

Colossians 4 – Continue in Christ

Hello! It is a great day to be in the house of the Lord. This is Redemption Church. We are a mighty & willing church in Plano TX. My name is Chris Fluitt.

Go ahead and get your Bibles and Bible Apps opened to Colossians 2.

Anonymous Text Line

I like to remind you every so often that we have an Anonymous Text Line, where we answer your questions about faith, Jesus, and life.

214 856 0550 is that text line. Every text is anonymous, so you can ask us your questions without fear or awkwardness.

We are in the 4th week of our Colossians sermon series.

Colossians

As much as I would love to review the last weeks, I think time is best served with you checking out the previous weeks on our website – Redemption-church.com. Also we would love you to subscribe to our podcast. It is available wherever podcasts are distributed.

Please open your Bibles and Bible apps for the reading of the word. We are reading, beginning in Colossians 2 verse 6.

Colossians 2:6 (NIV2011) So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him,

Colossians 2:7 (NIV2011) rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Colossians 2:8 (NIV2011) 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.

Colossians 2:9 (NIV2011) For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,

Colossians 2:10 (NIV2011) and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.

Colossians 2:11 (NIV2011) 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,

Colossians 2:12 (NIV2011) 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.

Let's clap our hands for the word of God.

Outline

Verses 6-7 Encouragement in Christ

Verses 8 Warning of captivity from Christ

Verses 9-12 What you have in Christ

Let's look back at verse 6.

Colossians 2:6 (NIV2011) So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him,

A received and lived Christ

Paul draws on an idea of comparison between the beginning and the present. He tells the Colossians to think back to how they first received Christ Jesus as Lord... and in that same way they received Jesus, continue to live in that very same way. Such a simple idea. Such a profound idea.

Humans are fickle. We often are excited at the start of things, but over time lose interest or worse, grow in contempt.

Perhaps you remember getting that new Job and feeling so blessed and happy to have it. But now it is Sunday and you are trying to convince yourself to go back to that horrible pace.

When relationships start there seems to be a different energy that goes away over time. In the beginning we could see nothing but crazy love, but now all we see are annoying little habits.

Paul instructs them to continue to live in Jesus in the same way they received Him. Continue to live with the same energy, passion, devotion, and willingness, they had when they originally received Him.

This requires 2 things!

#1 You must actually receive Him.

Notice Paul does NOT say... Just as you started going to church, continue... Just as you decided Christianity was your religion of choice, continue... Just as you started wearing Christian T-shirts and WWJD bracelets, continue...

Some of those things require no decision. Some of us started going to church because our parents made us. The average American chose Christianity as their religion and has little knowledge of what Scripture says. You can be swept away in a crowd of people through peer pressure and it does not mean you have made Jesus your Lord.

You actually have to receive Jesus as Lord. The word for receive is the Greek word *paralambanō* (pä-rä-läm-bä'-nō) and it means to take... to join oneself to...

It is important to remember that ALL of Paul's Epistles (letters) were written to people who had already received Jesus as Lord. Within these books are teaching to CONTINUE their walk with Christ. This is the case in Colossians.

#2 You must remember receiving Him.

When I do marriage & pre-marital counseling I like to ask this question. It always seems to catch people off guard. They never see this question coming. Here it is... I ask them to tell me their partner's testimony.

Think for a moment. Can you tell the story of how your partner came to know Jesus Christ?

People can tell the story of how their partner did that funny cute thing. With no prep time people can tell the story of how their partner was hurtful. On the spot you can tell me how you met.... But there always seems to be a look of strain when trying to tell the story of your partner meeting Jesus Christ.

Then I have to follow up the question with why don't you know that story better? Has your partner never told you that story or, have you not listened.

There is no more important Chris Fluit story, than the story where I received Jesus. I remember the moment Jesus saved me. I know what I felt. I know where I was. I know how it changed me and the way I thought about everything.

Do you remember? You can't continue in what you don't remember.

Paul tells the church in Colossae to continue in who they received. Redemption we must continue in who we received. We need that same energy & devotion we had at the beginning of this Jesus relationship.

