

You are Complete in Him Colossians 2:8-15

Thanksgiving Afternoon in 1971 in Portland, Oregon A storm was blowing in from the west...rainy/windy/dreary.

A man in his mid 40's bought an airline ticket to fly from Portland to Seattle, Washington.

Once the plane was in the air he called to the flight attendant, and gave her a note. Then he opened his "carry-on" bag to show her a bomb, with dynamite and wires attached.

Flight 462 was now officially hijacked by a man known as D.B. Cooper.

The plane landed in Seattle and everyone got off except Cooper & the Flight Crew. Cooper demanded \$200,000 and 4 parachutes.

The plane took back off, and somewhere over the Washington State wilderness, Cooper took one of the parachutes, opened the rear door of the plane, and jumped with his money. **D.B. Cooper has never been found.**

How was D.B. Cooper able to carry a bomb aboard an American airliner?

In 1971, there was no security at American airports. No security gates, no gun/bomb detection devices.

The security steps that are now routine in airports were not in place in 1971.

As a result, Cooper was able to completely take control of a Boeing 727 and its passengers/crew.

They landed where he demanded and did everything he said.

The passengers/crew of Flight 462 lost all control over their lives...They had been hijacked!

This is Paul's concern for the believers in Colossae –He doesn't want to see them get hijacked by False teachers & Vain Philosophies RD V. 8

8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic

principles of the world, and not according to Christ

The word Beware is the Greek word blep'-o/ it means to be in a state of constant watchfulness, to be always on the lookout for.

A)The idea being that these conflicting world views, these conflicting philosophies, are going to be coming at us from every direction

B) We need to be watching so that we are not cheated in our faith

1) The word **Cheated** is a military term that described what a conquering army would do to the people they had just conquered

C) They would take their possessions as spoil and take them away as captives !!!

So Paul is warning the believers in Colossae – be on guard so that no one is able to cheat you in the faith

A) Rob you of the joy that you have in Christ. Take away the Rest that is yours thru Him /

Take away your effectiveness for Christ/ ... Victory and take you Captive

B) Now we have talked about the false teachers who were seeking to infiltrate the Church in Colossae w/ their deceptive philosophies

1) **There were 4 main groups - The Gnostics** were getting them off on a quest for deeper knowledge and weird philosophies –

C) **The Judaizers** were sucking them into legalism and rituals and a return to the Law.

1) **The Mystics** were trying to get them into the worship of Angels

D) And **The Essenes** were trying to tell them that spirituality came through self denial and hyper-self discipline.

E) Paul is going to address each one of these in this Chapter – but He begins by addressing the deceptive Philosophies of the Gnostics

The word philosophy comes from two Greek words, φιλοιο "to love," and Σοφια

“wisdom.” Philosophy is the love and pursuit of wisdom

A) Now let me say that the Bible is not down on knowledge or learning, or the pursuit of Wisdom.

B) Its just the opposite, we read in the Book of Proverbs 3:13-14

13 Happy is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding; 14 For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, And her gain than fine gold.

C) God wants us to acquire wisdom and knowledge, but the question is **always going to be the source.**

1) Where is this wisdom and knowledge going to come from, are we going to God or are we looking for it somewhere else.

D) Listen, if your **car breaks down**, I wouldn't tell you to read your Bible. I would tell you to read your automotive manual. [Mechanic]

1) If your **arm breaks**, I wouldn't tell you to read your Bible. I would tell you to go to a doctor or read a medical manual.

E) But for matters of the heart and soul, I would implore you to go to the Lord & read your Bible, for it alone contains the answers you need.

Paul is warning about Philosophy that has as its source the traditions of men

A) That is filled w/ empty deceit because it doesn't line up w/ God's word

B) And it promotes a lifestyle that is according to the principles of the world and not of Christ

C) The Problem with so many of the philosophical ideas that have been embraced throughout man's history is that they have sought to discover man's origin and destiny **apart from God** –

D) The Wrong Source has resulted in the wrong Conclusion: Francis Schaffer put it well *man cannot begin with himself and arrive at an ultimate reality*

See that always needs to be the Starting place – The Source where did it come from – what is behind this teaching / this philosophy

A) If the source is polluted then the water is going to be polluted – River starting point is polluted – be that way by the time it hits me

B) That is the problem with so much of what we would call modern day Philosophy and the ideas that have sprung from it

1) See the founding fathers of Philosophy, Plato, Aristotle, Socrates and those who followed after them men like Thomas Hobbs, John Locke, George Berkeley, David Hume, David Hartley, James Mill,

C) They were all men who rejected God's revelation of Himself, God's statements concerning the world, the existence of man, the purpose and meaning of life,

D) By eliminating God and His revelation from the picture, modern philosophy has plunged man into the abyss of ignorant darkness and hopeless despair.

