

Colossians 2 :6-15

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[0 : 00] of Colossians, Colossians chapter 2, Colossians chapter 2, we're just going to continue on where we have been. We'll be in Colossians chapter 2 verses 6 through 15, very great set of scriptures, and we'll look at that together.

Colossians chapter 2 verses 6 through 15. You know, these old buildings are built kind of to confine the pastor and project his voice.

In my younger years, I would have had a very hard time standing still and probably would have fallen off, so I've tried to be a little bit more mental note of that.

Charles Spurgeon used to talk of the pulpits of the days when this church were built in the 1800s. He used to say the pulpits were the devil's cage to trap the pastor. I never knew what that really meant because he definitely wasn't referring to this type of pulpit until I went to the Cove, the Billy Graham Training Center.

At the Billy Graham Training Center, there's a chapel which you can go into, and there's a pulpit from England of the 1800s time frame, and that pulpit literally wraps around you, and the pastor would have to climb like two sets of stairs to stand in it.

[1 : 05] It would cage you in. Now, Spurgeon was a pretty healthy man, a little bit healthier than I am, but I said, well, I know how he felt. Now, there's no way I could have been caged in that thing.

But I'm thankful that we have this freedom that we do. We're going to be in Colossians chapter 2, starting in verse 6 and going through verse 15. If you are physically able and desire to do so, I'm asking you to join with me as you stand together and we read the Word of God together.

I'll give you a break from sitting here in just a moment. We'll be in Colossians chapter 2, starting in verse 6. Let's pick up verse 5 to get it in proper context, because Paul is encouraging the believers at Colossae.

It says, He says,

Lord, we are so thankful for this day. Lord, we rejoice in the privilege you have given us to read your Word together. Lord, we thank you for the opportunity to hear it.

[3 : 26] And Lord, we pray now that you would speak to our hearts and minds through it. Lord, may all things bring you glory and honor, and may we draw closer to you by way of it. And we give you all the praise in advance for what you are about to do.

And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. I love that sound, by the way.

I know many of us may not, but I love that sound. We have been looking at the book of Colossians. And the main theme of the book of Colossians is the supremacy and the sufficiency of Christ.

That Paul is writing to the church at Colossae, a church which he did not start, a church which did not know him personally, but a church which really could trace its roots back to his preaching.

If you remember, it was based on an individual who heard the preaching of Paul and responded in faith to Christ, who went back home to Colossae and began gathering other individuals together and proclaimed to them this good news which he had heard, and all of a sudden a church was born.

[4 : 29] So we can literally say the church was founded by a layman just sharing the gospel as he had heard it. He was excited about Christ. And as is often the case, these new believers had great fervency and great desire, but were lacking some teaching and instruction.

And in their fervency to be pleasing to Christ, in their fervency to really gain this eternal life which they had been told about, they began to blend a number of religions and a number of practices, thinking that they, all the while, while being obedient or being obedient and doing exactly what God wanted them to do.

So Paul writes this letter to really build them up and to strengthen them and to instruct them and to remind them that in faith they had accepted Christ and Christ was enough.

They did not need Jesus plus works. They did not need Jesus plus special understanding. They did not need Jesus plus angels. They did not need Jesus plus festivals. All they needed was Christ.

And really what they needed most was to know more of Christ rather than to know more of practice. Friend, listen to me. What the church needs today is to desperately know more of Jesus Christ than it does to know more of what it looks like to be a church, right?

[5 : 45] We need to know more of Christ because he is supreme and he is sufficient. And the text before us this morning, Paul is really referring to this great truth which believers need to comprehend and need to understand.

And it is the believers full union with Christ. Christ is supreme and he is sufficient. And as believers in Christ, we are united with him.

I want you to see our full union with Christ. That he is in us and we are in him. And being united with Christ, we have enough. Being united with Christ, we don't need to add anything to that.

But I want you to see the effect that this union has on the believer and this union should have lived out in life. Dr. Tony Evans loves to give the reference of a union with Christ as putting cream in coffee.

