

"SO WALK" COLOSSIANS 2:6-8

This Week's Core Competency

Single-mindedness – I focus on God and his priorities for my life. Matthew 6:33 *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

Today is 'Senior Sunday' at Pantego Bible Church. And in a few months, many of you seniors will be venturing onto college and university campuses all over the country. In doing so, you will be staring out a window of exceedingly great opportunities and, at the same time, staring down the antagonistic barrel of those who are militantly determined to dismantle your biblical worldview—namely the authority of the Bible (2Ti 3:16-17; 2 Pe 1:20-21) and the exclusivity of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). I wrote this edition with you/your spiritual well-being in mind. We live in a fallen world. There will always be detractors to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Don't let deception overtake you. Abide in Christ daily. Stand for the unchanging truth of God's word even in the face of persecution. May Paul's words of his *Single-mindedness* be true of you as well: *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.* (2 Tim 4:7). I want to share with you a blog, in its entirety, I recently read from Dr. Everett Piper, President of Oklahoma Wesleyan University, that I hope will inspire you to do that very thing.

"As a college president, I have often argued that ideas have consequences. For good or for ill, ideas

People are not as committed to truth as they are to their arguments.

– Dennis Prager

matter. People are unavoidably blessed or cursed by their guiding principles—by the import of their ideas. In many ways, we inevitably do practice what we preach. '[That] thing a man does practically believe . . . the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain . . . is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest' (Carlyle).

"I often tend to lean toward waving a flag of danger and, thus, warning of bad ideas and the bondage and dysfunction they bring; of hedonism's uncanny gift of deception and of the destructive consequences of what M. Scott Peck called the diabolical human mind.

"Today, however, I would like to focus on the power of a good idea. Rather than bemoan those that are bad, I'd like to champion an idea that bore its fruit over two hundred years ago on the streets of London. Its promoter was a young British Parliamentarian named William Wilberforce and here was his idea: God is God and we are not.

"You see, Wilberforce believed that men were defined by God and not God by men. He challenged his culture for assuming it had the authority to define what was human and what was not. In the face of slavery as well as the exploitation of women and children, Wilberforce boldly and clearly said no individual had the right to define, or redefine, 'a man' or delimit his or her moral worth and responsibility. Such things were God's alone to judge.

"For two decades, Wilberforce fought tirelessly in the British Parliament for his idea. He was beaten back time and again. He was ridiculed. He was accused of economic treason. He was insulted. He was ostracized. His political career suffered and was all but lost. His influence waned and

cont. pg. 2

his voice was muffled. But he held fast to his idea. He relentlessly pursued it, defended it, and promoted it. He believed in its power. He boldly declared that he would not be silenced. He confronted the 'corruption . . . of human nature' endemic in the political system of his day and he called 'vice and wickedness' by their true names. He refused to accept politically correct definitions of sin and contrasted the hubris of government with what he called the 'humiliating language of true Christianity', i.e. the call for personal repentance and moral responsibility.

"Wilberforce believed passionately in his worldview. He was confident in it as the only solution to the corruption rampant in his land. He, however, did not advocate imposing his views with force. To the contrary, he believed in the power of persuasion and the example of personal integrity. He wrote that Christians should 'boldly assert the cause of Christ in an age when so many who bear the name of Christian are ashamed of Him' Thus, he made it clear that his ideas would only prevail if they were grounded in—and proven by—the lives of those who espoused them.

"Wilberforce concluded (knowing that he could commend belief but not command it) by saying: 'The national difficulties we face result from the decline of religion and morality among us. I must confess equally boldly that my own solid hopes for the well-being of my country depend, not so much on her navies and armies . . . as on the persuasion that she still contains many who love and obey the Gospel of Christ. I believe that their prayers may yet prevail.'

"In the end, Wilberforce's opponents were forced to concede the obvious: God defines a man and woman, and we do not. It was the victory of an idea, not one of political or military conquest (of 'navies and armies'), but that of a good idea over a bad one. It was a victory of truth over lies; of freedom over slavery, of sanctification over sin.

"Ideas do indeed matter, and in this case we see the power of an idea lived out in humility, balanced with integrity, and measured with grace can indeed change the world. In his example, Wilberforce leaves us with the hope that in the midst of a culture that arrogantly declares, 'We are as God! We can redefine right and wrong, marriage and morality and even male and female,' the "prayers of many who love and obey the Gospel of Christ . . . may yet prevail."

