

Sermon Notes from Pastor Cornelius Schelling 8-02-09

Introduction to the book of Colossians

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

This is talking about how we need the word in our lives.

Colossians and Ephesians are parallel books.

As we study the book of Colossians we will find some of the same thoughts in the book of Ephesians.

The book of Ephesians talks about the body of Christ which is the church.

The theme for the book of Colossians is the head of the church—the Lord Jesus Christ.

Eph 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

This is talking about how we need the Spirit manifested in our lives.

Ephesians 1:23 tells us that Christ is the fullness and he fills all in all. He is the completeness of the church and we are the body of Christ and we are complete in him.

Christ is the head, we are the body and we are joined together with Christ, we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

1Jn 5:7 There are three witnesses: (vs. 8) the Spirit (Holy Spirit), the water (Word), and the blood (Jesus). These three witnesses agree.

The book was written to the Colossians at Colosse.

As we begin to look at the book of Colossians we must understand that the books written to the church are called epistles. In the epistles we find out who we are in Christ and what we have in Christ it was the mystery that was hidden from the foundation of the world now revealed to the church.

If we want to know who we are and what we have in Christ we will need to spend our time in the epistles.

The Old Testament was the law and the law was not given to the church to live by, yet the Old Testament was given for our admonition. It was also given that we wouldn't have to go through all the things they did.

Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: (20) That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, *and* that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he *is* thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

1Corinthians 10:6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Rom 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Heb 4:10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

Galatians 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Paul wrote the book of Colossians during his Roman imprisonment.

He also wrote:

1. Philemon
2. Ephesians
3. Philippians
4. Colossians

These four books will give you an in depth study of Christ.

Three of these books are written to churches in different cities. The book of Philemon was written or addressed to a person.

Philemon owned many slaves and was very rich and they also started a church in his home.

One of the servants named Onesimus had stolen some money from Philemon. Onesimus went to Rome and spent all the money and ended up in jail where Paul was. Paul shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with him and Onesimus got born again. Paul began to teach

him the word and Onesimus received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and when Onesimus got out of prison Paul sent with him and one of his friends letters or epistles. Col 4:7,9

Colosse was located in a valley and in vs. 13 we see two other cities that were located in the same area, Laodicea and Hierapolis and these letters were also to go to them.

Every epistle or book in the New Testament addresses itself towards a certain problem.

Remember in the book of Revelation there were seven churches of Asia and one of them was the church at Laodicea. Revelation 3:14

The church at Laodicea had forgotten that Christ was the head of the church, they had forgotten who made them rich and therefore they didn't benefit from this epistle.

The church at Ephesus was a different kind of church and Ephesians is a different kind of epistle. The church did not have one particular problem yet Paul addressed many different problems.

Galatians deals with legalism versus grace.

Corinthians deals with carnality.

Colossians deals with big-headed people, people with pride, they thought of themselves more highly than they should have and they became intellectual instead of staying spiritual.

In the Colossian church there were people who were highly educated and people who were not highly educated. There were rich people and poor people.

The people with education decided to shun those who didn't have much education and this opened the door for the devil to come in and after a period of time you couldn't tell the difference between religion and education and this is called Gnosticism.

Gnosticism is found in chapter 2:8, so the book of Colossians is directed towards intellectualism. It came to a point that it was so deep you couldn't understand it.

Now in verse 16 we find Legalism. This is the second problem that the Colossian church had.

Some people think Sunday is a special day but it's no more special than Monday.

Some think Christmas is.

Some think that Easter is.

If something is a sin on Sunday then it should be a sin every other day.

The church at Colosse had a problem with gnosticism the philosophy of men and legalism. In the New Testament legalism had come into most of the churches.

Remember what it says in 1Corinthians 5:6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

There is neither bond or free means there is no social distinction in the body of Christ. Paul brings this out very clearly in I Corinthians 12.

This brings us to the purpose of the book of Colossians. Paul divides the book into two parts, positional truth and temporal truth.

In chapter one and two Paul starts with positional truth. Positional truth is who we are in Christ. In chapter one Paul begins with Christ the head of the church, righteousness, redemption, our justification being seated with him and Jesus has all authority and power over the devil, we have an inheritance and we are heirs and joint heirs with Jesus—that's positional truth.

In chapters three and four we find temporal truth. Temporal truth is: I got to do it, self effort, living under condemnation, being unworthy.

The spiritual side of man needs positional truth of who we are in Christ.

The natural side of man needs temporal truth to know how to apply positional truth in life.

We need to understand that flesh, the human side of man cannot cleanse flesh.

Ephesians 5:26 says that he might sanctify and cleanse us by the washing of the water and the word.

The apostle Paul always begins with positional truth so that we would not be lifted up with pride, with self, so that we could take positional truth, who we are in Christ and apply it to our lives and by doing so we would have control of our fleshly nature.

We would honor God and live victorious in life.

We would rule and reign in life through one Christ Jesus.

Romans 12:1-3 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. (2) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (3) For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Let us continually keep our hearts and minds pure before our heavenly father so that we may prove that good ,and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.