

Calvary's Cavalry

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT ISN'T BURNING?

First came lockdowns, then came the violence. Next, for the Christian, should come the careful examination of the basics of life and practice in light of our status as God's redeemed people.

The world is openly warring against God; and if we are not careful, the Body of Christ will be unable to rightly respond because we will have missed the forest for the trees. What we are witnessing is an opportunity to return ourselves mentally and spiritually to our spiritual "First Things".

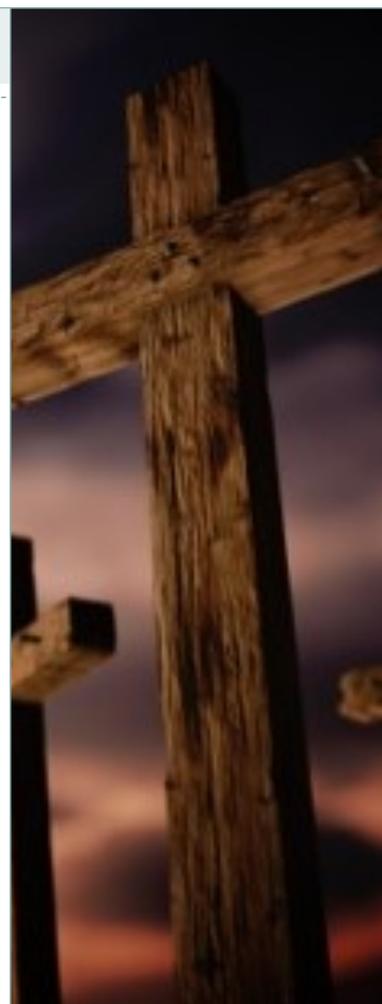
Take for example the lockdowns which still plague vast swaths of our country. We listened to politician after politician proclaim the necessity of action to "save just one life". The arrogance, the audacity, the total inability to evaluate rightly (1 Corinthians 2:14). By this logic, legion of daily activities could be banned outright: driving, racing, logging, surgery, construction, and even medical research; are all fraught with risk of death. Ban them all immediately!!!!!!

It was almost as if no one had ever died before, in the minds of these people. As Christians, we seek the welfare of our fellow man (Romans 12:17-18); but we cannot ever, this side of Eden or Eternity, eliminate risk from our world. Our reliance upon God should embolden us to live our lives with a measured disregard for our safety, here and now, precisely because we are His (Psalm 23:4). To live in fear is to reject the love poured out upon us by God and cower in the face of the culture at large (1 John 4:17-18).

This brings us to the riots. Not the protests, they are a different event; I'm talking about the violent reaction against authority in keeping with the depravity of the human heart (Romans 13:2). The new mantra is: *less police and more community: programs, money, whatever*. This too, for the Christian, is an opportunity to return to our *a priori* (knowledge not through experience) thought life.

What is the view of humanity of the person who thinks that if we: eliminate police, reallocate some of that funding towards social workers, community centers, counselors, etc.; then crime will decrease? That view is one of a human being who is genuinely good. That criminal is a victim of: racism, environment, abuse, whatever. Instead, we want a Biblical view. One that agrees with our Creator in the definition of our depraved thoughts (Genesis 6:5). One that agrees with God in the definition of our depraved hearts (Jeremiah 17:9). One that agrees with our Ruler in our depraved actions (Psalm 14:1-3). And finally, one that agrees with our Judge of the righteousness of His wrath (Romans 1:18-32).

This is a short overview, but one that will hopefully encourage you to begin to evaluate what you're seeing Biblically, not culturally: enjoy the rest of the Journal.



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OUR HOPE

For All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work



LIGHTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES ANSELM

Anselm d'Aosta was born in the Kingdom of Arles, which was part of the Holy Roman Empire, in 1033. He died in Canterbury, England in 1109.

In between those two marks on the calendar, Anselm was a Benedictine monk, Abbot, philosopher, and Archbishop. His work is still read and studied and his influence upon the church cannot be ignored; hence the reason for our focus on him this month.

