

Complete in Christ **By Elder David Pyles**

An important theme in the book of Colossians is that we are complete in Jesus Christ. One does not need other gods and does not need other revelations if they have Christ and His word. Anything other than this will be inferior, and anything added to this will be a corruption. The sufficiency and superiority of Christ are expressed in multiple ways and places in Colossians, including:

1) *In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. – 2:3*

This refers to Christ, and says that all we can know about true religion is revealed in Him and by Him. This is done in Christ-inspired scripture, as is corroborated by the famous verse:

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. – 2Tim 3:16-17

This verse not only says that scripture is inerrant, but that it is also sufficient for all spiritual needs and obligations of man.

2) *For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. – 2:9*

Humans can best understand bodily beings because this is what they are themselves, but spiritual beings are much more difficult to grasp. When the apostle says that Christ is the fullness of the Godhead *bodily*, the meaning is that He is the representation of the Godhead we can best understand. John said, “*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him,*” (Jn 1:18). While many men think of themselves as being experts about God, the immensity and complexity of the Universe should be sufficient to show that God is far beyond what any of us can comprehend. The nearest we can come to understanding Him is in Jesus Christ.

3) *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power. – 2:10*

This says He is supreme, having been given all power in heaven and earth (Mt 28:18). Those who worship things other than Him

are either worshipping imaginary beings or inferior ones, and are quite possibly worshipping devils.

4) *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. – 2:11*

Circumcision played a major role in ancient Judaism as well as in other religions, but their circumcision was by human hands and affected only the temporal, natural part of man. The circumcision in Christ is superior in that it is done by God, and in that affects the eternal, spiritual part of man.

5) *Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. – 2:12*

Religions commonly put great emphasis on burial, and some of the greatest structures in the world were built for the dead, and in the anticipation or facilitation of their resurrection. In Christ there is a superior burial, denoted by baptism, which is not based in unfounded speculations about a resurrection that shall be, but in a resurrection that has *already been*, and which certified a general resurrection to come.

6) *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. – 2:13-14*

Other religions of the world have works and rituals for appeasing their gods and securing forgiveness, but under Jesus Christ, forgiveness has *already been* completely and eternally secured by His death on the cross. Other religionists serve God in search of forgiveness. Christianity serves God in appreciation for it.

7) *And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. – 2:15*

Another reason people appeal to the gods of their religions is to be delivered from spiritual forces of evil. In Christ, the defeat of all such wicked powers has *already been* assured.

8) *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. – 3:1*

In Christ there is also a moral standard that is superior to that of any other religion. Jesus replaced all of the Ten Commandments with a higher standard, which if kept, will more than satisfy what those commandments demanded. The standard of Jesus is actually a heavenly standard. It is the standard by which heavenly beings live. He gave us this standard in preparation for the heavenly home He has bought us by His blood and given us by His grace.

All of this explains why Paul also said:

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. – Col 2:16-17

What he means here is that we should not leave others with the impression that our religion is about meat, drink, holy days, etc. Rather, it is about eternal forgiveness, resurrection from the dead and eternal life. While there is of course value to a good diet, taking time off for holidays, keeping track of moon phases, etc., Christianity is about much greater things (Rom 14:17). It is not about hot dogs, and it is demeaning to the religion to make it such. Let these be the preoccupations of the inferior competitors to Christianity. They have no place in the superior and sufficient religion of Christ.

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