

# “WHAT’S RIGHT WITH THE CHURCH”

**Text:** Colossians 1:1-27

**Subject:** “What’s Right With The Church”

## **Introduction**

- ◆ Colossians is an incredible book of hope and wisdom.
- ◆ It was written by Paul to the believers in Colosse.

**Question:** Why did God give us Colossians?

**Answer:** Because God wanted to say something through Paul and the Scriptures today (to us).

## **In Colossians**

- ◆ God warns us about a “human tradition” or a philosophy, or an empty illusion.
- ◆ It’s known as the “Colossian Heresy”.
- ◆ It was teaching that was superficial (yet attractive to itching ears).
- ◆ It was trying to undermine the gospel with legalism and mysticism mixed together.
- ◆ On the one hand, believers were told to submit to circumcision again to be spiritual.
- ◆ On the other hand, believers were told they had access to God through angels.

## **In Plain Vanilla**

Paul addresses this Jewish Gnosticism, based on illumination and a higher knowledge of heavenly things.

## **In Other Words**

- ◆ God addressed the Colossian heresy because it threatened the uniqueness of the Person of Christ.
- ◆ And the answer to every false idea of human thinking is one answer:

### **“The Supremacy Of Christ In All Things”**

- ◆ No need to observe circumcision.
- ◆ No need to observe new moons and astrology.
- ◆ No need to observe food laws or access angels.
- ◆ No need to depend on certain festivals, or ordinances to be spiritual.

**Question:** Why not?

**Answer:** Because our sufficiency and spirituality is in Christ alone!

## **What about Colossians today?**

- ◆ Colossians is as relevant today as it ever was.
- ◆ Scoffers wanting to weaken your faith.
- ◆ Philosophers wanting to dilute your faith!
- ◆ Devils wanting to steal your confidence in the Lord and in His church!

## **(So Paul writes Colossians)**

To affirm the supremacy and sufficiency of:

1. Jesus as creator and Redeemer
2. To produce gratitude in all believers for the victory already won in the cross of Christ.

3. To produce faith and joy and excitement (a God enthusiasm) because of what's right with the church. (And this removes all anxiety as to your future).

**Critical minds tell us what's wrong with the church:**

- ◆ We should sing all hymns (vs.) we should sing all choruses.
- ◆ We should be seeker friendly and never offend a visitor (or) spontaneous moving of the Spirit and altar calls at any time (Willow creek (vs.) Brownsville).
- ◆ We should always wear suits and ties (vs.) casual polo shirts in the pulpit.
- ◆ We should be elder governed with no voting membership (vs.) Deacons, Trustees and a Church Council or Governing Board with a voting membership.
- ◆ We should use only the King James Version Bible (vs.) the newer translations that are helpful.

**People everywhere will offer opinions and tell us what's wrong with the church.**

- ◆ Today – A healthy Christian focuses on **what's right with the church!**

**Write It Down Today**

**#1. The Head of the Church Is Jesus**

Chapter 1, Verse 18; "Christ is the Head of the Church."

**Question:** What does it mean that Jesus is the Head of the church?

**Answer:** Paul uses a figure (or a picture here) that everyone can understand.

- ◆ It's the common life picture of the human body.
- ◆ The human body gets its direction and control from what's in the head (or brain).
- ◆ So the church (or believer) gets their direction and wisdom and guidance from the Head (Jesus Christ).

**Jesus as Head of the Church means:**

- ◆ As the human body carries out the wishes of the head.
- ◆ So the church carries out the wishes of its Head, Jesus Christ.

**In Other Words**

1. The Lord is alive and still leading His Church.
2. The Lord is smart and still giving directions.
3. The Lord is aware of what's best for you.
4. The Lord knows what we need (more than we do).
5. The Lord has the reins and is in full control.

**So Rest Well**

- ◆ The Lord is looking out for His bride as the Head.
- ◆ The Lord will direct you personally as you ask Him for direction.

**#2. The Blueprint of the Church is the Word.**

Notice Chapter 1, Verse 5, "The hope of heaven laid up for you, you heard about it in the Word of Truth, the Gospel."

**Question:** What is Paul saying?

**Answer:** He is saying that the believers in Colosse (and the believers in this church) have an incredible life enriching hope beyond this life on earth.

**Question:** Where do we get this hope? Where did it come from? How was it born within your heart?

**Answer:** Verse 5, “We heard about it in the Word of Truth, the Gospel.”

#### **In Other Words**

- ◆ All of heaven stands behind the Word of God.
- ◆ It’s the Word that is the blueprint for living.
- ◆ It’s the Word that changed the believers in Colosse.
- ◆ It’s the Word that is changing you and me today.
- ◆ It’s the Word that feeds the spirit and cuts away flesh.
- ◆ It’s the Word that puts faith in your heart.
- ◆ It’s the Word that makes strong healthy people.
- ◆ It’s the Word that gives life and joy and peace.
- ◆ It’s the Word that reveals the will of God.
- ◆ It’s the Word that you can trust in and stand on.

