

“Dead With Christ”
Colossians 2:20-23

Introduction:

1. Let's Open Our Bibles Back Up:
 - To Colossians 2 - Where - This Morning:
 - We Will Be Finishing This Chapter:
 - In Which Paul Has Been Teaching Us - That:
 - **Christians Are Complete In Christ!**
 - In 2:10 - We Are Told:
 - “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power!”
 - This Means - That In & Through Jesus:
 - A Christian Is Given:
 - Complete Fulness!
 - Complete Forgiveness!
 - And Complete Freedom!
2. And All This Happens - Because:
 - When You Believe On The Lord Jesus Christ:
 - You Are Also Given:
 - Complete Fellowship:
 - With Him As Well!
 - This Means - That By Faith:
 - You Are **United With Christ!**
 - We Are Introduced To This Gospel Truth:
 - Back In 2:12 - “Buried **with** him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen **with** him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead!”
3. And It Is This Truth:
 - That Paul Will Focus On:
 - Here At The End Of Chapter 2 - And Also:
 - At The Beginning Of Chapter 3!
 - Because Believing This Truth:
 - Is How You & I Can Live Lives That Please & Honor The Lord!
 - 2:20-23 - “Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, / (Touch not; taste not; handle not; / Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? / Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh!”
 - You See - The Colossian Christians - To Whom Paul Wrote These Word:
 - Were No Different Than Us!
 - They Still Struggled In Their:
 - Worship Of The Lord!
 - Walk With The Lord!
 - And Their Work For The Lord!
 - And They Still Had To Fight Against:
 - Those “Weights” & “Sins” That So “Easily Beset” Us All!
 - Don't You Experience This Too?
 - We All Do!
4. And So - Paul Wants Us To Learn A Bit More:
 - About What It Means To Be:
 - **United With Christ!**
 - And Here - Especially - Our Union With:
 - **The Death Of Christ!**
 - Because - It's One Thing:
 - To Believe That Jesus Died:
 - On The Cross - For Your Sin!
 - This Is, After All, The Gospel!
 - This Is How You & I Are Saved!
 - But - Then:
 - You Need To Also Believe:

- That ***You Died With Jesus:***
 - On That Cross!
- And It Is Belief In This Truth:
 - That Will Help You Achieve:
 - Greater & Greater Victory:
 - Over Those Sins & Temptations In Your Walk With God!
 - And This Is Why Paul Begins In These Verses To Describe:

1. ***The Reality Of Your Death With Christ!***

- In The First Part Of 2:20a - Paul Writes:
 - “Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world!”
 - Here - He Is Describing A Spiritual Reality:
 - For All Christians!
 - You Are Now “Dead With Christ!”
 - And - The Death He Mentions Here:
 - Is Like The Physical Death:
 - We Are All Too Familiar With In This Life!
 - It Is A Complete Separation & A Complete Break!
 - You See - At One Time In Your Life:
 - There Was A Complete Separation From God!
 - Because You Were:
 - 2:13 - “Dead In Your Sins!”
 - Ephesians 2:1 Also Reminds Us That We Were All “Dead In Trespasses And Sins!”
 - So - Even Though There Was:
 - Physical Life In Your Body:
 - There Was Spiritual Death:
 - In Your Soul!
 - And You Were Completely Separated:
 - From God!
 - But This Is What God Changes Through The Gospel!
 - So That Now - If You Are Trusting In Jesus Christ & His Death On The Cross:
 - There Is A Complete Separation From Sin!
 - Before You Were Saved:
 - You Were Dead ***In*** Your Sin!
 - But - Now That You Are Saved:
 - You Are Dead ***To*** Your Sin!
 - In Romans 6:2 - Paul Asks:
 - “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”
 - Peter Also Writes - In 1 Peter 2:24:
 - “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed!”
 - And This Is A Spiritual Reality:
 - In Your Life As A Christian!
 - But How Does This Reality Work Itself Out In Your Every-Day Life?
 - As You Struggle With That Un-Holy Trinity Of The World, Your Flesh, & The Devil?
 - Well - You Also Need To Believe That:
 - There Is A Complete Separation From The World!
 - In The Words Of Paul:
 - 2:20 - You Are ***“Dead With Christ From The Rudiments Of The World!”***
 - Or - The Basic Elements & Principles That Govern This Old & Fallen World!
 - Back In 2:8 - Paul Already Brought This Up:
 - When He Warned Us:
 - “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ!”
 - You See - Christians Can Still Be Tempted:
 - To Live For Christ:
 - In A Worldly Way!

