

Sermon Notes

WALK IN CHRIST (COLOSSIANS 2:6)

I. Christ Is the Christian Life

- A. The Lord Jesus Christ is the ultimate reality for the Christian.
 - 1. The Christian lives and thrives only in Christ.
 - 2. In Christ, we have are in the eternal embrace of God.
 - Rom 8:39: “nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
 - 3. In Christ, we have been redeemed and forgiven.
 - Eph 1:7: “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,”
 - 4. In Christ, we have been given God himself.
 - Col 2:9-10: “⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰ and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.”
- B. We can say that THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, because we have no life before God apart from Christ. The only life we have is the life of Christ that is lived out through us.
- C. The Christian Life is the offshoot of another Life, who is Jesus Christ.
- D. The Christian life is a battle to hold fast to Christ.

II. “No” to Christless Religion

- A. The Christians of Colossae and Laodicea were fighting to hold fast to Christ.
- B. While in prison, Paul was informed that some teachers were trying to lure the Christians of Colossae and Laodicea from their simple faith in Christ with a new religious “philosophy” (2:8).
- C. This philosophy claimed to be able to bring people closer to God through compliance with a behavioral code (2:16), adoption of an ascetic lifestyle (2:23), and the pursuit of mystical experiences (2:18).
- D. But Paul sees these new teachings for what they were. No matter how spiritual, moral, disciplined, or mystical these teachings sounded, the end

product of complying with them would be the same—the glory of Christ would be diminished and people would be led away from him.

- E. Paul was determined to refute these teachers. For if the Gospel of God’s grace in Christ is the only hope for sinners, then those who try to minimize this Gospel or add to it as if it were not enough have to be resisted.
- F. Paul writes to the Colossians to encourage them in their faith and to warn them about the deception.
- G. He wants the Colossians to know that Jesus is truly sufficient for all of their spiritual needs, because, as verse 3 says, “in [him] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” And he wants them to conduct their lives with their eyes fixed on the Lord Jesus no matter what others might say.
- H. This is the context of the verse that we want to look at today. Paul says in Colossians 2:6: “Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him [.]”
- I. Colossians 2:6 helps us to answer the question: Now that we are Christians, what happens next? Now that we have Christ, what’s the next part?
 1. As we shall see, the next part is not to go outside of Christ to add new things to ourselves to further guarantee our salvation.
 2. The next part is to stay in Christ and conduct our lives as people who have been joined to Christ.

III. We Have Received Christ

- A. In the first part of verse 6, Paul talks about what has already been done on the part of the Colossian Christians; and indeed, of all believers. *All* believers—and by this we obviously mean “true believers”—have already received the Lord Jesus Christ: “you received Christ Jesus the Lord...”
- B. This is the very thing that makes us Christians. We have Christ Jesus the Lord.
- C. We received Christ Jesus the Lord when we first *believed* in him.
- D. But when did we receive Christ Jesus the Lord? We received him when we first *believed* in him. We received him when we first trusted him to be our Savior and our Lord; when we first believed in his death to cleanse us from our sins and his resurrection to save us from the power of our sins and from everlasting death.
- E. The verb “received” tells us that the Christian life is, at its base, essentially a passive life. We do not generate our own salvation. We did not even generate our own faith. We simply received the Lord Jesus Christ as a pure gift and a free gift from God.

IV. Walk in Christ

- A. Now that we have received Christ, now that we are connected to Christ by faith and these means of grace, what then does it mean to walk in Christ?
- B. “Walking” is a metaphor for personal conduct.
- C. To walk in Christ is to conduct our lives in Christ.
 - 1. It is to live as one who is united to Jesus Christ the Lord.
 - 2. It is to conduct oneself in complete dependence on this Christ whom we have received.
 - 3. It is to live with absolute reliance on Christ, depending on nothing else to make us acceptable to God.
- D. According to verse 7, to walk in Christ is to be “rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”
- E. Thus, to walk in Christ is to continue holding to the truths about Christ that were taught to us by the apostles and to conduct one’s life according to that Christ.

V. The “In Christ” Kind of Life

- A. What does it mean to walk in Christ?
- B. To walk in Christ is to live as one who has been filled by God in Christ.
 - Col 2:10: “and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.”
- C. To walk in Christ is to live as one who has been circumcised.
 - Col 2:11: “In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,”
- D. To walk in Christ is to live as someone who has been buried with Christ.
 - Col 2:12: “having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.”
- E. To walk in Christ is to live as one who has been raised with Christ.
 - Col 2:12: “having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.”
- F. To walk in Christ is to live as one whose sins have all been forgiven.
 - Col 2:13: “And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,”
- G. To walk in Christ is to live as one who is victorious over the powers.

- Col 2:15: “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him”
- H. To walk in Christ is to make sure that we do not come under the control of those who want to use human laws and traditions—even good laws and traditions—to distract us from the glory of Christ.
 - Col 2:8: “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.”
 - Col 2:16: “Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.”
 - Col 2:18-19: “Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind,¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.”
- I. To walk in Christ is to seek the things that are above where Christ is.
 - Col 3:1-3: “If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.”
 - 1. This, in turn, entails a life of evangelical repentance:
 - Col 3:5: “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”
 - Col 3:12: “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience,”

VI. The Christian Life Is Christ

So now that we are Christians, what happens next? Now that we have Christ, what’s the next part? The next part is *not* to add some new religious philosophy to Christ to make our lives richer, holier, and closer to God. The next part is to keep walking and living in the same Christ we have received. Walking in reliance on Christ means keeping Christ as the focus of our hearts, the hope of our lives, and the source of our new way of life. Christ Jesus the Lord is himself our new Life. He is the God-filled one who fills us with God. He is our forgiveness of sins. He is our

resurrection. He is our liberation from the powers. He is the new pattern by which we are to pattern our lives. He is the powerful, life-giving Lord who will not let us go. Christ is all of that to us. God has given him to us.

Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today's sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything with which you disagree or found difficult to accept?
3. According to v 35, what are some things that could sow fear in our hearts?
4. In what sense is Christ Jesus the Christian Life?
5. What are some of the features of the false teaching that was making its way amongst the Colossian and Laodicean churches?
6. Why does Paul write to the Colossians (see v 2)?
7. According to v 3, why does Paul want the Colossians to keep trusting in Christ?
8. What is the main instruction that is being urged on the Colossians in v 6?
9. When did we receive Christ? How are we continuing to receive Christ?
10. What does it mean to walk in Christ?