

THE DEITY OF CHRIST

Colossians 2:9-10

The specific *heresy* threatening the **Colossians** isn't mentioned by **Paul** ...but we can see from **verses 8-23** *certain beliefs* that allow us to understand the attack that they are facing.

- **Verses 8-10** contain elements of *Humanistic philosophy*.
- **Verses 11-17**, *Legalism*.
- **Verses 18-19**, *Mysticism*.
- **Verses 20-23**, *Asceticism* (self-denial...abstinence...performance).

Because those beliefs were shared by the *first-century Jewish sect* known as the **Essenes**, we can assume that they (or a group holding similar beliefs) were the ones threatening the **Colossian** believers.

This *heresy* also had components that were from an early form of **Gnosticism**...the belief that there was *a transcendent kind of knowledge in addition to Christian doctrine, known only to elite individuals who had ascended to that level*. Here it was teaching that **Jesus** was *neither God* nor *the source of all truth*. Of course...this was a direct attack on His **deity** and **sufficiency**.

After exhorting believers *to continue in* Christ...the One in whom the *fullness of God dwelt*...and in whom *complete redemption* was brought (**vs. 6-7**)...**Paul** then turned to condemn the **Colossian heresy** that was diverting them from Christ.

I. THE DECLARATION: (**vs. 9**)

This is one of the most bold passages in all of Scripture. It presents the *glorious majesty* of Christ's *incarnation*...and of His *complete sufficiency*. **Verse 9** is perhaps *the most definitive statement* of Christ's **deity** in all the epistles. It's the *rock* on which all attempts to disprove Christ's **deity** are shattered.

For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form (vs. 9)...

In Christ Jesus, **Deity**...*all the divine attributes of God the Father*...*dwelt* in His earthly body. This is a very strong statement of both, the **deity** and **humanity** of the God-man.

Fullness...Gk. *pleroma*, means *to fill up...to make full*. Here it is used in the *absolute sense* which emphasizes the *completeness of divine nature* being in *human form*.

Deity...Gk. *theotetos*, a very strong word that's used only here in the New Testament...and it's used for Christ's *essence as God*. It's used to emphasize *divine nature*. The full **deity** of Christ is nonetheless **in bodily form**...full and complete **humanity** (**Colossians 1:22**).

Dwells...Gk. *katoikeo*, means to *reside...to be at home...to settle down*. The **present tense** indicates that *the essence of Deity* continually *abides* at home in Christ. It describes *the fullness of the Godhead having settled down in...and is residing in Jesus*.

Form...Gk. *somatikos*, literally means *bodily...in bodily form...substantially, really, truly*. It's the *antithesis* of a *spirit being*.

So why is this so important? A couple of reasons. First, because both Christ's **deity** and **humanity** were being challenged by this early **Gnostic-like heresy**. Those *false teachers* diminished Christ to be on an equal plain with *angels*...one whose *body* was only *apparent...not real*. The apostle **John** also had to deal with this same issue.

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”

~I John 4:1-6

Second, this is also important because **His deity** makes Him **sufficient** for our *substitutionary atonement*...the *payment for our sin* before Holy God. That is why **Paul** strongly affirmed here that Christ is both *fully God* and *truly man*.

Follow the progression of Biblical truth.

“Although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the

form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

~Philippians 2:6-8

“...Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

~John 1:29

“...All things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.”

~Hebrews 9:22b

“By this, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.”

~Hebrews 10:10-14

II. THE DECREE: (vs. 10a)

And in Him you have been made complete (vs. 10a)...

Not only is all the **fullness** of God in Christ (vs. 9)...but as a believer we are “*in Christ*”. Therefore, this **fullness** that is *in Christ*, is *in us* also...and makes us **complete**. Our **completeness** comes from Christ’s **fullness** of God. We are partakers of that *divine nature*... *being made complete*...through Christ.

“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”

~II Peter 1:2-4

There is no **fullness** or **completeness** in **philosophy** based on *vain human reasoning*. Only in Christ can one **be made complete**...have **fullness**. Apart from Him is *emptiness*...a *void*.

Obviously, we *aren’t becoming a god*...but we are *being molded* in the *image* and *likeness* of God...the very way God originally made man (**Genesis 1:27**; **I Corinthians 11:7**; **James 3:9**). We share in the *goodness* of the *nature* in which He *is*...His *righteousness*...His *holiness*.

“Put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”

~Ephesians 4:24

The **perfect tense** of **have been made complete** indicates that the results of our *having been completed* (our *fullness*) is *eternal*.

III. HIS DOMINION: (vs. 10b)

And He is the head over all rule and authority (vs. 10b)...

He is the head over all rule and authority...He isn’t one of a series of *lesser beings* emanating from God as the false teachers maintained. Rather, He is God Himself...and as a result the *head over all*! Even over the *heavenly* angelic realm. Even over *earthly* political governments.

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth’.”

~Matthew 28:18

“For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

~Philippians 2:9-11

LESSONS WE CAN LEARN AND TRUTHS WE MUST FACE:

- Christ’s **DEITY** makes Him **SUFFICIENT** for our *substitutionary atonement*...the *payment for our sin* before Holy God. It isn’t Christ plus our being a *good person* or us trying to do *good works*.
- When we *repent* and by *faith* receive His *grace* we are *saved*. We are **in Christ**! And **in Christ**, we have been **MADE COMPLETE**...in need of nothing else. It isn’t Christ plus anything else. It’s Christ and Christ alone that completes us.

- God is **SOVEREIGN**. **He is the head over all rule and authority.**
That means that God is in control...nothing catches Him by surprise.
He is **King of kings** and **Lord of lords**.