

Complete In Christ: Accepted, Forgiven and Victorious

That mystery that once was hidden was now revealed in Christ. The Gentile Believers like in the Colossian church were on the outside of everything. But this is no longer the case...

Here is your job:

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. 9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority."
(Colossians 2:8-10)

Spiritual forces are at work; forces of darkness and evil influences are behind these false teachers. It is much more than a difference of opinion on issues or perspectives, behind them are demonic forces that want to take you captive.

(V9) Christ is greater than all these forces. The Jews were hypercritical of the Gentile Believers about days, holidays and food. This was pushing the Colossian Believers out of the church.

"20 Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: 21 "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch?" 22 These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence." (Colossians 2:20-23)

These human rules have no value, because they can't change a person's heart or transform a life. They are living a false humility that is actually moving them away from Jesus.

"16 therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. 18 Do not let anyone who delights in false

day. ¹⁷ *These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. ¹⁸ Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind.*"

(Colossians 2:16-18)

We need to be like bankers who handle cash every day who by handling real currency know when something is counterfeit.

We need to be on guard against having an elevated opinion of ourselves. It may be found in different areas, but the eating restrictions, etc. make us feel *safe* and even *superior*. This is in contrast to living in the freedom that Christ has given to us. Don't get caught up in the regulatory approach to life.

¹³ *The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.*

¹⁴ *Therefore once more I will astound these people with wonder upon wonder; the wisdom of the wise will perish, the intelligence of the intelligent will vanish."*

(Isaiah 29:13-14)

God is saying I'm going to blow up these "human rules". I can't be contained by their rules; I'm so much bigger than that!

¹¹ *For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. ¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, (Titus 2:11-12)*

How are we saved? Through Jesus and his *Grace* and that grace teaches us how to walk with him and teaches us how to say "no". His grace helps me walk in freedom and bring maturity in my life. This grace is manifest in the person of Jesus.

1) Complete Acceptance

¹¹ *In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead."*

(Colossians 2:11-12)

Circumcision was the mark or sign that you belonged and that you were accepted. The question of that time and for this Gentile Church was around circumcision. The word teaches us that this was a foreshadowing of the circumcision of our hearts.

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foreshadowing of the circumcision of our hearts.

This is a call to the original insiders and outsiders with no bias. Water baptism is also a mark or sign that you have put your faith in Christ.

“Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.” (Acts 2:41)

“So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law (not just to sin) through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.” (Romans 7:4)

2) Complete Forgiveness

“13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.” (Colossians 2:13-14)

“²⁵ It was nine in the morning when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS...” (Mark 15:25)

When Jesus was hung on the cross, they placed a written document nailed to the cross over his head proclaiming his crime. The only crime they could come up with his claim to be a king, “King of the Jews”.

There is a record or document against us too, but God has nailed it to the cross of Jesus and the debt has been cancelled...it is finished.

You don't have to forgive yourself because you have already been forgiven. At the cross you lost the right to condemn yourself. Quit trying to forgive yourself just receive his forgiveness.

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:1-2)

- There is a difference between conviction that comes from the Spirit of God and condemnation that comes from our own failure.
- Let your past failures now become a memorial to the grace and forgiveness of God.
- When the devil reminds you of your past, remind him of his future.

3) Complete Victory

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- Your life humiliates the devil.
- Authority is an absolute that we have in Christ, but power is relative, it's related to life posture.

“You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4)

Supplemental Information (Not covered on Sunday Morning)

Complete Connection

- **What's so great about Christianity is...Jesus.**

“The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.” (Hebrews 7:18-19)

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- **Spiritual people live in fellowship with the Spirit.**

“19 They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. 20 Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: 21 “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch?” 22 These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.” (Colossians 2:16-23)

Discussion Questions

- 1) In Colossians 2:8-10, it talks about our job our responsibility not to be taken “captive”. What does this mean in your life and what is behind these false teachers?

be taken captive . What does this mean in your life and what is behind these false teachers?

- 2) In verses 20-23, what are these human rules and why do they have no value?
- 3) According to verses 16-18, we need to be on guard against some things, what are they? We are warned not to get caught up in the regulatory approach to life; these can make us feel *safe* and even *superior*. Discuss how this contrast living in the freedom that Christ has given to us.
- 4) In contrast to the life lived by human rules, we are called to live in the same grace in which he saved us. Discuss how that grace teaches us how to say “no”, how that grace helps me walk in freedom and brings maturity in my life.
- 5) Discuss the 3 points at the conclusion of our teaching:
 - a) Complete Acceptance
 - b) Complete Forgiveness
 - c) Complete Victory