

NOT EMPTY PHILOSOPHY—BUT JESUS

Colossians 1:27-2:10

A message by Asst. Pastor Frank G Warburton

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Colossians 1:27-2:10 “**27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. 29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily. 1 For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, 2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. 4 Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. 5 For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. 6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.**

Last time we studied how Paul rejoiced in his sufferings. We saw how Paul might be rebuked or chased out of some churches today, for daring to say, “I now rejoice in my sufferings for you.”

Saul of Tarsus; was the Greatest Persecutor of the Early Church after the resurrection. Some scholars believe that it was the bold witness of Stephen and his compassion on his persecutors; by praying that GOD would not hold this sin to their charge as he died that was a great conviction upon Saul. Saul went berserk and heavily persecuted the church; after Stephen’s death; until he met the Risen JESUS on the road to Damascus.

Paul was shown what he must suffer for Christ at his conversion; and he still chose to follow JESUS.

JESUS explained why Paul had to suffer for him, in [John 13:16](#) “16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.”

We saw last time, that as a servant to JESUS; Paul and us as well are not greater than our master JESUS. JESUS set the example for us through the things that HE suffered leading to and including the cross. We looked at last time the many different things that JESUS suffered for us when HE paid for our sins on the cross. We saw in several verses in Isaiah; the physical things that JESUS endured for us, from the ripping out of HIS Beard in [Isaiah 50:6](#). How his visage was marred more than any man; in [Isaiah 52:14](#). The rejection of JESUS by HIS family prior to HIS Crucifixion. Let alone the separation HE endured for us when HE who knew no sin, became sin for us.

We also talked briefly about suffering for JESUS as believers, and the likely probability of increased persecution coming to believers here in America. Andrew Brunson, the Pastor who was imprisoned in Turkey described in a recent World Net Daily Article; "Persecution can make you stronger, "But it can also knock you out." Brunson said there are two "wedge issues" he believes will drive persecution. One is the "exclusivity of Jesus and salvation" and the other is the command of Jesus for obedience regarding the hotly contested issues of sexual morality, gender identity, marriage, family and biblical justice.

Today's message will hopefully be a little uplifting.

[Colossians 1:27-2:3](#) “27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. 29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily. 1 For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, 2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

The Word riches in Chapter 1:27 and Chapter 2 verse 2 is the same word and we will discuss this shortly. In verse 28, and this wrapping our review, that it is JESUS we preach warning every man. We talked about some people being saved by seeing how GOD loved them, but some need to be saved by the fear of separation from GOD.

As we transition from Chapter 1 to Chapter 2, I would like to remind you that the Bible, which is the WORD of God, is inspired. The Chapter and verse divisions were created by man and are NOT inspired. I believe the thought Paul has continues from Chapter 1 verse 29 into Chapter 2:1.

[Colossians 2:1](#) “1 For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh,”

In Chapter 2 verse 1 Paul describes a great conflict he has in his heart to the Church in Colossae and also in Laodicea. The word for conflict ag-one where we get our word agony from. It means a struggle, a battle, or an action in a legal trial.

What do we know about the Church of Laodicea?

JESUS wrote one of the letters to the Seven Churches in the book of Revelation. In the letters to the Seven Churches, most of the letters have a commendation pf something they are doing right and a warning to correct something that is wrong. The letter to the Church of Laodicea has NO commendation and only warnings of what needs to be corrected

Turn to [Revelation 3:14-17](#) “14 “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: 15 “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. 16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. 17 Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—”

What is the Church of Laodicea known for? The Church was not “HOT” and on fire for JESUS, nor was it “COLD” or against JESUS. It was “LUKEWARM.” JESUS condemned the Lukewarm state of the Church of Laodicea. JESUS also rebuked this Church for its pride, by thinking it was “wealthy and in need of nothing.” Instead of recognizing that they were: “Miserable, poor, blind and naked.”

Paul agonized in his heart and spirit over the unsaved as well as the Lukewarm believers as in Laodicea. We agonize over these same groups in our families. Some of us may be agonizing over an unsaved spouse; a wayward child; or parents or friends. How our hearts ache over the lukewarm members in the Body of Christ or within our own families.

