

## THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

“Blessings Abundant”

Colossians 2:11, 12

### Introduction

1. The obvious focus of this book is the Lord Jesus Christ. In Him “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (2:3). Indeed, “in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (2:9).

2. Consequent to this incredible truth about the Lord is that the believer has partaken of what He is, hence “ye are complete in Him . . .” (2:10). There is no reason whatsoever to be carried away as a captive (KJV “to spoil”) by empty deceitful mundane philosophy -- after men and after this world system.

3. An extrapolation of the full position the believer has “in Him” is given. Consider these actions done for the believer:

#### 1. CIRCUMCISED v. 11

a. It is personal. This is the significance of the phrase “in Whom.” Actually, it is parallel with the “in Him” of vv. 9, 10. Jesus Christ is the Person. Being “in Christ” (v. 10), the believer partakes of all that Christ is (1 John 4:17).

b. It is spiritual. In the O.T., circumcision was a physical procedure relating to the Abrahamic Covenant (cf. Gen. 12:1-3; 17:9-14). Interestingly, those “circumcised” were the Jews while the “uncircumcised” were the Gentiles (Eph. 2:11, 12). But the term “circumcise” also bore moral burden in the O.T. (Lev. 26:14; Deut. 30:6; Jer. 4:4; 6:20). This is carried over into the N.T. (Ro. 2:29). The fact that something “spiritual” is in view here is supported by the word “without hands” (cf. use of this term in Mk 14:58; 2 Cor. 5:1). So, the concept here is a spiritual one and in no way physical.

c. It is total. By virtue of its definition, a small portion of the body was involved with the physical procedure. Here, however, the total “body” is involved. Moreover, it is better to take the reading “putting off the body of the flesh” and not the body “of the sins” of the flesh. This makes the matter a more complete thing. It is not a matter of sins but rather sin in the nature. The verb “putting off” is only used here in the N.T. It includes two prefixed prepositions and refers to a complete stopping off, casting aside. Incredible! What a way for God to deal with the basic problem of sin (singular) in one’s life! The same subject is addressed in Romans (6:6).

d. It is heavenly. Although the phrase is rather awkward the meaning is clear: “by the circumcision of Christ.” The spiritual circumcision considered here was instituted and given to the believer “in Him.” It is a factor in the relationship with Christ Himself. It appertains to Him. He is the originating Cause. Thus, Christ, by union with Himself, brings about the circumcision and imparts it to believers. All of this is supported by the aorist passive form of the verb “circumcised.”

N.B. Surely this is part of the “ye are complete in Him” idea (v. 10). Remember the verb “complete” is a perfect tense in the original i.e. something done with eternal consequences!

#### 2. BURIED/RAISED v. 12

a. It is personal. The translation of “with Him” here is not from the same construction as the previous verse. However, the verb includes a preposition and the pronoun “Him” is clearly in the text in the associative instrumental case. The resultant meaning is the same. The believer partakes of all that Christ provides!

b. It is spiritual. There is no question that there ritual baptism is taught in the epistles of Scripture (1 Cor. 1:14-17). Admittedly, one does not have to be baptized ritually to be saved (1 Cor. 1:17). However, what is stated here is true of all believers. The reference must be to a spiritual baptism (1 Cor. 12:13). That being the case, the significance is to an identification with Christ (Ro. 6:1-4). Being identified with Christ in this manner, by baptism, the issue is the sin nature as with circumcision in v. 11. Moral and ethical purity is the concern in these verses. This is the point to the verb “risen” so that the believer is enabled to “walk in newness of life” (Ro. 6:4). The passive voice of both verbs (buried and risen) confirms that what is accomplished is the work of God and not the believer (cf. Gal. 3:27).

c. It is effectual. The subjective medium by which the objective grace of God is received is faith. But faith in what? Answer: in the effectual working (operation) of God Who raised (once for all) Jesus Christ out of the dead ones. Because God did this, He also has power to give new life by faith to the believer.

### Conclusion

The believer on the Lord Jesus has solid grounds for purity of life. Think of it, we are utterly “complete in Him” (v. 10). We “also” (vv. 11, 12) are circumcised, buried, and raised “with” Christ Jesus. These actions are all done, done, done. It is for us now to believe it, act upon it, and live it. Let’s ask the question -- are you a believer, a real one? So be it.