

Built Up in Christ

Col. 2:1-8

All Stand and Read Scripture

Colossians 2:1-8 (NASB)

² For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face, ² that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and *attaining* to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, *resulting* in a true knowledge of God's mystery, *that is*, Christ Himself, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument. ⁵ For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.

⁶ Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and overflowing* with gratitude.

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Prayer

INTRODUCTION:

During the last few weeks, we have covered the final days of Christ's time on earth. Christ came to earth to save the world from sin. He had fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies concerning Him and had performed God's will perfectly.

John 6:38-40 (NASB)

³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

Jesus came down from Heaven and was born a man. He lived here for over thirty years for the ultimate purpose of redeeming mankind from sin and bring us back to God.

He prepared the disciples for their role in establishing a new church and He trained them so they could teach others all that He had taught them so we could be saved.

Jesus made a triumphal entry into Jerusalem where the crowds in Jerusalem threw their cloaks on the ground and put palm branches in front of Him on the road to greet Him knowing that He was going to be crucified on the cross one week later.

He rose from the dead three days later, proving that He was not just another man. He spent forty days after the resurrection appearing before hundreds of people validating His claim that He was the Messiah, the Son of God.

Having accomplished everything that God had sent Him to do, He ascended into Heaven where He has promised that He will prepare for us a place to dwell when He comes again.

Christ did all of this for man so we can be saved from sin and be made righteous before God on Judgment Day by His grace.

It is Christ's desire that none should perish but for all to come to repentance.

But, Christ's work of salvation does **NOT** give us an **unconditional right** to righteousness and eternal life in Heaven. It requires **FAITH** and **OBEDIENCE** on our part.

Paul had a burden on his heart that believers would be "firmly rooted" in Christ and be able to withstand false teaching. He wanted the church to be "**BUILT UP IN CHRIST**".

Christ has provided us a way to be restored back to God. As Christians, we are asked to live a "new life" for Him and **build each other up** in the Lord. The purpose of this message this morning is to learn how this is done.

ILLUSTRATION:

If you were a dedicated football player for a high school team, your ultimate goal would be to win all of your football games and win the state championship. Think of all the things that you are willing to do in order to have a successful football season. You have to spend many hours in the training room lifting weights to build up muscle mass and running to build endurance. You would have to spend hours learning the offensive plays and defensive schemes. You would have to constantly be aware of what you eat and avoid activities that could downgrade your conditioning. You will also have to spend hours in running drills and practice on the football field. More hours would be spent watching videos of opposing teams to learn their offensive play trends and defensive patterns. This means you would have to sacrifice time that could be spent driving around town, dating, watching movies, and being a "**normal teenager**". You spend all of this time and energy in order that you can win football games. You enjoy willingly sacrificing that time, energy, and discomfort because you know that it is the only way that you can possibly realize your goal of attaining a state championship.

BODY:

I. A Good Coach

In order for a football team to win they must have a good coach. His past successes can create confidence among the players. He must be able to instill a "team" mentality and have everyone working cohesively together. The coach will also have to have a good sense of talent. Each person being assigned to the position that he is most skilled in respect to all of the other players on the team. A good coach will know everyone's strengths and weaknesses and will place each player in the game where he will provide the most benefit for the team.

Jesus is the perfect coach. He has proven that He is Lord and has laid out a plan before us by which we can win in the game of life. It is by following His example and living our lives based upon His instruction that we can learn how to love one another and build each other up in Christ.

Our first step is to join His "team". We do this by believing in Christ and accepting His plan of salvation.

Romans 6:3-4 (NASB)

³ Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Once we have joined the "team" we start learning how Christ wants us to live for Him. As we start learning Christ's "playbook" through Bible studies, sermons, Christian interaction and personal Bible study, we become "rooted" in Christ.

Colossians 2:6-7 (NASB)

⁶ Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and overflowing with gratitude.*

We cannot experience any real growth in faith, or be built up in Christ, unless we are first rooted in him. We are "**rooted**" in Christ by being nourished in the Word of God (the Bible).

In the New Testament, Christians are often represented as Christ's body or as branches to a vine. So, just like each person is a part of a football team, each Christian is part of a "team. Each believer is a part of the Kingdom of God.

This is absolutely critical to understand and to apply. We sometimes make the mistake of emphasizing our individual relationship with God and we think we can be a Christian on our own. But we can't. Following Jesus means being a **child** of the Father which means that you're **part of a family**. That family is an integral part of what it means to be "**in Christ.**"

Ephesians 2:19-22 (NASB)

¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Not only did Paul urge us to walk in Christ by being rooted in Him, he told us to walk in Christ by being “**built up**” in Him.