### **#3. The Lifeline of the Church is Prayer**

Chapter 1, Verse 3, “We give thanks to God, always praying for you.”

**Question:** What does Paul tell the Colossians in Verse 3?

**Answer:** He tells them two things;

1. He thanks God for them and,
2. He prays for them.

**Question:** Why is this so enriching?

**Answer:** Because Paul is transparent and vulnerable in saying this to the believers.

- ◆ “I thank God for you and I’m praying for you.”

**Question:** Why did Paul pray for the believers?

**Answer:** Because Paul knew that prayer brought God into the picture and that God is a God who still answers prayer!

**Question:** Why is prayer the lifeline of the church?

**Answer:** Because prayer is the link (as John Piper says) between our weak electrical wires and the lightning bolt of heaven.

- ◆ In prayer, God overcomes the powers of darkness against you.
- ◆ In prayer, God releases the resources of heaven on earth.
- ◆ In prayer, God communicates His plans for your life.
- ◆ In prayer, God makes you strong and overcomes temptation.

### **#4. The Enablement of the Church is the Spirit**

Verse 11; “Strengthened with all might according to His Glorious Power.”

**Question:** What is Paul praying for?

**Answer:** He is praying that the Colossians will be endued, not only with knowledge, but also with power from above.

**Question:** What is this power?

**Answer:** It is the same Holy spirit that God exerted when He raised Christ from the dead.

#### **In Other Words**

- ◆ Paul says that God wants to strengthen you and,
- ◆ Paul says that God's Spirit will strengthen you and,
- ◆ Paul says that the Holy Spirit will enable you to stand firm (and not buckle) in the face of any trial or opposition.

#### **(It's simple to see here)**

- ◆ As Paul wants the Colossians to be strong and Spirit filled,
- ◆ So God wants you and me to be strong and Spirit filled.
- ◆ The Holy Spirit is God's divine enablement for the church to be strong and recipients of the supernatural.

### **#5. The Price of the Church is the Blood**

Verse 20; "And having made peace through the blood of His cross, (Verse 22) to present you holy and blameless in His sight."

**Question:** What's the price of the church? (Of you and me?)

**Question:** What did it cost God to save you?

**Answer:** "The Blood of His Cross"

**Question:** What is Paul saying?

**Answer:** He is saying one thing.

- ◆ That he will have no part of some cosmic drama that was perpetuated by the false teachers.
- ◆ It's a lie from hell that deceives multitudes into trusting in their good works for salvation.

#### **So Paul makes it clear in Verse 21**

1. We all were alienated from God because of sin.
2. God wanted to reconcile (or change us from enemies to friends).
3. This could only happen through the blood atonement on the cross of Christ.
4. The glorious result is (in verse 23) that we are now holy and un-blamable in God's sight.

#### **In Other Words**

- ◆ The Blood reconciles us to a Holy God.
- ◆ The Blood allows God to forgive us all.
- ◆ The Blood frees us from all guilt and condemnation.
- ◆ The Blood gives you access into the very presence of God.
- ◆ The Blood declares that forgiven people are un-blamable before God.

### **#6. The Offer of the Church is Grace.**

Verse 6; “Fruit has come from the Word of Truth, since you received it and experienced the grace of God.”

**Question:** What is Paul expressing?

**Answer:** He is reminding the Colossians that they came to know the grace of God, through the truth that was preached.

**Question:** Why is Verse 6 so powerful and personal?

**Answer:** Because Paul uses the phrase “Which is come unto you as it is in all the world.”

- ◆ The phrase “In all the world” means: this same grace that was working in Colosse was also working throughout the world, including \_\_\_\_\_.  
(your town)

#### **In Other Words**

- ◆ The message of the church was going out to everyone.
- ◆ And people everywhere were receiving God’s grace and getting saved.

**Question:** Why is Paul so excited?

**Answer:** Because God’s amazing grace is changing every person who receives it! (And it’s offered to everyone!)

### **#7. The Future of the Church is Glorious!**

Chapter 1, Verse 27; “Christ in you – the hope of glory.”

**Question:** Why is Paul so positive?

**Answer:** Two reasons:

1. The believer has the risen life of Jesus within them and,
2. The witness inside of every believer is the basis for all confidence that we will share in the fullness of God’s glory yet to be revealed.

#### **In Other Words Beloved**

- ◆ On earth we walk **with** His presence.     ◆ At death we walk **into** His presence.

#### **In Other Words**

- ◆ The future of the church (all believers) is so glorious to sing and shout about.

I Thessalonians 4:16, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air - and so shall we ever be with the Lord!!!

AMEN  
Bill Kirk