



7/2/24

Have you enjoyed the beautiful weather over the last few days? It seems that God has given us a reprieve from the intense heat. I always think the weather is a reminder to us that He's in control. I'm thankful His plan involved a few cooler days.

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Colossians 2:1-15

Paul wrote this letter to the Colossian church while he was in prison around 61 AD. He had never been to this church before, but he had gotten word that people teaching heresy had infiltrated the church. This letter was to dispel the lies. Everyone knew who Paul was even though he hadn't been there. They deeply respected him as an apostle of Christ. In Colossians 1:28-29, he said, "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works within me."

Vs. 1-5 ~ With the powerful energy of God working within Paul, he still struggled for these believers and all believers who he had not met face to face. Why? He wanted to encourage their hearts so that they would never give up the faith. He wanted their hearts to be knit together in love...because it is through encouragement and love that we experience the priceless wealth of being absolutely convinced of who Jesus is. It is when we have that assurance that we get to know the mystery of God, Jesus Christ...the mystery that He would send His only Son to be the replacement payment for our sins.

We cannot know all the priceless treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge if we don't know Jesus. And what I find so convicting is that Paul said this knowledge would be ours with full assurance AS we are knit TOGETHER in love. We can't have the full assurance of knowledge of Jesus unless we are growing together in unity as brothers and sisters in Christ. This so goes against the individuality of our culture. We're taught to make it all about ME...I believe that is a tactic from the pit of hell because Satan knows that our unity destroys his work. So he takes

people captive with secret deception and whispers of lies. O Lord, please help us not to fall prey to his lies!!!

It is when we are knit together in the love of Jesus, growing in the understanding of God's mystery, Jesus Christ...with wisdom and understanding, that we are able to recognize plausible arguments and not get caught in their trap. Let me not miss this...the arguments the devil uses "through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared" (1 Timothy 4:2), are PLAUSIBLE. They make logical sense...but they are lies. The only way we can be protected from being duped by them is by standing together in unity and growing closer to Jesus. O Lord, let that be our hearts' desire!!! I pray that if Paul were here, he could rejoice that Summit Point church is disciplined in our stand with God, not shifting from the hope of the gospel, immovable in our faith in Jesus Christ!

Vs. 6-7 ~ Therefore, since we ARE in Jesus through His blood, in the same way that we received Him...through the Spirit, by faith...help us to walk in Him. We are rooted in Him and no one can take that away. Let us be built up in Him. How does that happen? By continuing to pursue His word so that we can hold it in our hearts and experience the joy of obeying Him. As we are taught so faithfully through His word and in our church...where the word is preached without apology...help us, Lord, to be strengthened in our faith. Let the roots grow deeper and deeper so that nothing moves our faith. And as our faith grows, our thankfulness will grow so that it cannot be contained. Father, for all eternity we will be finding more and more reasons to thank You. The reasons will never run out.

Vs. 8-10 ~ Father, please help us to be so rooted and grounded in Your love and truth that we recognize deception before it can take us captive as slaves. We HAVE Your truth...It is so strong that it has the power to break all chains. The truth is, if we allow ourselves to be taken captive, it is by choice. We are voluntary slaves.

The strategies of deception the devil uses to take us captive are philosophies and hollow, empty deceptions that will fall like a house of cards if we simply hold them up to the word of truth. They use the traditions of man that follow the principles of the world, which are infused by the evil spirits who are actively working in the world, rather than the words of Jesus.

I learned bank tellers learn how to recognize counterfeit bills, not by studying counterfeits, but by having them know the look and feel of the real bills so well that they immediately recognize a counterfeit when they see it. The way God's people will know the deceptive but plausible philosophies of the world (that are run by the devil) is by knowing the word like the bank tellers know money. O Lord, please help us to delight in Your word...and to be protected by Your word!

Sometimes my selfish desires and logic make me want to avoid God's word...especially when holding to it means that I have to change the way I think. Father, please help me to fully comprehend that I am ALWAYS better off holding to Your truth rather than trying to create my own.

Let me never forget that it is in Jesus that ALL of the deity of God dwells. Anyone who says they know God, but they reject Jesus, is following a lie. Anyone who says, "Your Jesus is not my Jesus," as though they could create their own Jesus that does not align with what His word says, does not know Jesus. He IS the Word. He will never contradict His word. O Lord, let me not be guilty of believing lies about who You are for any reason. I have believed lies about You so that I could justify my selfish desires, and I have believed lies about You because of my own fears. All lies about You paralyze me from following the truth. Please remove any weight of deception AS I hold fast to Your word.

Praise Your name! I HAVE BEEN filled by You. I am complete in You...completely secure, completely loved. You are the Head of all rule and authority. You are IN CHARGE. Any empty philosophy that teaches me that You are subservient to my needs and desires is a lie. You have all the authority, all the power, all the wisdom, all the understanding, and all the truth. I bow to You. You are the Head of me! Praise Your name for taking me into Your arms as Your own. Let me not wander from You or Your truth.

Vs. 11-12 ~ I am IN CHRIST. What does that mean? I was circumcised with a circumcision made without hands. This is Jewish terminology. Jews understood that physical circumcision was an outward sign that they belonged to the Lord as His people. The thing about circumcision is...the skin that is cut away never grows back. I was spiritually circumcised by Jesus Christ...He crucified my body of flesh (that part of me that is hostile to Him). I was buried with Him in His death and raised with Him to new life in Him simply by believing Jesus. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead also raised me from the dead. And the dead part of me will never grow back.

Vs. 13-15 ~ I WAS dead in all my sins and the uncircumcision of my flesh. This is before Jesus took hold of my life and circumcised my heart so that it would beat for Him. I had no hope until...God united me with Jesus and made me alive together with Him. There is no place to delineate where I end and He begins. We are completely one.

The only way I could be one with Christ is by His death and resurrection. He forgave all my sins. He canceled the record of debt that stood against me with its legal demands of life in prison...in hell. He canceled that debt...but somebody had to pay it...so Jesus did. My debt was nailed into His hands and feet when He was nailed to cross.

When Jesus died for me, He took away the power of all the evil rulers and authorities who now try to deceive me. They will never have the power to destroy me because of Jesus...so they spend their time trying to deceive me so that I drift away from the Lord. O Lord, please help me not to be taken captive by their lies. I am so much better off with You than I could possibly imagine. I will never be put to shame because I belong to You...but those deceivers in the spiritual realm are already put to shame...they glory in their shame. Let me not be deceived.

O Lord, I love You. You never deceive. You ARE the absolute truth. You ARE good. You are over

all and one day all will bow and call You Lord. I want to do that today and every day. Your Kingdom come. Your will be done.