Originally denied monastic orders, due to the objection of his father, Anselm hiked the Alps and became a vagabond of sorts until shortly after the death of his father he entered took monastic orders at the age of 27, in 1060. He held his oath at the Monastery of Bec in Normandy, France where he immediately began to write on matters of theology and philosophy.

He was promoted to Abbot in 1063, where Bec earned distinction for intellectual achievement and defense of the faith. He served for 30 years before being installed as the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093.

*.....God is that; than, which nothing greater can be conceived.....
Anytime you have an idea that endures for a thousand years, you have
done something amazing.....*

We mentioned his writings; the first of his major compositions being *Grammarian* which was both a work of philology as well as philosophy. This first work set the stage for the intellect of Anselm and his ability to apply right logical categories to varying fields of study and thought.

Perhaps his greatest works are the *Monologion* and the *Proslogion*. The *Monologion*, written in 1075 and 1076 brings the discipline of Christian Apologetics into the realm of philosophical knowledge. Anselm's argument for God follows the inductive method and argues the necessity of God is due to the existence of good. If there is good, there must be greater; if we follow this greater to a still greater, we eventually get to a singular great. This is God; He is neither the possessor of goodness or greatness nor the inventor of them: instead, God is the embodiment of them. If you would like a more modern version of this argument, read C.S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity*.

Writing in 1078, the *Proslogion* gives birth to the Christian ontological argument. Rather than deducing God from the experience of goodness and greatness, as the *Monologion* does, here Anselm seeks to work in the proper direction of starting with God and reasoning back. As an example, bachelors are unmarried; because that what the word bachelor means. Here, God exists; because He is God.

The argument is fun to verbalize in English; God is that; than, which nothing greater can be conceived. If you think about that sentence long enough, you will in fact hurt your brain. In a nutshell, we can conceive of a greatest possible being; but if that being does not exist, a greater being must necessarily exist. Since God must exist; and we cannot conceive of a being greater than God, and the greatest conceivable being must exist: God exists.

Here I will lose the battle of quoting Vizzini: "Inconceivable!!!!" And if you have no idea what I am referring to, watch *The Princess Bride*, it will do you good.

Unsurprisingly, this argument did not meet with immediate acceptance. And while it has endured as a "proof" for almost a millennia, it is not a great argument. However, Anselm's work does point to the growing scholastic influence in the Christian church; along with her willingness to engage the Truth of God on multiple fronts.

For Further Reading

- Monologion (Monologue)
- Proslogion (Discourse)
- Cur Deus Homo (Why God was a Man)
- Dialogues
- De Grammatico (On the Grammarian)

Key Doctrinal Ideas

- Ontological Argument
- Christian Philosophy

Beyond just his endeavors into the philosophical, Anselm was a defender of the autonomy of the church and a staunch defender of the orthodox understanding of the Trinity.

Anselm was twice exiled from Canterbury due to his unwillingness to acquiesce to certain royal preferences. Regardless of his motivations, by his death; he had delivered Canterbury from Royal dominion and successfully argued for the independence of the church from the control of the king.

Writing in 1092 and 1094 his work, *On Faith in the Trinity and on the Incarnation of the Word Against the Blasphemies of Roscelin*, which is one spectacular title; argued against the tritheism of Roscelin, while arguing for the traditional view of the Trinity as well as the universal definitions of the church and theology.

Anselm also defended the Incarnation (*Why God was a Man*), arguing for the necessity of the atoning work of Christ as a human, on humanities behalf. This argument undermined the previously widely held Ransom Theory of the Atonement. While not complete; Anselm's Satisfaction Theory, is a stepping stone to the modern Protestant Penal-Substitutionary Theory of the Atonement.

All of these points, as well as Anselm's dedication to holy living, aversion to ecclesiastical excess, and general disposition to discipline and Godliness; make Anselm one of the brightest lights of the Middle Ages.

