Christ (2:2). The Spirit's work in the lives of the believers draws them together. This healthy brotherhood produces an environment in which the understanding of God's workings can grow. It links people together and provides a greater defense against error. In our day of easy communications, we need to be careful that we do not substitute easily formed surface relationships for the place of a brotherhood in our lives.

2. An orderly church life is fertile soil in which faith can flourish (2:5). A lack of clearly defined faith and practice leaves a group very vulnerable to the philosophies of the world. When there is order and a system it is easier to identify innovations and false teachers. This is especially important in passing on the faith.

3. Those with unwavering faith in Christ receive their nourishment and stability from Him (2:6-7). When we find freedom from guilt, experience victory over sin, and grow in our Christian life, this is evidence of receiving nourishment from Christ. This nourishment comes from reading the Word and allowing the Spirit to minister to our needs. When trials and afflictions come, we need to draw more nourishment from Christ instead of turning to the philosophies of this world.

4. Faith in Christ gives fullness and meaning to life (2:7). The Christian life is an abundant life. With the Spirit in our hearts, we have access to all the resources needed to be fruitful Christians. The Spirit also brings an assurance of belonging to God (Romans 8:15) that brings rest and joy to our lives.

Complete in Christ

5. We must be convinced of the full deity of Jesus Christ (2:9). Jesus, in discussing who He was with the Pharisees, said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). If Jesus were not deity, He would have no power to save us. The Spirit in our lives will testify to the deity of Christ. His name Emmanuel, meaning "God with us" (Matthew 1:23), also testifies to His deity.

6. Faith in Christ enables us to say no to sin (2:11). In our carnal nature Satan has an ally that can lead us into sin. Only as we allow Christ through His Spirit to work in our hearts can we properly discern issues and have the strength to do what we know is right. We live in a time when things that were once secretive and hidden are open and enticing. But Christ's strength remains sufficient for victory today.

7. Faith in Christ's death and resurrection is the key to spiritual life (2:12-13). As Christians, we put to death our self-life and desires. It is only as we are willing to experience this death that the new life, we find in Christ can blossom and grow. The resurrection power at work in our life enables us to break the stranglehold of sin and experience a new life in Christ.

8. Believing in Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament Law is a key to steadfastness (2:14-17). The Old Testament Law reminded man of his inability to meet God's standards. When Jesus died on the cross, the Old Testament came to an end and a new way was opened for man to be right with God. There is nothing to be gained by seeking to incorporate the Old Testament Law into New Testament experiences. The Law pointed forward to Christ. Today Christ has come, and we can experience fullness of life in Him.

Increasing in Christ

9. Faith in Christ enables one to discern false spirituality and false worship (2:18-19). We must experience rest and fulfillment in Christ to avoid being susceptible to error. If we are unfulfilled and restless, we will be much more open to someone who claims to have something better. Anyone who is not in submission to the body is probably not receiving direction from the Head and is not safe to follow.

10. Those who are steadfast in Christ avoid asceticism (2:20-23). The sincere Christian will be serious about self-denial. The focus of self-denial is to keep our carnal nature from having opportunity for self-expression. Asceticism is a focus on physical denial that puts too much emphasis on works and ultimately on the ascetics themselves. It is possible to weaken ourselves spiritually by not paying proper attention to the needs of our bodies. Ultimately, we want our self-denial to strengthen us spiritually and to bring glory to God and not to ourselves.

Important Teachings

1. A healthy brotherhood bond goes hand in hand with faith in Christ (2:2).
2. An orderly church life is fertile soil in which faith can flourish (2:5).
3. Those with unwavering faith in Christ receive their nourishment and stability from Him (2:6-7).
4. Faith in Christ gives fullness and meaning to life (2:7).
5. We must be convinced of the full deity of Jesus Christ (2:9).
6. Faith in Christ enables us to say no to sin (2:11).
7. Faith in Christ's death and resurrection is the key to spiritual life (2:12—13).
8. Believing in Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament Law is a key to steadfastness (2:14-17).
9. Faith in Christ enables one to discern false spirituality and false worship (2:18-19).
10. Those who are steadfast in Christ avoid asceticism (2:20-23).
11. Men and Women of faith build upon the sound teaching of the past (2:7).

Answers to Questions

1. What does it take for a group to be “knit together in love” (2:2)?
A shared experience of a new life in Christ, the love of God “shed abroad in our hearts” (Romans 5:5), and a united defense of the faith knit a group together in love.
2. How does order promote steadfastness (2:5)?
For there to be order, there needs to be structure, authority, and a united effort. Where church life is orderly, the church and the home can work in harmony. An environment is produced that encourages people to grow in their faith and to develop ability.
3. What are some practices in our heritage that stabilize us (2:7)?
A strong teaching program that includes a Bible-based curriculum in our schools, Bible schools, instruction classes, and a time of proving for applicants to church membership helps to stabilize us.
4. What are some present-day philosophies that would threaten us (2:8)?
Philosophies of child training that do not require a surrendered will on the part of the child and philosophies that relieve us of our accountability for our actions because of our circumstances are a few that threaten us.

5. In what ways are we made complete in Christ (2:10)?

The Holy Spirit in our lives brings a fullness and completeness that we do not find any other way. The Spirit mellows us and helps us see ourselves as God sees us. He helps us to mature so that instead of becoming set in our ways, we can grow spiritually as we grow older.

6. What is our part in letting no man judge us (2:16)?

When we have repented and received forgiveness of sins, our slate is clear before God (1 John 1:9). If we continue to walk with God, we can have confidence in Him. We should be careful whom we allow to evaluate our spiritual walk. We should look to parents, church leaders, and other mature, faithful Christians we can trust. We should not allow ourselves to be unsettled in our walk with God by people who are not in harmony with the church. To become unsettled and unsure can open us to false teachers.

7. How do we know if we are attached to the Head (2:19)?

This verse is referring to those in verse 16 who would pass judgment on others. If someone is attached to the Head, he will be in harmony with His body, the church. If we are personally attached to the Head, our influence in the body will be a positive one. We will be able to find a place to fill that will harmonize with the efforts of our brethren.

8. What are the ordinances the Christian is dead to (2:20)?

It seems they were regulations that were designed to keep men from the contamination of the material, physical world rather than from the contamination of sin. For Christians, physical contamination does not automatically mean spiritual contamination, as it did in the Old Testament. In that sense we are dead to ordinances like “taste not,” and “handle not.”

9. Why should the Christian not need to be “subject to ordinances” (2:20)?

The physical World is not evil of itself. Contamination comes from our own wayward heart and carnal nature. The physical world becomes a source of evil when it is used to contaminate our souls. The Spirit of God in our hearts and a strong commitment to a spiritual brotherhood will guide us safely through this world.

Summarizing the Lesson:

Christ is the greatest revelation of God to man. John Wrote, “Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3). There

is nothing to be found that is more satisfying or spiritual than what we can experience through a simple, unswerving faith in Jesus Christ.

Research Guide:

1. Read the introduction to the Book of Colossians in Halley's Bible Handbook, which gives some insight into the error the Colossians were facing.
2. In Doctrines of the Bible, read the chapter "God the Son" as added inspiration on the work and person of Christ.