

## Fill Up! In Christ Col 2:6-15

### Intro/Hook

5 weeks into our series in Colossians titled “Fill Up! And Overflow” from 3:16  
Named such because keep seeing this fill up theme running through the letter  
Come to vs 6-7 – core of the letter  
Sum up the previous teaching and foundation  
Turn to practical application of it

### Read Col 2:6-15

Notice the “in Him’s”

How do you fill up, *in* something; or especially someone?

Very important because . . .

Being “in Christ” has major implications for us  
Used by Paul more than 80 times in his letters  
All-encompassing; defines who we are; our identity

### Defining “In Christ”

Used 6 times (in him) in 10 verses

United with him; in relationship with him; in communion with him  
Within his realm of influence, provision, and protection  
Closely identified with him and his attributes  
Under his Lordship; According to his ways; By his power

Just as a fish lives and moves and has its being “in water” (Finding Nemo)

So too, we are to live and move and have our being “in Christ”

Acts 17 – Paul to the religious people of Athens  
Fish and water go hand in hand; the water defines the fish because that’s where he lives  
So too, Christians and Christ go hand in hand; we were designed to be shaped and  
defined by the characteristics of Jesus

Conveys an intimate integration of your whole identity with his

One of the reasons why Christianity is a *personal* relationship

You take on the identity of Jesus

Because of this intimacy and identification w/ Christ, you think straight . . .

### In Christ, you think straight (v8-9)

Don’t get sucked in (taken captive) by . . .

*Philosophy* – beliefs and systems of thought contrived by man or influenced by Satan

Many bookstore examples; Number of religions in the world – 42,667

*Empty deceit* – deceptively good sounding thoughts that don’t hold up under scrutiny, or  
deliver on what they promise

You determine your own destiny – wishful thinking (3<sup>rd</sup> World)

If it feels good, it can’t be all wrong – flirtin’ with disaster (heroin user)

Truth lies within you, you just have to find it – if that’s true, it’s obvious that some  
people have been looking in all the wrong places; don’t hold your breath on that

Whatever works for you is best (people in prison)

These philosophies of empty deceit are . . .

*According human tradition* – practices/beliefs that claim respect just because they are old

In religious circles, when tradition supersedes the Scriptures, it’s empty deceit

Promises or claims sound good or might even be reassuring, but they don’t stand up  
to the scrutiny of the Word or deliver what they promise

*Or according to the elemental spirits of the world* – according to primal or cosmic forces,  
often associated with the demonic realm or spiritual forces of evil

Astrology is a current example

Don’t get taken in by these things, rather, be held firm by the truth . . .

8-9 – *according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily*

Be confident of who he is and the truth he represents

*Anything* apart from him and his truth is an empty, man-made philosophy that deceives

Not only do you think straight, but . . .

### In Christ, you have everything you need (v10)

10 – *you have been filled in him*

Been given everything you need in your union, intimacy, and identification w/ him

Tense of *have been filled* – state of fullness accomplished in past and sustained in present

You’ve been given peace, joy, patience, gentleness, humility, compassion, wisdom

Jn 1:16 – *From his fullness we have all received grace upon grace*

Includes material needs when linked to the body of Christ (Acts)

Illustration – small cup in ocean of Christ

Everything you need for life/godliness is yours in Christ

### In Christ, you’re set apart and free (v11-12)

11 – *In him also you were circumcised*

Break the sentence down . . .

*In Christ you were circumcised . . . having been buried and raised with him in baptism*

How were you buried and raised with Christ in baptism?

Paul is using the picture of baptism here to refer to salvation

Through faith (v12), Christ’s *physical* death, burial, and resurrection was your *spiritual*  
death, burial and resurrection

That is, when he died physically for your sin, you died spiritually to your sin

You were released from its consequences and washed of its stain

When he rose physically from the dead, you rose spiritually to new life of righteousness

Your salvation in Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection is referred to here using the  
symbolism of baptism

So you were buried and raised with Christ in baptism spiritually, through your faith in  
Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection, physically

Now, as a result of having been buried and raised with him, spiritually . . .

You have also been set apart as one of his people, free from the consequences/grip of sin

Uses the picture of circumcision to describe that

Before Christ, physical circumcision was God's means of . . .

Setting his people apart from those around them

Reminded them that he was their God, and they his people

Sign guaranteeing his promises/blessings to them

Some have been tempted to use this passage to draw an analogy between circumcision and baptism

They think because you were physically circumcised BC, you were one of God's own

And they think because you are physically baptized now, you're one of God's own

Problem is, they miss the faith part; this is a spiritual thing

Apart from faith, your physical baptism symbolizes nothing

12 – you were also raised with him *through faith*

So too, apart from faith, circumcision was nothing for God's people before Christ

Rom 2:25-29 – circumcision was a matter of the heart

So Paul is using the imagery of circumcision and baptism to say that . . .

