

Colossians 2:6-15

Standing Firm Against False Teachers

2:6-7 – These two verses succinctly summarize the teaching of the letter up to this point and emphasize Paul's desired response of his readers. "It serves as **the hinge** between the first major section of the letter (1:3-2:5) and the second (2:6-4:6)" (Moo, 177).

Paul's conclusion is clear - Jesus Is Lord! Where else in this letter has this been emphasized?

If Jesus is fully God and all the qualities, power, and beauty of the Father is fully found in Christ, then how and why would Christians be deceived into following false and hollow teaching contradictory to Christ and His teaching?

Every time we sin we have believed something false. We look at Christ and feel that He is not and cannot meet all of our needs; and, therefore, we try to find satisfaction, acceptance, and meaning outside of Him. Each Christian daily succumbs to false teachings that are all around them at all times. There are small messages coming from every direction suggesting that Jesus is not enough. Where do these voices come from? Describe some that you see and hear throughout your day:

2:6-7 – In similar fashion to 1:10-12, Paul calls us to **continue to live in Christ** (walk in a manner worthy of Christ) and describes **how** we do this through several supporting phrases. Ignoring the "how to's" sets us up to be more susceptible to deception and sin.

Continue to live your lives in Him (the command followed by the how's)

- *Rooted and built up in Him*
- *Strengthened (or established) in the faith as you were taught*
- *Overflowing with thankfulness*

This is a great picture of how we are to grow. Our roots go deep and wide, and as our foundation remains in Him as we also grow tall and wide. A tree grows in this fashion, the roots are ever deepening and the branches are every expanding reaching to the sky. How can your involvement in small groups help your roots grow and your fruit increase?

When the storms of life hit, what happens if we have built our lives on something other than Christ?

How can a desire to please others, perfectionism, or a fear of other's opinions erode our roots? What is the result of living out of these desires and tendencies?

The Colossians were taught by Epaphras. Paul has emphasized the need for as much spiritual knowledge and wisdom as possible. How would this emphasis be connected to the context and situation of the Colossians?

Is this still an applicable emphasis for the church today? How would you describe our context and situation (culture, values, popular views...)? Examples?

As we become rooted and built, how do we then establish ourselves in the faith?

2:8-15 - Paul now addresses the false teaching for the rest of chapter 2. It naturally falls into two sections (2:8-15 and 2:16-23). The first section emphasizes the completeness and spiritual victory we share with Christ. The second section details some of the false beliefs.

2:8 – “See to it” is a warning calling us to an intentional and watchful scan and assessment of all teachings that are influencing us and the church. What is our measuring stick to assess the world around us?

It is easy to see the larger false teachings (the denial of the deity of Christ), but sometimes the smaller ones can slip in if we are not careful.

Please assess each thought:

- God wants me to be happy.
- God wants me to be comfortable.
- God wants me to be financially secure.
- My suffering is a result of my sin.
- My actions are more important than my feelings.

2:9-10 – The Gospel is the response to these false teachings. In direct contrast to these descriptions stands the gospel: where the “philosophy” deceives people, the gospel is “true,” “reliable” (1:5); where the “philosophy” is “empty,” “devoid of spiritual value,” the gospel is powerful and transforming (1:6, 23). How does the Gospel help us assess and disarm these false teachings?

When a thought or teaching stands contrary to any part of the Gospel message we must recognize it and combat it. Everything is under attack. How has society undermined the sinfulness of man (and his need for a Savior)?

How is our world of entertainment, news, and social media trying to change our perception of the nature and work of Christ?

2:11 – Are outward rituals the foundation of our salvation and acceptance before God? Where then must we place our emphasis?

2:13-14 – What has been nailed to the cross? What does that mean?

Describe the difference between a Christian who fully understands their forgiveness and the Christian who still lives with residual guilt and shame from their past sins:

How can that residual guilt and shame lead someone to consider false teachings?

Where do you still hold on to guilt and shame? When do you feel it or sense it? What do you do with it?

“Christians experience spiritual ‘fullness’ (v. 10) because they are in Christ, in whom ‘all the fullness of the Deity lives’ (v.9). All that human beings can know or experience of God is found in Christ, and so Christians, simply by virtue of being Christians, have access to all this knowledge and all these experiences. We need look nowhere else” (Moo, 184).