

Colossians: The Supremacy of Christ (Col. 2:6-10)

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Preacher: Scott Liddell

[0 : 0 0] You may be seated. Good morning. When we were putting together this sermon series through the book of Colossians, I couldn't! wait for this day. This sermon, why is that? Because I'm going to make the argument that! everything that Paul has written in the book of Colossians is leading up to this exhortation that he's going to give us today, and everything after this section in the book of Colossians is going to flow from this exhortation that we're going to give today. And that exhortation is found in verse 6. And so if you have a copy of scriptures with you, if you can turn to Colossians chapter 2, we're going to be in verse 6 through 10 today. And that exhortation that everything is culminating to, and everything is going to flow out of, is three simple words.

Walk in him. Walk in Christ. And so if you have your Bible open, please read with me Colossians chapter 2, reading in verse 6 through 10.

Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him, established in the faith just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving, and see to it that no one takes you captive by a philosophy or empty deceit, according to the elemental spirits of this world and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

So that exhortation found in verse 6 is what I believe Paul has been leading up to, is the admonition and the exhortation, walk in him. Walking in Christ, it's a metaphor that is used in scripture that encompasses your whole life. It's your manner of living. It's another way of just saying the whole totality of your life, your manner of living, is encompassed in your walk with whatever.

Walk in Christ. So it encompasses the places we go, the places we physically walk into, the relationships we enter, the decisions we make, the emotions that we allow to take root in our heart.

[2 : 3 6] It is what we fix our mind's attention upon, what we do to fill our recreation time. It's our online viewing habits. It's our personal finances that we steward. Everything about our life is encompassed in your walk. It's in your manner of living. And Paul is saying, have everything that is in your manner of living, everything about your life, may it be in Christ. Chronicles, I've been reading 2 Chronicles recently, and there's the phrase that says this about different kings. It says, and he walked in the ways of his father. And he walked in the ways of his father. And what is that saying? It's that this king, who is now king, he walked in the way of his predecessor, who was his father.

And so if that father led Israel to sin, so too did this son. He walked in the ways. And so if his predecessor, father king, led Israel to set up high places, so too did the son. If the king married foreign wives, things that were sinful, so too did the son walk in this manner. He walked in the ways of his father. But we are to walk in a way that is worthy of the gospel. We are to walk in a manner worthy of Christ, the one who died for you, who died for sin, and who did all these things on your behalf. We are to walk in Christ. In other words, the whole being, your whole being, is to live in reference to Jesus Christ. I have in front of me here, if you're interested in a good read, it's the Noah Webster Dictionary of 1828, the publication of 1828, Noah Webster Dictionary.

When we as English speakers want to know the definition of a word, we use a reference, and we say, what's the definition? And so this becomes our reference for how we speak the English and use the English language. Well, what is our reference for our manner of living? It's Christ. So we're to walk in a manner of Christ that means we're to walk in a manner that is referencing Christ. What should my thought life be? Well, what is Christ's thought life? What is how I relate to people? Well, how did Christ relate to people? And so our reference, if you will, is that of Christ. He is our reference.

Our lives are to be lived. With Christ as a reference, who lives selflessly, sacrificially, who died for sin. And we are to walk in devotion to him. So today, we're going to answer two questions that were asked and answered in our text today. Maybe they were not asked, per se, but they were certainly

answered in our text. And the two questions can be this. Why walk in him? And how do we walk in him? Let's first answer the question, why? Notice the word, therefore, and that kicks us off in the verse 6. Therefore, therefore, Paul is concluding something. He is concluding an argument. He is concluding a thought. Paul is about to lay on us an exhortation, that is to walk in him. But he's doing so at the end of a thought, or he's concluding a thought. And what is it that he is concluding? Well, let's remember what previously Paul has argued from the book of Colossians. He has said, hey, Christ is the eternal Son of God. He is the firstborn of creation, if we remember that. He is the one who brought us out of the kingdom of darkness, and he has brought us into the kingdom of light. He is the one who is the member of the Godhead, who is responsible for all of creation.

[6 : 42] And so, as a result, all things exist by him and for him, we're told. Whether they are visible, whether they are invisible, whether they are things on this earth or in heaven, he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the one who reconciles all things, all people to God.

