

## Colossians 2:1-10 Is your camp in order?

v. 1 – Paul’s concern: Paul wants to meet the church at Colosse and is struggling for it while in jail.

v. 2-3 – Paul presents his purpose through three statements:

They are progressive but are each an aspect of the one hope: the purpose, the intermediate goal, the ultimate goal.

\* The purpose is: “that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love.” This statement suggests that the church at Colosse’s “encouragement grew out of a genuine love which formed a tie stronger than a merely physical one.” (New American Commentary) The Greek reads “that you may be encouraged since you are knit together in love.” Not only is Paul encouraging the believers but he is also teaching them the basics of living the Christian life, similar to Ephesians 3. The love that Paul is talking about here is not a human love but the bond of Christ’s love that keeps them together. This is a constant theme throughout Paul’s writings as he understands that Christian growth is a group task! You can’t do it alone. We will fail if we try. That’s why we meet together. That’s why we have churches. That’s why your friends and family are so important to you. You know kind of like I can make fun of my mom, but if you make fun of my mom I’ll punch you in the throat. We were wired to live in community, not alone, bear each other’s burdens as it says in Gal. 6:2 – “Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

\* The intermediate goal, it’s really just one long goal that Paul makes into little stepping stones for us to get into the pool, is “so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding.” Paul wants them to have a complete understanding of the Gospel so that they can be confident that they are mature/complete Christians.

\* The final/ultimate goal is “in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” As in chapter 1 Paul tells us that the mystery of God, which is Christ, was hidden but is now known through him. Here Paul is knocking the heresy going on by stating every piece of wisdom and knowledge is found only in Christ, nothing else. Basically, Paul is saying that the hidden God is found in Christ.

To sum it up Paul is essentially saying “as the group interacted with each other in love, each and the whole would experience a deeper understanding of Christ. No doubt this understanding was knowledge of how God works uniquely in the lives of each one so that they saw the application of Christ’s love in their lives.” Real knowledge is found in Christ. The people at Colosse were sharing knowledge and experiences corporately which is probably how the heresy began. They started to substitute their knowledge instead of trusting what they had been taught and read from the apostles. Just like all of us always do, they were seeking knowledge. However, real knowledge and truth is found in Christ. So in order to have knowledge and understanding of the Gospel, of God you must commit your life to Christ. Then you will be saved and have the knowledge that leads to assurance of eternity with God in heaven.

v. 4 – Have you ever talked to a car salesman? Maybe he’s a smooth talker, demeaning, makes you feel like you need this vehicle, or that whatever you think about cars is wrong. Perhaps he wants an answer immediately, says he is giving you a deal.

The way the heresy was gaining traction was through the fact that many of the people wanted to gain in their knowledge and understanding. That’s fine; however it was disguised as the

appearance of deeper theology. People were just soaking up information instead of actually living it out and believing it. They were just saying they knew it.

Do you know someone who seems to know about everything? And they let you know that they know everything too? The heresy was telling people you can know everything and because you know everything you will be closer to God. But, we know that knowledge doesn't equal intimacy with God. You can't get "closer" to God through knowledge. You can hear him sometimes and other times miss what He tells you because of sin but never because of knowledge. You are perfect in His eyes when you accept the free gift of grace from Him and make Jesus Lord over your life. More knowledge isn't going to help that. You can see how this would be attractive. I mean how many times have you wanted to know more and more about the Bible. Hello, I always want that! But, there have been people I know who are so focused on theology that they become arrogant, pious and even down right demeaning saying they know more than me. You're right I don't know that much {GASP} that's why I study the Bible McFly! But that doesn't mean I'm not saved. That doesn't mean you are closer to God than I am. Isn't that encouraging? I know it is for me because every day I realize how little I know.

v. 5 – Originally, when I read this statement I felt as though Paul was saying that even though he wasn't there he is happy to know that they are doing great in their walk with Christ, standing firm on the foundation of Jesus. After studying it, it does mean that but it means so much more. Paul used the words "orderly" and "firm" as military terms to show that the heresy was not over taking the church. They were "orderly" meaning that everything was in place and that the camp was in order. And "firm" was that their defenses were in place. They had not been shaken. Is everything orderly in your life? Are your defenses up? Like wearing the spiritual armor of God in Ephesians 6? How do you order your camp/faith? Are you constantly renewing your mind as it says in Romans 12:1-2? We talked about that last week in our small groups. [1 Peter 3:15](#)

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to **give an answer** to everyone who asks you to **give** the reason **for** the **hope** that you have.

