**Colossians 5**

Colossians 2:6-7

8/24/25 AM

Kids learning to walk

* Under normal circumstances, walking is something we all learn to do. But also walking is something we continue doing as we age.
* We don’t learn to walk and then set the activity aside, we continue walking.

**Today, we’re going to continue our way through the NT book of Colossians.**

* Paul wrote this letter to a group of Christians he had never met but for whom he felt responsible.
* **False teachers were threatening this young church by telling the Colossians that Jesus was just a steppingstone.**
  + If they really wanted to be fulfilled/liberated, they needed to open their minds to the hippy ideas of the day, they needed to consider the tenets of Greek philosophy, incorporate the rites and rituals of Judaism, or maybe even adopt the materialism and might of the Roman Empire.
  + The false teachers didn’t encourage anyone to forget Jesus, they just said he wasn’t enough.

**In response to this threat, Paul just shines the spotlight on Jesus.**

He makes several arguments for why we should stick with Christ and Christ alone:

* Because of what He’s done, who He is, and where He’s taking them.

**But now Paul is going to begin answering the “how” question and the two verses Gary read are at the heart of Colossians.**

Grammatically, the command at the end of verse 6 is the first true command in this letter and in a sense, it’s the overarching command of this entire letter.[[1]](#footnote-1)

And at first, Paul almost sounds a little anticlimactic here. It’s as if he says, *“Ok, I’ve told you why you should stick with Jesus, but now I’m going to tell you how. Here’s the secret—you stick with Jesus by sticking with Jesus. You continue with Jesus by continuing with Jesus.”*

* It almost sounds like one of those gimmicky answers.

**But church, if we chew on these verses a bit, I think there are three-word pictures that bring life to Paul’s command for us to continue in Christ:**

* Walk, grow, and overflow.
* Let’s tease these out one by one.

1. **Walk**

Look again…

***Colossians 2:6 NLT*** *And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him.*

So, Paul says, *“Hey, you want to know how to stick with Jesus? Walk with Him!”*

* The Greek word translated as “live” or “follow” literally means to walk.
* So, Paul tells us to stick with Jesus by walking with Him.

**But you notice, there’s a very clear order, or arrangement, to this walk.**

* We follow Christ. He is the one who leads. We aren’t leading Him; we aren’t even walking shoulder to shoulder—He leads, and we follow his lead.

PAUSE

**Church, verse 6 restates the key theological argument of the letter: Jesus Christ is Lord!**

* This is who Jesus claimed to be, this is who he has proven to be, and the invitation he extends in the gospels is for anyone who would come, to come to him as Lord.

**Paul reminds the Colossians that the message of good news they received about Jesus, consisted of two main parts:**

1. “Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah” (as demonstrated through his life, deeds, and teaching).
2. “Jesus of Nazareth is the Lord” (as demonstrated in his death, resurrection, and leadership).

**It’s not one or the other, Jesus is both savior and Lord. This is the message that we find in the Gospels and preached in Acts.[[2]](#footnote-2)**

PAUSE

**In Scripture, there are all kinds of titles that are given to Jesus.**

* For example, He is the Christ (the promised deliverer/King of which the OT prophets spoke[[3]](#footnote-3)), the Word, the Lamb of God, Emmanuel, the Son of God, the king of Israel.
* But the main title used for Jesus is the title Paul uses here: Lord.
* Over 700 times in the NT, this title is ascribed to Christ.

**Now, I think we throw this word around as if it’s nothing more than a polite, southern way of referring to Jesus.** Around here we say, *“yes ma’am, no sir”* and we refer to Jesus as Lord.

But the word Lord is much more than a term of endearment.

* It means master, owner, or one who possesses something.[[4]](#footnote-4)
* So, this is a weighty word with implications that reach far and wide.