He is the preeminent one. He is the one who reconciles and puts us in a right relationship with the Father. And he has accomplished this through his person and his work. He is the second member of the Godhead, who condescended to earth, who took on human form, who was born of a virgin, who lived a sinless life. He died a death for sin. He was in the grave three days. He rose from the dead, and he now is ascended to the Father and sits at his right hand, interceding for the saints today, and one day will return and set up his eternal order, the new heaven and new earth for all those who love him.

And so it's as if Paul has said all of that in the first part of Colossians, and so then he says, now then, therefore, walk in him. He's done all of this on your behalf. Now walk in him.

Everything culminates to this exhortation, and everything will flow out of this exhortation of walking with him. And we're answering the question, why? Because there is a threat. The why is because there is a threat. Notice with me in verse 4 that we already preach through a sermon. In chapter 2, verse 4, he says, I say this in order that no one dilutes you from plausible arguments. Arguments, that is, those things that are contrary to the gospel, and they're plausible because there just may be enough truth in them that they feel and seem like they're believable. They're plausible arguments. And then look with me in our text here in verse chapter 2, verse 8. We'll drop down a few verses. It says, see to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit according to the human tradition, according to the elemental spiritualist world, not according to Christ. So there is a threat. So why walk in him? Because there's a real threat to you as a Christian. There is the world. There is the flesh. There is the devil.

And all of them are beckoning you to walk according to them as a reference. They want to be the reference. The world wants to be your reference, not Christ. The world, Satan wants to be your reference, not Christ. Your flesh wants you to, begs you to be its own reference in your life, not Christ.

[9 : 40] That's the threat. I'm going to use a very weak example, and then I will apply it to us hopefully more meaningfully.

Someone came into our life, her name is Rachel, about six years ago. Six years ago, she began to come.

We invited her to live with us, and we have become to her surrogate parents, if you will, adoptive parents to her. And she is going to be married this next weekend. And so we have this wedding that we get to live with. Wonderful young lady, and about a couple months ago, she asked me, hey, Scott, would you walk me down the aisle? To which I said yes. Last week, she made a request of me that caused a little more anxiety. She said to me, Scott, would you dance with me? Like the father-daughter daughter dance.

So before I, to her, I quickly said, I would be honored to. Internally, I dislike dancing. I would rather have a root canal.

[11 : 07] I have two left feet. I have a sense of rhythm of a slug. The words fluid motion and Scott Liddell are never found in the same sentence. I don't like to look foolish. I don't like to be embarrassed.

I don't like public attention. Some of you would say you're in the wrong profession. I don't like things where I look foolish. I typically avoid those occasions.

I don't know what I'm doing, and I know I look foolish. Now, I want you to see something. All of my reasons are self-oriented. They're all about protecting self.

These things, dancing, threatens my sense of self-importance. It highlights the request highlighted my self-interest.

But we're to walk, not according to the flesh. My flesh wants to say, no thank you. But what would be something that would glorify the Lord and honor this young lady and be loving toward her?

[12:24] Yes. It's the only answer. Otherwise, I'm going to walk according to my flesh, not unto Christ. Make sense? So, now let's try to apply this more meaningfully with that example.

At the end of the service, we'll all have the opportunity to greet someone perhaps we don't recognize or someone who is new. Will you? And what's your reasons for or not for?

And are they self-oriented? This summer provides an opportunity to go to the lake or invite someone over and have a meal together. And you say, Scott, I don't know how to cook.

There's always toast, by the way. But I don't know how to cook. Look, well, and my house, I would just be embarrassed to have people over to my house.

Self-protection, self-interest, self-orientation. Do you hear it? I don't visit people in the hospital.

[13:26] Why? I don't know what I would even say. I don't care. I don't know. What about the request to teach children?

To come alongside parents and disciple their children on a Sunday to teach people who want to know more about the Lord? Would you teach children? Why would you say yes?

Why would you say no? What about calling someone this week and letting them know you want to encourage them and pray for them? Why would you do that?

Or why wouldn't you do that? Do you see how our reference, the world, the flesh, and the devil, there is a real threat to us.

So there's a culmination. Paul is saying, look at Jesus. Look at Christ. He's the preeminent one.

He's the firstborn of all creation. In him and by things, all things were created, and we're created by him and for him.

