



# MONDAY 26 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 2:1-7

### Plug In...

God has resources and provides them (vv.1-2). The ultimate treasure is Christ – all satisfaction is found in Christ (v.3). Paul says this so his audience will not be deceived.

Verse 6 – “You have received Christ Jesus, the Lord”. This is bigger than Paul saying hear the message about Jesus, understand the mechanics of the gospel, grasp clarity on a teaching. Paul says they have actually *received* Christ.

The rest of Chapter 2 will show: *they are in Christ; Christ is in them*. This union together by the bond of the Holy Spirit means that everything that has happened to Christ happened to them and will be realised.

### Chew It Over...

Think about this. Being united to Christ is not the goal of the Christian life, but the source of the Christian life.

How have you been thinking about your relationship with Jesus? Have you been thinking you still have to do things to receive God? Have some notions of doing even spiritual things like reading your Bible, or praying, or going to church, become mixed into a view of that is how you get joined to Christ? These are all good things, but they do *nothing* to actually get Christ. They might inform, they still tell the truth, but they don't give you one physical or spiritual aspect of Christ.

Christ gives Himself. We have received Him.

## **Prayer Suggestion**

Thank God that we receive the perfect Christ. Even when we have imperfect thinking, imperfect Bible reading, imperfect praying, praise God that we still possess the perfect Christ.



The Lakes

TUESDAY 27 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 2:7

### Plug In...

Let's stop on this verse to see what happens to the person that has received Christ. Christ gives Himself to people. They receive Him. Then, they *walk in Him*. This walk in Christ appears as someone that keeps pointing to Christ. Here, established in the faith is to be a person that always points to Christ. Even after sin, daily sin, they still say, "I'm safe, I'm saved *for I'm in Christ, and Christ is in me*, and God looks at Christ". For sure, there is changed behaviour, but salvation does not come from behaviour, but from *receiving* Christ. This reality for a person bubbles over with thanksgiving.

### Chew It Over...

Paul often uses thankfulness to God as a litmus test for Christian health. Lack of thankfulness could be a sign we don't get, or are forgetting, what it is to receive and possess the Christ (see: [Romans 1:21](#)).

### Prayer Suggestion

Reflect on what it means to possess Christ. Allow thankfulness to come forth.



# WEDNESDAY 28 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 2:8

### Plug In...

[Colossians 2:8 – 3:4](#) is the heart of this letter from Paul. Read the section. It deals with two ways people choose to be more holy and more spiritual. Only one way is successful.

Verse 8 has Paul warning about the flawed way. Here are the reasons given for why it won't achieve what it sets out to achieve:

- Because it is human – It doesn't rely on or utilise God. It is mankind relying on human power. It is an attempt to arrive at truth without using revelation from God. It is an attempt to become improved without relying on power from God.
- It is creaturely – The phrase 'elemental spiritual forces' comes from beliefs that spiritual powers influence all that happens. Here, we remember that spiritual powers – although real, yet not physical – are creaturely (they were created by Jesus – see: 1:16). Anything not the creator, is creaturely, part of creation (even if non-material). Again, the point is reliance on something other than God to achieve holiness or higher attainment.
- Lastly, because it is not of Christ. Essentially, non-Christian (not Christ).

### Chew It Over...

Things within other philosophies, religions, even within Christianity, can look religious and so feel real. Always ask: How is this being used? Is this being advocated as the key to unlock purity, to progress towards salvation, to progress from salvation to holiness?

If the answer is yes, it is the gospel distorted! What unlocks purity and increasing holiness in one's life is *receiving Christ*. This we'll see throughout the rest of chapter 2.

### **Prayer Suggestion**

Lord Jesus protect us from being taken captive by false truths. Drive back those actively seeking to take us away from being in you.



The Lakes

THURSDAY 29 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 2:9-15

### Plug In...

V.9 – the complete deity – the complete god-ness of God – is Jesus. Jesus is every bit God. And, the location of this complete god-ness of Jesus is the physical humanity of Jesus.

This is the reality of who Jesus was and is. This is why His death on the cross and resurrection has so much effective power for us.

V.14 – To literally translate from the Greek sounds clunky in English but helps highlight some things: “[Jesus] erased out the handwriting of ordinances which was set over us.”

