

Colossians Sermon Illustrations 2

COLOSSIANS SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS, DEVOTIONALS AND COMMENTARY

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COLOSSIANS 2

COLOSSIANS 2:5

HOW TO ESCAPE DECEPTION

I am...rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

Deception has always been part of military strategy. The British put it to good use during World War II in North Africa against German forces led by General Erwin Rommel. They constructed pasteboard look-alikes of tanks and airplanes to deceive the Germans. From the air this fake equipment looked real enough to fool reconnaissance personnel, and it could be easily moved.

Satan, whom Jesus referred to as "the ruler of this world" (John 16:11), is a master deceiver. He was the driving force behind the teachers who were trying to persuade the Colossians to accept heresy as truth (Col 2:4-note, Col 2:8-note).

Followers of Christ today are in a similar battle. How do we defend ourselves against deceivers? Paul used military terms in his comments to the Colossians that can help us to know what to do. First, he commended them for their "good order," which refers to being battle-ready, disciplined soldiers. Second, he spoke of the "steadfastness" of their faith in Christ, which refers to having a solid front. They had an unshaken commitment to their Lord and the advance of His kingdom.

Don't be fooled by Satan's lies. Know the truth of God's Word, and be battle-ready through a disciplined life and an unswerving commitment to Jesus Christ. -- David C. Egner

The shield of faith protects us
From Satan's fiery darts;
And he cannot deceive us
With God's Word in our hearts. --Sper

God's truth is the best protection against Satan's lies.

Colossians 1:27-2:3

Hidden Treasure

A British treasure hunter discovered a huge stash of Roman coins buried in a field in southwest England. Using a metal detector, Dave Crisp located a large pot holding 52,000 coins. These ancient silver and bronze coins, which date from the third century AD and weigh more than 350 pounds, are valued at \$5 million.

While Crisp's treasure may cause us to dream about somehow finding similar riches, we as Christians should be on a different kind of treasure hunt. What we seek does not consist of silver and gold. Rather our quest is to gather the precious gems of insight so that we might gain the "full assurance of understanding . . . , both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:2-3). The hidden treasure of knowing the Lord more completely is found in the Bible. The psalmist said, "I rejoice at Your Word as one who finds great treasure" (Ps. 119:162).

If we read the Word of God hurriedly or carelessly, we will miss its deep insights. These truths must be sought earnestly with all the attention of someone seeking hidden treasure.

Are you eager to find the treasures stored in Scripture? Start digging!

When reading God's Word, take special care,

To find the rich treasures hidden there;

Give thought to each line, each precept hear,

Then practice it well with godly fear. —Anon.

The treasures of truth in God's Word are best mined with the spade of meditation.

COLOSSIANS 2:6

August 25, 2003

CHRIST-CENTERED FAITH

READ: Colossians 2:1-10

Some Christians try to live from one dramatic mountaintop experience to another. Their relationship with the Lord is based on their feelings at the moment. They go from Bible conferences to seminars to Bible studies, trying to maintain an emotional high.

Author Creath Davis, referring to his early Christian life, wrote, "I felt that if something spectacular was not transpiring, my faith was weakening. As a result, I missed most of what was going on in the valleys, waiting to get back to the mountain."

What's an effective antidote for a feelings-centered faith? According to the apostle Paul in Colossians 2, being Christ-centered is the answer. Having received Christ Jesus by faith, we are instructed to continue to "walk in Him" by faith (Col 2:6-note) through both the highs and lows of life. By walking in close fellowship with Him each day, we become "rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith" (Col 2:7-note). We grow steadily into maturity as we focus on Christ and what He has done for us, and not on our feelings.

Mountaintop experiences can be beneficial, but nothing is more profitable than an ongoing, Christ-centered life of faith. —Joanie Yoder

With faith in Christ we walk each day,
Accepting all that comes our way;
So let us view each task at hand
As being His divine command. —D. De Haan

True faith needs no feelings to rest upon

COLOSSIANS 2:6

F B Meyer - Our Daily Homily

When we were first brought to Jesus, we received Him into our hearts by faith. Throwing open the door, we bade Him be welcome; and He came in never to depart again. Though he was viewless as the wind, and silent as light, He came. And there was a perfume as of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; like that which fills the ivory palaces of eternity.