[14:23] Look at him. He's so beautiful. Therefore, walk in him. He's our reference. And we want to say, oh, but my flesh. There's a real threat to making my flesh the devil.

Not Christ to my daily living, but Christ is supposed to be our reference to our daily walk. There are three questions that are often asked in philosophy classes if you have the privilege of taking them.

And people ask these questions to derive meaning for themselves of why I'm here on this earth.

And they are this. Who am I? Why am I here?

And where am I going? And why am I speaking of this? Because it says here, see to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of this world, and not according to Christ.

So there's messaging that this world has, and they answer these questions of who am I? Where am I? Why am I here? And where am I going? And for the Christian, these are easy questions.

[15:35] Let me just give them to you. Who am I? I'm created by God in his image to be an image bearer. I am a former sinner, and I've been saved by grace. That's who I am.

Second, why am I here? As an image bearer, I represent God and his plan of salvation to the nations. That's why I'm here. Where am I going? Glad you asked.

Because of what Christ has done on the cross, and he forgave sin for me, I am assured of spending eternity in heaven and glorifying him for all eternity. Who am I? Why am I here?

Where am I going? Easy questions. But now let's consider how the world may answer that question. And please know, I'm going to be, there's different people, if you go to different nations and you're going to hear a different worldview than what I'm articulating.

But in America, we have five generations who are living, who all have been raised with this. What I'm about to say is the air that they breathe. And as I articulate how our culture would answer these questions, it will help you understand why there is a real threat that you're going to believe one of these lies and live that out as your reference.

[16:47] So here it is. How does a secular humanist, and that's the worldview that is predominantly in our five generations that are living in our culture today, who am I?

How would a secular humanist answer this question? Well, since God does not exist, I'm a product of the result of the Big Bang, where matter and energy created all that we see.

After the Big Bang, out of some body of water, this primordial soup became the first living cell, and that living cell became more complicated over time, and as a result, of one of those complex organisms, ultimately it crawled out onto dry land and became ultimately evolving into the first

humanoid, of whom I am a descendant and the product of random chance and purposeless matter and energy.

That's who I am. Secondly, and this will answer a lot of what we see. Why am I here? Listen to how a secular humanist would answer this question, and this will explain a lot of what we see.

Since I deny the belief in any deity as a secular humanist, there is no meaning outside of myself. Meaning, therefore, is self-created.

[18:01] We can create meaning outside of ourselves through our actions and our relationships. However, since there is no deity, meaning that I create for myself is fluid, because morality is fluid, because there is no acknowledgement of ultimate truth or morality.

There is great freedom here, freedom to express yourself and express myself however I want, according to my values and according to my values. I create meaning for myself however I please. So why am I here? To create meaning for myself. And where am I going? Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?

Because there is no deity, and there is no eternal nature to who I am, I am the product of random and purposeless matter and energy, and it is to that that I will return.

My life and my meaning come upon my death. That worldview, secular humanism, is in the air that you breathe outside these walls.

[19:14] You just go outside, breathe it in, and go, whew, I'm almost a secular humanist. That was close. The lies that I just mentioned are everywhere.

And that worldview is baiting you to believe one of those lies and not have Christ as your reference. And this is written, this admonition, so walk in him.

And there is the reason, why is that admonition there? Because there is a very real threat. And there are things of this world that tempt you away from that.

See to it that no one takes you captive. I think everyone ought to, and someday, should they have the privilege, go see a site of atrocities, perhaps even genocide.

I've had the privilege of going to Auschwitz in Poland, to Burkow and Dachau, and to see these World War II concentration camps where people died in droves, were killed in droves.

[20:35] And imagine we were back in World War II, and we were to be on the outside. We were free, and those who were inside were captives in a concentration camp.

It would probably be an anathema to us to laugh at those people. Ha, ha, ha, ha. You're caught. You're in a concentration camp, and you're going to die. That's unconscionable.

But notice in this text, who is it that is caught? Who is it, who is the audience that is, that is, that Paul's fear is that you're about to be taken captive?

Look with me. See to it that no one takes you captive. Who is the you? The Colossian believer church. The church.

There is a real threat that you, and notice how you get taken captive. It's by the things that are not true, that are not in reference to as Christ, that you put into your mind, that you come to believe a lie.