Immanuel Kant, Rene Descartes, Alvin Plantinga, Gottfried Leibniz, and even some Muslim scholars all used or attempted to build upon Anselm's ontological argument. Anytime you have an idea that endures for a thousand years, you have done something amazing. We have mentioned throughout, the impact of Anselm's work throughout this piece; that work has not been lost or forgotten.

What we get in our look at Anselm is something that is sorely lacking in the modern, Protestant, Evangelical world: perspective. We live in a world that is constantly trying to move forward, wherever forward may happen to go. Anselm lived in a world that was more concerned with the building up of the individual in Godliness. That definition of life has a much more stated end.

Were we to fast-forward Anselm to today, we would likely have some disagreements with him over ecclesiology, or the role of philosophy in religion; but we should not have disagreement over his zeal to: know, understand, and propagate the truth of God in Christ. This should be the goal of every Christian, regardless of what language they speak, culture they inhabit, or any other outward attribute that may divide us.

Sit in a philosophy class today and you will and should encounter the ontological argument for God. It is foundational to the mind of Western Civilization, and came about because a great gifted mind; by the mercies of Christ, was redeemed and set to work to think on these great things. While we may not understand or agree with every word of Anselm, the encouragement should be to read and think on his writings; so as to grow in our own wisdom and understanding of the Almighty.

Many later controversies in the church: Pneumatology, predestination, atonement; find their prediction in Anselm's attempts to understand God rightly. We have around 500 of his letters still, and in them we see a man devoted to: prayer, theology, and the love of fellow believers. This is the fruit we should seek to cultivate in our Christian life; and it is fruit that is best cultivated in the soil of a redeemed mind, meditating and dwelling deeply on the: nature, power, and work of God. This is the example of Anselm, and it should be the example and testimony of all God's people.

Bibliology Basics

- 66 Books
- 40+ Authors
- 1500+ years of writing
- 3 languages & continents
- Inspired by God
- Inerrant in composition
- Infallible in teaching
- Sufficient in practice
- Solitary rule of faith

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY 101—APPLICABLE

In light of our definition of the Bible as: inspired, inerrant, infallible, and sufficient; we want to conclude our look at Bibliology with the idea of the applicability of Scripture. If the Bible is all of the things we have stated above, then it is not a leap of logic to believe that the message carried forward by the Bible is in fact applicable to the world in which we, or any other person, lives.

In order to apply something, we must first understand it; theologically speaking we refer to the Bible as having perspicuity. Something that is perspicuous is something that is clear, or able to be seen through; and thus it is with Scripture. When studying your Bible you are reading multiple styles and types of writing including: history, poetry, legal documents, personal correspondence, didactic material, etc. Not everything included in every genre of every book is meant to apply directly to me, in my life, at this time.

There are however, contained within each and everyone of those genres and styles, principles for living my life; regardless of who I am or where I live. This is what we mean when we define the Scripture as applicable. It contains timeless truths that I can understand, discern, and apply; regardless of my station or situation of life.

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Take, for instance, the Law's commands about regulations concerning oxen from Exodus 21:28—32. At first blush, this would seem to have nothing to do with my modern life. I do not own an ox, much less oxen; I am in no danger from any strange oxen, as I do not know anyone who owns an ox or has any intention, joking or otherwise, to purchase and raise an ox or oxen. Far too many modern readers have rejected this portion of God's Law as an archaic, useless cultural remnant unworthy of time or attention.

However, when we read our Bibles in light of what we know to be true of it, see above; then my practical working knowledge must come into alignment with that theoretical understanding. So in this case; God has inspired the recording of this law, and made it available down through the ages. It has been read by countless Christians, over the course of three plus millennia; in who knows how many languages, at present count Wikipedia credits 698 languages as having a Bible translation. Therefore, because God has given and preserved this; I can learn from it. At least that is how my theological understanding of Bibliology should practically work in my life; and in this case, as in every case, it does.

