

Sermon Draft

Text: Colossians 2:6-19

Sermon title: “Rooted in Christ”

Our Epistle lesson today contains words of encouragement for the believers in Colossae. Paul tells them to stand firm in what they have received and have in Christ. Paul also warns them not to let the false teachings lead them astray. Our world is full of false teachers who will say anything to get us to let go of the truth of Scripture. Twisting and changing Scripture to prove one’s point was a problem then and certainly a problem today. We like the Colossians need to walk with Christ and in Christ remain rooted in His Word just as we have been taught.

Remember how the more things change the more they stay the same? The false ideas confronting Christians in Colossae might not be exactly the same as the ones we face today but Paul’s answer to those problems uncovers a great truth for the false teachings of then and the ones we face today: In Christ we find everything God has to give, so that we let nothing entice us away.

People are always looking for a new and improved salvation plan, a new way to earn forgiveness and heaven. But God intends for us to cling to what he has given us in his Son, the truth and life in Jesus Christ. Christ is the root and source of our life with God. He builds us up giving us the gift of our faith. Christ has already paid for our sin; the debt has been canceled. He wants us to stand firm in what we have been taught. Paul says the same thing to Timothy, “Continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed.” In our world just as in the time of Paul’s writing to the Colossians there are false teachers who want to twist Scripture around to suit their own desires.

But what the Holy Spirit reveals and teaches us as we out of faith read and study Scripture enables us to walk with Christ standing firm as the false teachings attempt to destroy what God has given. Paul writes how we need to be firmly rooted in our faith and in what Scripture has to say.

Paul is telling the Colossians these things so that they can resist the voices that are trying to trip them up. So, they can resist those trying to take them captive by philosophies of the world and empty deceit, according to human traditions and desires. This is the same today. If a portion of the church service makes someone feel uncomfortable then lets do away with it. These are the feel good churches that want everyone to be happy even if it means doing away with Scripture.

As a Christian, I need to be reminded that I am a sinner and what Christ did for me on the cross. That's why we confess our sins at the beginning of the service, to see our need and to see what we already have in Christ but so many churches today have done away with the confession because it made people feel uncomfortable. The problem, if we are not reminded of our sinfulness and the need for a Savior, then Jesus' sacrifice on the cross begins to loose its importance in our daily lives. We tend to take what we have as Christians for granted.

As Christians we don't walk around with our heads hanging down because we are sinful, we live our lives in thankfulness for the forgiveness of sins we have in Christ.

Our Colossian friends were being falsely guided into thinking that through their own efforts they could tap into the fullness of God, achieving for themselves what only Christ can give, the forgiveness of sins and eternal life in heaven. Even today there are countless books and preachers teaching what one must do to achieve eternal peace on ones own. The age old question, “What must I do to receive the gift of heaven?” My answer or more appropriately Scripture’s answer is to stop rejecting Christ as Lord and Savior. Stop trying to do what Christ has already done. It’s not about a “How to book” or a list of things we must do. It’s all about faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

But the world teaches that anything is possible if one works hard enough. So salvation as a free gift goes against our human nature, but then our human nature is a sinful nature. Paul goes on to tell us that in him we have been circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ.

We have been buried with him in baptism, in which we have also been raised with him through faith. We were dead in our trespasses, but God made us alive in Christ! This by nailing him to the cross for the sins of the world.

And it is wonderful to know and say “Jesus loves me” or “I love Jesus.” For children coming to faith this is quite sufficient. But as we grow in faith we also are to grow in understand and knowledge of Scripture. Like when you plant a flower bed, if you don’t water, provide nourishment and care the flowers will all die, if you don’t work the flower bed the weeds will take over and eventually kill the flowers.

When we simply hang onto the feel-good statements or the things that make us outwardly happy but never go any further it’s like admiring a pretty package with the label *Jesus* on it but never opening it. Paul tells us to open up the package take a good look inside. Having a Bible sit on the coffee table looks nice but picking it up and actually reading and studying it is how we stay rooted in Christ.

Let us open our eyes wide along with our hearts and minds to the wonderful treasures we have in Jesus, all contained in Scripture.

Paul writes how we have God's fullness in the One who lived in the flesh, died on a cross, and was raised again. In Baptism, he circumcised us in a way that tackles our whole sinful nature, not just a portion. He canceled the debt of our sin that separates us from God. Christ has disarmed the rulers and authorities putting them to shame and triumphing over them for us.

The world is still full of false teachers promoting false doctrines trying to lead us astray. And on our own we would be like that flower bed if no one watered it or pulled the weeds. But we have the master gardener who has provided all that we need to live life and live it abundantly. He has given us his Word written down so that we can read it anytime receiving its rich nourishment. And as we open the Bible the Holy Spirit helps us grow both in faith and knowledge guiding and directing our every step keeping us 'Alive in Christ' here now and forever in heaven with him.

This is Paul's message to the Colossians and to us. Our lives are made complete in Christ. So let no one deceive you or convince you otherwise. Life is complete in God and only in God. There is no life outside of Christ. We need look no further.

Imagine the number of words contained in a thirty-volume set of the Encyclopedias? You do remember encyclopedias, right? With such an awesome number of words the fact is that only twenty-six letters were used. The authors did not have to go outside of the alphabet to assemble the massive collection of knowledge. It provided everything they needed for the task. Humans scheme to come up with new ways and new rules to accommodate their sinful lifestyles and even when guilty we so often try to fix it ourselves. Jesus already took care of it and has given us His example to follow.

Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega, and we do not have to go outside of him for anything that we need. Amen