

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 (Part 4) – Complete in Christ

Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun
Colossians 2:8 – 3:4

SERMON SYNOPSIS

- Tradition, convention, practices, and rules all depend on time, place, and people. They can be discarded or renewed. At that time when the Apostle Paul wrote the letter to the Colossians, some Jewish Christians were trying to impose gentile Christians to follow Jewish traditions and rules. For example, in order to complete the whole conversion experience, gentile converts were to follow Jewish law, the Law of Moses, and they all had to be circumcised.
- The Apostle Paul, however, taught Christians not to be taken captive by traditions, rules, religious regulations and spiritual practices that are not centered on Christ because Christ is the reality.
- Christians *are complete in Christ* as Jesus is fully divine, He is God (Colossians 2:9) and He has cancelled the debt of sin by having triumphed over rulers and authorities (Colossians 2:14-15).
- Through our union with Christ, Christians have undergone a spiritual 'circumcision,' died and risen with Christ in baptism, and received new life through faith. In other words, we find our life, our purpose, our identity *in Christ*. And how do we live this new way of life? As disciples of Jesus and as children of God, we do so by setting our minds on things that are above (ie, what God wants, His ways, His values... etc) and decisively putting away things that are of the world (ie, things, ways, values of this world).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

RELATE

1. We all grow up shaped by our families, culture, traditions and environment. Share with your CG one or two customs or rituals that you and your family continue to practise, and share if you know where they came from, why you still do them, and whether they remain relevant today.

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REFLECT

2. Read the following Scripture passages and identify what God's Word teach us &/or warn us about regarding keeping traditions.

[Verses to help us go deeper: Matthew 15:1-20; Mark 7:5-9; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15]

RESPOND

3. As Jesus completes us, our purpose and our identity is in Him. Hence, we live our new life in Christ according to how He wants us to and Colossians 3:1-2 instructs us to "*set our minds on things above*". What is one concrete practice this week that could help you live out your new life in Christ? For example, choose to pray, forgive, care for your body, or speak to someone who hurt you in a way that is Christlike, and at the same time, choose *not* to act on your naturally inclined human response with the Holy Spirit's help. At the next meeting, share with the group how has your new life in Christ deepened.

PRAYER POINTERS

- Thank God who made you complete in Jesus!
- Ask God to forgive you for keeping or imposing undesirable human traditions that held you captive.
- Pray for wisdom, persistence and faithfulness for everyone in TPMC to stand firm in the teachings (the acceptable tradition) of the Apostles in order to have the correct understanding of scriptures so that we can be faithful in doing God's will.

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON

"Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."
[Colossians 3:1-2 NASB1995]