

PERSEVERING IN CHRIST

ALIVE IN CHRIST (PART 1)

A SURVEY OF COLOSSIAN 2:6-7

Introduction:

The person and work of Jesus Christ has been set as the dominant theme of the book of Colossians. Christ stands in opposition to the Jewish apologists seeking to distinguish themselves from these “Christians”. These Jews demeaned Christ and His work. Paul, then, seeks to confirm these believers in their faith and to reassert both the person (deity) and work (atonement) of Jesus Christ. As we have studied in recent weeks, we have seen Christ portrayed in several different ways. He is seen as:

1. Creator and sustainer of all life (1:15-17).

- Reconciler of all believers (1:18-23).
- Head of the Church – His body (1:18).
- Only true philosophy for ministry (1:24-29).
- Our greatest treasure (2:1-5).

Paul now builds off these great Christological truths to encourage these believers to continue on with Christ and not be turned away from him to another “form” of spirituality.

Walk . . . in Him

Often in our own personal devotions, and even sometimes in our churches, we hear much discussion on the need to “walk worthily”. We want truth that is readily applicable . . . not something that is heady and intellectual. And yet, Paul reminds believers in Romans 12:2 that we are to be constantly renewing our minds. This is the process of spiritual growth. When we view the *command* of Paul, here in Col. 2:6, we must be careful not to jump to the end of chapter three to find out “what we must do”. While “doing” is important, this aspect of the Christian life will only come as the byproduct of right thinking. Before Paul gives us the fruit of right thinking (husband’s loving, wife’s submitting, children obeying, etc) he gives us information that is equally (if not more) vital. *He reminds the Colossian believers to “walk . . . in HIM”*. If our motive is not right, our actions will soon veer off course!

Persevere in Christ

Paul places a simple phrase before the admonition to walk. He understands our flesh’s desire to rush to application. Within this phrase he reminds believers of “how” they are to walk. He says that we are to walk,

“in the same manner as we received Christ Jesus the Lord.” And how did we receive him? . . . by FAITH! This can be seen in Col. 1:4, 1:23, and 2:5. The Christian life is to be a life of faith. This same idea is presented in Galatians where Paul urges the believers to continue in the same manner as they started (Gal. 3:1-5). The reference to Christ as “Lord” accomplishes reminds us of the importance of His work. Paul reinforces the deity of Christ with this reference. In the Greek version of the OT the word “Lord” was often used to translate the Hebrew word “Jehovah”. Thus, Paul’s phrase can be summed up in this way: “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus, *who is the Lord or God. . .*” When we seek to walk “in Him” we will not:

1. Clinging to the Old Covenant of Law: So often we run to the law for our means of sanctification, not realizing we have something much better, a *New Covenant!*
2. Pursue External Morality: This may at first glance look odd, but when we peruse morality we are by very definition not pursuing Christ. He has commanded us to pursue him. The by product of pursuing him will be external morality, but this should not be our focus!
3. React to Culture: To often we have become reactionary, seeking to understand culture so we can be “different”. The extent to which we allow culture to drive our spirituality is the extent to which we diminish the work of Christ. We must place our stake in Him and not our ability to be “different”. He does not shift or change the way the tides of culture does.

Persevering in Christ will produce . . .

- **A Firm Foundation**: Verse eight gives us the fruit of clinging to Christ as opposed to law or human ability. Paul says that when we remain in Him we will have deep roots. When tests and trials come, we will not fear or doubt the work for it is not ourselves we trust but HIM! When we seek to grow spiritually by developing a deeper knowledge of Christ, we will have a firm foundation and building!
4. **A Secure Faith**: When we build our lives upon the rock of Christ and His cross-work, we have faith that is secure in times of doubt. Ask yourself, why do you struggle with doubt or depression? To often the reason for this struggle is due to the simple fact that we have based our relationship with God on our flimsy ability to “please Him” instead of basing it on the finished work of Christ. God is never pleased with us alone because we will never be free from our flesh until we die (or he comes for us)! In the mean time we must cling to His promise to view through the eyes of Christ’s work. He is pleased with the work of Christ and thus, He is pleased with us! This and this alone will produce a secure faith!
 5. **A Thankful Attitude**: When we pursue Christ and seek to understand the riches we have in Him we will have a true joy. This joy will not be based upon our performance on a given day (did I do my devotions, did I pray, have I earned God’s favor today?) but on the solid work of Christ (Col. 1:22). Our frame of mind will be one of joy and not discouragement, love and not pride, rejoicing and not gossip or divisiveness.

Conclusion:

Let us then wallow in the cross-work of Christ. He has purchased for us more than we could ever imagine – and yet we are quick to trade our magnificent position for mere fool’s gold that will not last. Choose to walk in the “TRUTH” and not the lies of your flesh. Your relationship to God is based upon Christ and not your ability to obey! *Sola Gratia!*