

CHRIST, THE ALL-SUFFICIENT ONE

BIBLE TEXT : Colossians 1:9-29; 2:8-19

LESSON 410 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Colossians 1:9-29

⁹ For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

¹⁰ That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

¹¹ Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Loving Concern for the Colossians

1. The brethren in Rome are grateful for the good beginning of the Church at Colosse, Colossians 1:3, 4.

2. They pray for continued spiritual growth, Colossians 1:9-11;

John 17:9

⁹ I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

John 17:15-23

¹⁵ I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

¹⁷ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

¹⁸ As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

²⁰ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

²¹ That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

²² And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

²³ I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Ephesians 1:16

¹⁶ Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

Ephesians 1:17

¹⁷ That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

3. Paul reminds the Colossians that redemption and deliverance is through Christ's Atonement, Colossians 1:13, 14;

Romans 3:24-25

²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

²⁵ Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Titus 2:14

¹⁴ Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Hebrews 9:12

¹² Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

Revelation 5:9

⁹ And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

II Christ's Divine Pre-eminence

in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

¹⁹ For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;

²⁰ And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

²¹ And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

²² In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

²³ If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

²⁴ Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

²⁵ Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

²⁶ *Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

²⁷ To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

²⁸ Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may

1. Christ is the image of God, Colossians 1:15; 2:9;

John 14:9

⁹ Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

Hebrews 1:3

³ Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

2. Christ is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, visible and invisible, Colossians 1:16, 17;

John 1:3-4

³ All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

⁴ In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

Hebrews 1:2

² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Hebrews 1:3

³ Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

3. Christ is the Head of the Church, and the first-born from the dead, Colossians 1:18, 19;

1 Corinthians 15:20

²⁰ But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept.

Ephesians 1:22

²² And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,

III Christ, the Author of Redemption for Mankind

1. Peace and reconciliation is made through the Atonement, Colossians 1:20-22;

Isaiah 57:21

²¹ *There is* no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

Romans 5:10

¹⁰ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Romans 5:11

¹¹ And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

2. The holy and unblameable spiritual state is conditional on steadfastness in the faith, Colossians 1:22-25;

John 8:31

³¹ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

3. The great mystery is Christ within the Christian, presenting him perfect, Colossians 1:26-29.

IV Perfection in Christ

1. A Christian is complete in Christ; sanctification brings Christian perfection, Colossians 2:8-11;

John 17:17

¹⁷ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

1 Corinthians 1:30

³⁰ But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification,

present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

²⁹ Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Colossians 2:8-19

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, 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, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you 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, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

¹⁶ Let 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 of your reward in a voluntary humility and

and redemption:

Ephesians 5:26

²⁶ That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

2 Timothy 2:21

²¹ If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work.

Hebrews 10:10

¹⁰ By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

Hebrews 13:12

¹² Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

2. Christ's death, burial, and resurrection are wrought out spiritually in the Christian, Colossians 2:12, 13;

Romans 6:3-5

³ Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of his resurrection:

3. The Children of God enjoy freedom in Christ, Colossians 2:14-19;

John 8:36

³⁶ If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Ephesians 4:16

¹⁶ From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

NOTES:

The Colossian Church

The City of Colosse was located approximately 100 miles inland from the City of Ephesus. Though Paul had journeyed over much of this territory, never in his writings does he mention directly that he was in the City of Colosse. In reading Colossians 2:1, it would appear that he had not been there, for he wrote of his concern for as many as had not seen his face in the flesh. No doubt, as a result of Paul's ministry in Ephesus the Gospel was spreading into the surrounding cities, as in this Epistle he makes mention of the churches at Laodicea and Hierapolis which were neighbouring cities to Colosse.

Philemon was one of the faithful leaders at Colosse, and the church possibly was in his house (**Philemon 1:2** ² *And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house: Philemon 1:7* ⁷ *For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.*). During Paul's imprisonment, Onesimus, a native of Colosse, was won to Christ. This man was a runaway servant of Philemon's and Paul sent him back with the heart-touching letter known as the Epistle to Philemon. (**Colossians 4:9** *With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things*

worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

¹⁹ And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

which *are done* here. **Philemon 1:10-12** ¹⁰ I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: ¹¹ Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me: ¹² Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:)

Another leader at the church of Colosse seems to have been Epaphras, who was a faithful minister of Christ (**Colossians 1:7**

As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;), and who faithfully carried the Colossians on his heart in fervent prayer (**Colossians 4:12-13**

¹² Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. ¹³ For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them *that are* in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.). Perhaps Epaphras was

converted during Paul's ministry at Ephesus. In any case Epaphras not only loved his people, but he also loved Paul and journeyed all the way to Rome to be with him, to minister unto him, and to share his imprisonment. When this man gave the good report of the faith, love, and hope of the church at Colosse, Paul's heart rejoiced with thanksgiving (**Colossians 1:3-5**

³ We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, ⁴ Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints, ⁵ For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;). Inasmuch as Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles, he proceeds to write this Epistle to the church at Colosse, though he had never seen their faces.