Because of your salvation in Christ (symbolized by baptism), you are *set apart* as one of God's own (symbolized by circumcision), *free* from the consequences and grip of sin in your life

### **In Christ, you're alive (v13)**

13 – *You, who were dead in your trespasses* –

Before trusting Jesus as your Savior and Lord, you were spiritually dead . . .

Helplessly hopeless

You were at a loss for what to do, unable to help yourself, headed for doom

Due to your *trespasses* – specific and willful rebellion against God's standards

And to *the uncircumcision of your flesh* – your unclean state of sinfulness in general

Some of you are still there – you're spiritually dead

No joy, no peace, no hope, no freedom in your life, no security, no thought of it at all

Is it because of . . .

Lack of information – you just don't know the truth

Unbelief – you aren't convinced

Laziness – you have questions, but you're too lazy to find the answers

Pride – you've given the impression for years that you're a Christian, but you're just now getting it and you don't want people to know

Fear man more than God – afraid of what friends will think if commit your life to Jesus

The first step toward becoming alive in Christ is realizing your need

That you're spiritually dead – helpless to do anything about it except believe and trust

First step toward embracing God's love for you in Christ leads to being made you *alive together with him*

Assured of heaven; Living life to the full; Joy beyond words

Freed from guilt that needlessly nags you

Freed from the certainty of judgment

The basis of that is forgiveness . . .

### **In Christ, you're forgiven (v13b-14)**

You're alive because God has forgiven you of your willful rebellion against God's standards that stems from your sinful nature

14 – He forgave you *by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands*

*Record of debt* refers to a figurative list or record of your sins that condemn you (*stand against you*) and demand payment (*legal demands*)

Payment demanded is death – theme that runs through all redemptive history in Bible  
God demands payment for your sins, because ultimately, all sins are against him

*This he set aside* – he removed, took away, destroyed

*By nailing it to the cross*

There's a word play going on here

Common practice of attaching a crucified man's indictment to the cross with him

The difference – the list itself was set aside or destroyed, not just the man

Which means that Christ became our sin list – when he died, so did your list; when he was destroyed, so was your record of debt

1 Peter 2:24 – *He himself bore our sins, in his body on the tree*

In Christ, you're forgiven

### **In Christ, you're safe (v15)**

Striking irony here

*Disarmed* – literally, stripped them naked

*Rulers and authorities* – dual allusion to the spiritual forces of darkness and the evil earthly rulers at that time

*Put them to open shame* – exposed them to public contempt, ridicule, or disdain

*Triumphing over them in him* – dominates over those rulers and authorities because of Christ's death on the cross

That should sound familiar

The rulers and authorities of Rome and Israel, fueled by the spiritual powers of darkness, saw Jesus as a challenge to their sovereignty and power

So they stripped him naked, held him up to public contempt and shame, and celebrated a triumph over him

The irony Paul is trying to get across here, is that . . .

God was doing the very thing to them that they thought they were doing to Christ

He was stripping them naked by exercising his power over them (*disarming them*)

He was holding them up to public contempt/shame because they were helpless to resist

Ultimately exalting in triumph over them

It's one of the most striking ironies of the cross

Bottom line: God rendered the earthly and spiritual forces, powerless

Powerless to thwart his purpose of establishing his kingdom

Powerless to prevent you from entering in

Powerless to remove you from the protection found in Christ

You're safe – from both earthly and spiritual forces of evil  
No one and no thing can thwart your hope or diminish your joy  
Or separate you from Christ

Satan's shame is ongoing every time you resist him and he is forced to *flee* you (Js 4:7)  
He's more powerful than you, but is forced to flee you . . .  
Because you're in Christ

**In Christ, you act like it (v6-7)**

All roads lead to living out your life . . . in Christ  
When you're united with him, under his Lordship, within his realm, with his identity  
You act like it; Act like who you are!

Live your life in Christ . . .  
*Rooted and built up in him* – base everything on a solid foundation of biblical truth that is  
faithfully applied  
*Established in the faith* – knowing the truth about Christ, and holding firm to your  
relationship with him  
*Just as you were taught* – if you've been taught the truth straight from the Bible, don't  
deviate from it  
*Just as you received Christ Jesus the Lord* – with the same passion that you first followed  
him, do so now  
*Thankfully* – you won't even have to work at that one

Summary

In Christ . . .

You're safe – No fear; You're forgiven – no guilt remains  
You're alive – saved from your sin; You're set apart and free – ready for God's use  
You have everything you need – lacking nothing; You think straight – not fooled