

Colossians 2:1-15

October 18th, 2020

Let's Jump Right In!

LEADER:

As we read our passage for this week, listen out for something that Paul says that seems striking or surprising to you.

ASK FOR A VOLUNTEER TO READ THE PASSAGE FROM THIS WEEK, COLOSSIANS 2:1-15.

"For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in

There is a lot of ground to cover this week! You probably won't have time to work through every one of these questions.

Consider which questions will be the most life-giving and provide the greatest engagement for your group.

the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”
Col. 2:1-15

Question #1: What struck you from this passage? What seems significant to you? Does anything surprise you?

SAY: Let's look through some of these specific verses throughout the passage, thinking through both what Paul is saying and how these things have been true in our lives.

Question #2:
What do you think is the significance of Christ being described in v. 2 as “the mystery of God?” What kind of relationship does Paul draw between “God” and “Christ?”

SAY: Let's look at several different translations to try to better understand the meaning of verse two better. By comparing how different translators have translated the original Greek, we can recognize the different contours of the verse.

See what translations those in your group have, asking different people to read from their versions.

Col. 2:2 (English Standard Version)
“that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, which is Christ,”

Col. 2:2 (New International Version)
“My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ,”

Col. 2:2 (Christian Standard Bible)
“I want their hearts to be encouraged and joined together in love, so that they may have all the riches of complete understanding and have the knowledge of God’s mystery—Christ.”

Col. 2:2 (New Living Translation)
“I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God’s mysterious plan, which is Christ himself.”

To the left are a few different translations, moving from more formal (word-for-word) translations to more idiomatic (idea-for-idea) translations.

“Paul is again piling up words in order to hammer home the truth that Christ, and Christ alone, is the source of every conceivable bit of spiritual knowledge worth having.”

– Douglas J. Moo

SAY:

As we are knit together, we become united in love and grow together in our relationship to and knowledge of Jesus Christ. In other words, discipleship and our own spiritual growth happens within community. God wants us to strive together in our understanding of God and our worship for what He has done.

Question #3:

How has being within the community of the church contributed to your own growth? How have you been able to contribute to the growth of others?

Ephesians 5:18-21

"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ."

John 17:21

"that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

Question #4:

How have you experienced your knowledge of Jesus Christ grow and develop over time? How has that growth affected the way you view reality?

2 Peter 1:3

"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,"

2 Peter 3:18

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

Question #5:

Read verses 6-7. As you consider your own life, how have you had victory in "walking in Him"? How have you seen God help you to become rooted, built up, and established in Him?

LEADER:

Paul addresses the beliefs of the Colossians because of the false teaching that was creeping into the church (see vv. 8-15). No other tradition, belief, or spiritual power can compare to the unique deity that God possesses. Only Christ could raise us from spiritual death (2:12-13) and give us forgiveness. Let's turn to these last three verses, which is the hope we have been given through Jesus.

Paul's main point :

"Christ is the one in whom is to be found all that one needs in order to understand spiritual reality and to lead a life pleasing to God."

–Douglas J. Moo

On the false teaching:

"In place of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that the Colossians already possess in Christ (2:3), this 'philosophy' offers only human tradition and the basic principles of this world."

– N. T. Wright

Question #6:

Read verses 13-15. Who is the “responsible party” for the salvation we experience? According to these verses, what are the different things that have been accomplished?

Question #7:

How would you describe the freedom you experience now that your “record of debt” has been nailed to the cross and decisively dealt with by our eternal savior?

(Optional) Wrap-Up Question:

How do you think this passage translates into action for you? How do you think we should apply this into our lives?

LEADER WRAP UP:

We are given a powerful reminder in Colossians 2 that only Jesus makes sense of our reality, and only Jesus can give raise us from the dead, both spiritually and physically. Because of all of this life-changing and reality-defining that God has done for us, we can now “walk in him.” We can experience Him daily as we go about our lives, enjoying His presence and seeing His hand at work around us.

Ending With Prayer

End in prayer, asking God to “knit our hearts together in love” and to root us together in the faith.