

THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST

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Barry Black

Colossians 2:6-18

Today we are going to continue our study of Colossians that was started last week by Pastor Rolly. And, for today, we will cover 'The Sufficiency of Christ' from Colossians, Chapter 2, verses 6-18. Please go to Colossians Chapter 2, verse 6-18, and read with me as I take you thru the verses one at a time.

- ⁶ As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:
⁷ Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.
⁸ 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.
⁹ For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
¹⁰ And ye are complete in him [remember what the Lord said when he died on the cross - "It is Finished." Complete;] which is the head of all principality and power:
¹¹ In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:
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.
¹³ And you, [Point to your neighbor and say: YOU] being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you ALL [NOT SOME; NOT MANY; NOT A FEW – BUT ALL] trespasses;
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;
¹⁵ And having spoiled principalities and powers [who are the Principalities and Powers – Satan], he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it [How did He TRIUMPH? By going to Hell and dragging Paradise to Heaven with Him. And He preached to the captives who were there and had died before the flood, and He did it triumphantly].
¹⁶ Let no man [NO MAN!] therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days:
¹⁷ Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.
¹⁸ Let no man beguile you [TRICK OR DECEIVE SOMEONE] of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,"

There is a lot of revelation in this passage and we are going to lay the groundwork for this as we dig deeper into the word..... BUT FIRST – WE WILL PRAY;

Slide 2: This is our Theme Verse that we will use as we go through this study and which we have already mentioned. "8 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.” And we will go thru this to explain what is going on here with these vain traditions.....

But first, I want to show you the definition of Sufficiency: Slide 3: ‘Sufficiency: Definition: The Condition or quality of being adequate – of meeting the need.’

And Christ met the need when he died on the cross for your sins so I want to share a story with you; First there was this Jewish rabbinical teacher who was teaching his student and he comes to him and explains, [as he is going thru Isaiah 53] - “how the Lord was broken, how he was wounded for our transgressions, how he was bruised for our iniquities: how the chastisement of our peace [was] upon him; and how, with his stripes, we are healed.” And the teacher asks his student; Do you know what the word Asham means? The student answers, No. And the teacher tells him, “Well it means, in Hebrew – A guilt offering;” So the student answers, “So Christ was our guilt offering?” The teacher responds; “Yes, he was our guilt offering but it also has another meaning, it also means it IS the GUILT itself; So the Asham can also not just be the guilt offering but it can become “the guilt” itself! And that is exactly what the Lord became for us - The Asham – the guilt offering, yes, - but He also became the guilt – our guilt – as He took on every sin that we had ever done, would ever do, and bore this guilt as He died on the cross for us. And as He died with our guilt, our guilt was buried with Him once and forever.”

As we begin I want to take you on a short trip thru history to show you ‘in the Spirit’ what is going on;

1st: Jesus has begun His Church – thru the Great Commission, He has set the Apostles on the road towards spreading the gospel to the Jewish people.

2nd : He has taken the rebel – Paul, and after knocking him off his horse, Blinding him, and restoring his sight, Jesus has set him on a different course to accomplish a mission that probably no other man could take on AT THIS TIME – that of taking the Gospel to the Gentiles!

Now why is this so? I could go down a lot of rabbit trails and take you thru Romans 11 [which is another message unto itself] but all I really need to say is this: God had a plan – to take the message to the Jews first and – in time – to the Gentiles; But, since the Jews did not want to receive [Say; “they did not want it”]; God decided to take the message to the Gentiles and MAKE THEM JEALOUS – Then – Take it to the Jews – which is why we have the seasons which are appointed now as the age of the Gentiles; And that is the age that we are in at this time. The Age of The Gentiles. And then – after this age is closed... God will turn His attention to the Jews and “ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED!”

So – Paul – is planting churches and, when not planting churches himself, he is planting his assistants in places to develop churches and then going about the job of nurturing them – bringing them up like babes to maturity where they can begin to develop fully. Barnabas; Timothy, and Ephras – who developed the church at Colossae.

