

## Colossians, Chapter Two, Lesson Two

PROTECTING THE FLOCK Colossians 2:6-10

### STIMULATE

\*\* In our last study together, we were blessed to see how much the apostle Paul loved the church of Christ. What were the two ways in which Paul was "**Loving the Flock**" in our passage from last week?

**1) Struggling for their continued walk of faith.**

**2) By walking them through what they share in Christ.**

\*\* Verse four, from chapter two in Colossians, gave us the reason for which Paul was willing to be spent on behalf of the Colossians' faith. Do you recall that reason?

He did not want them to be deluded with "persuasive argument". We are not to grant an audience to those who want to propagate Satanic lies. We can give them the truth if they will listen, but not in exchange for us having to listen to their heresy.

\*\* Did anyone have an opportunity to stand up for the truth of God's Word this past week?

It should always be a joy to explain the truth of God's word to those individuals who are living contrary to it.

### MOTIVATE

\*\* As we continue now in chapter two of Paul's letter to the Colossians we are going to learn how to care for one another in the area of spiritual protection. Let's read through our passage and observe Paul while he is "**Protecting the Flock**" by using three distinct tactics in his assault on the heresy that was present there in the Lycus valley.

Read passage (V.6-7) (V.8-10)

Opening Prayer

### *Protecting the Flock*

### INVESTIGATE

**V. 6** \*\* Paul's first tactic in the battle for living out the truth of God's word each day is to make sure that our walk matches our talk. To what historical event does he refer as a setup for calling the Colossians to a godly lifestyle?

The day of their salvation! "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord..."  
cf. 2Peter 1:1, 1Thessalonians 1:9

There was a day in the life of these believers, when they turned away from living for themselves and their lusts and started living for their Lord and Savior. We should also be able to identify with these dear folks, as we remember our day of salvation and the new life which Jesus Christ has granted to us by faith.

\*\* Paul says, "As you...received Christ", so walk in Him. Could someone explain the comparison to which Paul is referring?

Our "walk" of obedience is to be just as genuine as our claim to salvation through faith in Jesus. There should not be a difference between who we say we are and how we act.

cf. 1John 2:4-6

**V. 7** \*\* The Christian "walk" is analogous to our daily experience lived out for the cause of Christ, for as long as we may live! That is speaking of a process, one in which the Christian is expected to progress from one level of glory to the next as we become more and more like our Savior. (2Corinthians 3:18)

The question becomes then, what is the process? Paul gives us just two steps here in verse seven. What is the first one?

**1)** "...having been firmly rooted..." God Himself has granted us salvation and "planted" us in His Kingdom. cf. Philippians 1:6, 1Corinthians 1:30-31

\*\* What is the second step in the process?

**2)** We are now "being built up in Him and established in [our] faith".

\*\* This is referring to our growth of course, but before we go any further in this verse - Who is it that causes Christians to grow, to mature, to become more like their beloved Savior?

God Himself! cf. 1Corinthians 3:4-7, 1Corinthians 15:10

\*\* Now back in our verse, what is the method by which God causes His children to grow into Christlikeness?

"...just as you were instructed..." Yes, it comes down to Bible study! God causes us to grow as we take in His word - unto application! cf. 2Peter 1:2 and 3:18, with 2Timothy 2:15

\*\* The Colossians had a wonderful response to their times of instruction in God's word. We would do well to emulate them. How did they respond?

They were "overflowing with gratitude"! This is the grateful heart that simply cannot contain all of its thankfulness to God for what He has provided in His precious Word.

cf. Hebrews 13:15

**V. 8** \*\* Alright then, we have seen that Paul's first tactic in waging war against heresy was to encourage Christians to walk in the truth. That might have been good enough, but Paul wants to go beyond practice to prevention. What do you suppose is his second tactic in waging this spiritual war?

He wants to go after our thinking! When Paul says, "See to it that no one takes you captive", he is referring to our thinking process.

A.W.Tozer said, "What we believe about God is the most important thing about us." Martha, the sister of Lazarus, demonstrated how important our thinking is when she spoke with Jesus.

cf. John 11:25-27

\*\* What is it that could captivate our thinking, if we are not constantly on guard?

philosophy - philosophia "to love wisdom", this is referring to everything in Paul's day that had to do with theories about God and the world and the meaning of human life.

\*\* What phrase does Paul use to describe the value and danger of this worldly philosophy?