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

Colossians 2:6-8

6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. 8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

Cf., another translation

6 And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. 7 Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

8 Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers[a] of this world, rather than from Christ. (NLT)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Box "So then" 1 indicating a *conditional* clause in v. 6.
- * Highlight "received" indicating *result* in v. 6.
- * Circle "continue to live" indicating *response* in v. 6.
- * Place a '1' over "rooted" indentifying *metaphor* in v. 7.
- * Place a '2' over "built up" indentifying *metaphor* in v. 7.
- * Place a '3' over "strengthened" indentifying *metaphor* in v. 7.
- * Circle "with thankfulness" indicating *response* in v. 7.
- * Circle "no one...captive" indicating *response* in v. 8.
- * Place an 'I' over "hollow" indicating a *characteristic* in v. 8.
- * Place an 'II' over "deceptive" indicating a *characteristic* in v. 8.
- * Place an 'III' over "human tradition" indicating a *characteristic* in v. 8.
- * Place an 'IV' over "basic principles" indicating a *characteristic* in v. 8.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Verse 6 begins with "So then." To what is Paul referring?
2. Having "received Jesus Christ as Lord," how did Paul want the Colossians to respond?
3. Receiving Jesus Christ as Lord refers to far more than their salvation. Read through chapters 1-3 and identify what else they have *received* as followers of Christ.
4. Identify the three metaphors Paul uses in v. 7. To which 'occupational' arenas do each belong?
5. Read through Colossians 1 and 2. Identify how/why Jesus Christ is uniquely the "Lord" (v. 6).
6. Identify the four characteristics Paul assigns to the philosophy in question. How would you define each term?
7. In what sense do you think Paul feared his hearers might be "taken captive" (v. 8)?
8. Read Colossians 2. Summarize the main characteristics of the philosophy of which Paul speak.
9. Read through chapters 1:10-4:6. Identify what it means to "continue to live in him."
10. **Discussion:** Talk about some of the "hollow and deceptive philosophies" that exist today.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

Paul's epistle to the church at Colossae begins with a brief introduction (1:1-2), ends with a lengthy conclusion (4:7-18) and contains a mid-letter parenthesis regarding his ministry labors on behalf of Christ's church (1:24-2:1). Woven throughout the rest of his letter exist four overlapping themes—each of which are present in today's passage.

First, Paul reminds them of all that they have *received*. By faith (1:4, 2:5, 12) you received Jesus Christ (2:6) through his circumcision (of their heart; 2:11). This resulted in your being totally forgiven (2:13b) and therefore, reconciled to God by Christ's physical body (1:22). You have been rescued from the dominion of darkness (i.e. "death"—2:13a) and brought into (i.e. "made alive"—2:13a) the kingdom of the Son (1:13). Through your identification before God with Christ's burial (2:12, 20) and resurrection (2:12, 3:1) you possess a fullness in Christ (2:10). Indeed, you are a "new self" (3:10). Additionally, you have received: the word of God in its *fullness* (1:25), the word of truth, the gospel (1:5), a *complete* (2:1) understanding of God's grace in *all* its truth (1:6), knowledge of (2:2) the mystery of God (2:2)—namely, Christ coming to Gentiles (1:25), the promise of Christ's return (3:4) and subsequent share of the saints' inheritance (1:12). And last but not least, you received knowledge regarding his will by spiritual wisdom (i.e. not of this world—see 2:8, 16-23) and understanding (1:9).

Second, Paul makes it clear what they are to *reject* based upon what they have received. Principally, you are to reject: fine-sounding arguments (2:4) that amount to no more than idle notions (2:18), the false humility others (2:18, 23) as well as their pompous judgmental assertions about what you are to eat or drink or in regards to your participation in religious practices unrelated to Christ's church (2:16). Further, you are to reject: the hollow and deceptive practices that are dependent upon perishable human tradition and the basic principles of this world (2:8, 20, 22). These consist of perversions such as: fanciful, made-up visions (2:18), the worship of angels (2:18), ascetic practices (2:21) and harsh treatment of their bodies (2:23). None of these hold any value in restraining sensual indulgence (2:23). In fact, participation in them will result in a loss of one's connection with Christ, the Head of the church (2:19), and will only serve to destine you into various

forms of captivity (2:8). All of these speak to the teachings of "the Gnostics and Judaizers who respectively believed that special knowledge or works were necessary to make a Christian complete" (sn v.10, Nelson *NKJV Study Bible*, 2014. For more on these, read the 'Day 3 - Examine' section of our January 3, 2016 edition of *The Scrolls*: tinyurl.com/SoHeavenlyMinded).

Later in Paul's letter he calls upon them as well to reject (i.e. "put to death"—3:5) whatever belongs to your earthly nature (See vv. 5b-7) and rid yourselves of practices associated with your "old self" (See vv. 8-10).