No, you have no oxen; but you do have responsibility. The Israelite was called to love their neighbor as themselves (Leviticus 19:18); that is not a New Testament command, it is part of the revelation of God through His Law. How would they love their neighbor in this way? For starters, it meant fulfilling the Garden command of having dominion (Genesis 2:15), and that includes the animals I raise and have watch over. In order to love my neighbor, I care for the things of God, and ensure, to the best of my ability, they are incapable of harming others. This should be equally true of say a 2,400 pound bull ox, and say a 3,000 pound vehicle (the average size of a midsize sedan). Already we have taken the principle behind the command and moved it forward to our time.

But Exodus 21 also takes into account: responsibility, care, and frequency; we should do the same. This is a simple example, we could give many more; but the point is profound. Your Bible makes sense from pillar to post, Genesis to Revelation; and as His people, it is our job to apply that sense to every aspect of our lives. If you do not know how, get into a good church and learn. And start by reading your Bible; it will do you good.

Next month we will look to move to Theology Proper (The Doctrine of God)

RECOVERY ROOM WITH DARRELL



Hello everyone; this month I want to talk about living in Christ and what that looks like. Everyone lives in or for something. Whether it be our: family, job, possessions, or whatever. But living in and for Christ is the most important.

When we accept Christ in our lives, we receive the Holy Spirit, and He empowers us to live in Christ and do our best to live a Godly life. The Bible tells us that if we do live for Christ, that we will bear much fruit and it is not talking about apples and strawberries. The fruit in the Bible is explained in Galatians 5:22 –23 *The fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self controls; against such things, there is no law.*

In other words, a life living in Christ should slowly look like a life that produces these kinds of fruits. Living in Christ is the exact opposite of living in sin. But that does not mean we will not sin. Over time, we should look more like Christ everyday and if we are not: we need to seriously take a look at our lives.

This is the warning of Paul in 2 Corinthians 13:5 *Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test? We are the only one's that truly know if we have accepted Christ. And if we did not; it will show either way.*

See you next month.

Addiction = Dependence = Craving = Need = Habit = Weakness = Slavery

Salvation = Release = Life = Freedom = Joy = Completeness

1 John 1:8–10

If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

The Problem

Psalm 51:1–4

Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. 4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

The Cure

2 Corinthians 5:20–21

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

The Promise

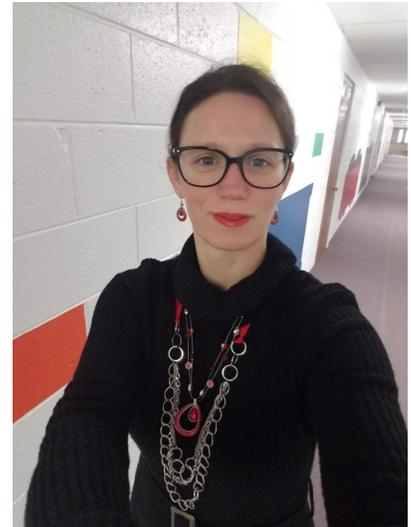
John 10:27–30

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

KAT'S KORNER

What a fancy word...Complementarianism. There is no simple answer as to what the word means, but rather it is a concept of how Biblical Manhood and Womanhood function in society. It came about by action of The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, to more thoroughly explain The Danvers Statement. The Danvers Statement was prepared by several, over 30 in fact, evangelical leaders and laymen in 1987 and first published in 1988.

Very wise and scholarly men and women as well as homemakers, Christian authors, professors, and pastors all came together to write a concise statement on what God, according to His Scripture, has to say about men and women. The results were then expounded upon in the book *"Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood; A Response to Evangelical Feminism"* edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem. I encourage you to read the book if you truly want to better understand, in this world of confusion, what God has to say about Biblical Manhood and Womanhood.