1) Paul, (Rom. 1:21-22). *“They became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools”*

E) Not surprisingly, many philosophers have expressed that futility.

The nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche scorned Christianity as the religion of weaklings.

A) He was among the first to proclaim that God is dead. Yet he could not live with the implications of his philosophy.

B) OS Guinness writes, *“For Nietzsche to be consistent, he needed to become his own superman, but his views were overwhelming even for himself. As he poised over the abyss, he shivered with the horror of being ‘responsible for everything alive.’ In the impossibility of this situation, madness perhaps becomes his only possible freedom from the overbearing responsibility. ‘Alas, grant me madness”*

C) Tragically Nietzsche's wish was granted. He spent the last eleven years of his life insane.

So the source is going to dictate the Message – We need to understand that there are many world views being expressed out there today

A) There is a Battle of the World view – and everyone has a world view that they want to Prevail / Liberal / Conservative/ Religious / Materialistic

B) Many of these world views are powerful and have an incredible platform to preach from – take for instance MTV

1) MTV – Music Television - is the world's most-watched television network, reaching 384 million households around the globe.

C) It is seen in 140 countries, on 31 channels and in 17 languages

D) MTV has a very focused and powerful world view, they have very specific ideas about politics, sexuality, religion, God, morality, fashion, authority, the environment, the global community

E) But here is the thing – MTV world view is not just different from God's world view / it is by design at war w/ God's world view

1) MTV promotes rebellion / Tolerance – no absolutes – over riding principle – live to please Yourself {This life is all that matters

Another Philosophy that is gaining Popularity – is Scientology – Stars

A) Scientology's view of man : Scientology maintains that in his true nature, man is not the limited and pitiful body and ego he mistakenly imagines himself to be. He is a thetan (an immortal spirit) whose fundamental nature is basically good and divine.

He is not morally fallen; rather he is simply ignorant of his own perfection. His only "Fall" was into matter, not sin. How did this Fall come about?

Apparently, trillions of years ago thetans became bored, so they emanated mental universes to play in and amuse themselves. Soon, however, they became more and more entranced in their own

creation until they were so conditioned by the manifestations of their own thought processes that they lost all awareness of their true identity and spiritual nature.

Now what is interesting to me is that in dealing with these heresies that were threatening to Cheat the believers in Colossae

A) Paul's approach is not to tear apart everything that is wrong with the heresies but rather he seeks to dwell on the DEITY OF CHRIST

B) And the DIGNITY & COMPLETENESS OF THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST

1) Not dwelling on what is wrong w/ the Philosophy but what is right about Christ - That will be our approach today

C) So in v. 9 He declares 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

The word fullness is plērōma: It means that all Divine Power and attributes of God were in Jesus.

A) In Jesus divine omnipotence moved in a human arm; In Jesus divine wisdom was cradled in a human brain;

B) In Jesus divine love throbbed in a human heart; In Jesus divine compassion glistened in a human eye;

1) In Jesus divine grace poured forth in human lips. - Seen me seen the Father – Express image of the invisible God

C) Now if Denise and I were to go down to the beach today - if I were to take a pint jar and allow the ocean to rush into it,

1) in an instant my jar would be filled with the fullness of the Pacific.

D) But I could never put the fullness of the Pacific Ocean into my jar!

Thinking of Christ, we realize that because he is infinite, he can hold all the fullness of Deity.

A) And whenever one of us finite creatures dips the tiny vessel of our life into him, we instantly become full of his fullness.

John 1:16 *And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.*

B) But From the perspective of our humanity, the capacity of our containers is of greatest importance.

1) Our souls are elastic, so to speak, and there are no limits to possible capacity.

C) We can always open to hold more and more of his fullness.

