

COLOSSIANS: FULLNESS, COMPLETENESS IN HIM

⁸ See to it that no one carries you off as spoil or makes you yourselves captive by his so-called philosophy and intellectualism and vain deceit (idle fancies and plain nonsense), following human tradition (men's ideas of the material rather than the spiritual world), just crude notions following the rudimentary and elemental teachings of the universe and disregarding [the teachings of] Christ (the Messiah). ⁹ For in Him the whole fullness of Deity (the Godhead) continues to dwell in bodily form [giving complete expression of the divine nature]. ¹⁰ And you are in Him, made full and having come to fullness of life [in Christ you too are filled with the Godhead—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and reach full spiritual stature]. And He is the Head of all rule and authority [of every angelic principality and power]. Colossians 2:8-10 AMPC

- ***Paul warns the church, don't be beguiled by human philosophy or empty deception. (v8)***
- ***Don't be 'carried off or taken captive'...don't leave the truth to become a slave to error. (v8)***
- ***The word for 'philosophy' used here means 'a love of wisdom'... the human pursuit of wisdom apart from God's revelation...this is the only time this word is in the Bible..."I like to say, 'this deception is full of emptiness.'" (v8)***
- ***Paul is very likely referring to philosophies that were influenced by demons and attempted to present Jesus as 'less than' what we need and not the complete spiritual fullness we require.***
- ***Any point of view that casts doubt on Jesus being the fullness of God and would portray us as not being complete in Him is to be rejected.***
- ***The false teachers that were trying to influence the Colossians were saying that the spiritual fullness they desired was not available in Jesus alone.***
- ***Any system of thought that would present Jesus as not sovereign and supreme should be denounced and discredited.***
- ***In Him, we have been made complete...the Spirit of God in you bringing you to full spiritual stature. (v10)***
- ***"He is the head of all rule and authority of every angelic principality and power. (v10b)***

¹¹ And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13 NASB

¹¹ In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, but in a [spiritual] circumcision [performed by] Christ by stripping off the body of the flesh (the whole corrupt, carnal nature with its passions and lusts). ¹² [Thus you were circumcised when] you were buried with Him in [your] baptism, in which you were also raised with Him [to a new life] through [your] faith in the working of God [as displayed] when He raised Him up from the dead. Colossians 2:11-12 AMPC

²⁸ For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. ²⁹ But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God. Romans 2:28-29 NASB

- **He deals with our sinful nature (v11) and even when we were dead in our sins and our closed hearts, He made us alive together with Him. (v13)**
 - **He canceled the certificate of debt that was hostile to us and nailed it to the cross...(v14)**

¹⁵ [God] disarmed the principalities and powers that were ranged against us and made a bold display and public example of them, in triumphing over them in Him and in it [the cross]. Colossians 2:15 AMPC

- **Rejecting the 'shadows' for the substance. (v16-17)**

¹⁶ Therefore let no one sit in judgment on you in matters of food and drink, or with regard to a feast day or a New Moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ Such [things] are only the shadow of things that are to come, and they have only a

symbolic value. But the reality (the substance, the solid fact of what is foreshadowed, the body of it) belongs to Christ. Colossians 2:16-17 NASB

- **Don't let anyone defraud you of your prize. (v18-19)**
 - **What is the prize? Jesus! Being alive together with Him. Living 'debt free' and experiencing the true reality of life in God.**

"Let no one defraud you of your prize, priding himself of his humility and on his worship of angels, and taking his stand on visions he has seen, and idly puffed up with his unspiritual thoughts. Such a one does not keep his hold upon Christ; the Head, from whom the body, in all its parts nourished and strengthened by its points of contact and its connections, grows with a divine growth." Colossians 2:18-19 Weymouth

Some people love to make a parade of exceptional piety. They pretend to have found the way to a higher plane of spiritual experience, as though they have been initiated into sacred mysteries which give them an infinite advantage over the uninitiated. Others are over prone to be taken in by such people, for this kind of claim impresses those who always fall for the idea of an 'inner ring.' But (says the apostle) don't be misled by such people. – F. F. Bruce

- **How do we get defrauded?**
 - **Living in the 'shadows' of a self-attained stature with God.**
 - **Self-abasement and asceticism...believing that if you add up enough physical negatives you will get a spiritual positive. (Note: we died to all that stuff!)**
 - **Worship of angels (His messengers) instead of God.**
 - **Vaunted and Flaunted visions that do not originate from God and have no Holy Spirit affirmation or confirmation.**
 - **Defrauded by the deception that you are 'living in the world' as your source. (see v20)**
 - **Legalism: attempting to reach an end that is spiritual in nature by means that are not...religious rigor or not spiritual reality.**
 - **A focus on the flesh, even in denying or subjugating the flesh, is a religious trickery unto 'making provision for the flesh'. (asceticism)**