Some think this is Paul saying the Mosaic Law code is fulfilled and so cancelled now as a law-code for the Christian. Although a true teaching from Paul elsewhere, this is more nuanced. The idea is that we each personally have a case file against us. It details all the breaking of the commands before God. In effect, we have written up this note in our own handwriting. Meaning, that with each sin we commit we sign our own (death) certificate. We sign the note. We sign underneath each sin, each time. This note, this list of sins, the case file against us is our condemnation.

That has been removed, obligations fulfilled, debts paid.

### Chew It Over...

More so than today, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century someone’s power and authority was designated by their clothes. Reflect on the certificate of charges hung over Jesus’ head and how He was stripped of His clothing ([John 19:1-24](#); cf. [Colossians 2:15](#)).

## **Prayer Suggestion**

Oh, to live free of obligation! Overflow with thankfulness.



FRIDAY 30 JUNE 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 2:16-19

### Plug In...

Listed are many things someone may engage in to pursue holiness, or higher spirituality. They may even involve keeping some Old Testament food laws or sacred day laws [which were important in their context, for they spoke about the need for being separate and holy – they just never actually provided the real stuff]. The substance is Christ. To utilise anything else as somehow giving you holiness and purity is spiritual self-decapitation: *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* (v.19).

### Chew It Over...

Many people speak of a profound spiritual experience. Western 21<sup>st</sup> Century Australians on the whole are sceptical. We should not be completely sceptical, for the worldview the Bible presents surely does speak of extraordinary spiritual experiences occurring. This passage doesn't speak against spiritual experiences happening, but critiques the chasing of them. Again, if pursuit of them is to gain purity, holiness, connection to Christ we've stepped off reliance for Christ for these things.

Should someone share a spiritual experience with you, apart from any details of the happening, based on Colossians 2, what should the experience land on? What will the person be speaking about and pointing to?

Should you feel someone might be missing the point of the experience they relate, you could gently ask: Tell me how this experience has helped you trust and love Christ more?

## **Prayer Suggestion**

Help us to stay connected to Christ alone. Help us to keep plugging others into Christ alone.



The Lakes

## WEEKEND 1-2 JULY 2017

SERIES: COLOSSIANS – LIFE IN CHRIST

## Read: Colossians 2:20-23

### Plug In...

Paul shows that it is possible for some Christians to operate in such a way that they are doing all these things to forge a path to holiness and purity. He states in verse 23: *They lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.*

If a person has died with Christ, it means they have been raised too (v.12), so why would they live as though they are yet to die, and worried about making sure they secure life, godliness, and more intense spirituality?

### Chew It Over...

If you see sin in your life, while still holding it as unpleasant and sinful, do not fear loss of your salvation. The next move is not killing it off in panic that you must/might regain your salvation. The next move is to reflect on the assurance of your salvation from Colossians 2. Assurance Christ has guaranteed despite *your* sin. You in Christ, Christ in you. This is what empowers you to actively remove yourself from temptation, cease sins, go forward to love and good deeds. You have died with Christ – your sin debt has been erased. No fear needed.

You've been raised with Christ – you have Christ in you doing the work of change.

The death and resurrection of Jesus is the whole package of salvation. The following terms maybe unfamiliar to you but the Bible speaks about phases within our salvation:

- Justification = God the Judge says, 'No more debt to be paid on your account' – you're debt free; sin-owing free. Jesus just paid it all.

- Sanctification = The power of sin is no longer the dominating force in your life. Instead the Holy Spirit enters and takes charge. He will spend the rest of your life making you more like Christ.
- Glorification = You will rise physically from the dead and all traces of death and sin are removed from your existence. You will be perfectly good all the time; you'll always and whole-heartedly love God and enjoy Him forever.

Justification is past. Sanctification is present. Glorification is future. Yet these are not separate transactions. And we are not involved in getting them happening in any way, rather we *receive* them (v.6). Here in Colossians, Paul is looking at the whole package of salvation comprehensively. Our salvation (justification, sanctification, glorification) has all been secured, and irreversibly activated. For the Christian, they've died with Christ and risen. Being united with Christ is to receive the benefits of Christ. Christ by His Spirit is actually transferring all the benefits of salvation and His qualities to us.

## **Prayer Suggestion**

Praise God that Jesus is making us holy and will make us perfect. And thank God that while that takes place, right now we are found to be blameless.