

A Brief Survey of Colossians

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[0 : 00] to Colossians chapter 1. Colossians chapter 1, and we'll launch at verses 9 and 10.

If you have not a Bible with you, if you forgot to bring one and you want one that you can turn to, there are some available in the seats before you.

Colossians 1 verses 9 and 10. This really is going to be the launching pad or the key text for us this morning. For this reason also, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord to please him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.

Now, this, as you saw on your list, is going to be an attempt at a survey of a book.

That's pretty dangerous, isn't it, Mark? It's going to be an attempt to go after the whole thing to get an outline, if you will, of the book.

[1 : 37] Since it's a survey, we will not spend a great deal of time in individual verses. I have attempted to avoid all cross-referencing outside of the book itself because it's a survey.

I may have made an allusion or two to others, but I've attempted to avoid that. Now, since I've said that I've avoided the cross-referencing, let me say this as being incidental.

Cross-referencing scripture with scripture is vital to an understanding of the word of God and hence to my spiritual growth and my relationship with God.

That's vital. But, since it's a survey, we can't spend too much time going to and fro, and I'll give a little parable of that.

Some of you like to hike, I'm sure. You're going to the Tetons, right? If the Lord wills it. So, as you would attest, when you're walking about in the bush, it's good to have a bit of an idea of a map and a compass to delineate where you're supposed to be going because there are many things to explore on the side.

[3 : 18] And I can attest this personally. When you're standing there looking at a beaver pond, you're on top of the ridge.

You're looking down upon a beaver pond that you've never seen before. And then, on this side of the ridge, you're looking at a valley and another ridge. And you know perfectly well where you are, but you forgot where the camp is.

It's fairly disconcerting and confusing. So, when we study the scripture, if we don't keep, if I may use a poor analogy here, if I don't keep my map and compass handy to know the basic theme, the basic direction, I may get disconcerted and confused.

You may know someone who says, well, I don't study the scripture because I get involved with this, and then it's also confusing to me.

Well, maybe I laid down the map. So, that's what the survey is about. It is not meant to explore every detail.

- [4 : 36] That is important, though, and is vital to my growth and the growth of the church. But, that's not what we're going to do this morning, not because it's not important, but to try to get or keep, if you will, a rough map and compass to keep me on course.
- As a survey, the drawback will be that we'll be turning pages frequently. And so, keep your Bible open and at the ready.
- Now, if I may be so bold, you can get a good outline of Colossians, but I'm going to give you one anyway. This is the outline I have used for this morning.
- And, if you want to jot it down just to see that I'm going where we're supposed to be going, that's fine. If not, just listen. Paul makes an opening greeting to the church, and I believe to us since we're in this age, in verses 1 and 2 of the first chapter.
- In chapter 1, verses 3 through 8, he gives a predicate, or a basis for his prayer for the church that comes in verses 9 through 12.
- [6 : 10] In verses 9 through 12 of chapter 1, Paul is going to tell us his prayer for the church, and the purpose of the prayer, or the end to which that prayer is prayed, if you will.
- In verses 13 through 23 of chapter 1, he enters into a bit of the doctrine of the purpose, or the person, and the work of Jesus Christ.
- And then he'll take a parenthesis in verses 24 through 25. Paul's going to take a bit of a parenthesis there and give us some insight into his stewardship that was given to him by God for the church.
- Then in chapter 2, verses 6 through chapter 4, verse 6, he's going to lay out a practical application of what that predicate doctrine was and what the prayer was all about.
- And then it's going to get very practical. He will talk in the first couple of verses there, chapter 2, verses 6 and 7, he's going to talk about living in faith and not by works.
- [7 : 33] And then in 2.8, he's going to give us a warning about don't be deceived. In 2.9 through 15, he's going to give us a reason why we should not live by works, but we should live by faith.
- In 2.16 through 4.6, then he gets very practical about this is what it's going to look like. So in 2.16 through 3.4, he's going to tell us about living by faith in our thinking, that is, Roger, think right.
- In 3.5 through 4.6, he's going to talk about living by faith in my behavior. In that behavior, then, he's going to have a couple of sub points.
- He's going to have some proscriptions, don't do this, and then he's going to have some prescriptions, do this. So that's his, the way he goes about that.
- Then, then, he'll finish the book in 4.7 through 9 with some personal news, and then 4.10 through 14 with personal greetings from the fellow workmen that are with him, and then he will finish up with 15 through 18 of chapter 4, giving final instructions about what to do with the letter, and then closing the letter.
- [9 : 09] That's kind of where we're going. So if I may be so bold, I will start with chapter 1, verse 2. I'm just going to read. You will follow.
- You may need to follow quickly, but this will be the contextual thread, if you will, for the book of Colossians, why he's doing what he's doing and where he's going with it.
- I'll finish up with verse, chapter 2, verse 8, but some of it I've changed to make the grammar flow a little better for me and to make it personal.
- To the saints, the believers in Christ, you have heard the truth of the word of God and have understood the grace of God in truth.