Now the apostle says that all our after Christian life is to be lived on the same principle. The holy life is not an attainment, but an attitude. Holiness is not an acquirement of which we may make a boast, but an openness of soul towards the Lord Jesus, as of a

window unshuttered and uncurtained to the light. The believer is never independent of Jesus; but at every moment he is receiving out of his fulness, and grace upon grace. He does not receive his qualities and attributes as things apart from the Lord Jesus; but receiving Him, he obtains them. The holy man is he who has learned the art of receiving Jesus; the holier, who has a greater capacity, through humility and faith; the holiest, he who can receive most of the life of the Son of God.

Our daily life is here compared to a walk. We cannot choose it. There is no alternative but to take what God has marked out for you; though you may choose your atmosphere, or, to use a modern word, your environment. Every step may be taken in Christ; rooted in Him as a tree in rich soil; builded up as a house on a rock; inhaling his very breath as the life of life. And whatever the need may be which the exigencies of the path suggest, there is always an abundant supply in the Lord Jesus, in whom all treasures are hid. He teaches us that we may know; He indwells that we may be.

COLOSSIANS 2:6

December 6, 1995

LEARNING TO WALK

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him. --Colossians 2:6

Walking is just one step away from falling. That's why venturing out on two unsteady legs can be frightening to a very young child. Yet children keep at it until walking becomes second nature.

This is similar to learning to "walk" as a Christian. We put our faith into practice one step at a time. Pastor and author F. B. Meyer explains, "We received Jesus into our hearts by faith. . . . In the same manner we must live always and everywhere, receiving from Him, by faith, grace upon grace, and allowing what He works in to work out in all manner of godliness, tenderness, and Christlikeness. This practice of looking to Jesus for grace in every circumstance of life tends to become more and more habitual."

Paul urged believers to live by faith so they would become firmly established in their walk with Christ (Col. 2:6,7-note). We do that by focusing our thoughts on Him: what He has done, what He is doing now, and what He will do for us. We take a risk by depending completely on Him, obeying His commands, and putting His teaching into practice.

Walking with Christ may sometimes be frightening, but it is the only way to make progress in our spiritual development. Are you walking with Him today? --D J De Haan

It is our Father's will,
And precious in His sight,
That Christians learn to walk
In wisdom, love, and light. --Hess

You cannot run the race until you learn to walk.

COLOSSIANS 2:6

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Accepting all that comes our way;
So let us view each task at hand

True faith needs no feelings to rest upon.

COLOSSIANS 2:6-7

READ: Colossians 2:6-12

MY sixteen-month-old granddaughter and I were walking along the wide concrete channel in Muskegon, Michigan. I was trying to hurry, but Kelsey was not. She had seen a six inch-high ledge that ran the length of the walkway. Slowly and carefully she climbed on top of the ledge.

After standing there triumphantly for a moment, she cautiously stepped back down. It was quite an accomplishment for a little tyke. Then, perhaps to convince herself that she had mastered the skill, she tried it again. A few feet farther down the walk, she climbed back onto the ledge. I waited for her each time because I knew this was an important phase of her learning.

I also realized that I had something to learn from her.

Scripture portrays the Christian life as a process of growth in which we advance from one stage to the next: from spiritual infancy to maturity; from milk to strong meat; from being rooted in Christ to being firmly established. We may want to be grown up all at once, but we must learn to take one step at a time. That's how spiritual growth occurs.

Like Kelsey, I need to be sure I've mastered one discipline before proceeding to one that is more advanced. Allowing spiritual growth to occur one step at a time will keep me from becoming discouraged in my climb to maturity.—D C Egnor

COLOSSIANS 2:6

WALKING WITH JESUS

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him."—Col 2:6-note.

THE DAILY walk of the Christian soul is so absolutely important because it is our witness to the world. Our character, as exemplified in our behaviour, is the world's only Bible and sermon (2Cor 3:2,3). Let us learn to walk so as to please God, and to bless mankind. To walk is at first a Matter of considering every little step, but afterwards it becomes the habit of the soul (Col 1:10-note).

We received Jesus into our hearts by faith. He entered through the open door and became our Lord and Master. In the same manner we must live always and everywhere, receiving from Him, by faith, grace upon grace, and allowing what He works in to work out in all manner of godliness, tenderness, and Christlikeness. This practice of looking to Jesus for grace in every circumstance of life tends to become more and more habitual--and this is what the Apostle means when he says, "Rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith."

But such a walk is only possible when we have learned to "crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal 5:24-note). The flesh is the assertion of our self-life, whether in lesser or grosser forms, but whenever self intrudes it exercises a baleful influence on our behaviour and Conversation. Just as the iron of the steamer will deflect the needle of the compass, so the intrusion of our self-life will act as a drag upon our character and walk.