II. A Good Program

In order for a football team to succeed, they must have firm confidence in the coach and the program that he has laid out for them. They must have a good set of offensive plays and defensive schemes. Each player must thoroughly understand everyone's role in the play and know exactly what is expected from him.

In order to get the plays down, each player will have to study and practice them until the name of the play creates and automatic reaction to it on the football field.

It is only when everyone works together as a team that the play can succeed. Without this confidence and knowledge, the play will be complete chaos.

Just like the football team that is practicing everyday to learn the plays and defensive schemes, we are building every moment of every day. As we grow in the Lord we are able to live effectively for him, improve our ability to love him and love others with his love, and face the stress of each day.

If you are not positive where you need to grow, simply examine your life.

- Have you established Jesus as the only foundation for your life?
- Are you yearning for worldly things that may show areas to build up?
- Are you experiencing stress that may exhibit a weaknesses that needs built up?
- Have you read scripture that reveals areas to build up?
- Do you fight a common temptation that needs attention?

How do we build?

I'm certain you already know the answer. Scripture constantly teaches about how we should and shouldn't live. As Jesus said, it is a matter of hearing his words and doing them.

Practices such as prayer, bible study, fellowship, worship, and serving, are ways we build ourselves up.

When **I** do what I am called and gifted to do, **I grow** and help build **you** up.

When **you** do what you are called and gifted to do, **you grow** and help build **me** up.

When we play football we always have to play against another team. They have designed plays and defenses that they plan to use to win against you.

Paul reminds the saints that they must be aware of those who would deceive the children of God with persuasive or enticing words. It is a horror for a Christian who has counseled a believer only to discover that they are being led astray by false doctrine.

Colossians 2:4,8 (NASB)

⁴I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

When we embed God's Word in our heart, it becomes easier and easier to identify false doctrine and be able to confront it and avoid it in our life.

God gives us His Holy Spirit and the Spirit gives us assurance that we truly know God and are adopted as His sons and daughters.

We know with absolute assurance that what we believe about our Lord is accurate because His Spirit has instilled that confidence and understanding within our hearts.

Even though the believers of the Colossian church were being attacked by false teaching, they were responding in victory. Paul was pleased and he wanted them to know and understand that.

This brings us to our last point.

III. A Desire to Win.

A football team can be very well prepared for the game, but unless they have a **desire to win** and be willing to exert the effort necessary to play the game it will be for naught.

Colossians 2:5 (NASB)

⁵For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.

Mature people persevere. They maintain their discipline and their steadfastness.

1 Corinthians 15:58 (NASB)

⁵⁸Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not *in vain* in the Lord.

Paul wanted the Colossians to be strong in heart.

He wanted them to be united together in love.

He wanted them to have a complete understanding.

He wanted the Colossians to live for the Lord.

Colossians 2:6-7 (NASB)

⁶Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and overflowing with gratitude.*

This is one of the places where our analogy to a football team falls apart. As you know, in football we aren't guaranteed victory. Only one team can win. We may have prepared 100 times more than the opposing team and have the best coach on the planet, but sometimes their talent and strength will exceed ours despite our preparedness.

However, in Christ, we are guaranteed a VICTORY!

1 John 5:1-5 (NASB)

⁵ Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

⁵ Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

So, we MUST not grow weary and maintain a winning attitude. When we remain faithful to Christ, we will find the thankfulness overflowing in our life that Paul wanted us to have.

We may not be thankful that our finances are tight or that our budgets that have been slashed, yet we truly do have something to be thankful for. We will never be alone, desolate, hopeless, or spiritually hungry.

Perhaps now more than ever we need to set aside a few minutes each day to count our blessings rather than worrying about our problems. And, when we find something to be thankful for, we can give the praise and glory to Jesus.

May we never forget this important message!

CONCLUSION:

So we offer His invitation, realizing that there may be someone here who has never ever accepted Christ as their Savior. We plead with you. We appeal to you not to let this moment escape not to let this window of opportunity pass you by.

If you do not know Christ as your personal Savior, then come now, confess that you believe in Him, be faithful to Him in Christian baptism, arise to walk in the newness of life. God's invitation is offered to you. Will you come as we stand and as we sing?

He Is Lord!

He is Lord, He is Lord. He has risen from the dead and He is Lord.
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess, That Jesus Christ is Lord.