- **Not holding fast to the head (Jesus) will cause you to miss the 'growth that is from God.'** (v19)
- **The growth that is from God (v19)**
 - **Jesus is the head and our connection to Him is what causes true growth...not some self-inflated religious posturing and projecting.**
 - **...“Growth with the growth of God.” – Rotherham**
 - **...“increases in a godly growth.” – Conybeare**
 - **...“Grows with a growth that God produces.” – Williams (see 1 Corinthians 3:6)**
 - **Real growth, real expansion from God is accompanied by the true expression of God.**
 - **Real growth comes from our connection to Jesus our Head and like Him it is full of grace and truth.**
 - **If we died to the elementary principles of the world, why be governed by them? (v20-23)**

²⁰ If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— ²¹ “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” ²² (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? ²³ These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh. Colossians 2:20-23 ESV

³ Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. ³ For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

⁵ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. Colossians 3:1-5 NASB

- **Nothing conceived in the flesh will help you fight and overcome the fight against our own human indulgence.**

- **What will help us as we fight fleshly indulgence?**
 - **Why do we fail to resist temptation successfully?**
 - **For that matter, why do we sin?**
 - **What is the strong sense of sin's allure?**
 - **Simply put...pleasure!**
 - **...the passing pleasure of sin...Hebrews 11:25**
 - **...the temporary enjoyment of sin... Transline NT**
 - **...the fleeting enjoyment of a sinful life... New English Bible**
 - **...the pressures of sin for a season...KJV**
- **We fight pleasure with pleasure. Colossians 3:1-5**
 - **Yielding to fleshly urges is overcome by seeking the things above. (The idea here is to 'seek and keep on seeking.'**
 - **The quest to keep on seeking and the deliberate choice to set your mind on the things above as opposed to the transitory things of this age will help you defeat temptation.**
- **We must encounter the beauty of spiritual readiness that captures our hearts and captivates our attention and affections.**

You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever. Psalm 16:11 NASB

⁷ How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! and the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. ⁸ They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house;

And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights. ⁹ For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light. Psalm 36:7-9 NASB

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy dwelling places of the Most High. Psalm 46:4 NASB

- **Look at what the Word says about us:**
 - **We have been rescued from darkness and transferred into the kingdom of God. (Colossians 1:13)**
 - **We have the forgiveness of all our sins. (Colossians 1:14)**
 - **We are alive from the dead...alive together with Him. (Colossians 2:13)**

- **All of the decrees against us and the certificate of debt that we owed was nailed to the cross. (Colossians 2:14)**
- **We are growing with a growth that God produces. (Colossians 2:19)**
- **We have died to the elementary principles of the world. (Colossians 2:20) God is our source.**
- **We have been raised up with Jesus (seated at the right hand of God). (Colossians 3:1)**
- **We were set free from the principles and spirit of this age and set free for a new life in Christ Jesus.**
- **We have a new source, new values, new ways, new pleasures and new power.**
- **Therefore, seek the things above; set your mind on things above, "for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-4)**
 - **Our life is hidden in Him...safe and secure in Him.**
 - **See Galatians 2:20**
 - **See 1 John 3:1-3**
 - **See John 10:28-29**
 - **See Romans 12:1-2**
 - **See 2 Corinthians 5:14-16**
 - **We have died and our new life is in union with Him. (Colossians 3:3-4)**
 - **He is our life; our life is hidden in Him in this present age.**
 - **We will be revealed with Jesus in the age to come. (Colossians 3:4)**
 - **We will be revealed with Him in glory; this does not mean 'glory' as a place but rather as an experience.**
 - **Paul says that Jesus will come to be..."Glorified in His saints on that day."**

When He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed—for our testimony to you was believed. 2 Thessalonians 1:10 NASB

John Stott explains 2 Thessalonians 1:10 like this:

So how will the coming Lord Jesus be glorified in relation to His people? Not 'among' them, as if they will be the theatre or stadium in which He appears, nor 'by' them, as if they will be the spectators, the audience who watch and worship; nor 'through' or 'by means of' them, as if they will be mirrors which reflect His image and glory [although, in a sense all those are true]; but rather 'in' them, as if they will be a filament, which itself glows with light and heat when the electric current passes through it.

Stott's point is that we will not only witness Christ's glory, but we will be enveloped within it, engulfed by surging splendor and made experiential participants of it. One day, oh glorious day, our lives will no longer be hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3), but fully and finally and forever seen as we glow with the brightness of His glory, for His glory. – Sam Storms

³ For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. ⁵ Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. Colossians 3:3-5 NASB

My old man (sin nature) has been done away with and my complete 'new life' won't be totally manifest until Jesus returns. So, my life here and now is a progressive series of discoveries of what is hidden in God for me.

You have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. The world, the flesh, and the devil will cause you to look everywhere else for your life...everywhere but where it can be found...hidden with Christ in God.

I am dead to the things listed in Colossians 3:5 but the enemy has tried to hide this truth from me. Satan knows that I am truly dead to these things because I am alive in Christ. But if I truly discover it, I will put an end to his interference in my life and this is what he fears most. What Satan tries to hide from me, the Holy Spirit has hidden for me with Christ in God.