Turn back to [Colossians 2:2](#) “2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,”

As Paul prayed that the hearts of the true believers in Colossae and Laodicea would be encouraged and knit together in love. My prayer for you is that your heart would be encouraged in the LORD. And as we have been looking the past several weeks in John’s Gospel. May your heart be knit and joined together with HIM and HIS love for you.

In the rest of verse two Paul writes: "and attaining to all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ." Paul is encouraging us to dig deeper into WHO GOD is. That would have a deeper relationship with; and a greater knowledge of WHO JESUS is. In this verse we have once again two distinct members of the Triune Nature of the Godhead.

The NLT translates verse 2 this way.

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.

Charles Spurgeon compared our knowledge of JESUS to climbing a mountain. I would like to read what he said to you.

Get thee up into the high mountain.”

[Isaiah 40:9](#)

Our knowledge of Christ is somewhat like climbing one of our Welsh mountains. When you are at the base you see but little: the mountain itself appears to be but one-half as high as it really is. Confined in a little valley, you discover scarcely anything but the rippling brooks as they descend into the stream at the foot of the mountain. Climb the first rising knoll, and the valley lengthens and widens beneath your feet. Go higher, and you see the country for four or five miles round, and you are delighted with the widening prospect. Mount still, and the scene enlarges; till at last, when you are on the summit, and look east, west, north, and south, you see almost all England lying before you. Yonder is a forest in some distant county, perhaps two hundred miles away, and here the sea, and there a shining river and the smoking chimneys of a manufacturing town, or the masts of the ships in a busy port. All these things please and delight you, and you say, “I could not have imagined that so much could be seen at this elevation.” Now, the Christian life is of the same order. When we first believe in Christ we see but little of him. The higher we climb the more we discover of his beauties. But who has ever gained the summit? Who has known all the heights and depths of the love of Christ which passes knowledge? Paul, when grown old, sitting grey-haired, shivering in a dungeon in Rome, could say with greater emphasis than we can, “I know whom I have believed,” for each experience had been like the climbing of a hill, each trial had been like ascending another summit, and his death seemed like gaining the top of the mountain, from which he could see the whole of the faithfulness and the love of him to whom he had committed his soul. Get thee up, dear friend, into the high mountain.

Colossians 2:3 “3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

In verse 2 the word riches means fullness, abundance or a good that with which one is enriched.

The word treasures in verse three in the Greek is thesauros and means:

- I. The place in which good and precious things are collected and laid up
- II. The things laid up in a treasury, collected treasures

The greatest riches or treasure we have in JESUS is JESUS:

Song of Solomon 2:16 “16 My beloved is mine, and I am his. He feeds his flock among the lilies.”

We have in JESUS exceedingly great and precious promises.

Romans 2:4 “4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”

John 5:24 “24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”

Philippians 4:19 “19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Explain the personal significance of this verse.

(job & recent text)

He knows what we have need of before we even ask.

We know that GOD the Father has made JESUS heir of all things.

Hebrews 1:2 “2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;”

Because of our relationship with JESUS, we are joint heirs with HIM.

Romans 8:16-17 “16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”

As a joint heir with JESUS and our relationship with HIM we have open access to GOD the Father.

Hebrews 4:16 “16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

We have open access to come into GOD’s throne room WITHOUT FEAR to bring our requests to GOD the Father, just like children have open access to come to their earthly Fathers. Contrast this with Esther approaching King Ahasuerus.

Wisdom and knowledge in Colossians 2:3 refers to how GOD is broad and full of intelligence and knowledge that we can literally know on very wide and diverse matters.

Colossians 2:4 “4 Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words.”

The word deceive means to cheat by false reckoning or deceive by false reasoning; or to delude or circumvent. Tying that with persuasive words. In this context the intent would be to intentionally led someone into error>

We are living in days of great deception; that will only increase the closer we get to JESUS’s return. We are being bombarded every day with more and more stories and details which make us question, what is the truth. Some

of the things we are hearing seem more and more that they are trying to shape the way we think and respond. Some of the things we are hearing seem more and more absurd every day.

Paul warned what was coming after his departure.

Acts 20:29-30 “29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.”