A Very Hopeful Beginning

How the heart of Paul the Apostle, the prisoner, must have thrilled when he heard the good report from the church at Colosse! But Paul, from years of Christian experience, knew that a good beginning was not enough. He knew there would be many trials, tests, and perils in the spiritual battles that were yet ahead for the young church. Paul desired and prayed that they might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that they might "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness."

Paul's great heart went out for them that they might continue and increase in their spiritual graces and attainments. It was his desire that they continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and that they finally be presented before Christ "holy and unblameable and unreprieveable."

Deeper in the Knowledge of Christ

The Colossians had a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, but there are heights and depths and lengths and breadths in Christian knowledge which cannot all be taken in at once. The greatest of saints never stop learning. All Christians need continually to add to their knowledge and to strive after deeper and clearer insights into the mysteries of God and His grace.

One of the profound mysteries of the Gospel is that Jesus could reside here on earth in a human body and still be part of the Godhead, the great Trinity. Philip said to Jesus, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus said unto him, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:8,

9). Paul said that Jesus is the image of the invisible God. He bears all the attributes, power, and nature of God.

All creation is ascribed to Jesus as well as unto God. John said, "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Paul the Apostle, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, states that all things in earth, yes, and in Heaven, visible and invisible, were created by divine command. We see nothing here of the modern man-made theory of evolution. The theory that this world gradually evolved through myriads of years is based on a whole series of completely missing links. This theory has been beset by the necessity of constantly being altered and changed because of later scientific discoveries, but the Word of God has remained unchanged down through the years of time. Scientific discoveries have not made it necessary to alter God's Word. Actually, these discoveries have rather confirmed the Bible and the fact that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21).

The great Creator, Paul says, is the Head of the body — the Church. This position is not left for an angel, certainly not for a mortal man — His created beings — but is for the Creator, not only because He is the Creator, but also because He is the Redeemer. He, the Creator, "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:6-8). All this, that He might redeem lost souls and forgive fallen mankind's sins, making peace by reconciling all things unto Himself! This wonderful salvation is a great mystery, and Paul told the Colossians that this mystery is "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Sanctification

Paul wrote to the Colossians: "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." How thankful Paul must have been that he knew the Colossians had been taught sanctification, that there is a circumcision of the heart in which the very root and nature of sin is removed. Paul was not trying to bring them back under the Law when he was speaking of circumcision (which was a ceremony under the Law, and typified sanctification), but he meant that circumcision which was made without hands, circumcision of the heart performed by Christ. Christ had come and had fulfilled all the Law with its types and shadows.

Jesus had died for their sins, had been buried, and had risen again for their justification; and in testimony of this they had been baptised by immersion in water. (**Romans 6:3-4**)

³ Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.) The Colossians were warned not to be in bondage or to be judged by anyone in regard to meat or drink, or the keeping of holydays or Sabbaths or the feasts of new moons. Many of these ordinances, true enough, were given by God, but they were given for a specific period of time, known as the dispensation of the Law; and the Law was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. So Paul said that the Law was only a **shadow** of things to come, but the body (who casts the shadow) is Christ who fulfilled all the Law.

The Colossians were warned of the danger of the Judaizers who wanted to bring them under the bondage of the Law. Paul also warned of those who "through philosophy and vain deceit" were trying to bring them back into the things of the world. But having been born into the family of God, made a partaker of Christ, that great Creator and Redeemer, they became a vital part of the Body of Christ, knit together in the unity of the faith and the bond of peace. No power in earth or hell could break such an intimate bond as this; but the aged Apostle knew that it all depended upon each one whether he would continue in the faith. They, being free moral agents, could take themselves out of the Lord's hands and thereby lose all the benefits of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But if they kept true, their faith and confidence steadfast unto the end, they would increase with the increase of God as they received more of God, and would eventually become partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, and enjoy the bliss of Heaven for all eternity.

QUESTIONS

1. What prompted Paul to write to the Colossians when he had never seen them?
2. Paul compared Christ to God; describe this comparison.
3. The first verse of the Bible states, "In the beginning **God** created the heaven and the earth." How then could Jesus be called the Creator of all things?
4. Why could Christ be called the Head of the Church?
5. Explain how we know that the Colossians had been taught about sanctification and water baptism.
6. What was the mystery of which Paul spoke?
7. What was the ultimate end that Paul wanted to see the Colossians and everyone reach?