

ActNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Connect Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Connect Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

Colossians: God's Treasure Revealed

Colossians 2:1-7

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SERMON SYNOPSIS

- **Paul's "great struggle"** – When the Apostle Paul writes about his "great ... struggle" for the Colossians and Laodiceans (v 1), what he meant is that he was agonising in prayer for the Christian communities there. (Compare with Colossians 1:29.) Paul was deeply concerned about their spiritual life in Christ Jesus, even though he was not the one who founded the church.
- **The Colossian heresy** – The problems affecting the Colossians came from combining Christianity with other influences – in this case, Jewish legalism (traditions and laws), Greek asceticism (rejection and harsh treatment of the body), and pagan mysticism (worship of angels and receiving visions from spiritual beings, cf. Colossians 2:8). This was *not* a complete rejection of Christianity, but a *dilution* of it, which is why Paul called the heresy "plausible arguments" (v 4).
- **The heresy's effects** – The heresy led to factions and divisions in the church, along with vain speculation and striving based on human effort. This is why Paul prayed specifically for the Colossians to have (a) unity in love, (b) the riches of complete understanding, (c) knowledge of God's mystery, and (d) access to the treasures of wisdom and knowledge – and **all these** are found in Christ.
- **The solution** – Paul praised many of the Colossians for having the discipline and firmness of faith needed to withstand the heresy (v 5). He taught them to *walk with Christ* in the same way they received Him, namely *being rooted* and *built up* in Christ, *established* in the faith, and *being thankful* (vv 6-7).
 - ✓ We are made complete in Christ, and nothing can be added to Him for salvation and sanctification (becoming holy as God is holy).
 - ✓ If we grumble over difficult circumstances instead of being thankful, we are doubting the goodness of God and may thus be easily deceived (Eg. deceived by a gospel that promises health and wealth over Christ).
- **Application as Disciples@TPMC**
 - ✓ What we treasure drives our priorities, habits & the way we live – Reflect honestly if Jesus is our one true treasure who drives our priorities, habits & the choices we make daily in our lives?
 - ✓ All of God's treasures are in Christ alone – Reflect our heart's motives with regards to the people we relate to, the work we do for a living and in Christian service & ministry – all arenas of our life and especially those whom/that we deem as important and precious.
 - ✓ We must prioritise Christ first (at the start of our spiritual life), last (at the end of our lives), and all the way (in every situation throughout our lives).
 - ✓ We must guard our hearts (our motives) and lives (how we live) very carefully that **Christ alone reigns Supreme** and there is *no* other person *nor* anything that we add to Christ in our lives. Everything, including good things such as hobbies, family, career... or spiritual things like coming

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to Sunday Service, attending CGs, serving others, etc – **done *without Christ at the centre*** – is evidence that we need to confess, repent and return to the Lord with our whole heart. Christ is enough. Period.

So, we remove **our other loves** like our hobby or loved ones that gripped our time, energy thoughts and emotions *above our love for Jesus* by surrendering them to the Lord, and then replace these with **what the Lord desires**. For example, we remove our hobby through our confession, repentance and surrender to the Lord, and then replace the time, energy, thoughts and emotions that has been redeemed with whatever activity or assignment that would please, delight, honour and glorify Him. **We do well to ask the Holy Spirit** to show us how God would want us to use our redeemed time, energy, thoughts and emotions as it would likely be *different* for different individuals. For one it may be spending time with family, for another may be enjoying the hobby but with the purpose of reaching out to a pre-believing friend for Jesus, while for another, it might be studying God's Word or even serving in church or the community we live in. When we live this way throughout our lives, we are enthroning Jesus as our King, and everyone around us will testify that Jesus is Supreme and is at the centre of our lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

RELATE

1. What are some things we treasure, meaning that we prioritise them and form habits around them?

REFLECT

2. Why should we give Jesus priority over every other thing in our daily life, including important persons who are precious to us? What will happen if we do?

[Verses to help us go deeper: Galatians 6:8; Matthew 6:33; John 15:4-8]

RESPOND

3. Identify one or two things (Eg. habits, hobbies or way of life, etc) the Holy Spirit is nudging you to put Christ *first* as your top priority. In the next week, put those changes into practice. At the next meeting, share with the group what difference it has made.

PRAYER POINTERS

- Praise and worship the Lord for infinite wisdom and knowledge is found in Him alone.
- Thank God for revealing understanding, knowledge and wisdom to us through Jesus Christ.
- Ask God to keep each one in TPMC be rooted in Jesus, established in faith, abounding in thanksgiving as we put Jesus first *daily* in every relationship, situation and choice we make.

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON

"Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving." [Colossians 2:6-7, ESV]