Maybe one of the clearest examples of just what it means for Jesus to be Lord is found in…

***Luke 6:46-49 NLT*** *“So why do you keep calling me ‘Lord, Lord!’ when you don’t do what I say?****47****I will show you what it’s like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it.****48****It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built.****49****But anyone who hears and doesn’t obey is like a person who builds a house right on the ground, without a foundation. When the floods sweep down against that house, it will collapse into a heap of ruins.”*

**Church, think about what Jesus is saying here.**

* If someone is Lord/master, they expect obedience. They call for obedience.
* And with this parable, Jesus clearly explains that this is what it means to have him as our Lord—we obey him.
  + If he is our Lord, if he is our Master, then we do what he says.[[5]](#footnote-5)

**But one of the greatest misnomers in our culture today is the idea that we can have Jesus as our savior without coming under his lordship.**

It was the 17th century Puritan theologian John Owen who said, *“He that would be saved by Christ and not ruled by him, shall not be saved by him at all. We are to receive a whole Christ, not a half Christ.”*

Nowhere in Scripture are we ever led to believe that we can use Jesus as a Savior and not own Him as our Lord.[[6]](#footnote-6)

* The Bible never in any way gives a concept of salvation in which we can choose to accept Christ only because we need Him as Savior but that we have the right to ignore or postpone our obedience to Him as Lord as long as we want to!”[[7]](#footnote-7)

**Church, Jesus can be our Savior only because he is Lord. He must have unquestioned authority over the powers of evil before he can possibly deliver us from them.[[8]](#footnote-8)**

* The reason Jesus can save us from our sins is because he is Lord and it is as Lord that He saves!

I know I sound harsh, but this is what Jesus told his disciples. In the most famous sermon ever preached, the SOTM, Jesus warned…

***Matthew 7:21-23 NLT*** *“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter.****22****On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’****23****But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’*

We cannot come to Christ and say, *“I’ll take Jesus as my savior—I’ll take his blessing and forgiveness and prosperity and affirmation, but I don’t want him as Lord—I don’t want his call to obedience, holiness, denying my flesh, or picking up my cross.”*

* I want into Jesus’ kingdom, but I don’t want him to be king.
  + I mean, that’s just illogical is it not?
* Jesus will not be divided, and He will either be Lord of all, or He will not be Lord at all![[9]](#footnote-9)

PAUSE

There’s a pastor in Florida named Darryl Black who recently preached a sermon titled *Who is Jesus?* There was a clip from his sermon that was floating around Facebook a month or so ago, but in the message, he talked about how our culture is full of customized versions of Jesus.

* We’ve bought into the misnomer, this idea that we can create a version of Jesus to fit our preferences; that we can take the parts of Jesus we like and leave the parts we don’t.
  + And in his message, Darrly Black laid out the sad truth—that for many of us, we want just enough Jesus to get to heaven, but not enough Jesus to change us on earth.
  + We want just enough Jesus to be inspired, but not enough Jesus to be transformed.
  + We want just enough Jesus to bless our plans, but not enough Jesus to change them.
  + We want just enough Jesus to wear a cross, but not enough Jesus to carry one.
  + We want just enough Jesus to look good at church on Sunday, but not enough Jesus to make a difference Monday through Saturday.
  + We want to be in his kingdom, but we really don’t want Jesus to be king.
* But here’s the zinger from Darryl Black’s sermon, *“…if our version of Jesus always agrees with us and never confronts us, never challenges us, and never changes us, that is not the Jesus of the Bible. That is a glorified selfie with a halo.”*

**To accept Jesus as Savior is to accept him as Lord.**

* So, Paul reminds the Colossians, *“Hey, you accepted Christ as your Lord,”* and then he commands them to continue walking with him as Lord.
  + To continue to work out what it means in both their thinking and their acting to live under his Lordship.[[10]](#footnote-10)

**QUESTION: Are we walking with Christ as Lord?**

* The question is not do we think highly of Jesus, or do we know about Jesus—are we walking with him as Lord?

When we make decisions in life, do we may them like the world in which we say, this is what I want, or this is what feels best. This doesn’t feel blatantly sinful, so this is what I’ll do…

* Or do we surrender to the lordship of Christ and say, God, this is what I want to do, this is what feels most comfortable or pleasing to me, but it’s not about what I want. What do you want, Lord? What is best for your kingdom?