- That Is - You Try To Use The Methods Of This World To Enhance:
 - Your Worship Of God!
 - Your Walk With God!
 - And Even Your Work For God!
- And What Are These “Rudiments Of The World?”
 - I Believe They Can Be Summed Up For Us:
 - In James 3:15 - Where James Describes Worldly Wisdom As - “Earthly, Sensual, Devilish!”
 - This Means That You Are Living:
 - A Secular Life!
 - Everything Is “Earthly!”
 - You Focus On Earthly Things!
 - And You Try To Use Earthly, Physical Methods To Achieve Spiritual Results!
 - IE: Monks / Nuns / Monasteries / Convents**
 - This Means That You Are Living:
 - A Selfish Life!
 - Everything Is “Sensual!”
 - You Focus On Your Self & Your Own Flesh!
 - The Basis Of Your Belief Is If Something Sounds Good Or Seems Right To You!
 - This Means That You Are Living:
 - A Sinful Life!
 - It Is “Devilish!”
 - Instead Of Surrendering Yourself To The Work Of The Holy Spirit, You Surrender To The Lusts Of Your Eyes, The Lusts Of Your Flesh, And The Pride Of Your Life!
- You See - This Is How The World Lives & Operates!
 - This Is How You Lived & Operated:
 - Apart From Christ!
 - It Is All You Knew & Loved & Pursued!
 - And So - It Is Still Easy:
 - To Be Lured Back Into This Kind Of Thinking & Living:
 - Even In Your Christian Life!
- And This Is Why - This Morning - You Need To:
 - Remember & Believe In - This Gospel Truth!
 - This Gospel Reality - 2:20 - You Are Now:
 - “Dead With Christ From The Rudiments Of The World!”
 - You Really Are:
 - A “New Creature – Creation” In Jesus Christ!
 - Your Life Really Is:
 - And Now - Can Be:
 - Different!
 - You Are No Longer Bound:
 - To This World’s Way Of Doing Things:
 - When It Comes To Your Walk With The Lord!
 - And This Is Why - Paul Then Describes:

2. ***The Relevance Of Your Death With Christ!***

- And He Does So By Asking A Very Pointed Question In:
 - 2:20b-22 - “Wherefore if – SINCE – ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, / (Touch not; taste not; handle not; / Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?”
 - Paul Is Calling On You To Think:
 - About What It Means When You Try:
 - To Walk With Christ In A Worldly Way – According To What Is “Earthly & Sensual & Devilish!”
 - Because- When You Do:
 - You Are Denying Some Things:

- That God Himself Has Given To You:
 - In & Through Christ!
 - So - He Asks:
- Are You Denying The Purpose Of God:
 - For You? And Do You Remember What His Purpose Was?
 - To Free You:
 - From The “Handwriting Of Ordinances” That Were Against You!
 - We Saw This Back In 2:14 - “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross!”
 - So Then - Paul Asks:
 - “Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?”
 - So - If You Are Still Living Your Christian Life:
 - As If You Are Still “Living In The World” And Not “Dead To This World”:
 - Then You Are Still “Subject To” & Submitting Yourself To:
 - Those Same Ordinances From Which Jesus Came To Free You!
 - So - Paul Points Us Back:
 - To Those Old Chains - In 2:16-19:
 - The Chains Of:
 - Jewish Religiosity & Worldly Philosophy!
 - You Need To Remember That:
 - They Will Never Help You Grow In Your Relationship With God!
 - They Will Never Help You Grow In Your Holiness & Service Before The Lord!
 - You Need To Remember God’s Purpose For You!
 - To Bring You To True Spiritual Freedom!
 - So That You Can Love God & Live For Him:
 - ***From Your Heart!***
 - And All Those Old Rules & Regulations:
 - Were Only For Those Who Were:
 - Alive To This Old World!
 - Often To Restrain Them & To Retrain Them! “Schoolmaster!”
 - But Now - You Are Dead To Them:
 - Because You Are “Dead With Christ!”
 - Paul Also Asks:
- Are You Denying The Provision Of God?
 - In 2:21 - Paul Describes What The Decrees Were Like:
 - That Those Christians Were Letting Be Imposed Upon Them!
 - “Touch not; taste not; handle not!”
 - With This Mantra - The False Teachers:
 - Reduced The Christian Life:
 - To A Series Of More & More Rules & Regulations - Designed To Restrict The Use Of Much Of What God Provided For Our Own Health & Strength!
 - Many Of These Rules Probably Carried Over From The Old Testament Jewish Dietary Laws! But Others Came From The Different Philosophies Surrounding Them At That Time!
 - But No Matter Where The Rules Came From - You Deny God’s Provision:
 - By Focusing On The External:
 - And Not On The Internal – The Heart!
 - They Would Say - “Touch not; taste not; handle not!”
 - Thinking This Would Help Them Grow As Christians!
 - But The Gospel Changes The Sphere Of The Law!
 - It’s Restraint Is No Longer From Without:
 - It’s From Within!
 - And It’s No Longer Just A List Of Negatives:
 - It’s A Positive - Galatians 5:14 - “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself!”
 - You See - Man-Made Negatives:
 - Will Never Make A Positive - In Your Relationship With God! Also - You Deny God’s

- Provision:
 - By Forgetting About The Nature:
 - Of These Things!
 - 2:22a - “Which all are to perish with the using!”
 - God Designed The Food That Was Being Restricted By The False Teachers To Be Used:
 - And Eaten In A Way To Benefit & To Bless His People!
 - We Must Not Forget That - 1 Timothy 6:17 - “God – giveth us richly all things to enjoy!”
 - But - What Was Happening?
 - As John Eadie Once Wrote - A Strange Belief - That - “What Is Physically Nutritious May Be Spiritually Poisonous; And What Gives Strength To The Body May Send Leanness To The Soul!”
 - Now - We May Not Have The Same Problems With Food!
 - But - How Many Times To We Try To Solve:
 - A Spiritual Problem:
 - With A Physical Solution?
 - Our Focus Needs To Be:
 - On The Internal - On The Heart!
 - And We Must Not Forget:
 - God’s Provision & Grace To Free Us In Our Service For Him!
 - Paul Also Asks:
 - Are You Denying The Power – And Authority – Of God?
 - Because - The Source Of These External Rules & Regulations Were - 2:22 - “After the commandments and doctrines of men!”
 - You Need To Beware Of:
 - The Injunctions & The Instructions:
 - That Are “Of Men” & Not “Of God!”
 - When You Give Men The Power & Authority:
 - Over Your Life - That Belongs Only To God:
 - And His Word - Then You Are Denying **His** Power & Authority Over Your Life!
 - But - When You Believe That You Are “Dead With Christ!”
 - The Power & The Provision & The Purpose Of God:
 - Will Be Your Focus:
 - As You Seek To Love Him & Live For Him - From Your Heart!
 - But Then - Paul Also Shares:

3. ***The Result Of Your Death With Christ!***

- You Will Be Able To See - As Paul Did & Explains:
 - The True Nature Of All The “Commandments & Doctrines Of Men” - 2:23 - “Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh!”
 - You Can Now See:
- Their Disguise!
 - They Make A “Shew Of Wisdom!”
 - That Is - The Reputation Of Worldly Philosophy:
 - Is That It Sounds Good To Our Ears!
 - Or That It Seems Right To Our Minds!
 - Many Of These Worldly Philosophies:
 - Are Very Convincing!
 - And That’s What Makes Them So Dangerous!
 - Because They Often Appeal To Our Natural Minds & Our Natural Senses!
 - But Instead - We Can Also Now See:
 - Their Display!
 - They Make A Show Of Wisdom:
 - In Their Public Displays:
 - Of Devotion - Pretending To Worship The Lord!
 - But Really - What Is Its True Nature?
 - It Is “Will Worship!”

