I invite you to open your Bibles with me tonight
to the book of Colossians, the book of Colossians chapter 2.
Good looking crowd here on Wednesday night.
Colossians chapter 2, begin reading verse 1 and just read down through verse number 12.
Paul writing to this young church, he says,
For I would that you knew what great conflict I have for you, and
for them at Laodicea, and for as many as I have not seen my face
in the flesh, that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together
in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding,
to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and
of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.
For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit,
joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.
Verse 6, he says,
As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye
in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith,
as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.
Beware, beware, lest any man spoil you through
philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men,
after the rudiments of this world, and not after Christ.
For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.
Love verse 10, he says,
When you are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power,
in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands,
and putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ,
buried with him in baptism,
wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God,
who hath raised him from the dead.
Let's pray one more time.
Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word.
Lord, that continues to speak, it continues to teach.
Lord, through your word, you reveal yourself.
You reveal your heart and your will for your children.
God, I pray tonight that you would enable me to,
or simply say, what you led the Apostle Paul to pen.
Lord, that we might see the relevance of New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church.
Just as it was written for this church many, many years ago.
Lord, I thank you for this opportunity to gather.
Thank you for every individual.
Lord, each person that makes this place up.
God, I ask you to bless this time tonight.
Lord, in Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.
Amen.
A few weeks ago, we begin our study through the book of Colossians.
It's a very short book.
I like going, from time to time, going through a verse-by-verse
Bible study of a certain book for a couple of reasons.

Sometimes we discover things that we've never really seen before.
It's a way to discover something new.
But it's also, one of the reasons I enjoy it, is some
things that you are familiar with become new again.
They become fresh to you again.
That happened to me last week as we was looking at chapter 1.
I love what Paul says in verse 28.
At the very end of verse 27, this hope, he
says, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
The greatest hope that a man has is Christ in the man, the hope of glory.
Then he says in verse 28, whom we preach, warning
every man and teaching every man in all wisdom.
That really stood out to me that true preaching, real
preaching, God-glorifying preaching, is about a person.
And if the person is not the preacher, that person is not
anybody he's got animosity against or anybody he admires,
true preaching is about the person of Jesus Christ.
Preaching, the Lord.
True preaching is deliberate teaching.
Teaching and preaching aren't necessarily two different things.
You may be a teacher and not a preacher, but
you can't be a preacher and not be a teacher.
Impossible.
He took time to dissect and to teach.
But true preaching is also sincerely and passionately warning men.
There is a hell to shun.
There is a life to fear.
There is a God whom we will stand before.
All of those things are involved.
But what really jumped out to me is the purpose
of what Paul says at the end of verse 28.
Look at that in chapter 1, verse 28.
Whom we preach warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom.
My Bible has a semicolon.
That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.
See, there was an aim about this for the church.
That through preaching about Christ, through
teaching about Christ, through warning the church,
that the apostle Paul, that any pastor, that each
one of us, basically Paul saying, here you go, Lord.
Here's this group of people that you saved and that you've redeemed.
And they've moved from a new birth and they've begun to grow and mature.
It means to be complete.
It means to be whole.
But folks, there's lots of things that get in the way
in that progression in the life of the child of God.
That progression to completeness to which none of us have arrived yet.
That's what sanctification is.
We've been set apart.
They have been set apart.