[21:41] And Paul is saying, that's the threat, and I'm trying to save you, so make Christ your reference. Walk in Him. And that is why, that is the why, to why that exhortation is there.

Because there is a real threat, and we have a real enemy, the world, the flesh, and the devil. But now let's talk about how. Well, how then do you walk in Christ?

The text reads, After therefore, it says in verse 6, As you have received Jesus Christ the Lord, so walk in Him.

The text is a comparison. It cues us that it's a comparison because it says as. The word as is a comparison word. It is being comparing two things.

Notice the first part of the verse, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so that's talking about our conversion, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord.

[22:51] So he's comparing conversion with our walk, with our daily conduct. Conversion with our daily conduct. And so if we want to think about laying two tracks of the train that are going to be compared to one another, that are walking parallel with one another, we've got our conversion and our daily conduct.

Let's first talk about the first track, our conversion. When we were saved, we placed our faith in Christ. So all that to say, so how you were converted is how Paul is making the argument, you ought to now walk.

So how is it that we were converted? We place our faith in Christ, on His, we went from not being forgiven to forgiven.

We went from death to life, darkness to light. We went from not being right with God to now having a righteous standing with God. How did that happen?

How did this occur? Well, we did so by receiving the Lord. So it says in our text, as you receive Christ. In John 1, 12, we may have this verse on the screen, it says this, but to all who did receive Him, notice how, what receiving Him looks like, or is likened to, but to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.

[24 : 16] So notice, receiving Him, and believing in His name, are used synonymously. trusting in Him. So if we bore down on that a little more, we would mean this, it is not merely a mental assent to the facts of who Jesus is, His person, His work on the cross that we've talked about.

It is an understanding of our need for Christ. We receive Him. It is on Him, He is the one on whom we rely. We trust Him.

We rest our lives in Him. We rest our hopes in Him. We rest the hope of our forgiveness upon Christ. And that is what it means to receive Him, is to trust Jesus and be saved.

So now let's talk about the second railroad track. So He's comparing conversion, which we just talked about, with walk. And it says, do this in the same way. How is it that we then walk with Christ?

Well, we recognize, we wake up every morning, and we recognize, I need Christ. I declare my trust in Christ. And I rely upon Him for my day.

[25 : 33] That is your walk. That is your daily conduct. And we're to do it the same way we were saved. Trusting Him. Relying upon Him. Expressing our need for Him. That is how you walk with Christ.

So what is the concern that you think about when you rest your head on your pillow at night? Your mind begins to whirl. Financial concerns.

Relationship concerns. Employment concerns. Reputation concerns. Health prognosis and concerns. Marriage concerns. Concern with your children.

Here is my encouragement. In that moment, have Christ as your reference. Walk in Him. And as you so have received Christ.

So what does that look like with those concerns that are just now keeping you up at night? Express your need for Christ. Trust Him. Rely on Him.

[26 : 33] Receive His blessing. That's what it is to walk with Christ. So, but that's the big idea. Walk with Him. And then there's some four more things we're going to look at.

Like, do that practically, Scott. What does that look like? Well, I'm happy that verse 7 is here for us. Rooted and built up in Him. Established in the faith, just as you were taught.

Abounding in thanksgiving. So we're going to conclude with these last four thoughts. What does walk in Christ look like? We've got to be rooted in Him. Being rooted, it's an agrarian term.

In this verse, it is referencing something that has already happened. So, we were converted in Christ and we were then rooted.

We could read it this way. Having been rooted in Christ. We were grafted into this root system that already was present.

[27 : 36] And the root system is Christ. And since that is true, then there are ongoing results when you are tapped into the root. And what is the result? All the blessing that the root supplies is now yours.

In Christ. And so we are rooted in Christ. It's what John is articulating in John 15, 5 when he says, I am the vine, you are the branches.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me, you can do nothing. So we are to abide and enjoy the benefits and the blessings from the root who is Christ. And so it is our calling to walk with Him. Paul says it another way in Galatians 2, 20. He says it this way, I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the flesh. And the life that I now live in the flesh, And the life that I live in the flesh, I live by faith in the flesh. It is the same concept. Paul understood what it meant to be rooted in Christ.

[28 : 47] And all the blessings flow from that root. There is another metaphor, though, that Paul is using here of what it looks like to walk with Christ. It says, well, because you have been rooted with

Christ.