This is getting the camp in order and being prepared. When you are devastated by getting less hours at work, getting that D on your test, by breaking up with your boyfriend or girlfriend, when your car breaks down and you have no money to fix it, is your camp in order? Are your defenses up? Will you trust in yourself and your ability, or will you trust in Christ the true foundation and source of wisdom and knowledge.

v.6 – This is the only place in Paul's letters that he uses the statement "Christ Jesus AS Lord" The Greek article actually reads "Christ Jesus THE Lord." It doesn't focus on Christ's Lordship as Paul normally does but more so that we have received Him as the one who is the Lord. He did it this way because the heresy was telling the people to not embrace Christ as the complete sufficiency for their lives. Lord means he is in control over EVERYTHING in your life. Not just on Sunday mornings, not just when you are studying (or forgot to study) for a test, not just when you need something, but for the good times and the bad, for those hurricane times and those peaceful times. He is for those times when you have to pay for tuition and during the times when you get financial aid. Just as you received Christ, remember what he has done for you and because of that continue to live in Him, continue to follow him and praise him in the storms and the blessings of life.

v.7 – This verse continues verse 6 with how you continue to live/walk in Christ. Through being rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in faith and overflowing with thankfulness.

Rooted and built up – both promote the idea that Christ is your foundation. If you are rooted, you are strong in the soil of Christ and not just of the surface of the earth. A building that is built high

needs to have a strong foundation. The buildings that crumble are the ones where the foundation was incorrectly placed, or even just slightly off.

Strengthened in the faith – because of the foundation you are strong in your faith.

Overflowing with thankfulness – Are you thankful for what Christ has done for you? For us? One of the first indicators that you are moving away from God is a lack of thanksgiving. I've noticed in my life that when I am not in the Word as much, or praying and talking with God that I begin to act like the world revolves around me. There have been times in my life when I get upset when things don't go my way, when what I want to happen didn't and I can't get over it. That happens when I am not rooted in the foundation of Christ and not being strengthened by my faith, by my trust in Christ. When I realize this, I have to ask for forgiveness, even though He has already given it to me, and come back to focusing on God and not myself. Romans 1:21 talks about how the wrath of God was coming from heaven because men were not being thankful for what God had given them. Are we thankful for salvation and how God continues to sustain life?

“Faith and the nature of a Christian foundation are often invisible, but thanksgiving is a visible response to the grace of God in their lives.”

V8 Splash (the regular stuff is just nasty) – This verse intros the section of theology to directly defend the Christian faith against the heresy. Some of the Bible's deepest and richest theology is in today's and next week's verses.

This is the only time Paul uses the word philosophy (*philosophia*) which means “love of wisdom.” “The word described any theory about God, the world, or the meaning of life.” Here Paul talks about the philosophy or heresy as hollow and deceptive. He basically was saying there is no substance to this; following it led to nothingness.

The philosophy was based upon human reason, “tradition.” It was based upon a human's thoughts and not God's. In Isaiah it says God's does not think the way we think. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Therefore, it was basic, which means the beginning, the spiritual milk, the abc's, the barely thinking principles, where you check your brain at the door. Paul was calling the principles of the heresy elementary. Finally, the heresy was “not according to Christ.” It was a non-Christian philosophy that was trying to overtake the church. It was contrary to what Christ did on the cross.

v. 9 – Jesus is completely God. This was hard for the heresy to believe because as we have been saying, they say God, who is perfect and good, would never live in created matter, which is evil. But here, again, Paul says all the fullness of the Deity (God) lives in Christ in bodily form. This means in the flesh, not just in spirit. The fullness refers to the complete nature, all of it, not just a part of it. Paul chooses a word that does not mean divine nature but ultimate deity. Underline the word fullness.

v. 10 – This verse is amazing, it doesn't mean that Christians are elevated to the same stature as Jesus but it means just as Jesus was fully God, believers are fully complete in Christ. We have everything we need in Christ. John 1:16, from the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. We are complete in Christ – we don't need to do anything to be made more righteous in God's eyes. We have the same power that raised Christ from the dead in us because God is in us by what Christ did on the cross.

“Christ is the head over every power and authority,” means that He is not the same as created beings; in fact he has power and authority over them. Nothing is greater than He is, nothing can sustain us like He can because He is in charge of everything. The heresy was saying that Christ can't have this power because He was a created being and now Paul was refuting that with the fullness of God which leads to Christ's authority.