I'm going to stop right there and interrupt myself for a moment. Notice he uses truth twice here and just within a couple verses because later on, when he gets into the practical application, one of the proscriptions is going to be he's going to tell the church quit lying to one another.

[10 : 23] Now, we'll get more into that later, but this is something that you, when you read through the book, you will notice he repeats certain ideas and certain phrases.

Paul will also go through the book and repeat very frequently, he'll give me some information and then he, the next, very next verse, he'll start with, therefore, so do this.

because of this, then do this. So we'll see that. Back to the thread. You've heard the truth of the word of God and have understood the grace of God in truth.

For this reason, we pray that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will and all spiritual wisdom and understanding so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord to please him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all power for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience, joyously giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

for God rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

[12 : 02] Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God. By Christ, all things were created both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, visible, whether they be thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things have been created through him and for him.

Christ is before all things and in him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church, and he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he himself will come to have first place in everything.

For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Christ and through Christ to reconcile all things to himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet he has now reconciled you in his fleshly body through death to present you before him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.

Paul was made a minister by God to make known the riches of the glory of the mystery among the Gentiles, which is, Christ in you, the hope of glory.

[13 : 42] He proclaims Christ, admonishing every man and teaching every man, so to present every man complete in Christ. Our hearts, then, should be encouraged, having been knit together in love and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, so that no one will delude us with a persuasive argument.

Therefore, as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in him and established in our faith, just as we were instructed and overflowing with gratitude, 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.

I'll stop there for, that is the path, if you will. That's my main map. So that when I start to study details within the book, I remember the line is, remember the centrality, you can even answer it if you wish, the centrality is found in Christ.

Never, I should never be moved from that. and to keep the main thing, the main thing, if you will, will not only give me assurance, we'll get into that a little bit, it enhances or gives me a basis for love for the brethren and it also will help me as I remember the centrality of Christ, it will help me send up the red flag when I hear a persuasive argument that somehow detracts from what Christ has done on the cross.

So we, with that in mind, let's begin, if you will, with the opening greeting just to look at a couple of things and we'll not, I will not belabor you, hopefully, too much with too many things, but notice in that opening greeting, this would be the first two verses.

[16 : 30] He's an apostle of Christ by his will or by God's? By God's will. Now, that's important to remember because God is the one who selects the prophets and apostles.

I don't select myself. God selects the apostles and prophets and then we listen to them.

To the saints, the holy ones, sanctified, if you will. Saint, the word saint means exactly that, the set apart one, the holy one, the sanctified one, the consecrated one.

It does not mean that you, if you are a saint, it doesn't mean you're on a higher spiritual plane. Everyone who believes in Christ, and notice to the saints and the faithful brethren, the word faithful means, it's the same word as you will read elsewhere, believing brethren.

