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
Jewel 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 con-
cerning 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 philo-
sophical 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 doc-
trine. 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 nec-
essary!

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 knowledge is not wrong. It
is for this reason that God gave us minds. Philo-
sophy 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
legomenon 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 some-
      thing of "beguile".
      Item: Any sort of truth-seeking which is incons-
      sistent with the Bible is declared, therefore,
      to be useless!

b. Related. With the repetition of the same pre-
   position, 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 par-
      tially 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 pro-
  blem with all philosophy, Men prefer to measure
   Christ by their philosophy. This is backwards.
   Christ is the Measure of all human knowledge in-
    asmuch 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 al-
ways 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 incarna-
tion 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 Corin-
thian 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