1) The walls can always stretch further; the roof can always rise higher; the floor can always hold more.

D) It is His influence upon our life that makes us complete –

Now what Paul is saying here flies right in the face of the Gnostic Philosophy that – the Jesus wasn't God – but a lesser God

A) And that the believers were not complete but – thru gaining more knowledge and insight they would move in that direction

B) Paul says – He is the fullness of God and we are complete in Him

Paul describes 3 ways how we have been made complete in the following verses RD v. 11-15

A) The first thing that we want to note is that we have received a complete Salvation:

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new

B) Paul describes that newness with 2 analogies – the 1st being Circumcision / the 2nd being baptism

C) Circumcision : Male child on the 8th day – Marked the Hebrews as belonging to God – Mark of the Covenant

1) The Cutting away of the foreskin was symbolic of the cutting away of the Flesh

D) The idea was that a piece of the flesh was cut off on the outside which would be a constant reminder of something cut off on the inside

What is it that God wants to cut off on the inside? Paul describes it. It's the putting off of the body of sins of the flesh"

A) the body of the flesh refers to the sinful, fallen human nature totally dominating believers before salvation. Sinful tendencies

B) That part of you that loves to gossip / that part of your heart that can't stand to see someone else succeed,

1) that hates it when others have things that you don't have, that part of your heart that is so self-centered it can't see straight

C) You know how I know that about your heart? Because your heart is just like my heart and my heart is filled with all of those things.

1) They're like little blotches of cancer, they can't be cured, they can only be cut out.

Now this flies in the face of a popular philosophy today that says – We are not Bad – we are good people who just do bad things – Is that true?

A) No the bible says – we are rotten to the core – Core of our Problem is a heart problem – We need a new heart

B) Jesus says to us when you give your life to Me I am going to do a circumcision of the heart – take away the bad and replace it with Good –
1) give you a new Heart – A heart that longs for God is after God and wants to please God

C) Also Flies in the face of the Philosophy that says – *Man is not bad – problem is his environment is bad – If you could give him a new environment – he would be ok* – Is that true – No

D) Adam and Eve were in a perfect environment and they still sinned and rebelled against God
1) Bible declares that when a man comes to faith in Christ – Christ is going to work in Him and Change Him and that man then can go out in the power of Christ to **impact his environment**

The 2nd analogy that Paul uses to describe our complete salvation is that of Baptism: 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.

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

- A) Understand that he is not so much talking about literal baptism –but what Baptism symbolized – A Death and a Resurrection
 B) Jesus died – Buried – Rose – We come to Christ – we identify with his death - Old man – Crucified w/ Christ – Buried in the tomb
 1) But as He rose – His life is imparted to us – Now we can walk in a newness of life

Roman 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

- C) No longer in bondage to those old impulses – no longer governed by those old feeling of lust or bitterness or what ever
 1) Been given new life and the Power thru Christ spirit residing in me to walk in a newness of life

We know that so often it's our past that keeps us from moving forward. A) This is one thing that the Bible and modern psychology agree on, and that is that the problem is in the past,

- B) It is the hurts of the past / the mistakes of the past, the failures of the past, the addictions of the past, the missed opportunities of the past,
 1) But what they don't agree on is what we are to do about it.

- C) The Psychologist wants to take you back so that you can understand your past and come to grips with your past, with goal of fixing the past.
 1) Sometimes that means - Blame others

Man's solutions always involve going back and fixing the past, fixing the old nature.

- A) That is all that man has to work with, he has no control over the future, so we have to go back and try to fix the past,
 B) we go back and work on the old woman, the old man.

- C) God's solution is to bring forgiveness in the past, transformation in the present, and to walk us into the future that He has prepared for us in Christ.

- D) One is backwards looking, the other is forward looking.

- 1) The one emphasizes the failures of the past, the other emphasizes the victories of the future.

- E) The one has as its focus on our old nature, the other focuses in our New Nature.

God's solution works, through Repentance, though a willingness to forgive by the renewing of our minds with the washing of the Word,

- A) Thru a desire of obedience to His word, that He supplies by the power of His spirit –

- B) That is what Paul is proclaiming here – The old man died w/ Christ – the past all the hurts mistakes failures

- 1) Now we have been raised & filled w/ God's spirit to walk in a newness of life – walk in victory – no longer plagued by the past

In Philippians 3 Paul said this, *“one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,*

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

- C) Paul wasn't going back, he was moving forward to the upward call of God in Christ.