Some of you, bless your hearts, you like coffee black. I don't know why. I've tried it. I've drank it that way. And it works in a pinch. But thankfully, I don't always live in a pinch. Because I love some cream in my coffee.

[6 : 51] Or I love a little coffee in my cream. Either way, we want to put it, right? But when you put cream in coffee, it completely changes everything in the cup. Some of you say, well, you're messing it up.

I don't think so. I think we're making it great. And that's all that matters, right? Is that you can have something that can get you going. But as Tony Evans likes to say, that cream, when put in the coffee, are two very distinct things that now have been united into one and you can no longer separate them and pull them apart.

Once you put cream in there, you're not ever going to have black coffee again. And you'll never be able to pull the cream out because the union has been blended and they are now one totally different thing.

And what we see in the believer's union with Christ is that when we are united with him, we can no longer be, we can no longer possibly be what we were. And therefore, we should no longer act like we used to act.

It is a complete and full union. And Paul is sharing this with the church because the church needs to know it. Because the church thought that Jesus was good, but they needed to be a little bit better.

[7 : 54] Friend, listen to me. In Christ, that's all we need. In Christ, we are completely full. And I hope that you see that by the time we get through this morning. Number one, we see that this union with Christ is a union of influence.

It is a union of influence. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.

That is a great Bible verse and that is one that we ought to know. It says, therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him. Let me take this a little bit further and go ahead and say, as you received him, so you will walk in him.

If you received a part of Jesus, you'll give him a part of your life. If you wanted something to get you out of trouble, then you'll live as long as you're in trouble. If you wanted something to get you through a hard time, then you'll lean upon him in the midst of a hard time.

As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him. Because look at what it says. Having been firmly rooted and now being built up in him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed and overflowing with gratitude.

[9 : 01] He says, as you have received him by faith and are rooted in Christ through faith, so walk in Christ by faith. I'm going to go ahead and tell you, as Paul says in some of his other letters, you do not accept Christ by faith and then live a Christian life by works.

Now, works are a part of your Christian life, but you do those works by faith and you live a life of faith. Because what does it say? It says, you have been firmly rooted and now being built up in him and established in your faith.

Some of you know and many of you might, but isn't this okay? Many of you might not. Some of you do. One of the things I've taken great joy in at least the last few months is a very dear friend of mine got a sawmill.

He purchased a sawmill and he said, I'm going to buy a sawmill, I'm going to have it delivered to your house. Now, I think that was a twofold thing. Number one, he said, that way you and Ethan can learn to run it. Anytime I need any lumber, I'll just send it to you.

And the other reason was is because he had other issues going on. So I love getting these trees and cutting them open and just seeing boards come out of a useless log and I think it's beautiful. But you know, one thing that I have found is whatever the root in the ground is is going to determine what tree you cut up.

[10 : 16] I have yet to cut a maple tree off of a walnut root. I have yet to cut an oak tree off of a walnut root. If it's a walnut root, it's going to be a walnut tree. If it's an oak root, it's going to be an oak tree.

And as Paul says, if you are rooted in Christ, it will begin to influence every aspect of your life. Because wherever your roots are, it will influence everything.

We know we can determine a species by tree by looking at its leaves or sometimes we can determine it by looking at its bark or we can determine it by looking at the fruit that it bears. I remember how excited I was several years ago.

I probably don't need to tell this, but it's okay because I cook a lot of barbecue and I wasn't really good at determining species of trees. Okay? Cooking barbecue, I like hickory.

That's what I smoke barbecue with. And I remember, we had moved in this house in the middle of the subdivision and I noticed there were all these little nuts laying on the ground and I had to do some research and found out these were hickory nuts, which meant that that was a hickory tree.

[11 : 14] So now every time I cook barbecue in that subdivision, I'd wait till the sun went down and I'd go out and cut parts of my tree up to smoke my barbecue. Nobody knew why this tree was gradually dying in our front yard, but I was able to determine that because of the fruit laying on the ground.

