

How To Continue In Christ (Col. 2:4-23)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In a world full of different ideas and religious expressions it is important to know where Christ fits into our lives and how we live out the Christian life day by day.
- B. The culture around us looks at us, like through a magnifying glass to see if what we profess is real and whether it actually works in real life. There is also the question about religious customs and whether we as Christians need to observe them in order for us to be accepted by God.

II. HOW TO CONTINUE IN CHRIST

- A. The Apostle Paul gives us very practical exhortations on how to live out of lives as Christians. He says, *now that you have received Jesus, keep living for Him*. I'm impressed by how much teaching for practical living there actually is in the Word of God. We are not left to wonder about it. All we have to do is learn out it from the scriptures and then live it out.
“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. (Col. 2:6-7).
- B. ***“So walk in Him”(v.6):*** The word “walk” means, to make ones way. To live. There are 32 things the Apostle exhorts us “to do” in Colossians.
- C. ***“Rooted and built up in Him” (v.7):*** Rooted means to be thoroughly grounded. God wants us to be thoroughly grounded in Christ and in truth, and in knowing who Jesus is according to His word.
- D. ***“Established in the faith” (v.7):*** “pistis” is the Greek word for faith. It means persuasion, moral conviction of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God. It is also means “assurance”.

III. NOT PHILOSOPHY BUT CHRIST

- A. The word Philosophy means, “the rational investigation of the truths and principles of being.” It is the attempt to understand everything there is through mans wisdom and logic. The philosophy building at Harvard University contains this inscription: ***“What is Man That Thou Art Mindful of Him”*** (Psalm 8:4). How fitting when you consider that knowing God through Jesus Christ is really the highest knowledge of all that man can achieve!
“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition on men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. For in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.” (Col. 2:8-10).
- B. ***“Beware lest anyone cheat you...” (v.8):*** There are many who have lost their way in life because someone has “cheated” them to believe from man’s point of view instead of Christ’s. “Cheat” means to carry one away as a captive.

- C. **“Empty deceit...” (v.8):** To be deceived. To be deluded. To believe things about life and God that are not biblical. Many attempt to justify their lives through vain deceit so they don’t have to give an account to God. ***Jesus is the Truth, The way, and The Life*** (John 14:6). **“Basic principles of the world”** is speaking about the world system opposed to Christ.
- D. **“For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead” (v. 9).** Jesus Christ is God. It is as simple as that. *All the fullness of the Godhead* is the word “theotes” – The state of being God, God dwelling in Christ. (See also John 1:1-3, Heb. 1:3, Isa. 9:6-7, Col. 1:16-18).
- E. **“You are complete in Him” (v.10).** There is nothing else that you need. You are perfect in Christ. He is your all-in-all and all that you need to know God and live a godly life.

IV. NOT LEGALISM BUT CHRIST

- A. Legalism is a deadly force. It chokes the life out of you. The word means “a strict adherence to law or prescription”. It is the letter rather than the spirit that gives life, (2Cor. 3:6). It is observing the “do’s and don’ts” of commandments without understanding the heart of it.
“Let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ” (Col. 16-17).
“Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations – “do not touch, do not taste, do not handle”, which all concern things which perish with the using...” (Col. 2:20-21).
- B. “Let no one judge you” means, don’t let anyone tell you what you have to observe in order to be a Christian. Legalism can appear in many forms. ***“Festival or new moon or Sabbaths” (v.16)*** speaks about a set of rules that requires you to worship on certain days (Sabbath) in order to do things rightly, or to only eat certain things, and not others. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. (Mark 2:27)
- C. **“The substance is of Christ” (v. 17)** means, when all is said and done, it’s all about serving and living for Jesus, not about keeping certain religious rules. All those things point to Jesus Christ who set us free to serve Him.

V. NOT FALSE MYSTICISM BUT CHRIST

- A. Lastly, The Apostle exhorts us not to get carried away by mystical, spiritual ideas that are not grounded in the Lord. He says some of these things are ***“vainly puffed up by fleshly minds”*** (v.18).
“Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head... (Christ)” (Col. 2:18-19).