So we believe that what God says is true about Christ and if I do, I am a saint. Not because we're so good, but because he is.

[17 : 58] It's amazing grace because as we get into it, we're going to see it's not, well, what's our verse? Not by works of righteousness. That's for certain.

Okay, so those who believe in Christ are set apart by God for God. That's one thing we see there. Let's look at what his preparation that he gives for his prayer for the church.

This will be in your verses, chapter 1, verses 3 through 8. Notice that he says, we give thanks to God because we have heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and the love you have for the saints and the hope laid up for you in heaven.

That is, your hope is a firm expectation and it is secured in heaven by God because you have believed in Jesus Christ.

By the way, this is not a universalism. If I don't believe what God says about me and about him and about Jesus, then I'm not in this.

[19 : 13] I'm not sanctified. I'm not set apart. But if I do, I am. This is assurance. So, he said, you have previously heard the word of truth.

Faith in Jesus secures our hope of heaven. Faith in Christ is what secures our hope of salvation, our eternity.

And this hope, because we have this hope, we have this assurance, it promotes our love for one another.

Now, by the way, this love as he's right now is an active love. It doesn't have much to do with emotions.

later on, when he gets into the practical application, there will be an application for emotional love of the brethren and affection one for another.

[20 : 19] This is not what he's talking about here. Here he's talking about what's often rendered in your King James as charity or a beneficent feeling or an approach.

I want to do what's good for the brethren. That's what he's primarily talking about here. That love for the brethren is promoted because we have assurance.

For those who have no assurance, the love waxes cold, doesn't it? It frequently does. Okay.

he says you've heard the word in truth as it was delivered, that is the gospel, right?

The gospel is the word of truth here, and you have understood the grace of God in truth. That's going to be important a little bit later.

[21 : 23] He prays for the church, and it's interesting, the prayer. And he gives the purpose or the end that he desires for that.

For this reason he begins. Okay, because of your faith, and because of your assurance, and because of your love, this is what I pray for you.

We have not ceased to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Now, there's an end for this. I have prayed for you that you will be filled with the knowledge of his will and with spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Why? So, Roger, so you behave yourself properly. Now, look, though, you see that word there when he says behave or walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

[22 : 30] You see that, do you not? That's, I have to be careful that, don't I? Because if I concentrate and I don't get the whole picture or I don't keep myself on track, I might say, well, then, my behavior is what wins me to God.

It makes me available to grace. That's not what he's saying. He's saying, because you are in Christ, I pray that your wisdom and your understanding, your spiritual wisdom and understanding, will increase, you'll be filled with that, so that you'll know how you ought to walk.

It doesn't mean that I earn my way. I cannot earn my way. It doesn't mean that I even earn my way to grace. That's kind of a falsehood, isn't it?

Grace is not grace if it's earned. I know, I made an allusion to Romans, but you'll get over it. Grace is not grace if it's earned.

The grace of God comes because it's not earned. It's what Christ did, not what I do. So, but, what he says is, I'm praying for you that you'll be filled with wisdom and understanding so that you'll know how you ought to behave, bearing fruit in every good work.

[24 : 01] And now, that's my behavior. But he continues in the prayer, and he said, I pray that you increase in the knowledge of God.

Now, increasing in the knowledge of God, that gets very relational. because you have more affection for those who you know than those who you do not.

And I say you in a very general sense, but the idea of knowing God is a very relational thing.

God is a God and it astounds me that the God who created all this and sustains all this has a relationship with me and allows me to have a relationship with him.

So, this gets very relational. In the knowledge of God, and that will strengthen, be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for the attaining of steadfastness and patience, or we might say perseverance.

[25 : 29] Steadfastness. Remember, truth, truth, steadfast, because we're going to get a warning. Steadfastness and patience, joyously giving thanks to the Father.

And what has the Father done? Qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. It is God who justifies.