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Now any overview of Complementarianism begins with a definition of both Biblical Manhood and Biblical Womanhood. First off the roles for men and women were given by God in the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, BEFORE the fall of man. (Man as in Mankind). SOOOO, the definitions are based on the perfect plan of God for both men and women before sin entered in and distorted everything. These definitions are a goal and guide, something to strive for in living a life following after Christ. While there is no perfect way to follow or fit in with them on this earth; praise God one day we will be able to Glorify Him perfectly in following His plan when He redeems His people. But until then, we can glorify God in our striving to follow His will.

Now on to the definitions.

Biblical Manhood is defined as: *"At the heart of mature masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, provide for, and protect women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships."*

Biblical Womanhood is defined as: *"At the heart of mature femininity is a freeing disposition to affirm, receive, and nurture strength and leadership from worthy men in ways appropriate to a woman's differing relationships."*

Before diving into each one individually, we can see that there are some similarities within Biblical Manhood and Womanhood; and the first is "maturity". We are not talking merely physical or emotional, but rather spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity only comes from: time in prayer with God, reading scripture, and spending time with fellow believers who are examples of mature Christ followers.

The second is appropriateness towards differing relationships. Men will not treat his: mother, wife, daughter, sister, female coworker or any other woman the same, in regards to his responsibility towards each woman; nor should he. He still has responsibilities toward each woman, but in different respects, in light of the relationship.

The same is true for women. How a wife interacts with her husband is different than with her: father, son, brother, or coworker. A woman is not under obligation to follow any or every man, but to follow men in her life appropriate to the relationship.

Every male-female relationship is delicately balanced or complementary to one another. The way God has things is, orderly, balanced, and beautiful.

July will be Biblical Manhood, followed by Biblical Womanhood in August.

WORDS WITH LOU



“In the beginning (αρχή) was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1, NASB95)

What is the meaning of αρχή (beginning, ruler) in John 1:1?

Range of meanings

the commencement of something as an action, process, or state of being, beginning, i.e. a point of time at the beginning of a duration.

One with whom a process begins, beginning

The first cause, the beginning

A point of time at the beginning of a duration—‘beginning, to begin.’

αρχή always signifies “primacy,” whether in time: “beginning,” principium, or in rank: “power,” “dominion,” “office.”

The prologue of John's Gospel is of the utmost importance because it immediately brings the reader back to the beginning of the Bible and to the very first verse of the Bible "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." (Gen 1:1 NASB)

In doing this, the apostle John is no doubt referring to the creation and its Creator. D.A. Carson, the author of the Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel According to John puts it this way: “Both in Genesis and here, the context shows that the beginning is absolute: the beginning of all things, the beginning of the universe. “

Thus, the reader should quickly realize after reading verse one that John attributes to the Logos, that which can only be attributed to God alone. John's attributing creation to the Logos cannot be overstated; as the entirety of his gospel relies on the person of Jesus Christ. Indeed, when John writes (εν αρχή ην ο λογος,); that is, "In the beginning was the Word"; John is stating that Jesus is more than a created being, he is saying that Jesus is eternal: with no beginning and no end.

Understanding the personhood of Christ in relation to the Father and the Holy Spirit is crucial, as many world religions get this wrong. For example, Mormonism believes that while Jesus indeed created this world, they believe that He is separate from the Holy Spirit, and the Father. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus was the first created being; more specifically, they believe that he was Michael the archangel and a lesser god, and that Jesus then created all other things. They base this on their faulty translation of the Scriptures, the New World Translation. This Bible translates John 1:1 like this, " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." (NWT)

While their translation has many issues that have been thoroughly refuted by anyone who knows Greek; it does not agree with the totality of Scripture. The reader needs to go no further than the prophet Isaiah to understand what the Bible says about the Creator. Importantly, Isaiah teaches that there were no gods before Yahweh, nor were there any formed after (Is 43:10). The book of Isaiah also states that Yahweh alone created all things (Is 44:24). Thus, the reader of the Gospel of John should understand that Jesus is God; which is John's point all along.