Now, the Church of Colossae was located 120 miles east of Ephesus in the Lycus River Valley in ancient Phrygia, part of the Roman territory of Asia Minor.

It was one of THREE cities in the area (the other two being Laodicea and Hierapolis), resting at the foot of Mount Cadmus. It's biblical significance lies in the fact that the book of Colossians was addressed to the church here (Col 1:2) and that Philemon, who also wrote a book of the Bible, lived in this city.

Paul's entire ministry is forged in conflict. In Acts - Luke tells us that Paul and his companions are being opposed in almost every city, many times being attacked and chased out. Who is opposing Paul? SATAN: He is doing all he can to undermine each and every church – each and every believer – and each and every ministry.

..... Just as He does TODAY!

In Acts 15:1-2, and 5. There are Jews, some Pharisees who have believed, demanding that the Gentiles be circumcised and obey the Laws of Moses. Paul rejects this position and continues to reach Gentiles, without pushing the Law on them. For the remainder of the Acts record, he is chased, beaten, and slandered by Jews. Luke seems to describe these merely as Jews, which leads the casual reader to assume they are persecuting Paul in the same manner as he himself had done as Saul of Tarsus. But, upon further study, we see that he describes his primary opposers as false brothers.

When Paul writes his letter to the Church of Rome, Paul writes his letter to make sure his ideas are clearly presented to the Romans. In Romans 14:14-23, Paul talks about his stance on unclean meat, one of the issues where he is not in agreement with the decision of the Jerusalem Council. [The Council had brought up issues that needed to be clarified and they would rule on what rules needed to be applied to the Gentiles to admit them into the Messianic congregation.]

This account in Acts seems to indicate that the primitive church was not effectively fulfilling the Great Commission until the apostle Paul came on the scene. And in fact, by the middle of the second century the Christian Church was primarily Gentile.

So what is going on? Well, let's go back to the Garden of Eden; Here, Satan persuaded Adam and Eve to believe that what was false was actually true — that human beings are better off living by their own rules (Gen. 3).

He continues this today, trying to persuade Christians with arguments that sound good at first, but are in reality lies from the pit of Hell.

This was going on when Paul wrote to the Colossians, as he states his reason for writing was to keep his audience from falling for “plausible arguments” (Col. 2:4). “The most dangerous false teachings are those that seem plausible, not outright fallacies. It may be tempting to think Christ’s work on our behalf is only needed to get us started in our quest for godliness, that we must move on to a new doctrine, person, or practice to reach advanced spirituality.”

For instance, as a good example: Here is the question? True or False; If you Know the Word of God – this will get you saved and make you a better Disciple of Christ? FALSE: Knowing the Word of God will not save you and while it may help you discern how to be a better Christian, it is only going to help you if you receive guidance and discernment from the Holy Spirit for wisdom – insight – and begin to live out the Word in your life! It is no different than taking a ride in a bus or a cab thinking that it will help you become a Cab or a Bus;

Paul is facing a group called the GNOSTICS - "Gnostic" comes from the Greek word gnosis, meaning knowledge. It was around early, for Paul refers to the Gnostics as those who believed that salvation was achieved and reserved for the intellectually superior. As an adherent of a gnostic school, you would learn its teachings about the spiritual world and learn to reject the physical world (1 Tim. 6:20). Paul’s answer to this “plausible” argument, however, is a resounding no!

John Calvin writes, “Those who are not satisfied with Christ are exposed to all fallacies and deceptions.”

Now Paul, who did not found the church at Colassae, connected with the people of Colassae.

Slide 4 ⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces^[a] of this world rather than on Christ.” [Colossians 2:8]

¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. [1 Colossians 2:13-14]

He said: "Do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration, or a Sabbath day." ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. ¹⁸ Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; as they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind.¹⁹ They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

²⁰ Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: ?

²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? ²² These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings."