God set us apart. And so, we rejoice. And that brings joy. But, the joy will wane if I'm not in the word to listen to the steadfastness or be increasing in my knowledge of God.

Pardon me. This happened to Sherry earlier this week, and I was happy about it, but now it's happening to me. When it happens to me, it's a judgment.

When it happens to Sherry, it's a trial. I can't understand that. Okay. Let's move on to the person in the work of Christ in verses 13 through 23.

[26 : 57] God rescued us from where?

Satan's domain, or the domain of darkness, or the is how it's worded. The domain of darkness, God rescued me, and he set me from the domain of darkness into what?

The kingdom of light, the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Metaphorically speaking, we're not talking now about the messianic kingdom that will come on the earth.

He's speaking metaphorically here. He's saying you were in this kingdom, in the darkness, and God rescued you and put you there. In Jesus, I have redemption and the forgiveness of sins.

This, remember, is a key theme. It is in Christ, in Christ, Christ. It's important to remember that.

[28 : 28] Now, he explains something about Jesus here. He says he is the image, or the exact, it's a, the original word is the word from which we get icon.

He is the image, or the, the, it's the same word that Jesus used when he, when the Pharisees tempted him and they said, is it legal to pay taxes?

He said, give me a coin, whose image is on the coin. It's the same word there. So, Jesus is the image of the invisible God.

God is spirit, spirit, they, Jesus took on flesh. That is the incarnation. That's part of the whole how did God become flesh thing.

But he did. And that's what it's about. So, Jesus is the image of the invisible God, says he is the firstborn of creation.

[29 : 42] It doesn't mean that God's created. It means that the body that he took on is the firstborn, if you will, of creation. In fact, let us make man after our image.

Right. So, Jesus is the firstborn of creation for by him some things were created. Oh, all things were created.

on earth or in heaven. Spiritual and material, all things are created by God through Jesus and they for what end?

for him. For him. So, not only were they created by him, but in him all things stay put, if you will.

All things hold together. The word is consist, but in Christ all things hold together. together. If not for Christ, if by chance Nietzsche was right, we wouldn't be here, right?

[31 : 20] See, because he wasn't right. He knows the truth now, but anyway. Firstborn from the dead, the resurrection, that's what he's talking about.

So, he sustains all things, whether they're visible or invisible, and Christ is the head of the church, and all the fullness of the deity abides in Jesus Christ.

The reconciliation of creation, you'll see that for it was for it was the good pleasure of the Father for all the fullness to dwell in him that is in Christ and through him to reconcile all things to himself.

So, he reconciles or Christ reconciles all things to God because of the cross, by what he did on the cross, by his shed blood on the cross.

And it is for me to remember that that's why I have a hope of salvation. It's because of what Christ did. The sacrifice that Christ made reconciles everything to God.

[32 : 50] Now, I don't understand that because I don't see everything reconciled, but that's my limited vision. There is coming a time when that will be fulfilled.

I was going to resist that, so I am. I was going to go to Romans 8, but I won't. Now, he also goes into this with my state of affairs before I trusted Christ.

He says, although we were alienated and hostile to God. Now, you know somebody who says, well, I don't have anything against God, I just don't want anything to do with him now.

That's not true, is it? Either you are for him or you are against him. That's the image there.

Either you acknowledge God as God or you do not. And if you do not, he says, you're hostile to him.

[34 : 02] So, although I was alienated and hostile to God, yet, and here is amazing grace, Christ has reconciled us through the death of his fleshly body so that we are presented holy, the saints, right, holy, and blameless, and beyond reproach, if we abide in our faith in Christ's person and work.

See, it takes faith in Christ's person and work to be in this position. It takes faith to be in that position.

If I do not believe God, I am not there. If I trust Christ and what he has done, that is my position, holy and blameless and beyond reproach.

I'm glad God sees me that way because that's not what it looks like this morning in the mirror. It's not always what it looks like when I'm thinking, boy, why did I say that?

