

"make firm" or "make stable." It's a great thought because the faith which one has on the Lord will make him a stable person. This idea of never knowing what you believe or where you are going is nonsense. Such attitudes have been the fertile field of neo-orthodoxy and neo-evangelicalism.

- 4) Abounding. Thanksgiving is for His work in the life and one's personal response to Him. That's the way to actually give excitement to a positive stand in the Lord. A sound stand for Christ does NOT rob one of his joy and thanksgiving.

Conclusion

No scheme is a panacea for all ills. But the support from a ministry which is true to the Word of God and the Person of our blessed Lord Jesus is a help in the right direction. The believer must not be passive in his resistance of false teaching. It behooves him to be alert and active in the things that really count. Do not merely say you are His; Live like it. What a privilege in the light of an eternal destiny. Amen.

NOTES:

THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

"Beware of Spoiling"

Col. 2:4-7

Introduction

1. The people of God are always alerted to dangers through the ministry of the Word. If they listen carefully, they will learn how easily false situations may arise within them. Far too few listen!

2. One of the large reasons for Paul's ministry as a servant of God is the care of the Lord's sheep. Indeed, many feel this is the prime reason for a minister of the Word in a local assembly--the maintenance of true doctrine and practice. Suffering, serving, preaching, and praying have their children!

3. Be cognizant, therefore, of the objectives within the ministry of God's servants. Judge them not for what one may think they mean, but on the basis of their divine commission and goals!

1. PAUL'S PURPOSE. v. 4.

The phrase "and this I say" leans back to the previous paragraphs of Paul's letter. He wrote and exercised himself because there was imminent and specific danger. This danger is:

- a. Stated. The verb "beguile" is the core of the problem. It means to "reason falsely." Only used here and in James 1:22. Has the idea of miscalculate or mislead. It is tragic that some feel this is impossible. Many are blind to the inroads of such actions. The whole liberal theological, social, and political movements of the day are sharp evidence that people are easily misdirected!
- b. Explained. How misleading is done is shown by the phrase "enticing words." This is a hapaz legomenon (only found here in the N.T.).

It connotes "probable arguments." Oh, how many are deluded by such in our world today! The philosophies and speculations of the Gnostics then and the world today are enticing. They have an appeal. But Paul wars against such. Those who know the truth will see through their paper statements and attach themselves ever more firmly to the Lord!

2. PAUL'S PRESENCE. v. 5.

The opening phrase of this verse has been abused by many well meaning Christians. When they do not find it convenient to attend an assembly because it interferes with other activities, they quote it. Paul used it because he was in prison for the sake of the Gospel. He surely would have been at Colosse if it were humanly possible! Not so with many who lightly and carelessly quote the text. Though absent in body, he was present in spirit (whole heart!). This meant:

a. An involvement. Two specific verbs show what Paul's involvement was: joying and beholding. The former verb means to "rejoice." He rejoiced in what he knew of them. But further, he beheld with the eye of faith and reported what God was doing. One wonders just what bodily presence would have added to such deep interest!

b. A contentment. The apostle was satisfied that two issues were clear at Colosse:

1) Their order. They had ordered discipline in the assembly. The word here is a military one. It suggests quiet, concord, and subjection to the spiritual overseers.

2) Their steadfastness. This word is only found here in the N.T. It is used in LXX of the firmament (Gen. 1:6) or of fastness of a rock (Psa. 18:2). Paul was delighted that the character of their faith was so solid. Like a phalanx, they had a solid front in doctrine--tho they were being attacked.

3. PAUL'S PLEA. vv. 6, 7.

Encouragement is a great word in the English vocabulary. We all need it with more or less consistency. Hence, although Paul tactfully showed the Colossians his great confidence in them, he did not leave them without showing how their future pattern should be. His plea was:

a. Based. Two verbs denote that Paul had some grounds for making a plea.

- 1) Received. The Colossians had taken Christ Jesus the Lord into their lives. Now they were to live up to that commitment!
- 2) Taught. The educational principles of the Bible and the modern world are at polarities one to another. God contends for consistency of belief in what has always been taught. The moderns do not feel this is a sound pedagogical practice. The open-mindedness we are led to conceive of is entirely out of step with the Bible.

b. Affirmed. The whole round of the believer's life is meant by this verb "walk." It's the way one is to "walk around." Being the present imperative, the idea is "go on walking in HIM." What a blessed word.

c. Detailed. The manner in which the Colossians are to carry out the plea of Paul is carefully stated. Four suggestions are given:

- 1) Rooted. Here is a metaphor from the garden. The verb is only found here and in Eph. 3:17. The perfect tense notes an act accomplished with permanent results!
- 2) Built up. The change to the present tense in this verb marks up the constant process which is involved. The metaphorical change is also interesting--like block upon block, one is to become more firm and fixed.
- 3) Stablished. Here is an old verb meaning to