How can we crucify the flesh? Only by allowing the Holy Spirit to have supreme control. He makes the Cross every day dearer and more effective. He will conquer evil habits in us and for us, while we stand by as more than conquerors through His grace. If we will be led by Him, there will not only be deliverance from the self-life, but He will produce in us the fruit of holy living which will please God and refresh men.

PRAYER - Let Thy Holy Spirit be continually with us, and may we feel the powerful effects of Thy Divine Grace constantly directing and supporting our steps. AMEN. F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk.

COLOSSIANS 2:6-7

January 9, 2003

FINDING THE TRUTH

How would you answer the following questions:

1. Did Jesus ever sin?
2. Was Jesus resurrected?

3. Do all religions teach the same basic ideas?

According to George Barna and Mark Hatch in their book *Boiling Point*, many people who call themselves Christians have a hard time with questions like these. When Barna and Hatch surveyed professing believers, one-fourth said Jesus committed sins, one-third said He did not rise from the dead, and one-third said all religions are basically the same.

These are troubling statistics, for they reveal a serious lack of biblical understanding. The answers to the questions above are concepts that are clearly defined in Scripture and are foundational to the truth of the gospel.

So, what can we do to make sure that we are "established in the faith"? (Colossians 2:7). First, we must dedicate ourselves to read and study the Bible. Second, we should seek the help of godly teachers and dependable resources. Third, we must ask God to lead us to truth and to keep us from error.

As God's people, we must love the truth, look for the truth, and live by the truth. —Dave Branon

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Jesus didn't sin: 2Cor 5:21; Heb 4:15-note; 1Pe 1:19-note; 1Pe 2:22-note.

Jesus was resurrected: John 20:21; 1Cor. 15:1-20.

Jesus is the only way to God: John 14:6; Acts 4:12.

Truth is not determined by how many people believe it.

COLOSSIANS 2:7

GRATITUDE OR GRUMBLING

Imagine being given a bowl of sand containing tiny particles of iron, and you are told to remove the iron from the sand. You have two choices. You can pull your fingers through the sand, searching for specks of iron but finding very few. Or you can pull a magnet through the sand and watch it attract countless bits of iron.

Like the fingers in the sand, the grumbling heart finds very few mercies. But as the grateful heart moves through life, it finds countless blessings, just as the magnet finds iron.

Of all the choices we make in life, few affect us more powerfully than our choice between gratitude and grumbling. An honest look at our lives will reveal which choice we have made. If it's grumbling, we probably see few blessings. If it's gratitude, we not only find innumerable blessings—they seem to find us!

Paul taught that a heart overflowing with thankfulness comes from being grounded in faith (Colossians 2:7-note). In Philippians, he pled with the believers, even repeating himself: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" (Php 4:4-note).

Which choice have you made? Grumbling or gratitude? Grumbling overlooks blessings, but gratitude finds blessings everywhere—even in dry, sandy places! —J E Yoder

A grumbling mood of discontent
Gives way to thankfulness
When we consider all God's gifts
And all that we possess. —Sper

With a little practice, anyone can master the art of thankfulness.

COLOSSIANS 2:1-8

KILLED BY IMPROVEMENTS

April 25, 1998

I wonder what the apostle Paul would say if he were to visit our churches today. What a beehive of activity! Committees, programs, entertainment without end. But worship is often downplayed, services are cut back, prayer meetings are eliminated. Some call these improvements, but are they really changes for the better?

There's a story about a woman who became seriously ill and was taken to the hospital. In the evening her husband asked how she was doing, and he was told that she was improving. For several days her doctor gave the same report. Then one day she

unexpectedly died. When the man saw the doctor, he asked, "Well, what did she die of-- improvements?"

I know of a church that died of "improvements." The first was to hire a minister with unbiblical ideas. Then the prayer meeting was changed into a literary debating society. Finally, the minister stopped praying from the pulpit. The church is now dead. I suggest that someone put a tombstone in front of it with these words: "Died of Improvements."