God sees. Not because of us, but because of Christ. So, our faith in Christ's person and work is the hope of the gospel.

[35 : 36] And it's, and it was, as Paul said, it was given to him by God to minister this gospel or to administer it, to reveal what had been concealed before but is now revealed in these letters to all of humanity for the admonition, if you will, to trust Christ for salvation.

salvation. Now, he gives a little bit, he steps in verses 24 through 2, 5, he gives a bit of a parenthesis.

There he's been going through the prayer and the reason for the prayer, but he steps into a bit of an insight into the stewardship.

So, he begins it with, I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, on behalf of the body, which is the church, that is Christ's body, the church now is commonly referred to and will be commonly referred to as the body of Christ.

And there's a reason for that. His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. Now, of this, I was made a minister.

[37 : 07] Paul's stewardship from God, he makes a big statement here. Your scripture, your Bible will probably say something like this.

So, I'll start with verse 25. of this church, I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God.

That is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations but has now been manifested to his saints, and so on.

This church is not in the original. You'll notice it's in italics in your Bible and preaching of is in italics there.

But nevertheless, the idea here is that it was given to Paul, his ministry is to complete the word of the grace of God.

[38 : 19] that is the doctrine that was given to Paul to complete. He was to fulfill that. And in that, it doesn't mean that he was to preach every place he could preach, although he did that.

It really means that the ministry was given to him to fulfill that word of God, the word of grace. So that's important to me to remember because when I read the scripture, when I read the scripture, no matter where I'm reading, I read it all for the benefit and for instruction and for hope.

And it does all that. But if I'm reading it for marching orders, if you will, for how I ought to live or how I ought to think or how I come to God, read, then it must be read through the lens of the epistles given to Paul because that's where the fulfillment of this message is.

So that's marching orders for the church come through the Pauline epistles, not, for instance, from Exodus. Now, I learn things, I see principles, I get hope, but I need to be careful that I don't try to admix, for instance, what he said under the law because it's all going to fulfill out in this gospel of grace where he, well, we'll get to the nailing in a bit, I think.

So, he preaches then, I'm going to jump way down, and he preaches Christ and warns and teaches in order to present every man complete in Christ.

[40 : 26] Now, if you're still there, you're in chapter 2, verse 3 by now. we see that our hearts are encouraged and knit together in love because of the full assurance of understanding Christ.

Now, and we trust in Christ alone so that, and here's the warning, we won't be deluded with persuasive arguments.

Now, the deluded means to reason falsely or wrongly, wrong reasoning with persuasive arguments.

That is pithy or pithy comments or enticing words. it's a warning to me that I should, I need to remember Christ and the centrality of Christ so that I won't be deluded or I won't be tricked or I won't be led astray.

So, he gets into practical application. I'm going to try to step it up here. He gets into practical application of this in verses chapter 2 verses 6 and 7 especially he talks about living in faith.

[42 : 01] So, you came, I'm going to ask a question. When you came to Christ, you did what? What did you do?

You believed. You trusted Christ. You came to Christ in faith or in works? Okay, you came to Christ in faith.

Now, look at what he says there in verse 6. As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.

So, as you have received Christ in faith and not by works, so walk by faith and not by works. Now, we're going to get into this because he gives some very practical things about don't do this and do this.

So, he's not talking about what is I'm going to make another allusion to Romans. He's not talking about well, sin greatly so that grace may abound.

[43 : 10] That's not what he's saying. That's not ever what he says. But what he is saying is don't live by the rules.

Don't live your life out by what you do. He's going to call it elementary principles or traditions of men.

That's what he will call it here in a few verses. But what he's saying is you live your life by trusting Christ and by keeping him central and by a knowledge of God and an understanding.

What he's telling me is, look, Roger, if you want to live your life correctly, stay in the word, listen to me, listen to what I say, and trust me.