All I want you to know is every aspect of that tree is determined by the roots in the ground that we cannot see. It's bark, it's fruit, it's leaves, what is on the inside.

And if you are rooted in Christ, friend, listen to me, that is a union of influence. Not only will the fruit you bear look different, you'll look a little bit different on the outside.

What you are on the inside is different. How you behave in life situations will be different because you cannot have a union which has put fruit or put roots in the ground. You cannot be rooted in Christ and be living a fruit of worldliness.

Now you will have those times and those temptations. We understand that. We're not talking about that. But all I want you to see is that this union is a union of influence.

[12 : 20] Paul would say later that we can tell a believer by the fruit which he bore. We can make this determination by a life's individual how they act. Why? Because we know where their roots are depending on what we see.

We don't have to dig trees up to see what kind of roots are in the ground. We just look at what's being displayed on the outside. So as Paul says, if you have been firmly rooted and now being built up in him and established in your faith just as you were instructed in overflowing with gratitude then we are to walk in him.

The whole reason for Christian instruction or the whole reason for biblical instruction is so that our life can have a greater influence. And I'll go ahead and say that the greatest display of gratitude that we can ever offer is a life that has been radically transformed by the influence of Christ.

The greatest display of gratitude that we can ever offer to God to show our thanks to God to rejoice in all that he has done is to display a life that is being completely influenced by the one we have been rooted in.

This is the whole goal of the Christian life is to show the gratitude that is displayed in the influence that is put upon us. Secondly, we see that it is a union of lordship.

[13 : 33] Not only is it a union of influence it is a union of lordship. Verse 6 says Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord.

You know many people love to speak of Christ Jesus because that name speaks of a Messiah, of a Redeemer, of a leader. Christ is Christos or Messiah.

Jesus is the descendant of David. But we want to leave off that last phrase. The Lord. I love how the Bible testifies over and over again that he whom they have crucified God has now made him now both Savior and what does it say?

Lord. Both Savior and Lord. You know according to Scripture my friends you cannot have a Savior in Christ until you allow him to be Lord of your life.

He cannot be your Savior and not be your Lord. Which means he cannot get you out of a pinch and not be in control of the rest of your decisions. That's just the reality from Scripture. He is both Lord and Savior.

[14 : 38] The way we know he is our Savior is because he is our Lord. We are giving him all allegiance. We are giving him all influence over our lives and we are committing ourselves totally to him.

He demands lordship and that's not a bad thing. In our country we tend to push against that. We tend to push against anybody wrong. Listen I'm going to live how I want to live. I'm going to do what I want to do.

Well friend I have tried that and I saw where it was getting me and it wasn't getting me anywhere good. Life is a lot better with the Lord making the decisions and me just saying yes Lord I'll follow you. Because look at what it says.

Verse 8 says see to it. Now I love the way the New American Standard says this. See to it. That means now you have a responsibility here. This is your action right?

You have a part in this. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception according to the tradition of men. Which means you are to be physically active guarding your life making sure no one takes you captive through the philosophy and empty deception according to the traditions of men.

[15 : 43] What was going on here with these believers? Or these people had come along beside them and said yes you've accepted Christ and that's great. But now that you've accepted Christ be sure you don't eat this food or be sure you don't do this action and make sure you don't do this.

And it started speaking of all these traditions. You know traditions are not necessarily a bad thing. For traditions are not the thing. Traditions are not the thing that need to be added to Christ.

And when we get so consumed about the traditions we enjoy than we do about the Lord who rules over us we have a problem.

and let's just go ahead and say this isn't just a New Testament or Old Testament thing. Some of the greatest dissensions and disruptions in any church has been in the breaking of their traditions and many of those traditions have no root found in Scripture.

I could probably possibly within a moment make just about every one of you mad. Not that I want to but we can begin to question things which we think are so dear and so valuable to us things which are so meaningful to us and things that have meaning and to be no disrespect whatsoever none of those have a foundation in Scripture.