So what we are talking about here is Getting into the Word of God – Why it is so vital and necessary that you get a good Bible and READ IT DAILY! Know the truth and it WILL SET YOU FREE!

²³ Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence." [1 Colossians 2:23]

[Satan's tactic – Separate and keep others from attaining based on knowledge] But what is THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE that he doesn't want you to know?

Slide 5: Only that Christ came and died for your sins and that HE and He alone can save you!

Paul was well aware of the tide of false doctrine being promoted by society, and he was committed to challenging this wave of heresy with biblical truth.

We are the same today.... Our world is not that much different than the world in which Paul lived and ministered. Religious spirits reign supreme giving one the idea that this one, not that one, are entitled to receive from the Master's Table; And then – only this one is really in the know; spiritual or up to speed – For instance, Who can find a chapter in the Bible faster than another/ Sword Drills, etc. That is really going to help you in Heaven someday isn't it?

People are religious beings searching for meaning and a sense of purpose. They will worship something, even if it is their own knowledge and abilities. You need to Look Out!

Modern doctrines may have a hint of truth, but at their core, they are corrupt and false.

We ought to rejoice that we were presented **genuine Truth in Christ. He alone is the source of salvation**! Apart from Him, man remains lost and condemned before God!

Paul presents Christ as the only source of truth and hope. Regardless of what men have been taught, Jesus alone can provide what all stand in need of. The redeemed in Christ have no need to look to another. So let's examine the provisions afforded the believer in salvation as we consider:

The Sufficiency of Christ.

Slide 6: I. We have Certainty in Christ (8-9) – The fundamentals of Christian faith were being challenged on many fronts, and Paul sought to comfort the believer concerning their faith. Although many refuted the teaching of the Gospel, Paul knew all believers could possess absolute certainty in Christ.

And here again, is that word of caution in verse (8) – “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.”

As Paul begins to address His sufficiency, he offers a word of caution to Colossae. The doctrines of men were varied, but they were all dangerous and damaging. He warned them not to be spoiled by such doctrine. This has the idea of “leading off as prey, as if to carry away captive, to rob or kidnap.” He revealed that the doctrines of men would rob believers of the abundant riches available in Christ. He addressed four specific doctrines we are to guard against.

Philosophy – Human reasoning, intellectualism. A system of thought or discipline.

Vain Deceit – Lies, deceit, and intellectual fraud taught through subtlety.

Tradition of Men – This deals with the way men think when they ignore God and His purpose for life. The Pharisees and legalists were a continual presence surrounding Paul. Everywhere he went, he found tradition being held in higher regard than divine truth.

And the Rudiments of the World – It is generally agreed this speaks of the base elements of the world: earth, water, wind, and fire.

Some assume Paul spoke of a view of theology that never embraced the profound truths of the Gospel and the divine plan of God for humanity. Others believe this speaks of worshiping the creation more than the Creator. Both were prevalent then and now, and both are in error. While the Old Testament revealed Christ through types and pictures, now we have the risen Christ. Many today continue to worship

the stars and planets, placing more emphasis on them than the Lord who created them.

A Word of Confirmation (9) – “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”

Paul had warned of the doctrines of men that are not in Christ, and here he proclaims the abundance through Christ. The world looked to the philosophies and traditions of men, worshiping philosophy and planets, but they had received truth. They had been born again in Christ, made part of His body, in who dwells the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form. There was no need to bother with the deceit of men, they had the assurance of a risen Lord who possesses and portrays the very essence of God.

Christ was not a created being who obtained greatness among men; He came as God robed in flesh, fully God and fully man, offering His body a sacrifice for sin, redeeming us from condemnation and placing us in the family of God. He is not merely a legend passed down through tradition and folk lore. We need not look to or consider another. We have received absolute truth in Christ, the embodiment of God.

