

CTW: Psalm 85

Reading: Colossians 2:6-19

AGD: If you ever used a GPS then you know it can lead you wrong sometimes. The other day on our way to the Hillsong event ours tried to lead us down a road that was closed. Sometimes it will have directions to go around the block when a left turn will take you right there. With a GPS it makes sense to not follow it blindly but what about following God?

Our text was written to a church being troubled by strange new teachings (or syncretistic teachings mixing paganism and Judaism it seems). Paul didn't found this church but he served as a leader for them and he wanted them to finish what they started.

1. "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit"
 - a. We've got plenty of philosophy and empty deceit. I have 4 examples
 - b. Post-modernism. The belief/assumption that there is no knowable absolute truth. Everything is relative
 - i. Colossians—secret mysteries
 - ii. A wandering life
 - c. Legalism. Counterpart to PM. We know everything we need to know. Practice of self-righteousness. Save yourself by figuring out the right group and then go do it.
 - i. Colossians—asceticism, new moons, foods, etc
 - ii. A "church" life
 - d. Atheism. Denies a spiritual world or spiritual life. As if science can measure all things. Removes meaning from life or even worse makes it as if human beings (or some equally unworthy material thing) is what matters.
 - i. Colossians—not really a thing in the ancient world but when we make it about us...
 - ii. A hopeless life
 - e. Casual Christianity. Ego-centric and hedonistic. Enough Jesus to make us feel good but not enough to restrict us from living how we want. Its motivation is to increase pleasure (heaven/help) and to reduce pain (suffering/hell)
 - i. Colossians—faith should grow, its about relationship not religion
 - ii. A lukewarm life
 - iii. Jesus didn't die for you to live a lukewarm life
2. The works of God in Christ and our response
 - a. "walk in Him" stay rooted, abound in thanksgiving, avoid being taken captive, don't let others judge over superficial religious practices, let no one draw you away from faith back toward self-righteousness
 - b. Christ—"the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" (you have been filled in Him!)
 - i. The Head of all rule and authority
 - ii. Your sinful flesh of sin was circumcised in Him
 - iii. You were buried with Him in baptism
 - iv. You were also raised with Him (the power that raised Him is the same power that raised you to eternal life)
 - c. We were dead in our sin and God made us alive together with Christ
 - d. God...
 - i. Made us alive
 - ii. Forgave our sin
 - iii. Cancelled the "debt of sin" (by nailing it to the cross with Jesus)

- iv. God disarmed all other rulers and authorities (human and demonic) and exposed their weaknesses against Him.
 1. Christ submitted Himself to their evil, judgement, power and broke it
 2. They brought death and He reclaimed life
 3. They used violence and Jesus didn't exercise His power as God
 4. Human and demonic evil conspired against Christ
 5. We hated Him so much to crucify Him but Jesus loved us anyway

3. So which is more impressive—the human or the Divine?
 - a. Human philosophy or the revelation of Christ?
 - b. Human sinfulness or the grace of God to forgive?
 - c. Death or Christ's triumph over it?

4. Therefore as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.
 - a. Is "received" active or passive?
 - b. How do/did you receive? **God extended grace and we accepted it.**
 - c. Paul is telling the Colossians not to trust in human activities but only to keep their faith in Jesus Christ.
 - i. Have you wandered away from simple reliance upon Jesus and drifted toward ideas or practices that show more faith in yourself than in Him?
 - ii. If you stopped growing then it's because you stepped out from under the Head
 - iii. Hold fast to Jesus
 - d. Remember "you were DEAD" in your trespasses and sin...what can a dead man do? Nothing. Like Lazarus we just got up when God called our name.
 - e. So, continue like that. Keep responding to God.

CLOSE— We know what Jesus says: "You can do nothing apart from Me; but in Me you will have the grace to do all things." Grace to live, serve, grow, learn

So let us continue in the faith first handed down to us for it is God's Good News. Let us continue in love so that we can look like Jesus and show the world He is still involved.

And not turning away to philosophies, human traditions or religious works let us continue in God's lavish grace