"empty deception" - **kenes apates** is used to describe and qualify the term philosophia. The absence of both preposition and article in the second clause shows us that Paul is not introducing a new term, but is describing the first.

**Apates** - used here for deception, means "a deceit, fraud or trick". There is no value in such speculative human philosophy - even when it sounds good, the damage is eternal when it leads people away from the Savior.

\*\* What are the two sources for such vain speculation?

1) The traditions of men - the practice of repeating previous errors because they were socially acceptable, or to use a term of our day, politically correct. We cannot allow our thinking to trade off Biblical truth for what the unsaved world around thinks is good.

cf. Mark 7:5-9, Matthew 15:5-6

2) The elementary principles of the world - This phrase is referring primarily to the letters of the alphabet. It literally means "things in a row". Given the simplistic religious views of the day, Paul is saying they should guard their minds from being deluded by false teaching and should hold fast to the truth. cf. Acts 17:16, 19-23

\*\* Before we leave verse eight, what is the standard to which we should allow thinking to be taken captive?

The standard which is "...according to Christ."

**V. 9** \*\* To clarify their thinking, what point does Paul want to make regarding the Person of Jesus Christ?

We can allow our thoughts to be taken captive by Him, because "in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form..."

\*\* We saw this term used before in chapter 1, verse 19. Fulness, pleroma, is used here by Paul intentionally confronting the false teachers of the day who said that the divine "fulness" was divided in its expression among the various emanations or gods. How is Paul's view different?

Jesus Christ is God forever! He possesses all the fulness of Deity and is the One to be worshipped instead of the false gods of the nations.

**V.10** \*\* This sets Paul up for his third and final tactic in the war against heresy. He now addresses the spiritual implications of what he has been saying. For us personally, what is the importance of "all the fulness of Deity" dwelling in Jesus Christ?

3) Because, "in Him [we] have been made complete..."

Our standing before a Holy God is based solely upon the work and Person of Jesus Christ. We could not stand before Him on our own, and we could not make ourselves holy through our own efforts.

\*\* Once we have been saved by grace through faith, do we need to do spiritual push-ups in order for God to accept us into His Heaven?

No - When we were made into a new creature (2Corinthians 5:17), God sees His Son in us and we have been made complete in Him. cf. John 1:16, Ephesians 3:19 and 2Peter 1:3-4

\*\* How does that spiritual reality protect us from all forms of heresy?

He is the One who has made us complete, when error tries to attack our security we simply trust in the work that Jesus has accomplished on our behalf.

\*\* What does Paul add at the end of verse ten to keep us secure in our protection?

We are being protected by the One who is "the head over all rule and authority". He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords - He is the authority over all who would attack us, from men to angels. cf. Romans 13:1 and Colossians 1:16

## **EXTRICATE**

\*\* Let's go back and review the three tactics used by Paul in the war against heresy or false teaching. What was the first one?

1) Paul's first tactic in the battle for living out the truth of God's word each day is to make sure that our walk matches our talk, that we walk in truth.

We will be victorious against any form of heresy, if we know God's Word and are faithful to live it out each day. Our lifestyle will silence the mouths of the critics! cf. 1Peter 2:15

2) To keep our thinking held captive by Jesus Christ and rejecting the foolish speculations of human philosophy.

That is why true Biblical fellowship will always include time spent in God's Word, with God's people. cf. Colossians 3:16

3) To remember that on a spiritual level, we have been made complete in Christ and nothing anyone can do will be able to shake that marvelous reality.

He is the head, the authority, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. With Jesus Christ and His truth on our side, we can only be victorious. cf. Romans 8:31

## **DELINEATE**

\*\* As you look back over that brief list, you may find that one of those items especially encouraged your heart today. We certainly praise God for that, but what could you do with all three items on that list when someone you know is shaken by the false doctrines of our day?

We need to know, remember and share these truths with others so that we might be "**Protecting the Flock**" of God from Satanic heresy.

## **EVALUATE**

\*\* How prepared are you to share God's truth? Do you talk with Him about the opportunities He might bring your way? When you read His Word, do you pause to consider how you might use it in instructing others to know God's truth?

## **ACTIVATE**

\*\* Let's live out our lives this next week by overflowing with gratitude for the things we have learned and by being committed to "**Protecting the Flock**" as He directs!

Closing prayer