Slide 7: We have Our Completeness in Christ (10-12) – Although the philosophies of men were ever changing, the believer had received hope, confidence, and assurance that it never would change. There is no worry of the next “best” thing that might come along. We need not fear our Lord being unable to equip or keep us. We are complete in Him. When we consider our completeness in Christ. We see:

The Appropriation (10b) – Paul confirms we are complete in Christ who is the head of all principality and power.

The Gnostics were limited by their wisdom.

The Traditionalists were limited by their ability to keep and honor tradition through religious activities and works.

We are not bound by such restrictions and limitations. We are complete, filled with Christ, who possesses all principality and power.

The word principality simply means “the cause.”
Christ is the Beginning, because He is the cause of creation.

Christ is the Head because He is before all things and by Him were all things created and consist.

He is the Creator and Sustainer.

We are filled with Him. We do not possess the power our Lord possesses, but we have been appropriated in a relationship with Him with the promise of His mighty presence and power in our lives! Our existence and eternal destiny is not limited to the wisdom, ability, or resources of humanity. We are in Christ!

The Circumcision (11) – “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:” Paul speaks of an event the Traditionalists would’ve related to.

In the Old Testament male children were circumcised to identify them with the people of God. This circumcision was performed on the 8th day after birth IAW Jewish Law. What is interesting in this is that scientists have discovered that there are chemicals in our body that coagulate the blood efficiently and that these chemicals do not materialize until the 8th day after birth – so God knew something that would help this process along and, hence, gave this command to Moses for teaching the Israelites. By the removal of the foreskin, the Jewish men were associated with God and His commandments.

Here Paul speaks of the spiritual circumcision of all believers. This was done ‘without hands.’ He doesn’t speak of a physical practice, but the removal of the body of sin by the hand of Christ through a personal relationship with Him. Just as it was in the Old Testament, those who have been spiritually circumcised, having the body of sin removed and cast aside, are now identified with Christ, being made partakers of His glorious inheritance!

Circumcision did not have to be repeated. It was a once and for all event. And that is how it is with our salvation! Once we are identified with Christ, we are identified with Him eternally!

The Resurrection – We are 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.

Here we are reminded of the spiritual resurrection that occurs at salvation. In sin we are dead, separated from God and void of the spirit. Gnostics were always adding things such as baptism, church membership, taking communion etc. to faith in Christ as an essential part towards salvation. But having Christ is all one needs for salvation!

In Christ we are resurrected a new creature, delivered from the condemnation of sin and made alive in the Lord.

Slide 8: Finally, in the remaining portion of this scripture we see that We have Victory thru The Conquest of Christ (13-15) –

Paul addresses the victory all believers experience in Christ. Through Him we are given victory over sin, delivered from the eternal consequences it brings. We experience:

- A. Deliverance from the Penalty of Sin (13) – “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;”

We know that sin is enmity with God. While in sin there can be no fellowship with God and we abide under His wrath. Prior to salvation we are dead in trespasses and sin awaiting the ultimate penalty for that sin, which is eternal death. Sin, when finished, brings forth death. Death is the penalty for sin.

Christ came that we might be reconciled to God and delivered from the penalty of sin. He has forgiven our trespasses, cleansed our sin, and quickened (to make alive) us in Him.

I rejoice to know that I have been delivered from the penalty of sin, eternal death. It has been said, he who is born twice dies once, while those who have only been born once will die twice. In reality, physical death for the believer brings the beginning of real life within the presence of our Lord.

John 5:24 – “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

Slide 9: Deliverance from the Payment for Sin (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;”

Here Paul speaks of the Law of God that reveals His holiness and our guilt. There was no question that we were guilty before God due to our sin. We owed a debt we could not pay. Sin had to be atoned and we had no way of securing atonement within ourselves. There was nothing we could offer, sacrifice, or do to appease the holiness of God. We were declared guilty by the Law of God.