**Church, this has always been a tough question, but it’s an especially difficult question for us today because we place such a high value on our feelings.**

* Whatever feels good, natural, and satisfying—that’s what we should do and pursue.
  + We place an extremely high value on our feelings.
* Francis Chan said, “even [in our] church culture [we have] emphasized our feelings…to the point [that] we don’t understand lordship anymore.”[[11]](#footnote-11)
  + We’ve emphasized our feelings to the point that we’ve forgotten that sometimes obedience isn’t comfortable, easy, popular, or even rational. **Often, it would feel much better to just do what we want to do.**

**But Paul reminds us that when we turned to Christ, when we made a public profession, when we joined ourselves to Him, when joined ourselves to him as Lord.**

So, to ‘receive Christ Jesus the Lord’, is to recognize as truth the marvelous news that, in Christ, the Lord who has power to redeem the world from error and misery has come. But more than that, the words necessarily imply the appropriate submission to that Lord for personal deliverance.[[12]](#footnote-12)

* True conversion implies the right of Christ to rule, and therefore to determine the shape and character of what in his eyes is worthy and consistent living. His pleasure is first to be consulted. The Christian therefore comes to any and every situation willingly recognizing that the writ of Christ’s authority runs there.[[13]](#footnote-13)

Paul was serious about walking in Christ. So, how’s our walk? Are we walking with Christ as Lord?

The second word picture that brings Paul’s command to life…

1. **Grow.**

***Colossians 2:7 NLT*** *Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught…*

**This is a summons to grow in Christ.[[14]](#footnote-14) To become stronger in our grasp of ‘the faith’.[[15]](#footnote-15)**

When we consider Paul’s writings, his instructions, his encouragement, his teaching, many questions Christians wrestle with can be answered by the simple rule, *‘Let everything be done so that the church may be built up. Let all things be done that the church may grow.’*

PAUSE

Paul uses two metaphors here, one from agricultural and the other from building. Both metaphors suggest growth, but one stands out in my mind.

* Bonanza
  + The mark of gospel seed has always been vigorous growth (1:6).[[16]](#footnote-16)

**As Christians, we are to grow.**

And how are we to grow? We are to grow in the faith [we] were taught. We have no need to seek secret or “higher” knowledge elsewhere. We are to grow in knowledge of the truth already revealed in Christ.[[17]](#footnote-17)

* It is the Word of God that builds and strengthens Christians.
* Christians who study the Word become established in the faith and Satan has a difficult time deceiving the Bible-taught believer.[[18]](#footnote-18)

As one commentator points out, to be ‘in Christ’ is to occupy the richest position that can be ours this side of heaven.

* Still yet, Paul exhorts us to grow in our faith. There is infinite scope to the fullness of Christ and Paul calls us to explore this fullness with intentionality.[[19]](#footnote-19)

**QUESTION: Are we growing in the faith we were taught?**

* The question is not do we think highly of Jesus, or even if we agree with Paul. The question is are we growing in our faith?
* Do we prioritize our time in the Word? Do we prioritize doing all things that the body may be built up?

**I read something recently that just hit me hard. In my own paraphrase the author wrote…**

“We used to beg God to change us, but now we dare Him to accept us as we are. We used to pray ‘God, make me new’, but now we declare, ‘I’m fine as I am’. We used to have a holy desperation for God, but now we are obsessed with affirming ourselves and our choices.

We used to recognize God’s grace and mercy in conviction, but now we’ve bought into the lie of our culture that conviction is condemnation, and the call to be transformed is oppression.

* We’ve traded holiness for authenticity. We’ve become afraid of offending one another and, in the process, stopped fearing the One who made us. We are more concerned about sounding judgmental than we are about being judged by the one who has the authority to throw both soul and body in hell. We’re more committed to not hurting feelings than we are to not grieving the Holy Spirit.
* But Jesus did not die for our sins to leave us in our sins. He died to make us new. To wash and sanctify and transform us into His image. And if we claim His name, but reject His refining fire, we’re not following the Jesus of the Bible, we’re following a god made in our own image.

Paul was serious about growth. So, how’s our growth? Are we growing in the faith we were taught?