Continue in who you received

In the very same way you started this relationship with Jesus, continue.

That is why coming to pray at the front of the church should not be a one time experience. You must continue.

That joy you felt should continue.

That surrender to His will, needs to continue.

That willingness must surrender.

..Only then can verse 7 happen.

Colossians 2:7 (NIV2011) rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

If you aren't rooted... you are not continuing.

If Jesus is not building you up and strengthening you in faith... are you continuing in what you received with Jesus in the beginning?

Paul is telling the readers of this letter that they have room to grow.

Room to grow

Is anyone done growing in Jesus Christ. Do not raise your hand!!!

Notice the direction of growth.

Roots grow what direction? Roots grow down in depth.

Buildings are built what direction? Up. We are to be built up in Him. To grow up in Jesus.

Where does growth take place when you are gaining strength? Inside. Strengthened "in" faith.

And thankfulness grows in what direction? It overflows from the inside to the outside.

A Christian needs to grow in every direction. Rooted downward and growing upward. Growing in strength inside and growing in thankfulness that flows outward.

Grow up, down, inside, and out.

Colossians 2:8 (NIV2011) 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.

In the King James version it says BEWARE!

BEWARE

Verse 8 is a warning. ...See to it. Be aware. Look out. Discern.

Beware of what? Beware of anyone who would take you captive...

Captive to what? Hollow & deceptive philosophy.

What is hollow philosophy? It means that it is empty. There is no life within it. It is useless and vain.

This world is filled with hollow philosophy.

- If you can name who is dating who in Hollywood... You are hollow.
- If you are looking to study the universe with no interest in meeting its creator... You are hollow.
- If you speak the name of your denomination more than the name of your savior... You are hollow.

What is deceptive philosophy? What does deception mean? IT LIES!

There are some philosophies that are outright lying to you. This world is filled with deceptive philosophy.

- If you believe Jesus is one of the many ways to get to heaven... You have been lied to!
- If you believe that happiness comes through money, sex, or power... You have been lied to!
- If you believe that truth is ever changing and constantly evolving... You have been lied to!

BEWARE of hollow and deceptive philosophy. These philosophies depend on...

Colossians 2:8 (NIV2011) 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.

Human tradition & elemental forces... rather than Christ.

What is human tradition? Well what isn't? Anything could be a human tradition.

Most people are the political party of their parents... just like they are the religion of their parents... It is human tradition. Everything you see and experience you could adapt to your life and make it a tradition.

Now there is nothing wrong with tradition. Some traditions are very honorable and beneficial. But Paul is warning us that human traditions can lead to hollow and deceptive philosophy. When human tradition leads us away from Christ it is a hollow or deceptive philosophy.

What are elemental forces of this world?

This word Paul uses could mean anything. It is so broad in meaning, it could be any first thing from which others rise from.

The natural design of the earth and the laws of nature are elemental. God spoke and out of that order the universe rose...

But also God created the stars, and humanity took that elemental creation and brought about astrology, a false religion that does not receive Christ as the one true God.

This word is broad enough to cover Demons & Angels...

Angels were created before man. Paul later in the chapter speaks of some worshipping Angels... That is an example of choosing the elemental forces rather than Christ.

Demons are fallen Angels who created a FIRST THING called sin... Satan let loose a first thing on earth called a lie, and from that has risen things in an order. Death rose because of the elemental force of sin.

The Devil is the master of hollow & deceptive philosophy.

Rather than on Christ

Beware of anything that is not on Christ. It is hollow & deceptive and depends on something else rather than on Christ.

Paul is telling the Church in Colossae to depend on Christ! Remember in chapter 1 he told them that Christ is Supreme (Colossians 1:15). Colossians 2:9 is right in line with that idea.

Colossians 2:9 (NIV2011) For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,

All the fullness of DEITY... Give me another word for Deity... GOD!

Redemption Church scripture tells us clearly that there are how many Gods? 1! 1 God.

How supreme is Jesus? The fullness of the one God lives in bodily form in Jesus Christ. How much of God is in Jesus? THE FULLNESS.