There's always room for the right kind of improvements in our churches. But let's make sure they are guided by the life-changing principles of God's Word, not the deadening philosophies of this world. --M R De Haan

We join our hearts and hands together
Faithful to the Lord's command:
We hold each other to God's standards--
All that truth and love demand. --DJD

**God put the church in the world;
Satan tries to put the world in the church.**

COLOSSIANS 2:8

April 25, 2002

DON'T BE FOOLED

Read: Colossians 2:1-10,

Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. —Hebrews 13:9-note

People don't like to be fooled, but it happens so often that it might seem as if they do. Far too many people fall for crooked schemes that cost them money, endanger their health, or waste their time. It happens to elderly people when they trust the friendly, persuasive person who comes to the door selling a too-good-to-be-true product. It happens when a shyster tells a couple that he's from the bank, and they need to withdraw money and give it to him to fix a bank error. It happens when a person with health problems buys hundreds of dollars' worth of bogus medicine. It can happen to us too—in spiritual matters. We can be fooled by deceitful presentations that make guarantees far beyond what God has clearly promised. But this isn't anything new. Paul warned about this kind of deception in Colossians 2:8-note.

So, how do you protect yourself from those who make religious claims that God's Word does not support? By being "rooted and built up in [Christ Jesus] and established in the faith, as you have been taught" (Col 2:7-note).

Whether listening to a salesperson or to a preacher, be discerning. Don't be fooled. —J D Branon

Christ is all we need, His truth complete—
The world will try to add, subtract, distort;
Cling to what you know, and trust God's Word,
Don't let yourself believe a false report. —Carbaugh

Feeding on God's truth will keep you from swallowing a lie.

COLOSSIANS 2:9

WITHIN REACH

In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.--Colossians 2:9

A little girl once said to her mother,

"Mama, I like you better than God."

"Oh, you must not say that!" replied the mother.

"Yes, but really, Mama, I do like you better than God."

Shocked, her mother inquired,

"Dear, what makes you say that?"

The child answered simply,

"Because I can hug you!"

That little girl expressed the universal desire of man to have contact with God in a personal, tangible way. A spirit without a body is difficult for us to conceive, but a real "flesh and bones" man is a concrete reality we can understand. In the incarnation, therefore, Jesus brought God within embracing distance.

Someone has said, "The kindest thing God ever did was to become a Man!" It is indeed a thrilling truth. Because of the incarnation, we can now have a much clearer understanding of God, and we can experience a warm, personal contact with Him through the person of His Son. No wonder the apostle John declared, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

Have you embraced Christ as your Savior? --Herbert Vander Lugt

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel. --Wesley

Christ's birth brought the infinite God within reach of finite man.

COLOSSIANS 2:10

SINGLE SATISFACTION

October 6, 1995

A friend of mine, Elizabeth-Ann, is in her sixties, single, and radiantly contented. "But how is that possible?" she is often asked. To answer this question she wrote a book titled *Complete As One*, which is based on Colossians 2:10. She recalls being challenged years ago by a comment about a friend: "You know what I appreciate about June? She's so satisfied with Christ."

That phrase, "satisfied with Christ," left a profound impact on Elizabeth-Ann. She was 21 at the time and had been converted 3 years earlier. Her friends were getting engaged and married, and she was happy for them. But she was hearing comments like, "Have you seen how radiant Mary is?" and "I've never seen John so happy." This set her to thinking: These friends are Christians. Certainly it is appropriate for them to radiate happiness, but why do they have to get a partner before they experience the joy and fulfillment Christians should have? So she began praying, "Lord, I don't want to marry until I have learned to be satisfied with You."

Even though Elizabeth-Ann is still single, she believes that God has answered her prayer. She is rooted and built up in Christ. And that's the key to completeness--whether married or single. --J E Yoder

The world is filled with so much good
That brings us joy and pleasure,
But Christ can fill our lives with joy
Above all earthly treasure. --Sper

For lasting satisfaction, put God's will first.

COLOSSIANS 2:10

IT COMES WITH THE TICKET

Author Peter Kreeft tells the story of a poor European family who saved for years to buy tickets to sail to America. Once at sea, they carefully rationed the cheese and bread they had brought for the journey.

After 3 days, the boy complained to his father, "I hate cheese sandwiches. If I don't eat anything else before we get to America, I'm going to die." Giving the boy his last nickel, the father told him to go to the ship's galley and buy an ice-cream cone.

When the boy returned a long time later with a wide smile, his worried dad asked, "Where were you?"

"In the galley, eating three ice-cream cones and a steak dinner!"

"All that for a nickel?"

"Oh, no, the food is free," the boy replied. "It comes with the ticket."

The apostle Paul warned his readers about false teachers who were offering them "bread and cheese" instead of "steak." They were in danger of forgetting Christ's sufficiency and relying on their own self-effort (Col 2:8-note, Col 2:20, 21, 22, 23-note). We who have trusted Christ for salvation have been assured not only of safe passage to heaven but also of everything we need to live for Him here and now

(Col. 1:13, 14-note; Col 2:6-15-note).

