

IF YE CONTINUE IN THE FAITH

A CONTEXTUAL LOOK AT A TROUBLE VERSE

*"If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled,
and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel ..."*

~ Colossians 1:23

1. A Common Question

- a. *"What does Colossians 1:23 mean?"*
- b. Col 1 speaks of our reconciliation (1:21) through the death of Christ (1:22) ... if...?
- c. Does our reconciliation, salvation, or justification depend on our faithfulness? (No.)

2. To the Saints at Colosse

- a. Remember to whom Paul is writing "saints and faithful brethren" ← saved – Col 1:3-8
- b. They need "comfort" "full assurance of understanding" - Col 1:9, 2:2
- c. They were at risk of being deceived by enticing words - Col 2:4, 8, 16, 18-20
- d. What was the wrong idea? That Christ was insufficient, he couldn't/didn't do it all.
 - i. In short, perfection required your participation and performing of good works.
- e. Attractive things: wisdom, tradition, religion, obedience, humility, discipline - Col 2:23

3. Paul's Remedy

- a. They need 'rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith...' – Col 2:7
- b. Strengthen with all things Christ does and that he is – see Col 1:11
- c. 1st, who did it all for your salvation in Col 1:12, 13, 14, 20. Who is he in Col 1:15-19.
- d. Who did it all for your perfection in Col 2:6, 11-15, 19, Who is he in Col 2:2-3, 9-10.
- e. Answer: Christ did it all for your salvation and sanctification - 1 Cor 1:30-31

4. Continue in the Faith

- a. *"in the faith"* – Not 'in your works', performance, maintaining holiness, but in Christ's.
- b. 1:22 - *"to present you holy ..."* - Only Christ makes this possible, through his work.
- c. To be reconciled, we must be presented 'holy, unblameable, unreprouvable' – 2Cor 5:21
- d. *"in the body of his flesh..."* – his blood, death, resurrection is what does this work.
- e. See their faith and hope as Paul preached in all the world - Col 1:4-6
- f. It was faith acc. to the ministry of Paul, the dispensation of God's grace - Col 1:23-25
- g. Christ has already made them perfect (complete in Him) – Col 2:10
- h. Not everyone continues in it (i.e. walks in assurance of these truths) Gal 2:5, 2Ti 3:14
- i. Paul preaches to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus (by faith) – Col 1:28
- j. *"grounded and settled"* - If they continue in the faith unsettled, they can be deceived.

5. Hope of the Gospel

- a. *"be not moved away..."* – This is what happens when they are deceived, not stablished
- b. *"hope of the gospel"* – Our standing in hope of the glory of God – Rom 5:1-2, 8:18
- c. This hope of glory is one of the riches of the mystery Paul preaches – Col 1:26-27
- d. Paul is not warning them about losing the hope but moving away from it by deceit.
- e. Paul also warns the Corinthians about not keeping in mind the gospel – 1 Cor 15:2-4
- f. Paul reminds the Ephesians about the grace given to him - Eph 3:2
- g. Being perfect, holy, sanctified, complete comes from the gospel of Christ in them.
- h. If saints think they are incomplete, it is because they have moved away from faith/hope
- i. If they continue in the faith, they stand in what that faith declares – complete in Christ.