

a thought! The perfect tense of the verb strikes the finality of our completeness. Glory to God.

Conclusion

Everywhere and in various ways men are bombarded with reasonings which seem all too plausible. Paul warns about these. Anything which is outside the revelation of God in the Word is vain and full of deceit. Be careful. Fair warning should mean fair preparation! But God has a better offer--adequate satisfaction in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, He is the Jewell and Star of heaven. Would we have peace? Would we have purity? Would we have inexhaustible **resource** for life and holiness? Would we have **strength** for victory, triumphing over the devil, the world, and the flesh? The answer is still the same. Christ is the Secret of God! Do you know Him? Amen.

NOTES:

THE EPISTLE OF COLOSSIANS

"The Fullness of God"
Colossians 2:8-10

Introduction

1. Paul reaches the zenith of his proclamation concerning Christ whenever he affirms the equality of the Lord with the Father. It is so in this passage.

2. The doctrinal guns of the Apostle have been levelled against the Gnostic error. It is that philosophical viewpoint which denied the deity of our Lord and propounded a series of emanations from God, Christ being one of many. Paul counters and upholds Christ as God.

3. Believers need to be warned against false doctrine. There was no doubt in the mind of Paul that the Colossians were Christians (cf. 1:10-14), but he was concerned lest they give credence to encroachments on the form of sound doctrine! Alertness is always necessary!

4. It is the burden of this section of Paul's letter to show the problems of false teaching and the importance of the truth. Attend to these statements in his arguments:-

1. The SEDUCTION OF PHILOSOPHY v. 8.

To seek truth and have knowlege is not wrong. It is for this reason that God gave us minds. Philosophy is one of the disciplines for the mind. It is designed to penetrate the essence of things. The Hebrews did this in relation to the revelation of God. The Greeks by inductive reasoning. Philo did it with Gnosticism.

Paul warned about this Gnostic tendency which was seeking an entrance into Colosse. He told them to "beware". This verb means "to be on guard" as in Mark 12:38. The reason for such watchfulness is that the Gnostics would "spoil" them. This verb really means to "lead away as prey." It is a hapax legommenon and notes that Colossians could be taken

away as booty if they didn't attend to themselves!
What kind of philosophy was being offered? Consider these words about it:-

a. Described. Two words are used:-

- 1) Vain. This is the word for "empty" or "useless". This actually explains the philosophy.
- 2) Deceit. The meaning here is that it was something of "beguile".

Item: Any sort of truth-seeking which is inconsistent with the Bible is declared, therefore, to be useless!

b. Related. With the repetition of the same preposition, Paul provides a negative evaluation of the philosophy.

- 1) To tradition. What had been passed on from one generation to another is the thought here. It is opposed to divine revelation. Here it refers to something of an occult order, an alleged secret transmission of mysteries.
- 2) To the world. The word "rudiments" literally means "one of a row or series." Hence, it means first a simple "element," Then an element of early principle in teaching. Hence, the idea is that this philosophy was a partially developed reasoning apart from God. Many feel that this is a strong bite at ceremonialism.

c. Separated. It is stated negatively here, but with great force. The whole scheme being foisted upon the Colossians is not according to (after the yardstick) of Christ. This is the key problem with all philosophy. Men prefer to measure Christ by their philosophy. This is backwards. - Christ is the Measure of all human knowledge inasmuch as He is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

2. The DISTINCTION OF CHRIST. v. 9.

Three dynamic thoughts are presented in the text concerning our wonderful Lord. Here they are:-

a. His deity. This is probably the classic reason why Christ is the Yardstick for all philosophy: He is God! Consider the fact that Paul used "in Him" in the emphatic position to say that "in Him and in Him alone" deity resides! This is a permanent situation as the verb "dwelleth" affirms. Present tense shows that this has always been the case--pre, post, and during His incarnation. The word for "Godhead" means the very essence of God. It is to be carefully distinguished from the word used in Rom. 1:20 which means the "quality of God." What a burst of gunfire this phrase is to blast the Gnostic theories!

b. His humanity. It is only through the incarnation that Christ manifests the very Being of God. God has manifest Himself in Christ. By this one word, Paul disposes of the Docetic theory that Jesus had no human body. The Corinthian separation between the man Jesus and the aeon Christ is also discarded. The deity and humanity of Christ were present in corporeal form!

c. His authority. v. 10. Whereas so many at Colosse would have the believers feel that Christ was an emanation, Paul reaffirms what he has already taught (cf. 1:15-19) that Christ has all rule and authority. Others are subject to Him. He is first in time and in rank. Oh, the height of heights is given our wonderful Lord.

3. The SATISFACTION OF BELIEVERS v. 10.

All the pheroma of God is in the Son and in the Son as incarnate. How gloriously near God is to us! But there is an extension of this truth. We are full in Him (same word pleroma is used). Our fulness is derived from His. A proper trans- fusion takes place. By virtue of our identifica- tion with Him, this is true (cf. John 1:16-18; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:1-3). Complete in Him! What