Third, Paul proclaims what they are to *embrace* instead of the false teachings, namely the all-sufficient supremacy of Jesus Christ. Paul attests that in Jesus Christ *all* the *fullness* of God lives in bodily form (2:9). In fact, he is *the* image of the invisible God (1:15a). Countering the Gnostics' assertions, Paul says that it is in Christ *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden (2:3). He continues. Jesus Christ is the beginning (1:18b) and therefore, before *all* things (1:17a). He is the firstborn over *all* creation (1:15). For by him *all* things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him (1:16), and in him all things hold together (1:17b). He is the head of the universal church body (1:18a) as well as the head over every power and authority (2:10). He is the firstborn (i.e.—resurrected) from among the dead (i.e.—believers who have died and will one day be resurrected; 1:18c). For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him (1:19), and through him to reconcile to himself all things whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross (1:19-20). Christ's work not only cancelled the written code against us (with its regulations) by nailing it to the cross (2:14), he dismantled the spiritual powers and authorities against the purposes of God (2:15a). In fact, in his triumph, he made a public spectacle of them in the heavenly realms (1:15b). Thus, in *every* sense, Jesus Christ demonstrated his supremacy over *everything* (1:18d). Quite simply, he is *the* Lord (2:6) over the entire universe.

Fourth, Paul goes to great lengths to encourage them to *live* in light of Jesus Christ's matchless majesty. You are God's chosen people (3:12) and have

been unified as members into one body (3:15). Your faith is indeed firm (2:5) for it is rooted and built up in Christ (2:7). Therefore, continue to live by faith in him (2:6b) and remain unmoved from the hope of the gospel (1:23). In fact, set your hearts and minds on things above - where Christ is seated at the right hand of God (3:1-2). The way you live is to be found worthy of the Lord; for a life that is pleasing to Him bears much fruit (1:10a), has a heart that overflows with joyfulness and thanksgiving (1:11b; 2:7), and continually grows in the knowledge of God (1:10b).

This will take great endurance and patience on your part, but you will be made strong by his glorious might (1:11a). Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you (3:16a). Clothe yourselves with

compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience (3:12). Teach and admonish one another wisely (3:16). Bear with one another. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you (3:13). Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts (3:15). Use wisdom when talking to outsiders. Make sure that your conversations and responses to them are always full of grace (4:5-6). Devote yourselves to prayer (4:2) and intercession—especially for us missionaries—as we seek to boldly proclaim the mystery of Christ under duress (4:3). Here is the bottom line: whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him (3:17).

May Paul's 'themes' to the Colossians be the themes of our lives as well.

The Message of the Passage

In Christ you have received, in full, everything you need relative to faith and practice; therefore, reject erroneous teachings and live a life worthy of His unrivaled supremacy.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the first two "living questions" below to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 6, 7 "In the paragraph commencing with verse 6 we come to the heart of the letter. Verse 6 and 7 occupy a pivotal position a) they set forth the positive instruction that serves as a basis for the attack on the Colossian heresy, and this is because b) they summarize much of what has preceded [it]" (Peter T O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, WBC, 104-05).

v. 6 **received** "When Paul says that his readers have "received" Christ Jesus as their Lord he is not simply reflecting on their personal commitment to Christ (although this is no doubt included), but he uses the semi-technical term specifically employed to denote the receiving of something delivered by tradition. Primitive Christian tradition, however, was not connected with the authority of famous teachers [i.e. as in historic Judaism], but was concerned ultimately with its source, "from the Lord" (1Co 11:23). This tradition was "comprised of three main elements: a) a summary of the gospel, particularly the death and resurrection of Christ, expressed as a confession of faith (1Co 15:1-5; 1Th 2:13; b) various deeds and words of Christ (1Co 11:23-26; 7:10, 11; 9:14); and c) ethical and procedural rules (1Co 11:2; 1Th 4:1; 2Th 3:6)" (O'Brien, 105). "In other words, the Colossians have received Christ himself as their 'tradition,' and this should prove a sufficient safeguard against following the 'traditions of men' (v.8)" (F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians*, NICNT, 93).

v. 6 **Lord** "The one whom the Colossians received as their tradition is the center of God's mystery (1:27, 2:2), and the Lord in both creation and reconciliation (1:15-20). He is Lord absolutely (1Co 8:5, 6), not just one among many" (O'Brien, 106).

v. 6 **continue to live** "A life worthy of the Lord and pleasing to him in every good way" (1:10ff). "For Paul there is no hiatus between believing and behaving (see Gal 5:16; Ro 14:15; 2Co 4:2)" (O'Brien, 106).