BIBLICAL LANGUAGES

- Hebrew (O.T.)
- Aramaic (parts of Daniel & Ezra)
- Koine Greek (N.T.)
- Each have unique Word Order
Syntax
Culture
Specificity
- All were used by God

FUN WITH LEARNING—PARENTS ZONE

FAMOUS CATECHISMS

- Martin Luther's Small (1529)
- Geneva (1541)
- Book of Common Prayer (1549)
- Heidelberg (1563)
- Westminster (1647)

Catechism is not just a dirty word that Roman Catholics use to scare children. It is a valid method of teaching that we use in other areas of life. Based partially on the Socratic method (question & answer), the fundamental goal of a catechism is to communicate timeless, Biblical truth in such a manner that it “sticks” into a child’s mind (Proverbs 22:6).

The goal of this section is not to make you feel like a bad parent if you have not done this. It isn’t even to make you feel guilty if you do not use it. The goal of this section is to give you another tool in the toolbox to combat the secularization of your brain, my brain, and our children’s brains.

The more we recognize the need for discipleship in our homes, the more we will want solid tools that aid us in that task. Each month we’ll give you some new questions, and blank the answers to last months as a way to test. If this works for your family, awesome, if it does not; find something that does. Then tell us about it so we can include it for other families.

Last Month's Questions

Run through them & see how you did.....
Even if you don't get them all correct—Celebrate the things you have learned

Question 21: How do you know your soul will last forever?

Answer:

Question 22: In what condition did God make Adam & Eve?

Answer:

Question 23: What covenant did God make with Adam?

Answer:

Question 24: What is a covenant?

Answer:

Question 25: In this covenant, what did God require Adam to do?

Answer:

Question 26: What did God promise in this covenant?

Answer:

Question 27: What did God threaten in this covenant?

Answer:

Question 28: Did Adam keep the covenant?

Answer:

Question 29: What is sin?

Answer:

Question 30: What is meant by ignoring?

Answer:

This Month's Questions

Question 31: What is meant by transgression?

Answer: Doing what God forbids

Question 32: What does every sin deserve?

Answer: The wrath and curse of God

Question 33: What was the sin of our first parents?

Answer: Eating the forbidden fruit

Question 34: Who tempted Adam and Eve to this sin?

Answer: Satan tempted Eve, and used her to tempt Adam

Question 35: How did Adam and Eve change when they sinned?

Answer: They became sinful and miserable

Question 36: Did Adam act for himself alone in his covenant?

Answer: No, he represented the entire human race

Question 37: What effect did the sin of Adam have on all?

Answer: We are born guilty and sinful

Question 38: How sinful are you by nature?

Answer: I am corrupt in every part of my being

Question 39: What is the inherited sinful nature called?

Answer: Original Sin

Question 40: Can anyone go to heaven with this nature?

Answer: No, our hearts must be changed first.

FUN WITH FUN—KIDS ZONE

Paul's Letters

T T K E S K F O M R N A V X W
I K P C N Z B W O X B T J Z S
M P H U A X P M J N N L R N Y
O J A V I B A H P O Q O A K C
T K Q H S N J P I D P I G O O
H R E G S O T T F L T A R W I
Y C P N O P C T V A E I K L O
G Y V R L J P B L O N M F O T
D V G N O J Q A L T G L O T G
S Y Z N C H G K H I N E A N S
X S T X S N A I P P I L I H P
E P H E S I A N S S U T I T Q
V L R Q P N K G H W P D Q E Y
M M N M S O A G R M N F T Q F
R W W X R S B J K T Q B O Z G

COLOSSIANS

GALATIANS

ROMANS

CORINTHIANS

PHILEMON

TIMOTHY

EPHESIANS

PHILIPPIANS

TITUS

WALKING THROUGH THE WORD BIBLE STUDY

COLOSSIANS 2:1–5

AUTHORSHIP & DATE

- Written by Paul
- Between 60–62 A.D.
- Prison Epistle

COLOSSAE

- In modern day Turkey
- Founded by Epaphras
- Encountering Gnosticism
- Not visited by Paul

