

COLOSSIANS

Life in our supreme & sufficient Savior

Colossians – Life in our Supreme & Sufficient Savior

Review of Background

- Occasion: False teachers have promised ritual ways to experience God’s presence and blessing (mysticism/legalism). Paul’s correction in the letter is that those who have trusted in Jesus can already experience the fullness of God’s presence through what has been provided already for the believer in Jesus.
- Theme verse: “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.” (Colossians 2:9-10)
- Theme of the Class: Life in our Supreme & Sufficient Savior

Class Outline

- Part 1: The Preeminence of Christ in Christian Thinking (1-3:4)
- Part 2: The Preeminence of Christ in Christian Living (3:5-4:6)

Lesson 7 – Colossians 2:16-23

Jesus is true religion!

1. Don't turn away from a real walk with Jesus (2:16-19).
 - a. Jesus is the substance of true religion, so don't turn away to shadows (16-17).
 - b. Jesus is the strength of true religion, so don't turn away to self-reliance (18-19).
2. Live life dead in Jesus (2:20-23).
 - a. Kill human self-righteousness because you died with Jesus (20-22).
 - b. Kill powerless self-disciplines because you have the fullness of Jesus (23).

Application

Jesus is the substance of true religion, so don't turn away to shadows -

Jesus is the source of real growth, don't chase the sensational. There is the idea that there's "more out there" that we can access for growth in the Christian life: The latest style of worship, the newest book – about a vision of heaven, getting in touch with your guardian angel, preaching styles, church methods, evangelistic focus. There will be no real growth in your life, or in your church, unless Jesus Christ is at the heart of all we teach, preach, promote, and worship! Jesus is the substance of true religion.

Jesus is the strength of true religion, so don't turn away to self-

reliance - Jesus is the strength of real growth, so don't chase self-reliance! We might think, "It's not that important that I get connected to my local church...No one is reaching out to me – maybe I should go somewhere else...I'm getting more out of my personal study at home...I don't need church. I'll just stay home and watch services on the live-stream." We think we got this, but Jesus is the true strength of the Christian life, and He has directed us to live in fellowship with Him and a local church.

Kill human self-righteousness because you died with Jesus - We often classify “worldliness” as outward rebellion to God, including murder, adultery, sensual living, and so on. However, here Paul condemns submitting to rules as a way to earn self-righteousness. He doesn’t condemn the rules as much as he condemns the “principles of the world.” Selfishly seeking righteousness with God is empty rule keeping, rather than living out our fullness in Christ. In Christ, we are dead to passing traditions and “commandments” of men. We must disregard those perspectives unless they reflect the teachings of Scripture. Sometimes we place upon ourselves inherent human standards as a means of self-righteousness and status. Instead of following the commandments of men, based on self-performance toward self-righteousness, we must live by the everlasting, unchanging teaching of God’s Word. We must constantly take its truths and apply it to our present situation. Not submitting to the fads of men, and seeking their approval, but submitting to the instructions of God, and seeking to live for His glory.

Kill powerless self-disciplines because you have the fullness of Jesus – We must refuse self-destructive disciplines that look good on the outside but have no effect upon our hearts. Discipline is not wrong, but outward, fake, self-destructive disciplines are pointless! They have no spiritual value. Our level of spiritual maturity is not measured by our level of self-discipline! Our righteousness before God is not found in our bodily sacrifices like fasting – something that isn’t necessarily wrong. This is *condemned* when it is outward, self-righteous, and self-harming. It is fine as a means of greater focus on God. But something like fasting does not create spiritual growth. We have our growth, and we have our fullness in Jesus!