

For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body

Colossians 2

¹ I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally.

² I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ himself.

How important it is for us to yearn good toward one another! We are called to do so as Christians, the body of Christ. Do we have strong ties of love for one another? We do have strong ties to one another being in the Body of Christ. We know "Christ so loved the world ...," "God is love ...," and "in Him is no darkness"

God's wonderful plan is Jesus of Nazareth. How incredible this is for those who are saved! Paul yearned for his brothers and sisters in keeping them in the truth. That nothing should detract from this truth. The ancient rabbis wondered about the "Suffering Servant" and the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah." They saw two personages and knew the Messiah would be one. They could not perceive that one Messiah would be both and that there would be two "comings of the Lord."

Then, one day Jesus walked into a temple and spoke these words.

Luke 4:17-22

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ^e

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,

²¹ and he began by saying to them, "**Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.**"

²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

NIV

Jesus told His neighbors that 'I' am the one the scriptures speak of. Not only did he recite these words but

- He preached,
- He proclaimed freedom,
- gave sight to the blind, and
- released the oppress

One thing Jesus could not do is give sight to those who claimed they could see and yet were the most blinded individuals. Neither did He perform - in abundance - miracles where the people did not have faith.

We know that if all were written of the things that Jesus did while on earth during His first visit here, all the books of the world could not contain His acts.

Do you know that you are so wonderfully made if your DNA were to be printed into books they would fill the Grand Canyon 78 times over – from top to bottom! And you are just one of billions Jesus has fashioned into existence not to mention all of creation.

³ In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

⁴ I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments.

⁵ For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your faith in Christ is strong.

Having strong faith gives us the ability to live as we should. No one could tell the first century Christians that Christ's life is a religious concept. No one could tell them that God did not make the universe and that man comes from apes just to mention one false philosophy that claims itself as truth in the pagan culture of our day.

Well, just the same, people were contriving ideas that Paul did not like, so His letters were to help the early church stay on course. Here in Colossae were many cultic and pagan concepts that were influencing the early church in the area. Note how bad philosophy can be so dangerous. Though these early Christians had seen and heard the Lord, persuasive false ideas can so easily lead some down dangerous paths.

Humans are a fickle creature. All we have to do is look at history or the daily news paper and we read of people killing, fighting and murdering one another for the most ridiculous motives. A bad philosophy, for instance like "survival of the fittest," can lead to catastrophes even when good concepts and morality is a present them.

"If it feels good, do it?"

We must remember we serve a God of Love and God is Love. If we do not love our brother, how can we claim to be a child of God and not love another child of His?

We must remember that anyone who has claimed Christ as Lord is our brother.

Freedom from Rules and New Life in Christ

⁶And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him.

⁷Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

We truly must repent daily of sins. We must confess and take every thought captive or our thoughts will take us captive. The enemy of our souls never stops targeting Christ's saints. So we must put on the full armor of God as we read in Ephesians. As long as we confess and repent, Christ's flow of power – Love – will continue to flow into us and back out to others.

⁸Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers* of this world, rather than from Christ.

⁹For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.*

¹⁰So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

Let me make this relevant for our day. How many of us went to school in the United States or another country and were taught evolutionary theory? Do you know some concepts in this theory were proven incorrect decades before I was born, (I'm nearly fifty) and yet I can remember being shown figures of half human and half ape creatures and was told that we came from these beast in substitution of "In the beginning God."

The Bible tells us that we were fashioned in His image not in the image of an ape. Remember that please and pray for God's truth to sink in especially if you were trained, indoctrinated, to believe otherwise.

¹¹ When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature. *

¹² For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.

¹³ You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins.

¹⁴ He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.

I would say that the false philosophy around the Church of Colossae were taking some Christians down the path of immorality.

I could not help but to add this here. This is just one cultic ideology that prevailed during this time we are reading about. Does not this remind you of something we hear about today?

Mystery Cults

A diverse group of Greek cults entered only by special initiation. The details of the initiation were to be kept entirely secret, although one could join a number of these societies. Apart from secrets and initiations, they varied widely in popularity, antiquity and appeal to different social classes.

(from IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament by Craig S. Keener Copyright © 1993 by Craig S. Keener. Published by InterVarsity Press. All rights reserved.)

Here is something even more telling!

Chapter 7: Believer, Beware! (Colossians 2:16-23)

There is, then, the danger that our lives today will rob us of reward and glory tomorrow. The peril Paul had in mind here was Oriental mysticism, **the belief that a person can have an immediate experience with the spiritual world, completely apart from the Word of God or the Holy Spirit. The false teachers in Colossae had visions and made contact with angels. In bypassing the Word of God and the Spirit of God, they were opening themselves to all kinds of demonic activity - because Satan knows how to give counterfeit experiences to people** (2 Cor 11:13-15).

(from The Bible Exposition Commentary. Copyright © 1989 by Chariot Victor Publishing, and imprint of Cook Communication Ministries. All rights reserved. Used by permission.)

I can tell you there are a group of people out there today in our day that want to kill everyone that does not agree with them and they are arming themselves with biological and nuclear weaponry and they believe if they get killed in the process of committing murder, they will go to heaven. Bad philosophy is not a good thing.

What comes to mind for me personally is our own retched flesh. It desires first its own pleasure. This is bad enough without satan coming as some false angle of light as he is doing so today in our pagan belief systems. Well, if I know on a surface level that God wants me to be moral, and our society promotes promiscuity, there is a good chance I will leave God's truth and go elsewhere. Especially when as a young child all of the adults keep reminding me that God did not make me but that I came from a gorilla.

It's as if satan keeps repeating,

"hath God said, hath God said – do you really believe God or me?"



But for us who are **Born Again**, renewed with the Life of Christ indwelling us, there is much good news and there is not enough paper anywhere to write and tell you about it.

¹⁵ In this way, he disarmed* the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

¹⁶ So don't let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths.

¹⁷ For these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality.

¹⁸ Don't let anyone condemn you by insisting on pious self-denial or the worship of angels,* saying they have had visions about these things. Their sinful minds have made them proud,
¹⁹ and they are not connected to Christ, the head of the body. For he holds the whole body together with its joints and ligaments, and it grows as God nourishes it.

²⁰ You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as,

²¹ "Don't handle! Don't taste! Don't touch!"?

²² Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them.

²³ These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person's evil desires.

Holy Bible, New Living Translation ©, copyright © 1996, 2004 by Tyndale Charitable Trust.
Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers. All rights reserved._