So our salvation is Complete / So is our Forgiveness

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, 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.

- A) This is such a glorious truth – The *handwriting of requirements that was against us*, refers to the law.

- B) All of us have been guilty of breaking God's law – List was long against us –

1) But in Christ we are forgiven of breaking the law and we are freed from its oversight – Christ fulfilled the law – paid the price

C) Our sins and trespasses (willful disobedience were many – now all forgiven in Christ

Listen you will find forgiveness for sins no where else. Buddha does not offer forgiveness of sins, Mohamed does not offer forgiveness of sins,

A) If the issue is sin, then there is only one cure, there is only one place for forgiveness and that is through Jesus Christ.

B) And notice the completeness of His forgiveness, He has forgiven us of all, all, our sin.

C) When you came to Jesus and confessed your sin and your need for a Savior and gave your life to Him.

1) **He took all of your sin, past, present, and future, and buried them in the deepest sea where they would be remembered no more.**

D) John tells us in his Epistle that Jesus forgives us of even the guilt of our sin. Sins are forgiven and the guilt is removed

1) When God the Father looks upon you now, He sees you through the lens of the Blood of His Son, Holy, Blameless, without spot or wrinkle.

E) You are righteous in His sight. He has forgiven you of all of your sins.

Folks do you know the power of living in that forgiveness?

A) Do you know what would happen in your life if you really began to live in the full power of God's forgiveness?

B) Talk about being whole people, talk about being well adjusted and healthy people, this will do it.

C) Let me tell you what I mean by fully living in God's forgiveness. It includes three things.

1) First it means fully receiving God's forgiveness in your life,

D) If you have confessed your sin to God, then you need to walk in the confidence that you are forgiven, completely, totally.

Not a trial forgiveness, like forgiveness will stick only if you don't blow it again, or if stay really spiritual.

A) But total and complete forgiveness that is based upon God's promise and work in you.

B) Forgiveness is not something that you earn or deserve, it's something you receive by faith and enjoy.

1) That's part one, walking in the confidence that you have been forgiven.

The second part of fully walking in God's forgiveness is believing that what God has done for you, He has also done for others.

A) And that of course means that God has extended forgiveness to those around you as well.

B) I don't know why we have such a hard time with this but we do. We can fully understand why God would want to forgive us,

1) but why in the world would God want to forgive that person, especially when it's someone who has sinned against us.

C) When that is the case, we don't want God's mercy to be extended, we want Justice and judgment extended.

One of the things I have to come to grips with in my own heart is God's forgiveness in the lives of those around me,

A) God forgives them, just like He forgives me.

B) This makes a huge difference in my attitude towards them. And it sets the stage for part three of walking in God's forgiveness.

C) **Which is extending our forgiveness to those who have sinned against us.** One of the most amazing capacities that God has given us is the ability to forgive.

D) You are never more like Jesus, then when you extend mercy and grace and forgiveness to people who have hurt you, or failed you, or let you down,

1) When you extend forgiveness to them, you are functioning in the flow of the Spirit, you are walking in the Will of God.

E) There is nothing that God loves more. / Freeing / Liberating

So it is a complete salvation – New Life / Complete forgiveness that even enables us to forgive others / Complete Victory - 15
Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

A) Picture of a Roman Conquest – General disarmed / disrobed – Look at how your leaders power has been stripped away

B) Jesus is saying that is what he did to those demonic forces of Darkness –

1) They have been disarmed – their power has been stripped

C) Free from that influence

It just bugs me when I hear Christians talk about what we can't do because these demonic spirits have control of this, or that.

1) Those demonic spirits have been disarmed, they have been defeated, and they have been humiliated in the Spiritual realm.

Let the world fix our broken cars and repair our worm eaten computers, and even mend our broken body parts, but don't let them touch your soul. There is only One who is capable of touching our souls and healing our broken hearts repairing our crushed spirit and that is Jesus.

If you have Jesus, you have it all, in Him you are complete. He is all that we need, both now, and in eternity to come.

Received a Complete Salvation / Complete Forgiveness / ... Victory