[17 : 14] Take this building for instance. This building I'm sure for a number of years until the late 1800s from the late 1800s up until the late 1900s was a venerated space seen as holy precious probably carefully guarded that nothing would ever happen here that did not need to happen here and that's good.

A couple of days ago I walked in here I walked into a building I didn't walk into a church I walked into a building I walked into a space with beautiful architecture I walked into a space with beautiful craftsmanship I walked into a space with someone I had put a lot of thought into with great acoustics and I love it by the way but I didn't walk into a holy place I didn't walk into a special place the place became special when God's people gathered together and all of a sudden it's a church because where two or more are gathered together I am there as well see how our traditions can begin to influence our allegiance the main thing is not the facilities we meet in the main thing is the Lord who meets with us and this means no disgrace or disrespect whatsoever many many believers around the Lord are content together in a shadowed room and together together as long as Jesus is there in the

New Testament a number of the churches were meeting in homes as long as Jesus was there or they would go meet somewhere else they didn't have church buildings as long as Jesus was there see how Paul says we must be careful that we are not taken captive by these empty things we are not taken captive by philosophy and empty deception according to the traditions of men friend listen to me it is not a matter of where we gather and that's just one aspect it's not a matter of what you do it's a matter of who you are submitting your life to who is Lord of your life I'll go ahead and say this here because we need to flesh it out in verse eight the wording there according to the elementary principles of the world many Bible scholars believe and I tend to be in agreement with them that the reference here is to the power and principalities of the air and the spiritual forces of the darkness and the prince of this world which means it is speaking in direct reference here to Satan taking men captive by tradition and works we need to see this throughout church history that some of the greatest work which Satan has done is to take men captive by works rather than by their savior because when men get so consumed on what they need to do they're not following the one who is leading them to work and to labor for his name's sake when I get so consumed about what I must do or I must not do and I need to go through all these traditions and all these customs and all this philosophy it begins to take my mind off of Christ why do we need to understand that this union is a union of lordship because verse 9 says for in him all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form and in him we have been made complete and he has had overall role and authority friend listen to me if we are united with

Christ we are united with the one who is overall so no matter who comes beside us and tells us that we must do this do this do this we need to behave this way and not behave this way we need to do all these rules and regulations if those things are not coming from Christ then we must be careful not to be taken captive by them the only one who deserves to captivate our attention is Jesus Christ himself may the lord alone be that which takes us captive and may we be consumed with him and not consumed with everything we must do not with everything that we must be and so we see here this third and final thing yes it is my final thing we will be through my third and final thing it is not only a union of influence it is not only a union of lordship it is also a union of completion and this is something that I believe many many believers need to understand we are complete in Christ do you know the moment you accepted Jesus Christ as your lord and savior that very moment you are complete now I think about it

I am now 40 I will be 41 later on this year so this marks my 20th year of accepting Christ I accepted Christ when I was 20 shortly before my 21st birthday so I accepted Christ about 20 years ago just a couple of months shy of 20 years ago some of you much longer than me at the moment I accepted Christ at 201 Canova Drive in Shelbyville Tennessee beside my bed that moment that great little cry of a prayer the moment I accepted Christ I was complete that means I didn't need to be anything else I didn't need to do anything else I didn't need to add anything to that I was complete now in the same vein let me say since he is lord I have allowed him to dictate how I have grown and I have bought I was happy to look through this morning and some of my old sermons and looking through some of the old bibles I had thank you lord for allowing me to grow in you not necessarily to grow in me but to grow in you thank you lord for opening up your word to me but I didn't need any of that because I was complete the moment

[22 : 47] I accepted him I was complete you don't need to add anything else if you've accepted Jesus Christ as your lord and savior let's just go ahead and settle this right now there's nothing else you must do to be complete in God's house you are complete you are that word complete means to be full you are fully what God desires you to be I don't know about you but to me that just kind of makes me go I am everything God wants me to be in Christ no other requirements no other standards that's it and this is why because it is a union of completion it says in him you have been made complete and then we notice all the in him or through him or for him that we get in verses 11 through 15 look at what it says and in him you are also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of

