



CONNECT GROUP NOTES

Sunday 18.06.2023

“Christ the Fullness”

Preacher

Ps. Nathan Bean

Scripture

6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, **7** rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, **10** and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. **11** In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, **12** having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, **14** having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. **15** And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.



16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. **17** These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Thought

Paul once again is writing to the church at Colossae facing pressure to lower their view of Jesus. The pressure of the gnostic teaching with their spiritual ladder climbing, secret wisdom and mysterious spiritual experiences, along with pressure from the Judaizers, trying to make the new believers Jewish, by forcing them to take on Jewish cultural and ritual practices. This constant pressure was causing some in the early church to walk away from Jesus as Lord and succumb to these external pressures.

This is where Paul does not hold back. v6; "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him." How we start in the Christian faith is also how we grow. We start by making Jesus The Lord of our lives and we also grow by the same means, *keeping* Jesus as Lord. There is no secret spiritual ladder or special spiritual quest or experience to seek out. Should we grow and mature? YES! Should we continue to bear fruit in our lives YES! But first and foremost, we grow by keeping Jesus as the Lord of our lives and we don't move on from Him.

In fact, the very word that Paul uses in v6 for 'continue' is simply, "walk". It is amazing that our faith in Jesus is called a walk. That means by consistently showing up and inviting him into our everyday lives, we grow and are built up.

When we drift away from Jesus as Lord or when we make him something less than Lord, we find ourselves drifting to a lesser version of him. We are carried away by empty hollow teaching, which might be the modern pop-culture philosophy of our day with its enticing mix of slogans that are half truths, permission giving and socially acceptable. Or, we become religious with all of the perils of performing religious duty without knowing Christ. This was the pressure that the church at Colossae faced and equally what we face today.



Finally, when Paul talks about receiving Christ as Lord, he does something unique to the book of Colossians. Normally the word 'receive' is then followed by a teaching or tradition to pass on (1 Cor 15:3/Php 4:9). Here, however, Paul is not passing on a concept. He is telling us that we did not receive Christ as the concept or idea, but Christ the person and to make Him Lord and Saviour.

This is the same for us today. When we receive Him as Lord, we bring the fullness of Jesus into our hearts and real change begins when new life is received.

Discussion Points

1. As you have received Jesus Christ as Lord, are you "continuing" to strengthen your walk with Him. What are the areas that you find challenging to make Him Lord over?
2. Have you felt pressure to either add popular culture/ideas/hollow philosophy (v8) to your faith in Jesus or felt drawn to the trappings of religious duty over relationship?
3. 9 "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and in Christ you have been brought to fullness." Paul shares a similar thought in Ephesians 3:19. Have you found that you have been "brought to fullness" in Christ? Meaning, have you experienced the deep life/soul fulfilling work that only Jesus brings? Or are you still searching?