Rather than on Christ

This scripture should call us back to several verses in chapter 1.

V 15 said Jesus was the image of the invisible God.

V 16 said Jesus created everything!

V 17 said Jesus existed before anything else!

V 18 said Jesus is the beginning!

V 19 Says "God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him"

Christ is Supreme! Christ is God! AND CHRIST IS YOURS!

Beware Colossae! Don't let anyone take you captive through anything RATHER THAN ON CHRIST.

The fullness of Deity is in Jesus! And Church this is what you have in Jesus.

Complete in Christ

Colossians 2:10 (NIV2011) and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.

In Christ you have been brought to... fullness. You are complete. You are lacking NO THING because you have Jesus Christ.

We spend too much time dreaming about having that thing... If we just had that thing then we would be happy. If that thing would happen to us then we would be fulfilled.

WAKE UP CHRISTIAN! In Christ you have been brought to fullness! It does not say in Christ you are being brought to fullness... IT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED!

The WHO that is Christ is supreme to any THING.

You are fulfilled when you are Christ filled!

He is head over every power & authority. The word for authority is Exousia. We have preached on that word a lot. But we have never preached on the word translated here as POWER.

The word for power here is archē (är-khā') and it means more than just power... It means original power, the first person or thing in a series,

Jesus is head over the original powers. This should remind you of Colossians 2:8 where it said "elemental forces of the world." It meant 'any first thing, from which others take an orderly rise.'

Great word choice by Paul. He is talking about original beginning powers from which a series starts. The word also suggests demonic and angelic powers. Jesus is head over those things.

The power (archē) of satan that started this series of sin & death. Jesus is head over it. That is why Jesus is the one to fix the problem.

Do not be carried away with these forces and powers... Jesus is head over them. He is before their beginning. He is firstborn over their creation.

What else does Jesus, the head over every rule and authority, do for us?

Colossians 2:11 (NIV2011) 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,

Colossians 2:12 (NIV2011) 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.

Spiritual Circumcision

Paul talks about circumcision. The audience was well aware of the meaning of circumcision. It was the sign of the covenant God made with Abraham.

Now Paul drops a bombshell and declares that Jesus himself is performing a spiritual circumcision on your heart (Romans 2:29). A circumcision not made with human hands! No human hand could perform this surgery on your heart. Your self ruled flesh is put off when you are circumcised by Christ. You no longer call the shots when your self ruled flesh is put off. Now Jesus Christ calls the shots on your life.

Then Paul ties this powerful covenantal visual with what other visual act?

Having been buried with Him in baptism! This is such a strong verse on baptism. We love to baptize people around here. If you have never been baptized what are you waiting for? Come talk to us today.

When we baptize someone in water, HUMAN HANDS lower the person into water and then the same HUMAN HANDS raise them up. We focus on the natural in baptism and sometimes are dismissive of the spiritual work of Jesus in baptism. There is a Spiritual component not to be missed.

Human hands baptize you, but Paul declares that a spiritual circumcision not performed by human hands takes place. Human hands lower you in water and Paul says you are buried with Jesus. Human hands raise you from the water but Paul says you are raised with Jesus through your faith.

Let's review

Everything you do needs to be in Jesus Christ!

You should worship because it brings you closer to Christ.

You should study His Word because it makes Christ known to you.

You should be baptized because it buries you in Christ.

You need the Spirit because it is Christ in you the hope of glory.

Musician

Paul tells us to continue in Christ!

Continue in who you received

In the same way you received Jesus... Continue in that same way.
Grow in Him with that same passion.

Then Paul warns us.

BEWARE

Beware of anything that stops you from continuing in Christ!

Then Paul tells them that everything they will ever need they find in Christ.

Complete in Christ

You are not missing out on anything when you follow Jesus. He gives us everything we need.

And this Jesus who is head of all power & authority performs spiritual circumcision on our heart.

Spiritual Circumcision

We are about to spend some time in prayer. I want you to come continue in Christ today, just as you first received Him.