

We Are Complete In Christ

Colossians 2:1-15 (J.B. Phillips New Testament)

A. Introduction

1. Many people think of salvation as the finish line. In reality, it is the starting line.
2. Birth is the beginning of life, not the completion of it.
3. In the same way, spiritual birth is the beginning of a lifelong journey of growth.
4. But God's purpose is to transform us into the likeness of His Son.
5. The Colossians were being tempted to look beyond Christ for spiritual fullness.
6. Paul writes to remind them that everything they need is already found in Jesus.
7. He clearly teaches that Christ has paid for our sin & reconciled us to God.

B. The State of the Colossian Church

1. The church at Colossae was facing a dangerous threat, false teaching.
2. There was a mixture of ideas that sounded spiritual, intellectual, & attractive.
3. Yet they undermined the sufficiency of Jesus Christ.
4. Paul wrote this letter to reaffirm the supremacy and sufficiency of Christ.
5. Similar ideas continue to challenge Christians today.
6. The Colossian church had some problems that Paul addresses.
7. Legalism, ritual observances, Ascetic practices, Greek philosophy etc
8. They all pointed believers away from Christ.
9. God warns to correct Christian beliefs, practices & to preserve the church health.
10. Warnings can be seen to be an expression of God's love to us.
11. False teachers didn't reject Christ, but taught that Christ alone was not enough.
12. The most dangerous heresies don't deny all truth; they mix it with error.
13. Satan succeeds by persuading people to add something to Christ.

C. Where Did They Go Wrong?

1. Paul warned against false teaching claiming special wisdom beyond the gospel.
2. Many philosophies, built on false foundations, claiming life apart from God.
3. The central error was that Christ was presented as necessary but not sufficient.
4. The false teachers suggested believers needed something more:
5. Paul's response was clear "You are complete in Him." Colossians 2:9-10
6. Every false religion & false gospel ultimately teach some form of "Christ plus."
7. Paul says, "No. Christ is enough."
8. When we add anything to Christ for salvation, we undermine the gospel.

D. How Did Paul Answer The Colossian Heresy?

1. Paul taught that Christ is the supreme power over all powers, Christ fully God.
2. If Christ is fully God, there is no higher authority to seek.
3. Paul presents Jesus as Creator & Sustainer of all things
4. Nothing and no one can compare with Christ.
5. Paul's central message is that believers are complete in Christ (v. 10)

6. We do not need something beyond Christ, as He is sufficient for all things.
7. Everything necessary for salvation is found in Jesus.
8. Christ plus anything equals a distorted gospel. Christ alone is enough.
9. Christ has given us a new life (vv. 11-13)
10. Christ produces genuine spiritual growth as believers remain connected to Him.
11. Like a body receives life from its head, believers receive life from Jesus.
12. All true spiritual growth flows from a living relationship with Christ.
13. We grow through dependence on Christ, not through man-made systems.
14. Christ has won the victory (vv. 14-15)
15. Paul says Christ cancelled the debt against us & nailed it to the cross.
16. Paul points to the Cross and says the victory has already been won.

E. Modern Forms of the Colossian Heresy

1. Though the ancient heresy has passed, its ideas remain.
2. Christ plus good works, but The Bible teaches salvation is entirely by grace.
3. Some groups claim Christ plus secret knowledge:
4. Yet God has fully revealed salvation in Christ.
5. Christ plus religious performance- trusting in human effort instead of Christ alone
6. True faith rests upon God's Word rather than changing emotions.
7. Many people believe: "Jesus can help me become a better version of myself."
8. But Christianity is not self-improvement, it's Christ transforming sinners.

F. Conclusion

1. The Colossian heresy taught that Christ was not enough.
2. Paul's message was very clear. Christ is supreme. Christ is sufficient.
3. Christ is the source of all spiritual growth. Christ is all we need for salvation.
4. The church must continually guard against teachings that add anything to Christ.
5. The gospel remains the same:
6. **Christ alone saves.**
7. **Christ alone satisfies.**
8. **Christ alone is sufficient.**
9. The question for every believer is not merely:
10. "Do I believe in Christ?"
11. The deeper question is:
12. "Am I trusting Christ alone?"
13. Have I begun looking elsewhere for what can only be found in Him?
14. "As therefore you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith" (Colossians 2:6-7).