Christ this is Christ has fulfilled the letter of the law circumcision was a sign of the covenant right you had to fulfill the letter of the law thankfully we do not have to do anything else to fulfill the letter of the law in Christ we are complete in the letter of the law you have been buried with him in baptism in baptism in which you were also raised up with him through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead that baptism is a picture is a sign it is not necessarily your salvation but it is not at all your salvation because you are complete in Christ but the baptism is a display of that this is why I say the same thing every time I baptize an individual we are buried with him in the likeness of his death and raised to walk with him in the likeness of his life right because it is a sign for those of us who have accepted Christ and followed him in believers baptism we can point back to that day and say on that day I was buried with Christ and I was raised to walk in the newness of life it is!

no! my life that old man was dead and buried God has already called me out of the tomb so to say this is great news that we have for the believer the believer has already died and the life we're now living is a resurrection life it's a great thing that Jesus said in the book of John it says those who have accepted him and have believed!

in baptism in which you were also raised up with him through faith in the working of God who raised him from the dead when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh he made you alive together with him having forgiven us all our transgressions his life is now our life he has in verse 14 having canceled out their certificate of death consisting of decrees away having nailed it to the cross you know what I love about the old testament when I read the old testament all throughout the old testament I see the decrees that God has against me in the old testament I am reminded of the certificate of death when I read the old testament I am reminded I cannot fulfill those laws I cannot fulfill those commands and in each one of them God says guilty and guilty and guilty and he writes these decrees beside them and he shows me my guilty heart and he shows me my guilty life and he shows me who I am in the flesh and then he shows me over in the new testament that

Christ took that decree he carried it to the cross he nailed it to the cross because at the cross it was finished it was finished right that is exactly what the Roman emperor would do if you were convicted of a crime he would take your crime he would write out that crime he would put it on a piece of paper he would take you to your cross he would nail you on that cross and above that cross he would nail that piece of paper to show the reason you died was to pay that price what Jesus did for us is he took my piece of paper and he nailed it on his cross and above his head my price was paid that certificate of debt which was hostile towards me has now been nailed to the cross and taken out of the way friend do you understand that in Christ if you have put your faith and hope and love and trust in Christ everything that God has against you he has already nailed it to his cross think about that just for a moment he who created it all spoke it all and controls it all and provides it all no longer has anything at all against you

[27 : 39] I know someone told you not to amen me this morning because I may go a little bit longer but that would be a good hallelujah point because God of heaven and earth who is over all and above all in Christ friend listen to me no longer has anything against you doesn't matter how good you are doesn't matter how how perfect you are how much you have it all together none of us have it all together in Christ that's paid in full and nailed to the cross and now taken out of the way we see that he took that and I've got one more good news I want you to see look at verse 15 when he had disarmed when he had disarmed the rulers and authorities he made a public display of them having triumphed over them through him!

and he made and he made a public display of you having triumphed over you when he came out of that tomb for in Christ we are complete we no longer have an enemy who can overcome us we no longer have an enemy who can do any harm to us we no longer have a God who has anything against us which means this not only the next time that Satan comes to accuse you the next time he comes to tempt you remember he comes offering a temptation without any power behind you have the authority and the power to resist that temptation in Christ because you are complete lacking nothing and completely full and it's all because of our union with Christ he is supreme and he is sufficient and our union with him makes all the difference in the world let's pray together Lord we thank you so much for this day and

God we thank you for this opportunity which you have given us Lord as we have gathered in this place today we have seen your word we have heard it Lord I pray if there is any individual who has not been united with Christ through faith or maybe they never put their hope and their trust and their faith in you Lord may today be that day Lord for those of us who have may we understand the full weight and scope and the glory of our union with you and may our lives be lived for your praise and for your namesake and we ask it all in Jesus name Amen Amen

Amen Amen Amen

Amen Amen Amen

[34 : 15] Amen Amen Amen

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[41 : 45] Amen Amen Amen

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