v. 7 "Having spoken of a path on which one is to walk (v.6) Paul moves to the language of horticulture ("rooted"), then to an architectural metaphor ("built up") and finally on to an image of the law-court ("established," "confirmed," [NIV - "strengthened"]). Each of these participles is in the passive voice probably pointing to the divine activity" (O'Brien, 107). "By sticking to their roots and being built up, the readers will be established in faith (Douglas J. Moo, *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*, PNTC, 175).

v. 7 **rooted** "Rooted is in the perfect participle. This suggests the thought of something which took place in the past, but whose effects persist in the present. The 'rooting by faith' meant an organic union with Christ so that now there is a perennial source of life for the growth of the spiritual plant" (Herbert M. Carson, *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and Philemon*, TNTC, 60).

v. 7 **built up** "Built up is the present participle, and speaks of the steady growth of the structure. Paul does not use the preposition epi which would direct the thought towards the foundation. That aspect has been covered in the metaphor of the rooted plant. Here the preposition en suggests rather the fact that Christ is the means whereby the fabric is held together. Christ is the life of the plant and He is the binding force of the building" (Carson, 60).

v. 7 **thanksgiving** This concept is mentioned seven times throughout Colossians (1:3, 12; 2:7; 3:15, 16, 17; 4:2). "The clear indication is that joyful thanksgiving is to characterize the lives of these readers, no doubt bearing in mind all the mighty things God had done on their behalf" (O'Brien, 108).

v. 8 **see to it** Lit. - "Take care lest there will be anyone who carries you off as spoil."

v. 8 **hollow philosophy** "Their teaching was a blend of the highest elements of religion known in Judaism and paganism; it was, in fact, a philosophy. Paul does not condemn philosophy as such, but a philosophy of this kind - one which seduces believers from the simplicity of their faith in Christ" (Bruce, 98). "It is empty [i.e. hollow - NIV] for it is void of real truth. It is empty of vital power, for the dynamic of the gospel is absent. It is empty of hope, for it leads away from the light of God's presence into the midst of man's speculation" (Carson, 60).

v. 8 **human tradition** "The manner in which the words are introduced here does suggest that the false teachers had set forth their "philosophy" as 'tradition,' thereby [attempting to point] to its antiquity, dignity and revelational character. Paul, however, rejects any suggestion of divine origin" (O'Brien, 110)" for it was not a teaching or tradition based "on Christ" (v.8b).

v. 8 **basic principles** *Stoicheia* can refer to basic elements of learning, the physical elements/ forces of the natural world or possibly to the demonic forces behind the deceptive philosophy. The second sense is more likely here. Yet, to the extent worship toward the celestial objects was being promoted, demonic influence (contrast with vv. 9-10) would be an associative aspect of these teachings as well (cf. 2:9-10).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Early in our parenting years, we chose to homeschool our kids. It was more a decision born out of logistics than anything else. My husband owned his own business and frequently worked nights or weekends. We would have family time during the day and school on those evenings or weekends when he was gone. As his job situation changed and we added another child to our home as a temporary arrangement, we felt led to put our kids in public school. The public school system has mostly been a great option for us and we have seen our kids succeed in ways they wouldn't have otherwise. However, there are moments when the teachings of the world have collided with our faith. When my kids entered high school, they were exposed to the hollow and deceptive philosophy mentioned in our text today. Many of our dinner and bedtime conversations are spent refocusing this teaching through a biblical worldview teaching them what God says about these subjects. It is so beautiful to see my kids not be swayed by the world's teaching but to hold fast to the faith they have been taught. I am grateful for these opportunities because it will not be long before they are all in college or out on their own. I can confidently say they are rooted in Him and when they fail, they know He will be there waiting to lovingly draw them back to truth.

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Col 2:6-8

1. How are you to continue to live once you have received Christ?
2. What should you be overflowing with?
3. What is the warning in verse 8?

What Do You Think

1. List some specific ways you can be rooted and strengthened in Christ?
2. Think about the word "captive". What does it mean to be captive to false teaching?

What R U Going To Do

We have so much to be thankful for! Even though it's not Thanksgiving, make a thankful tree this week! List things you are thankful for on each leaf and hang it somewhere you will see it often!

MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Single-mindedness: I pay attention to what God thinks is important in my life.

Memory Verse

Colossians 2:6 - *So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

Tom Bulick (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) for twelve years before accepting the position of Spiritual Formation Pastor at Pantego Bible Church. He and his wife Ruth have been married forty-six years and have one son, Zach.

Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.

Kevin Glenn (M.A.B.S., M.A.C.E. Dallas Theological Seminary) guest author.



8001 Anderson Blvd.
Ft. Worth, TX 76120
1-866-PANTEGO
Fax 817-275-6403
www.pantego.org

The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.