

MEMORY VERSE: "So 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." Colossians 2:16, 17, NKJV

LESSON STUDY INTRO

This week's lesson takes a closer look at Colossians chapter 2.

1. Christ gives assurance through doctrinal understanding (Sun, Mon)

- Paul desired that the Colossian believers would receive the "riches of the full assurance of understanding..." (see Col. 2:1-3).
 - Note that it is not the understanding, nor the riches of understanding, but the riches of the *full assurance of understanding* that Paul refers to. In other words, it was the understanding that gave assurance, and that assurance was the treasure Paul desired his readers to have.
 - It was the desire of the apostle that they might have entire conviction of the truth of the Christian doctrines. Dr. Barnes on Col. 2:2
 - "‘Riches of the full assurance’ or ‘wealth of the firm persuasion.’ As believers learn the deeper truths of God’s teaching, their assurance becomes firmer. When Christians truly know the Lord’s ways, they cannot but trust. And this trust is based on understanding." SDA Bible Commentary on Col. 2:2
- Christ is the substance of all true Bible doctrine (see Col. 2:3, 6-7).
 - "We receive salvation by receiving a person, not just a body of teachings. But receiving Jesus also includes accepting all His teachings..." Qtly, Mon, par 1

The truth for this time is broad in its outlines, far reaching, embracing many doctrines; but these doctrines are not detached items, which mean little; they are united by golden threads, forming a complete whole, with Christ as the living center. The truths we present from the Bible are as firm and immovable as the throne of God. 2SM 87.1

- "We become rooted in Christ by accepting Him as our Savior and ordering our life according to His Word. That is how we become 'established in the faith.'" Qtly, Mon, par 4

2. Christ crucified the flesh on the cross, not the Law (Tue)

- "You are complete in Him,... in Him you were also circumcised... by the circumcision of Christ" (Col. 2:10, 11).

- True circumcision was about cutting away the fleshly nature and renewing the heart (see Dt. 30:6; Jer. 9:23-26 w/Gal. 6:14, 15).
 - This was effectively accomplished by the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, which is symbolized by baptism (see Col. 2:11-13; Rom. 6:4; Q'tly, Tue, par 4, 5). Thus the rite of circumcision was replaced in the Christian Church with the rite of baptism.
- It was Jesus' body that was nailed to the cross in fulfilment of the typical sacrifices of the ceremonial law that had for centuries pointed forward to His great sacrifice.
 - It was the "body of the sins of the flesh" that were crucified on Calvary (see Col. 2:11). Christ thus disarmed the principalities and powers seeking our destruction and "triumphed" over them" by doing what, since the beginning of the controversy, was said couldn't be done.

Christ came to vindicate the sacred claims of the law. He came to live a life of obedience to its requirements and thus prove the falsity of the charge made by Satan that it is impossible for man to keep the law of God... His life testifies that it is possible for us also to obey the law of God. 8T 207.3

3. We have been crucified with Christ (Wed, Thu)

- "...You died with Christ..." (see Col. 2:20-23).
 - We are no longer to be judged by the ceremonial law, not only because Jesus fulfilled it, but because we have died with Him. Now, He lives His righteous life in us (Gal. 2:20; Isa. 54:17).
 - Ceremonial regulations, like the "basic principles of the world" (*Gr. stoicheion*), were a means to an end (see Gal. 4:8-12).
- "...of no value against the indulgence of the flesh" (v. 23).
 - The rites and ceremonies of religion have their place; yet without surrender of the will to God, they will fail of transforming us into the image of Christ.
 - "[T]he carrying out of all these human laws and speculations is of no value against overindulgence of the flesh. The only thing that will achieve this is complete surrender of the heart to Christ and the death of the will to the appeals of the world." SDA Bible Commentary on Col. 2:23

CONCLUSION

There is nothing so hard as the crucifixion of the will... Those who follow Christ, if they would become complete in Him, must keep their will surrendered to the will of God. Abundant provision has been made that those who will seek God with the whole heart may find Him a present help in every time of trouble. Help has been laid on One that is mighty. Christ has promised, I will be your helper. OHC 107.4