"(Share about encounter with Mormons and they want to help encourage people with their faith. Also JW's and "Bible Studies")

(Real JESUS vs Mormon Jesus / JW Jesus)

(Bible vs Mormon Bible and Extra books / JW "Bible and extra publications)

(Biblical virgin birth vs Mormon "virgin birth" / JW non virgin birth)

(Biblical heaven & salvation vs Mormon Salvation and "godhood" / JW salvation)

Colossians 2:5-7 “5 For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. 6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”

While Paul was not physically present with those in Colosse; he was with them in Spirit and he rejoiced to see those in Colossae walking with the LORD and the steadfastness or firmness of their faith. How joyfully it is when our loved ones come to the place to walk in the LORD and to see them building convictions about JESUS that are based on the Bible.

Colossians 2:6-7 “6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”

Amos 3:3 “3 Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?”

Explain the gospel and receiving JESUS.

Ephesians 2:8-9 “8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

After salvation we need to get rooted in JESUS and make our faith firm in HIM. How do we do this?

Turn to Psalm 1 “1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.”

We get rooted and “grounded” in JESUS by spending time with HIM in HIS WORD, the Bible. The deeper our “roots” go into the Bible and into JESUS, will fill our souls with the abundance of life; so that when trials come will be moved. It has been said that a Bible that is falling apart is owned by a Christian who is NOT falling apart. It doesn’t mean that will never have tough times. But if we stay grounded in GOD’s WORD; the Bible; we will get through the tough times.

[Back to Colossians 2:7 “7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.”](#)

In verse 7 the word for thanksgiving is eucharistia; where the eucharist comes from. Before I say what I am going to say about this, let me begin by saying that I grew up in the Catholic Church. I love Catholics; and I have a responsibility to tell you the truth. As we have discussed deception in the world; it can creep into the church as well. In fact, many people in our congregation are former Catholics.

[Proverbs 27:6 “6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”](#)

[Colossians 2:8 “8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”](#)

There are those who reject the simplicity of the Gospel to pursue “worldly” wisdom or philosophies. As it is written in verse eight these are empty deceit.

I found an article that mentioned several. We will just discuss these briefly.

Solipsism

Solipsism revolves around the idea that there is nothing you can confirm except your own existence. (Think Matrix) tied to Gnosticism

Idealism (Philosophy)

The philosophy of idealism has nothing to do with being idealistic. It has nothing to do with ideals, but rather ideas. It revolves around the thought that reality is fundamentally something that exists on a mental level.

Phenomenalism

Is the idea that nothing can be said to exist beyond the observation of the thing itself? For example, this belief states that you can't prove that anything exists beyond your own senses.

Presentism

The idea that only the present exists, and that both the past and future do not.

Externalism

Contrary to presentism, externalism is the belief that all moments in time, past, present and future are equally real. Some eternalists believe that because of the nature of time, in this case that time exists as a whole, not in separate parts, the existing future already exists in a set and final manner, and therefore we are only capable of experiencing the future, not able to change it in any way, which one could interpret as the existence of fate.

As Christians we would believe that GOD who is eternal and outside of time; can tell us the end from the beginning because from HIS perspective it would be the present. God would allow to exercise our free will to make decisions of our own choosing that would be incorporated into HIS plans and purposes.

Think ocean liner traveling to a destination and everyone on the ship doing their own thing.

Nihilism

The most well-known form of nihilism, existential nihilism is focused on the assertion that life has no inherent purpose, goal, or intrinsic value. (Intrinsic value is the idea of something having value in and of itself.) Simplified, it's the belief that life is utterly pointless.

Hedonism

Hedonism is centered around the belief that pleasure is the only thing that has intrinsic value.

Skepticism

One could perhaps argue that skepticism is the basis for all other philosophies. Because if we didn't question, if we didn't ask, then where would the answers be? But philosophical skepticism, unlike methodical skepticism, does not focus on questioning individual statements to validate or invalidate; rather, it questions if there is a possibility for a certainty in any knowledge.

Be sure to check out Acts 17:16-23.

The enemy can use these things to get the eyes of the lost or even us into pursuing these philosophies instead of simply trusting what GOD has written in the Bible.

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/9-philosophies-that-will-change-the-way-you-look-life.html>

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower— please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

Want to know more? Click [here](#).