Last word image…

1. **Overflow.**

***Colossians 2:6-7 MSG*** *My counsel for you is simple and straightforward: Just go ahead with what you’ve been given. You received Christ Jesus, the Master; now live him. You’re deeply rooted in him. You’re well constructed upon him. You know your way around the faith. Now do what you’ve been taught. School’s out; quit studying the subject and start living it! And let your living spill over into thanksgiving.*

**In this letter, thankfulness, so full that it constantly spills over, is placed at the center of Christian living (see 1:2ff.; 3:15, 17; 4:2).[[20]](#footnote-20)**

* Paul frequently employed thankfulness as one of the litmus tests of Christian health.
  + He assumed that Christians would live in an attitude of thankfulness for the many blessings bestowed upon them.
  + By contrast, one of the first indicators of departure from God is a lack of thanksgiving (e.g., Rom 1:21ff.).[[21]](#footnote-21)
  + Paul was convinced that true gratitude for God’s grace is an important “offensive” measure against falling away from Christ.[[22]](#footnote-22)

**So, the apostle wants us overflowing with thankfulness.**

This comes when we recognize that we are complete in Christ, that we have every opportunity to grow spiritually in him. A thankful believer is not easily led away from Christ.

* A discontented, grumbling, whiny believer, however, will be easy prey for false teachers who are more than willing to offer “just what you’ve been missing.”[[23]](#footnote-23)

**QUESTION: Are we overflowing with thankfulness?**

The barracks where Corrie ten Boom and her sister, Betsy, were kept in the Nazi concentration camp Ravensbruck were terribly overcrowded and flea infested.

Corrie and Betsy had been able to miraculously smuggle a Bible into the camp, and in that Bible, they had read that in all things they were to give thanks and that God can use anything for good.

So, Betsy decided that this meant thanking God for the fleas.

This was too much for Corrie, who said she could do no such thing. Betsy insisted, so Corrie gave in and prayed to God, thanking Him even for the fleas.

Over the next several months a wonderful, but curious, thing happened: They found that the guards never entered their barracks.

This meant that the women were not assaulted.

It also meant that they were able to do the unthinkable, which was to hold open Bible studies and prayer meetings in the heart of a Nazi concentration camp.

**Through this, countless numbers of women came to faith in Christ.**

Only at the end did they discover why the guards had left them alone and would not enter their barracks:

It was because of the fleas.

Paul was serious about thankfulness. So, how’s our overflow? Are we overflowing with thankfulness?

Walk, grow, and overflow.

**By reviewing these pictures of spiritual progress, we see how we can stick Jesus.**

* We see how the growing Christian can easily defeat the enemy and not be led astray. If our spiritual roots are deep in Christ, we will not want any other soil.
* If Christ is our sure foundation, we have no need to move.
* If we are studying and growing in the Word, we will not be easily enticed by false doctrine.
* And if our heart is overflowing with thanksgiving, we will not even consider turning from the fullness we find in Christ and him alone.
* A grounded, growing, grateful believer will not be led astray.[[24]](#footnote-24)

How’s your walk, growth, and what is overflow out of your heart?

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3. Moo, [*The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*](https://ref.ly/logosres/pntccolphm?ref=Bible.Col2.6&off=3044&ctx=r+weak%2c+of+Jesus+as+~the+promised+deliver), 178. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Henry George Liddell et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon*](https://ref.ly/logosres/lsj?ref=Page.p+1013&off=9500&ctx=%2c+head+of+a+family%2c+~master+of+a+house+(c) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 1013. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. From Crazy Love Podcast: Is Jesus Your Lord? | Francis Chan, Apr 19, 2023

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8. R. C. Lucas, [*Fullness & Freedom: The Message of Colossians & Philemon*](https://ref.ly/logosres/bstus72col?ref=Bible.Col2.6-7&off=6568&ctx=gospel+upside+down.+~Jesus+can+be+our+Sav), The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
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20. Wright, [*Colossians and Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary*](https://ref.ly/logosres/tntc72colus?ref=Bible.Col2.6-7&off=4300&ctx=s+probably+correct.+~Thankfulness%2c+fillin), 104. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
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