As Christ bore our sin upon the cross, the holiness of God was satisfied and atonement was made. As we come to Christ by faith, the guilt of our past is erased. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to our account. And we are no longer viewed as guilty according to the Law of God, but as righteous through the Son of

God. [What does God say that He will do in Heaven? He will remember our sin no more as it will be as far away as the East is from the West.] Our blessed Lord nailed our sin and condemnation to the cross of Calvary as He bled and died for the sins of the world. And just before He died He said, "It is finished." And He meant it!

Sin bears consequences and the debt of sin must be paid. Christ has made provision for all who come to Him in salvation. Sadly, many remain in their sin and have not accepted the atoning grace of Christ. They remain guilty before God and will one day stand accountable for their sin. What a tragedy this is. Christ has made a way of reconciliation and yet many will not receive His atoning grace by faith.

Deliverance from the Power of Sin (15) – "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Paul reveals here that IAW the victory that was won as Christ bore our sin on the cross and rose again, He spoiled principalities and powers, literally "Stripping them of power and authority."

Paul is speaking of the power of Satan and his evil influences. While in sin, we are dominated by the prince of this world. Our lives are controlled by sin. We are slaves to an evil taskmaster. In salvation we are set free from the power and bondage of sin. That is not to say that we live perfect lives above sin, but that we are no longer bound by sin and Satan. His grip on humanity was broken and defeated publicly as Christ fulfilled the plan of redemption on the cross and rose again in power and great glory. We do not have to live lives being defeated by sin. We have a source of power to overcome the temptations of sin, lusts of the flesh, and fear of death!

In Conclusion: I rejoice to know that my salvation is secure in Christ. I am complete in Him. I am not trusting in vain deceits, philosophies of men, or human ability. I have placed my faith and trust in the eternal, victorious, risen Christ. I have been delivered from the penalty and power of sin. I have been set free from the guilt and condemnation it brings. I can enjoy victory through Christ.

If you have been saved, you ought to rejoice in Christ as well. If not, you remain in your sin and are guilty before God. And you stand accountable for your sin. Why not look to Christ by faith in salvation so that you too can be forgiven, resurrected in Christ, and experience complete victory and abundant life?

Slide 10: Christ Is More Than Sufficient!

So finally, here is the truth: Our eternal salvation and day-to-day existence depends on **Jesus alone**. He is More Than Sufficient.

And these things do not count:

1. Our muddled Philosophy (v. 8)
2. Traditions of Men (v. 16)
3. Mysticism and other (False religious teachings) (v. 18)
4. Legalism - Mainly (Human rules and teachings) (vs. 20-23)

Now in closing; I want you to know how the practice of sacrifice was practiced in the Law of Moses and how it came to pass in Christ sacrificing for us: And this is truly remarkable!

First, the High Priest took two goats – each one identical to the other in color and texture;

He placed them each one by his side and drew lots – each lot has a different Hebrew word inscribed on it - He placed one lot on the head of the goat to his left and the other lot on the head of the goat to his right;

One stone that he drew [lot] identified the goat who would die for the sins of the people; The other stone [lot] identified the goat who would be set free;

So before there would be a sacrifice, there had to be a PRESENTATION of the two goats before the people, for the CHOOSING, FOR THE APPORTIONING OF DESTINIES;

Well, now fast forward to the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ; There had to be two men presented before the people: in order to be chosen for the sacrifice;

Only one could be chosen as the sacrifice; So Messiah had to be one of the two ones presented; And according to the ordinance of Yom Kippur, the other life had to be let go;

So what happened to the other life that was presented that day?

His name was Barabbas and he was let go..... According to the requirements of the ancient ceremony, the goats or lives had to be identical.

You see – Messiah was the Son of God, the Son of The Father..... And do you know what the name of ‘Barabbas’ means ? Barabbas comes from two Hebrew words, Bar which means SON and Abba, which means FATHER; Two lives – each one bears the name of “The Son of The Father”

So, if God were to die in your place..." What would he have to be? He would have to become like you., of flesh and blood, in the likeness of sin, He would become ... your identical."

Can we give a shout to the Lord for His Atoning Sacrifice ?!