

Christ in you...

The message of Colossians



Part 3: "You Are Here"

INTRODUCTION – Getting "Off Track" On Purpose

EXCURSUS: When Is It Appropriate To Divide?

1 Corinthians 1:23; 2:2; 4:6
Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 Timothy 2:5-6

THREE KINDS OF DIVISION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:

- 1) STRATEGIC AND COOPERATIVE
(When Christians have different callings, missions, or styles)
Acts 15:36-41; Galatians 2:9
- 2) CHURCH DISCIPLINE (I.E., SHUNNING, EXCOMMUNICATION, DISFELLOWHIPPING)
(When confronting wilful, ongoing, unrepentant sin in the Church)
Matthew 7:1-5; Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 16:17-19; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 1:18-20; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; Titus 3:10
- 3) COMPLETE REJECTION
(When confronting obvious anti-Christ or anti-Gospel teaching)
Galatians 1:6-9; 1 John 2:22-23; 2 John 1:7-11

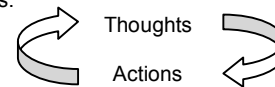
DINE IN – Learning The Text In Its Context

- **CONTEXT:** After painting a poetic picture of the supremacy, divinity, and centrality of Christ, Paul now applies this truth to the lives of his readers. It is as though, after drawing the map of cosmic reality, he presses in a pin that reads "You Are Here."
- **AND YOU:** The first words after the poem – "And you" in the Greek – help to ground the cosmic reality of Christ in the personal story of the readers.
- **ENEMIES:** People who are estranged from God are actually working against God's will for the planet and are therefore his enemies, opposing his purposes. But rather than obliterate his enemies, God wins them over through his sacrificial love, making them his friends.
- **BUT NOW:** Favourite words of Paul (see **Romans 3:21**) to denote the radical transformation from the former way of being (whether pagan or Jewish) to the present. Paul paints a graphic before and after picture.
- **GRACE VS RELIGION:** Paul stresses that God-in-Christ is the one who acts to accomplish everything that religion cannot do. "HE" does the reconciling, not us. He "presents" us "holy" and "without blemish" – all phrases borrowed from the religious language of their day.
- **FREEDOM:** God also makes us "free from accusation" – a legal phrase for the person who has been tried and found not guilty.

- **IF:** "In Paul's theological understanding, divine provision does not preclude human responsibility." (Todd D. Still, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Revised Edition*) Paul seems to teach a form of "Covenantal Nomism" (as popularized by E.P. Sanders) – that God's people are brought into the covenant and saved by grace, but are free to reject the covenant and walk away if they so choose. (**Matthew 24:13**)
- **FAITH:** Personal trust and the object/content of that trust.
- **ESTABLISHED:** Like the foundation of a building.
- **FIRM:** The adjective comes from the verb "to sit".
- **NOT MOVED:** Suggests that there are teachings and philosophies that can cause spiritual drift if entertained.
- **THE GOSPEL:** Jesus is Lord. The Good News message that God became one of us to SHOW us his love, SAVE us from sin, and SHUT DOWN religion.
- **SERVANT:** Paul viewed himself as a servant of God (**2 Corinthians 6:4**), the New Covenant (**2 Corinthians 3:6**), and the church (**Colossians 1:25**) as well as the Gospel.

TAKE OUT – Applying The Text To Our Context

TAKE OUT #1: Our thoughts effect our actions AND our actions effect our thoughts. We experience personal change when we embrace who we truly are and live accordingly. Work for change on both fronts.



TAKE OUT #2: With apologies to our Calvinist friends, we cannot escape the biblical pattern of warning that our salvation, though a free gift of grace, depends upon us receiving it and living it out.

TAKE OUT #3: As Christ-followers our minds should be filled with Christ AND the implications of Christ for our lives. Rich Christocentric theology should always lead to the "so what" question. Truth is meant to be applied, not just pondered. In what ways and for what reasons could it be accurately said of you that, like Paul, you are a servant of the Gospel?

CONCLUSION – Radical Separation From Temptation

Matthew 18:7-9

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP...

1. After briefly reviewing this week's message, share one thing that most challenged, puzzled, or encouraged you.

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

2. Let's work together to wrap our minds around the biblical concept of "Church Discipline". Read through each of the passages listed in the introduction of your notes on the second kind of biblical division, from multiple translations if time permits. For each passage, list as many principles as you can mine out of the text on this topic. At the end of the process, try to articulate a clear statement about the motivation and methodology, benefits and potential pitfalls, of practicing church discipline.

SO WHAT?...

3. Re-read **Galatians 6:1-2**. Given the context, what would it look like for your Home Church to do a better job at carrying one another's burdens? Talk about practical steps you can take toward this vision of biblical community.

Bruxy Cavey @ THE MEETING HOUSE – Sunday, February 24, 2008