Live your life in faith. So, he talks about living in faith in verses 6 and 7 there. Since we are saved by faith and not by works, we should live in faith and not by works.

[44 : 21] And we should be overflowing then with gratitude because I remember what Christ did here. My gratitude is because God has sanctified me by the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

and that should be front and center. Now, he's going to give us a warning in verse 8. See, it sounds a lot like what he just said in verse 4, doesn't it?

In verse 4, he just said, I say this to you so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument. Now, look what he says in verse 8. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception.

If you're reading King James, it's going to say vain deceit. We'll get to that. According to, I'm going to see if you're reading, what's the next one?

According to what? Traditions of men or elementary principles of the world. He's going to fill that out, by the way, in chapter 2, verses 20 through 23, rather than according to Christ.

[45 : 42] So, this is a warning. Now, that philosophy is a pursuit. The word actually means the pursuit of knowledge.

And empty deception actually means vain deceit or vain empty.

It has no purpose. There's nothing really to come of it. Empty deception. Why do I need that? Well, because I'm prone to tricky words.

I'm prone to like pithy sayings. And there are many things that sound very clever, but they're not.

He says, rather than according to Christ. He's keeping this theme according to Christ. Now, he gives some reasons to live by faith and not by works in 9 through 15.

[46 : 52] He reiterates here what he said in verse, chapter 1, verse 15, when he talked about Christ, where he said he's the image of the invisible God.

For in him, verse 9 of chapter 2, in him all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form. So that's a fulfilling or a restatement of the image of the invisible God.

deity becomes flesh in Jesus Christ, the incarnation. That's pretty amazing by itself.

So, and in him you have been made complete, not partial, but complete in Christ.

my only hope is in him. He's the head over all rule and authority, and now he's going to use much more picturesque language, but it's a reiteration, if you will, of chapter 1, verses 13 through 23, where he says you've been circumcised, you've been baptized, you've been crucified, and you've been raised.

[48 : 24] So, it's in Christ that we have our hope. It is in that hope that we have our assurance.

It is in that assurance that our love is made strong, and for steadfastness and perseverance in the face of philosophy and empty deception.

So, we also see in this section what Christ did upon the cross with the law, specifically the Mosaic Law is what I usually mean, but the rules and regulations and the moral judgments that condemned me.

What did he do? He nailed it to the cross. So, read there in verse 14.

Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, and he made a public display of them, well, I'm sorry, having nailed it, he took it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross, and by that, he disarmed rulers and authorities.

[49 : 56] He disarmed Satan on the cross. Now, I don't see that realized, but that's what he did. Okay, so we're going to go, I'm going to go much more quickly, I'm sorry.

I said we weren't going to spend so much time in those, and then look what I did. Okay, verses 16 through 3, 4, 2, 16, through 3, 4, give me a reason to live by faith in my thinking.

There seems to be in this church a little bit, by the emphasis Paul makes here, there seems to be a little bit of an addition or an adulterating of the word of truth, of the gospel, with some mosaic law in, and some mysticism put in there.

You'll notice he mentions food, and sabbaths, and festivals, and he also talks about self-basement and religion of the angels, or worship of the angels, literally religion of the messengers.

Now, whether that involves angelic beings and worship of angelic beings, or whether that involves veneration of preachers, makes no fundamental difference to the passage, he says, don't let anybody trick you with that.

[51 : 41] Don't do that. He said, don't, don't let anyone act as your judge regarding those kinds of things.

Rather than, and look at verse 18 and 19, they are elevated in their own minds rather than according to Christ.

So, they are not holding to the head. Now, he said, if you've died with Christ, then don't pay attention anymore, or don't adhere, or don't seek to grow, or walk by elementary principles of the world.

Don't submit yourself to decrees as don't do this, or don't handle, don't taste, don't touch. all these are, have an appearance of, and here it is, the persuasive argument.

They have an appearance of wisdom. Remember the philosophy and vain deceit? They have an appearance of wisdom, but they are of no value against indulgence of the flesh.