Based on everything Paul has laid out in chapter 1, it is now time to address some of the “how to” of Christian living. Paul begins this application with an understanding of, and basis for Christian unity. And yes, Christian unity is different from cultural or worldly unity. The world can never truly have unity; they can have short-term agreement, but never true unity. The believer, on the other hand, can and does have true unity and fellowship with the people of God because we are united in Christ. That fellowship shows itself in: concern, encouragement, wisdom, security, and joy; all of which are demonstrated in this section by Paul.



Verse 1 begins with Paul declaring his love and worry over those in Christ who he has not met, and therefore, has not disciplined. This was Paul’s goal for all of the people of God, regardless of how they came to faith (1 Corinthians 3:5–9); that they grow in accordance with the Apostolic teaching and mature in the faith.

Paul desires this growth because that is the burden that has been placed upon the Apostles (Acts 1:7–8), and it is the gifting for God’s people that

has been given to Paul (1 Corinthians 12:4–7). This is not an ego trip for Paul; rather it is the divine mandate placed upon him in action (Acts 9:1–19).

Hence his sentence continues with the hopeful goals of Paul’s Apostolic teaching; beginning with the encouragement of their hearts. This is a work that can only be done through the ministry of the Holy Spirit on behalf of the completed work of Christ (Ephesians 3:14–19). Our faith builds us up from the inside out (Matthew 23:25–26), and Paul desires to increase the knowledge of the Colossians; thereby increasing their faith and encouraging them for Kingdom work.

Notice how we are dealing with the church of Colossae as a whole; that is because they are a whole. Verse 2 continues with their togetherness: because of the work of Christ, leading to the building up of the believers, encouraging their core being; they are the people of God (1 Peter 2:9–10). Because they are the people of God, they are no longer their own, they have been redeemed (1 Corinthians 6:20), by the most valuable of currencies (1 Peter 1:17–19). So they belong to God and are now tasked with working and walking together as the body of Christ. They are to watch over one another, guard one another, and carry one another’s concerns as they endeavor to follow after Christ (Galatians 6:1–2).

As they do this, they follow the upward march that leads to the great prize of humanity: union with God. This is the goal; not earthly reward, but heavenly blessing (Mark 8:36–37). We seek, as we follow faithfully (1 Corinthians 4:16); to attain that great prize which is: righteousness and fellowship with God (Philippians 3:7–11).

And that righteousness will answer the great mystery of our lives; how do we attain relationship with God. The answer is; only through Christ. We know that sin will be judged (Genesis 18:25), and that judgment will encompass all sin (Romans 1:18–32), but in Christ we are freed from it (John 3:36). Because of our standing in and with Christ, our condemnation has been paid (John 19:30), and our condemnation has been cast off (Romans 8:1). Therefore we can confidently walk (Psalm 23:4–6), because we know there is nothing in the valley of this world that can take us away from the salvation that is found in Christ (Romans 8:38–39).

This Christ, who is Jesus, is the fulfillment of the ages (Hebrews 1:1–2). He is the One to whom the entirety of the Law was directed (John 5:39–47), and in who the Law would have her fulfillment (Matthew 5:17–19). He is the One who answers the question: “How may I be redeemed?”; because He is the One who removes the veil and opens our minds and hearts to the truth of God’s salvation by grace through faith (Galatians 3:23–29).

And this revelation of the Son is the fulfillment of the totality of the Old Testament. How may I be free of fear (Proverbs 9:10)? I can be free because in His grace (Romans 2:4), He has taken away my shame and the reproach of my sin; and granted me free access to the throne room of the King (Hebrews 4:15–16). In that great throne room, the King has judged me in Christ. And in that judgment I am not guilty, and righteous (Jude 24–25). And by His empowering I am no longer afraid or downcast, but uplifted and set forth as a servant in His Kingdom (2 Timothy 1:7).

