



VERSE BY VERSE MINISTRY
INTERNATIONAL

TEACHING THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD

Colossians - Lesson 1B

Chapter 1:9-23

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Col. 1:9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

Col. 1:10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Col. 1:11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

Col. 1:12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

Col. 1:13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

Col. 1:14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

- As we introduced last week, Paul is setting up a connection in their minds
 - Firstly, he has to establish credibility with his audience
 - Secondly, he needs them to understand they have been subjected to false teaching
 - Thirdly, he wants to combat the false teachers with the truth – the fundamentals of the faith
 - Paul moves from cause to effect in the list we just read
 - Cause #1 is to be filled by a knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding
 - As revealed by the Holy Spirit
 - Filled means *pleroo* – to be complete, to be accomplished
 - The effect of that filling is in verse 10: so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord
 - How can a child walk (live/ behave) in a manner pleasing to their parents?
 - Only by knowing their parents' expectations
 - Besides the factor of obedience, the fundamental question is can I do it if I don't know it?
 - So we said last week, this relationship between what you believe to be true and how you live is a Biblical principle
 - Imagine someone was to claim they don't believe in gravity, we can test this belief by walking them to the top of a tall building and asking them to jump
 - If they are firm in their belief, they should have no worry to jump
 - If they decline, it shows they are not believing what they say they believe (as crazy as it is)

1John 2:4 The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

1John 2:5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been

perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

1John 2:6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

- John is not saying that perfection is the standard, but that there ought to be a desire to live like Christ
 - If there is no fruit, we have reason to question what they truly believe
- Then Paul moves to the next series of cause and effect relationships
 - Effect #1 becomes Cause #2
 - Walking in a manner worthy of the Lord
 - Pleases Him in all respects

2Cor. 5:6 Therefore, though we are always confident and know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—

2Cor. 5:7 for we walk by faith, not by sight—

2Cor. 5:8 yet we are confident and satisfied to be out of the body and at home with the Lord.

2Cor. 5:9 Therefore, whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to be pleasing to Him.

2Cor. 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or bad.

- Paul is saying that no matter where we are, our aim is the same – to please the Lord
 - We can't wait until we get to Heaven to serve Him in obedience
- He adds another phrase, and bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God
 - So Paul completes a circle of sorts that says our pursuit of a knowledge of His will and of spiritual wisdom
 - Causes us to walk in worthy manner
 - To please the Lord
 - And to bear the fruit of good works
 - Thus to increase in our knowledge of God all the more
 - If you walk obediently according to God's will, you can't help but bear fruit
 - Paul's prayer finishes in verse 11 & 12 asking that they be strengthened in these efforts by God's power
 - So that they might attain steadfastness and patience
 - All the while giving the Father thanks for including us in His inheritance
- Paul now moves to a jumping off point into his most powerful presentation of Christology, the doctrine of Christ
 - The key for every church who wants to be sound and healthy, is to understand who the man Jesus is

Col. 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

Col. 1:16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created through Him and for Him.

Col. 1:17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Col. 1:18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

Col. 1:19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

Col. 1:20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

- Paul wants to magnify the person and work of Jesus Christ within the minds of this church
 - Paul describes Jesus' image or person in relationship to three things:
 - To Deity
 - To Creation
 - To the Church
- These are the three areas of knowledge we must get right if we are to mature properly as a Christian
 - First, we must understand Jesus' relationship to Deity
 - Jesus is the image of the invisible God
 - Provided the physical connection to God for us
 - We can't see the Father nor the spirit, they can only be manifested through His creation
 - Moses and the burning bush
 - Pillars of cloud
 - Thunder/lightning
 - But men did see Jesus
 - He is the member of the trinity who can be seen
 - And today we see Him living out in the lives of His church
 - That's why we reflect Jesus in our actions and words
 - Secondly, we've already touched on His relationship to the Creation
 - Finally, we must understand Jesus in relationship to the Church
 - He is the head of the church – and this headship can have no true meaning if it doesn't mean that Jesus is actively making decisions and directing the work of the church through men
 - It must be that what is happening in His church at all times is happening according to His plans and purposes

- So the preeminence of Christ is Paul's point here
 - There is nothing else of value or meaning in our religious experience as Christians except Christ, and Him crucified
- But that's the basic problem with the Colossian church
 - They've taken their eye off the ball
 - They've left their first love
 - Like the church at nearby Ephesus

Rev. 2:4 'But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

Rev. 2:5 'Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent.

- Here are these two sister churches, experiencing the same effects
 - Moving the teaching of Jesus aside
 - And they stand to lose their lampstand; their position as a church in this world
- Just as when a church arrives, God has planted it. And when a church leaves, their lampstand has been removed
- In verse 20 Paul has begun to make a transition, narrowing down to the individual

Col. 1:20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Col. 1:21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds,

Col. 1:22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—

Col. 1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

- Jesus has reconciled all things to Himself by His blood
 - Christ's work on the cross was the saving work of creation
 - Paul transitions away from a discussion of the person of Jesus Christ to a discussion of the work of Jesus Christ
 - This tells us Paul was concerned about the thinking that a believer still required something to enter into Heaven
 - The false teaching in their church had gained a foothold in the church preaching that there was more you needed to do to be secure in your place with God
 - The only way you become susceptible to that kind of thinking is if you are

not confident about what the scriptures say about your relationship

- Paul says in v.23 that the fact they are able to gain a foothold gives clear evidence to indict their confession
- This is the same point made by the writer in the letter to the Hebrews

Heb. 3:12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

Heb. 3:13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Heb. 3:14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,

- The writer is not saying what you have to do to be a Christian, he’s saying this is the definition of a Christian
 - A Christian hold firms their assurance to the end
 - False teachers don't get a crack at you because you know Christ's work on the cross is sufficient
 - But when you run after the teaching that says you haven’t done enough, you show the falseness of your confession
- Again in v.23, we are to be firmly established in the hope of the Gospel
- Paul is pointing out to this group that Christ has reconciled us into the body, and we gain the benefit from it – only as long as we trust in that message
 - But if we depart from it to chase false messages, we're showing ourselves to never having believed the truth to begin with