But now it says, but it is being built up. And this is a construction metaphor. And by the way, I don't really care that Paul is mixing metaphors in an agrarian and a construction metaphor, but he's an apostle, and I'm not, and so I'm going to let him do it.

But Paul is using this construction metaphor, and he's saying, and built up is, is a way of communicating one's increasing maturity.

And because it's a construction metaphor, it's a way of saying to be buttressed or to be strengthened. And also, though, being built up is an interpersonal term that Paul uses in the New Testament.

I'll just reference one. In 1 Corinthians 12, we are given gifts to build one another up. Well, we're to cause maturity in one another, by building up one another.

[30 : 02] So we are, when we are saved, we are rooted in Christ, and all the blessings flow from Christ, and we are being built up in Him because we're in fellowship with other believers.

We have a responsibility to one another to encourage one another to walk in Him. This is why it's so important to have a local church and not be a de-churched person.

I know I'm talking to the choir because you're here today, but that's why I'm deeply concerned for de-churched Christians. They hinder the ability to be built up.

And then thirdly, in this passage, we are established in the faith. And here, I'm sorry, is where we are being buttressed, reinforced, and strengthened, and confirmed.

You can think of your life as a house. You know, old houses begin to fail. Plumbing starts to leak. Electrical things start to fail.

[31 : 05] Floor joists begin to sag. Stairways begin to creak.

And our lives can be no different than that. We walk, and things, soffits begin to fall. And we can think of our lives in this way, that as we live our life, we need help being buttressed or being reinforced and so, we don't just need to add paint to one another.

We need to actually do substantial things to help one another. And you are being aided by one another and in the person of Christ. But notice how you are aided in this way, rooted and built up in Him, established in the faith.

It is our faith, our trust in Him, believing what is true about Him, that helps us be buttressed, strengthened in Him. And then lastly, we are told, what does walking in Him look like?

Well, you abound in thanksgiving. Now notice what Paul could have said. Paul could have just said, being established in the faith and giving thanks.

[32 : 24] He could have just said, and give thanks. But notice he says, abounding in thanksgiving. It is this, that thanksgiving breaks over the levies of your circumstances in your life.

It just, it crushes the levies. It overflows the levies of circumstances in your life. So that whatever is bubbling out of you, it is always a praise and thanks to God.

It is like we are an unseen spring that continually gives thanks to our Lord. It is to be habitually, regularly, and continuously giving thanks to the Lord.

Gratitude and thanksgiving are interpersonal terms. They are used in relationships with one another. Thanksgiving, I'm going to try to define it this way, is a recognition and celebration of the goodness, kindness, and benevolence of another.

It's a recognition and celebration of the goodness, kindness, and benevolence of another.

Thanksgiving and gratitude is part of our walk with Christ. Gratitude flows from the reality of Christ.

[33 : 42] Our very being in Christ is reason enough for gratitude. Think of it this way. Even if everything were taken from you, your health, your home, your home, meaningful relationship, there is still reason for gratitude.

Do you believe that? If everything has been taken from you, is Christ still enough? You have been reconciled.

You've been redeemed. If all your life was suffering and all of your life were pain, is it enough that Christ saved you? Is it enough that your sin is forgiven? Is it enough to have assurance in heaven? Is it enough for you to have an imperishable, undefiled, unfading inheritance because of the resurrection of Christ? Is that enough for you? If it is, you will abound in thanksgiving.

So if you just happen to be a part of the Whiners for Jesus and Complainers for Christ Club, if you happen to be in that category, you are informing everyone around you that Jesus is not enough.

[34 : 57] It does not matter what will happen tomorrow. You can still abound in thanksgiving if Jesus is enough. Why?

We realize the reality. Why am I here? Where am I going? Because of Christ. when the reality is what I deserve is death, hell, and the grave, and eternal torment.

Compared to what I have been saved to, Jesus is enough. We ought to abound in thanksgiving. So I've asked and I've answered two questions. why walk with Christ? Because the threat is real. The threat is real. He would not have warned us not to be taken captive if being taken captive weren't a real threat. Secondly, how do we walk in Christ?

[36 : 08] We acknowledge our need. we are rooted in Christ. We are established in the faith and we abound in thanksgiving. who knew