- **IE:** Like The OT Priests - Nadab & Abihu - Who “Offered Strange Fire Before The Lord!” (Leviticus 10:1)
- Any Kind Of Worship That Is Not According To God’s Will & Standards:
 - Is A Redefining Of Worship According To Your Own Will! And It Cannot Please The Lord! **IE:** Church In NYC - Ballet Offertory - Also:
- They Make A Show Of Wisdom:
 - In Their Personal Displays:
 - Of Degradation - Pretending To Be Humble & Meek Before The Lord!
 - But Really - What Is Its True Nature?
 - It Is A “Voluntary Humility” (2:18) - Which Is A False Humility!
 - **IE:** Like Fasting - Matthew 6:16 - “Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward!”
 - Need To Remember:
 - 1 Samuel 16:7 - “For the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart!” Also:
- They Make A Show Of Wisdom:
 - In Their Private Displays:
 - Of Discipline - Believing That “Neglecting” Or Even “Harming” One’s Body - Can Help Their Soul!
- A Person May Feel The Need:
 - To Worship The Lord & To Walk With The Lord:
 - But - These Ways Are Not God’s Ways!
 - And This Is Why Paul Also Describes:
- Their Danger!
 - 2:23b - “Not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh!”
 - This Means That There Is No Value:
 - To These External Attempts:
 - To Effect Internal Change!
 - **IE:** It’s Like Trying To Change A Vicious Dog By Just Muzzling Its Mouth! It Doesn’t Change Its Nature! Or Its Like Trying To Change A Thief By Cutting Of His Hands! It Doesn’t Change His Heart!
 - In Fact - These External “Solutions” Do Not Work For Our Internal “Problems!”
 - They Never Have & They Never Will!
 - **IE:** Think About Adam & Eve In The Garden Of Eden - After They Sinned & Were Ashamed Of Their Nakedness - What Did They Do? They Tried To Solve Their Spiritual Problem With A Physical Solution! They Covered Themselves With Fig Leaves - When Only A Sacrifice Would Do! A Sacrifice That God Himself Provided!
 - Now - How Do You:
 - Try To Solve Your Spiritual Problems?
 - Dealing With Your Own Temptations & Sins?
 - How Do You Attempt To:
 - Appease Or To Please The Lord?
 - You Need To Remember:
 - The Truth About These Worldly Solutions!
 - They Are Dangerous!
 - Because - Even Though They Have An Appearance Of Wisdom:
 - Yet - They Only Feed Your Flesh & Your Pride!

Conclusion:

1. You See - When You Were Saved:
 - All You Needed Was:
 - Christ & His Gospel!
 - You Needed To Believe:
 - That Jesus Died On The Cross:
 - For Your Sin!
2. But What About Your Life Now:
 - As A Christian?
 - Paul Asks This Question In Galatians 3:3:

- “Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

- This Means That:

- To Worship The Lord:

- As You Should!

- To Walk With The Lord:

- As You Should! And:

- To Work For The Lord:

- As You Should!

- All You Need Still:

- Is Christ & His Gospel!

- You Need To Believe:

- Not Only That Jesus Died For You:

- But That ***You Died With Christ!***

- “From The Rudiments Of This World!”

3. So Now - You Are Free:

- From The World’s Philosophies & Methods:

- As You Love & Live For The Lord:

- From Your Heart!

- And It Is Belief In This Truth:

- That Will Help You Receive:

- Greater Growth & Greater Victory:

- In Your Walk With God!

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