Christ has all we need. It comes with the "ticket."-- Dennis J. De Haan

God freely gives His grace to all
Who on His Word rely,
For they have learned the secret of
His infinite supply.-- DJD

Live the Christian life the same way you began it -- by trusting Christ.

COLOSSIANS 2:13-14

LEAVE IT BURIED

April 17, 2004

I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more. — Jeremiah 31:34

A 10-year-old boy wanted to be a pastor when he grew up. One day, when the family's black cat died, he had an opportunity to do some "practice preaching" by conducting a funeral.

The boy found a shoebox and put the kitten inside it. When he placed the cover on the box, however, the tail wouldn't fit in. So he cut a hole in the lid so that the long furry tail could stick out. Then he rounded up his friends, preached a short sermon he had carefully prepared, and buried the cat in a shallow grave.

When the service was over, he noticed that the tip of the pet's tail was still sticking out of the ground. Every 2 or 3 days curiosity would get the better of him, and he would secretly pull up the cat by the tail and then rebury it. Eventually the tail came off, and the body finally remained buried!

How many of us do this with our forgiven sins? We confess our sins, but we continue to drag them up and weep over them, even though God considers the ugly things buried once and for all (Jeremiah 31:34; Col 2:13,14-note; 1John 1:9). As a result, we are not joyful or productive in our Christian life and service. Please — leave the "cat" buried! —Henry G. Bosch

God has buried my sins where no mortal can see;
He has cast all of them in the depths of the sea—
In the deep, silent depths, far away from the shore
Where they never may rise up to trouble me more. —Anon.

The only sure place to bury sin is at the foot of the cross

COLOSSIANS 2:14

REAL CHANGE

J. Vernon McGee told of a man who came to him and said, "I'll give you \$100 if you will show me where the Sabbath day has been changed." McGee answered, "I don't think it has been changed. Saturday is Saturday, it is the seventh day of the week, and it is the Sabbath day. I realize our calendar has been adjusted, and can be off a few days, but we won't even consider that point. The seventh day is still Saturday, and it is still the Sabbath day."

He got a gleam in his eye and said, "Then why don't you keep the Sabbath day if it hasn't been changed?" McGee answered, "the DAY hasn't changed, but I have been changed. I've been given a new nature now, I am joined to Christ; I am a part of the new creation. We celebrate the first day because that is the day He rose from the grave." That is what it means that the ordinances have been nailed to the cross, Col 2:14-note.

COLOSSIANS 2:14

He made Him . . . to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2Corinthians 5:21).

More than four hundred years before Jesus' birth, the Greek poet Agathon said, "Even God cannot change the past." Historically speaking, he was right. What happens cannot be undone. Yet when God sent His Son to die on the cross, He provided a way to erase our sinful past.

Here is how Donald Grey Barnhouse described what Jesus did for us: "Just as a hole in the ocean floor would let sea water into the volcanic fires, creating force that could blow the world apart, so the Lord Jesus Christ by dying and rising again broke through the past and allowed eternity to pour in, shattering, turning and overturning, changing, and altering all things. He took the past of all believers and cleansed it by His blood and transformed the life in such a way that the time-rooted life gave way to life eternal."

The poet said, "I wish there were a land of beginning again." There is. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1John 1:7). And the hymn writer said, "Calvary covers it all, my past with its sin and stain; my guilt and despair Jesus took on Him there, and Calvary covers it all."

This is the wonder of the gospel. For those who have accepted Christ's offer of forgiveness, He "wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, . . . having nailed it to the cross" (Col. 2:14-note). God has completely cleansed our sin-stained past. —P. R. Van Gorder.

Salvation can change the worst sinners into the most honored saints.

COLOSSIANS 2:18

THE WORST FOOD YOU EVER ATE

The proprietors of the "Worst Food in Oregon" restaurant say that what they serve in the "worst food you ever ate, and the service is even worse." Actually, the restaurant is unusually clean and the food is very good. Diners are served generous portions, and the prices are very reasonable. The name is just a gimmick. It was the idea of the owner who, when tempted to call his food "the best," figured he might get more attention by calling it "the worst."

Well, his strategy worked. Customers who come the first time out of curiosity soon come back for more. They like the food so much that they even ask what the chef recommends. With a twinkle in his eye he tells them to "take their money and spend it at another restaurant down the road." Self-denial can be merely a cover for self-promotion. --Source unknown

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