[53 : 11] So, keep on seeking the things above, the things above are the centrality of Christ, the things on the earth are the elementary principles. So, I am warned about that.

Now, getting to behavior, he has some proscriptions. things. That is, don't do this, Roger.

So, consider the members of your body, or reckon your body, to be dead, to immorality, impurity, and so on.

You'll read them all there. Your King James will say, mortify, then, the deeds of the flesh. So, we don't put these things, though, you notice, we don't put these things out of our life in order to be justified, because Christ has already justified.

But we put them out of our life, notice what he says there, in verse six, because we don't want to participate any longer in things for which the unregenerate are going to be punished by God.

[54 : 31] It says the wrath of God is going to be poured out on those who don't trust Christ because of acting like that. So, Roger, you've been saved by grace through faith, good, but don't act like that, because that's going to be, that's why God's punishing the world.

Well, so, then he also says something to us there in verse nine, and herein has to do with the truth, truth, remember this, and then don't do this.

He says don't lie to one another. Now, that certainly does have to do with regular deception, but he's talking to the church within the church, and I believe what he's saying there, this, in the context, this really has to do with elementary principles of the world, the philosophy and vain deceptions, the enticing words that are not according to Christ, but according to men.

And so he's saying that shouldn't be part of your teaching. Get that out of your head, and don't lie to one another. And then he goes quite a bit into prescriptions then in verses 12 through 4-6, and he talks about what to do.

And a couple of those I will look at. He said, put on a heart of compassion, and that's the emotional part.

[56 : 12] The heart of compassion, I think your King James would read it, bowels of mercies. It has to do with that gut feeling, the emotional response.

So when the scripture says love, most often it's talking about an active thing wherein you desire the benefit of another.

This is the emotional aspect of it. So the church is to have, the body of Christ does have an emotional affection one for another, or should have.

If I don't, maybe I'm not paying attention to the word like I need to pay attention. Maybe I don't have the hope that I need to have.

Maybe my assurance has waned. Any number of things. But he says, you do these things. Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and bearing with one another, forgiving one another, just as the Lord has forgiven you.

[57 : 22] And verse 336, what do I do with the scripture? Let the word, 3, oh I said 36, 316.

Yeah, 316, let the word of Christ richly dwell within you. And that's where we get the teaching and admonishing and instruction.

It has to be in the word of Christ. So, having said that, and run out of time, you'll see that he goes very explicitly there about what things are going to look like when he gets to the good works business.

let your good works do not preclude helping out other people outside the church.

They don't preclude that. But that's not primarily what he's focusing on here. You notice that when he's talking about the good works here, it's all within the body. So, he's talking about really this is what they actually look like.

[58 : 39] And he talks about relationships in the home. Husbands, wives, children, fathers. He talks about relationships in the workplace with masters and servants.

And then he will finish up with some personal news greetings from those who are working with him.

And then he will leave them with final instructions which are you read this and after you've read this in your church, you send it to Laodicea where it'll be read in Laodicea and you read the letter that I sent to Laodicea.

So, these are circular letters from Paul to the churches and, I believe, to us. let's thank God for the day and trust him for what comes.

And by the way, be in prayer for our nation as we approach November.

[59 : 54] These are important days. They always are important days, but they almost seem vital days to me at this point.

And so, be in prayer and ask God's mercy and our wisdom as to how we approach.

Be wise in your approach. In this letter, Paul will say to the church, be wise, speak with outsiders with wisdom. And the outsiders are those who are not saved.

So, we need to act with wisdom too. Father, thanks so much for this day. And now, as we go, our separate ways, help us to go in love one for another, encouraging one another.

Thank you for your word, which gives us hope. Thank you, most of all, for what you have done on the cross to give us that assurance of salvation.

[60 : 58] Help us always to remember the assurance of salvation and to keep Christ central in our lives and in our thoughts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.