This knowledge and understanding of Scripture is vital to being rightly grounded in the world and preserved by His grace.

.....The believer can and does have true unity and fellowship with the people of God because we are united in Christ. That fellowship shows itself in: concern, encouragement, wisdom, security, and joy; all of which are demonstrated in this section by Paul.....

Knowing and following God is our inoculation against the deceitfulness and scheming of the world. By being grounded in Christ and His Word, we are able to stand firm and be sanctified by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:11–16). That sanctification works itself through every avenue of our lives as we grow in wisdom and Kingdom service; living as the transformed worshippers (Romans 12:1–2).

Furthermore, this wisdom is our guide. We know the truth, are grounded firmly by it, and therefore are able to rightly evaluate the world in light of the truth of God and the revelation of Christ Jesus (1 John 4:4–6). This is how the sinner is converted and hearts and minds are changed (1 Corinthians 2:1–5). We do not change anyone; the Holy Spirit does. We do not convert anyone; the Holy Spirit does. We do not redeem anyone; Jesus does. We do not forgive and transform anyone; God does. This is our rest and labor; the constant evaluation of the world (see page 1 of this journal), according to the standards of God in Christ through Scripture. And we can be at ease in this work, because God holds us and will never forsake His people (John 10:27–30).

This leads us to Paul's conclusion, joy in growth in Christ. The people of God labor for one another, because we are the Kingdom until Jesus returns. There are not multiple kingdoms, because there are not multiple gods. Instead we have now imposters waiting for their turn at judgment; until the final righteous Kingdom of God will be established (Daniel 2:44–45).

So we strive and build because no matter who we are, or where we are; we are part of the One Church (Ephesians 4:4–6). And that One Church has one stated Divine goal of standing and dwelling with God (1 Peter 5:6–11). And that one goal is based upon the work of the One Savior for whom there can be no substitute (Acts 4:7–12).

OUTLINE

- Paul's greeting (1:1–2)
- Thanksgiving (1:3–8)
- Prayer for the Church (1:9–14)
- Exaltation of Christ (1:15–23)
- Sacrifice for Christ (1:24–29)
- Unity with Believers (2:1–5)
- Grounding in Christ (2:6–15)
- Freedom in Christ (2:16–23)
- Sanctification by Focus (3:1–4)
- Sanctification in Living (3:5–11)
- Born-again Living (3:12–17)
- Relationships (3:18–4:1)
- Testimonial Living (4:2–6)
- Commendations & Greetings (4:7–18)

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY MINISTRIES

A ministry of Calvary Baptist Church in Rockford, IL; we are a teaching ministry with the goal of making Biblical Theology make sense to the everyday Christian.

We are Pastors and laymen, formally educated in theology and trained in the school of life. We have had success and failure, joy and heart-break, faith and doubt. And through all these things we have had a secure salvation in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

JUSTIFYING JUNE

In Christ our lives truly need no justification (1 Corinthians 2:15). Instead, as followers of Christ, faithfully seeking to be His disciples in this world; we should (and must) live boldly for God and His Kingdom. The world is unravelling and, barring a revival or similar movement of God; could quickly descend into a humanist nightmare.

This is because, at its core, the world has no basis to accomplish the things it demands (1 Corinthians 2:14). The world wants justice; but only God can provide true justice. The world wants righteousness in her dealings; but only God can provide true righteousness. What the world is truly clamoring for, is the same thing every sinful heart, living in rejection of God, has been clamoring for: acceptance. This is both the description and prophecy of Paul (Romans 1:32). The world wants your featly and approval; and will stop at nothing less than your full submission to it.

As His people, walking in His ways (1 Corinthians 11:1); we must be willing to be the people you say no. We must rightly weight the thoughts and views of the world and judge them rightly (Matthew 7:1–5). To do less would be dishonest (Proverbs 11:1), and an abdication of the calling we have been given (Matthew 28:19–20).

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