

# The Iron Men of Fellowship of Champions

Colossians 2:3-7

Lesson 14

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Opening Prayer

\*\*\* Start Recorder \*\*\*

## Colossians 2:3 (NOTES)

- "In [Christ] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." - The Gnostics were teaching that knowledge and wisdom were acquired through esoteric experience (rites), and through relationships with "principalities and powers" (aeons, angels), and that such knowledge was superior to that of the ordinary follower of Christ.
- Paul points to Christ as the fount from which all knowledge and wisdom flow, rather than from experience, rituals, or spiritual hierarchies. Paul's argument is that all such wisdom and knowledge, indeed - every spiritual blessing is available through Christ, not to just a few spiritual elite, but to every true believer. " ... God ... has blessed us with every spiritual blessing ... in Christ." (Ep 1:3)
- "hidden" - Simply means that in Christ, and Christ alone, may they ("all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge") be found. When one comes to Christ, they are revealed. But to those who are not in Christ, they are mysteries, and their treasures are not accessible.
- Any pursuit of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge apart from a relationship with God through Christ is a pursuit of folly and vanity because:
  - Spiritual truth cannot be obtained through any other means; and
  - Anything believed to be of gain is falsehood; and
  - Trusting any other source for spiritual truth results in the loss of eternal life, because all other means lead away from it, which was the aim of the pursuit of spiritual truth in the first place.
- Consider Paul's reference to the Jews led by Moses at the Exodus from Egypt. They were not attentive to God's Word through Moses, but kept turning back to their old pagan ways (golden calf). In their hearts, they trusted Egypt and Pharaoh (worldliness and Satan), who enslaved them.

- 2Co 3:14-16 "But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant [OT] the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. 15 But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; 16 but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away."

## Colossians 2:4 (NOTES)

- "I say this" – Say what? That all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom are found in Christ. And not just "knowledge and wisdom" but the ["treasures"] of knowledge and wisdom" - all the benefits derived therefrom: repentance, faith, and eternal life.
- "so that no one will delude you" – "No one," who? The Gnostic heretics.
- "with persuasive argument" – What deluding persuasive argument? False philosophy and human wisdom. Arguments can always be presented in such a way as to seem to "make sense." But, things that "make sense" aren't always true (e.g. - prosperity doctrine, social justice).
- Paul is making the point that all arguments of so-called truth must be viewed in light of the true revelation God has given us in Christ. Christ is the standard by which all philosophy, religion, practice, and so-called truth must be measured. Any weighed and found wanting must be discarded, for they are unprofitable and lead to deception and ungodliness.
  - Co 2:8 "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."
  - 1Ti 1:6 "For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion."
  - 1Ti 6:20 "O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly [and] empty chatter [and] the opposing arguments of what is falsely called "knowledge"."

- 2Ti 2:16 "But avoid worldly [and] empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness."
- Tt 1:10 "For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision [Judaizers]."
- Tt 3:9 "But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless."
- We must guard against listening to false teaching of any kind, always being on the alert - relying on the discernment of the Holy Spirit as our defense, and relying the Word of God as our only weapon, the complete package - all 66 books - continually comparing what we hear to His standard, the Scriptures, or we, too, can be led astray.
  - Ac 17:11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily [to see] whether these things were so.
  - 1Th 5:21 But examine everything [carefully]; hold fast to that which is good;
  - Mt 24:23-25 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. 24 For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. 25 Behold, I have told you in advance."

### **Colossians 2:5 (NOTES)**

- "I am absent in body" - Paul was in prison in Rome.

- "nevertheless I am with you in spirit" - Paul was speaking with reference to a spirit of solidarity - "Hey, I'm with you.." Paul was not suggesting in any supernatural sense that he would be present in some metaphysical way. He meant that his spirit was bound together with their spirits, as one in the body of Christ. He meant that their struggles were his struggles, their glories his glories, their pain his pain. He is not a detached bystander, but is deeply concerned for their spiritual welfare.
- "good discipline [Gr. - taxis] and the stability [Gr. stereoma] of your faith" - Both Greek words "taxis" and "stereoma" were military parlance. Taxis = order, or rank. Stereoma = steadfastness, as in a military front line. Paul is saying that though their defenses are under siege by the marauding Gnostic heretics, he rejoices that their lines are unbroken, their discipline is intact, and their faith in Christ is unshaken. They are standing firm with an esprit-de-corps (spirit of camaraderie).

### **Colossians 2:6 (NOTES)**

- Paul exhorts the church at Colossae to continue in the true doctrines and live them out in their lives, without wavering or turning to the right or the left into Gnostic heresy. "Let us hold fast the confession of our faith without wavering ... " (He 10:23) Don't stray into, or be led astray by, the Gnostic heresies.
- "as you have received Christ ... so walk" - With childlike faith, they received Christ through the Gospel, and they fully trusted every aspect of it and obeyed it at their conversions without question, and they submitted themselves to it without reservation. Paul is saying, "Now, live out your faith in Jesus in the same way, keep trusting Him and keep accepting His Word. Don't start doubting His Word now. Don't cast it aside, or co-mingle it with Gnostic beliefs. And if you've drifted away from the truth into error, return to the truth."

### **Colossians 2:7 (NOTES)**

#### **Discussion: What does it mean to be firmly rooted in Christ?**

- "having been firmly rooted ... in Him" - To be firmly rooted in Christ is not to have our root in Him, but to have Him as the root in us, branching out in all directions in the inner man, impacting every aspect of our spiritual existence. To be rooted in Christ is to be indwelt by the Spirit of Christ, which occurs at regeneration - the singular past event of their salvation. Rooted once for all time in Christ.

- Ro 8:9 "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."
  - Co 1:27 " ... Christ in you, the hope of glory."
- "rooted" - Paul intends a spiritual pun here, if we don't miss it. The "Root" is an OT title of the Messiah (Christ). The Christ is the "Root of Jesse" (Is 11:1-2, 10), the father of King David. This is a reference to Christ as King.
  - Is 11:1-2 "Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch from his roots will bear fruit. 2 The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.[the sevenfold Spirit of God]"
  - Is 11:10 Then on that day The nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal flag for the peoples; And His resting place will be glorious."
- Christ as the "Root" is obliquely referenced in the parable of the soils.
  - Mt 13:3-6 "3 And He told them many things in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow; 4 and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. 5 Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and they sprang up immediately, because they had no depth of soil. 6 But after the sun rose, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away."
- "now being built up in Him and established in your faith" – Their continual sanctification, as they apply the Scriptures to their lives.
  - Jn 17:17 "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth."

- "just as you were instructed" - According to the original Gospel preached to you, which led to your salvation, and that same Word of God that has now led to your spiritual growth up to this point.
- "overflowing with gratitude" - Overflowing (Gr. - per-is-syoo'-o) like a river overflowing its banks. Paul is summing up his sentiments by indicating that those who lack a deep sense of gratitude to God are especially susceptible to doubt, heresy, sin and failure in spiritual battles.

**Application:** Were there any new concepts you picked up today? Is there anything you have trouble accepting in these doctrines? Did anything stand out that may prompt you to do further study? Do you feel confident that you can explain the doctrines of deity and trinity to your family, other believers, nonbelievers?

### **Closing Prayer**

### **Small Groups**

- Discuss current Scripture reading assignment.
- Prayer:
  - Anything praiseworthy.
  - Areas of accountability.
  - Other prayer requests.