But we ought to be growing in the likeness of God with
that goal that we grow into the likeness of Christ
and that we are presented complete and whole before Him.
And one of those things that hinders this progression,
and we've covered it many, many times, but it's worth repeating,
is false teaching.
It's the wrong influence.
There were people who had infiltrated this church
who didn't deny the existence of the Lord Jesus.
But what they did do was greatly diminish Him.
They diminished His sufficiency.
They diminished His preeminence.
And so Paul is writing to refute, not just to refute them.
The way he refutes them is by making much of the Lord.
So in these 12 verses, I sort of broke it down this way.
It's kind of sort of how it's written.
We've got a couple of different themes just in these 12 verses.
In the beginning of verse number 1 through 5,
we find Paul's conflict that he has in his heart.
And we see the defense that these people are to put up
to keep them from being led astray,
to keep them from being captive,
to keep them from remaining weak and bathed in Christ,
that they might be able to present themselves before the Lord.
So look at verse 1 through 5 again.
Paul says,
Paul's got great trouble in his heart.
There's conflict in his heart.
And it's not for the men and women that he goes to church with.
These are for people that he's never even met.
They're people that he's never laid eyes upon.
It's the church at Colossus.
It's also those lukewarm Laodiceans.
And Paul knows the attack that they're going under.
He knows what's happening to them.
And it troubles this man in his heart.
I was thinking about this just today.
You know, there are tests that we can take
that test our nearness to the Lord.
I think we ought to do that from time to time.
Lord, am I nearer to you than I used to be?
I mean, there's a couple of things that we can do.
I think the first thing we can ask ourselves is,
where are our treasures?
What did the Lord Jesus say?
Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
Where are our treasures?
Is there less of us than there used to be?
What does that mean, preacher?
Do I think less about myself and more about him?

Am I more submissive than I used to be?
Am I more forgiving than I used to be?
Hebrews says our God is a consuming fire
that where Christ is having his way in a man's life,
he begins to eat away and burn away and chip away at that man
that there's less of him than there used to be.
But I know there's two things that test our nearness to the Lord.
And number one is, do we love the things that God loves
and do the things that break the heart of God break ours?
Paul loved this church.
The Lord loves the church.
And it grieved him and it wounded him at what they were going through.
But it's not just about this conflict that he has.
Here a list, if you'll have a defense for
these people and what they're going through.
Begin looking at verse number 22.
He says that their hearts might be comforted,
being knit together in love,
and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding
to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God
and of the Father and of Christ.
What is this defense?
That their hearts are knit together in love for each other
and their love for God.
Folks, the isolated sheep is the one who is most at risk.
A church that loves each other and cares for one another.
I mean, not just, hey, how you doing?
Not just acquaintances.
But these people literally needed to band together
with one another and show their love for one another
that flowed from a love from God.
That there was an assurance within them of what they had been taught
and in whom they believed.
When you're confident and you're confident and you're
confident and you know and you know and you know,
I'm saying to you, there's some things that just can't drag you away.
It begins with love.
Love for God.
Love for each other.
Being assured of what they've been taught and who they believe.
But he says here in verse 3 and 4,
he says,
In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge?
He says, In this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.
Again, what was the lure?
What was the danger?
It's the same danger that exists today.
This idea that there's something better.
That there's something more to offer.
That somehow I'm missing out or this or that or the other.

And Paul tells them,
Be assured that in who?
Not in Paul, but in the Lord Jesus Christ is hid
all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
But also be aware of the presence and the practice of the enticers.
This I say, verse number 4.
This I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.
We're going to look at that a little bit
deeper in this section here in just a minute.
But there was one more defense that these people had.
We find it in verse number 5.
He says, Though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the Spirit,
joying and beholding your order
in the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.
These people had remained firm.
These people had remained solid.
And let's take all this.
And listen, it's one thing.
I heard a preacher say not too long ago,
My job was explanation.
It's not application.
And I'm like, I disagree with that.
It ain't just interpretation or explanation.
It is application.
We take what is going on in Colossus.
We take what is going on in this world.
And folks, the church is under attack.
The family is under attack.
Individuals are under attack.
They just don't deny religion.
They don't deny the Lord.
But there's more to be had in this life.
He's not exactly who he says he is.
But Paul says,
No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.
That's not the case at all.
And we have a defense.
It's that we will love one another enough to care for one another.
And that love for each other flows from our love from God.
That there's an assurance and there's a
steadfastness that our faith doesn't rest in them.
Our faith rests in God.
That in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
Everything that I need in this life to live a
godly life, to be a husband, to be a father,
to be a pastor, to be a preacher, to be a son, to be a brother, to be a mother.
I can find all of these things in the Lord.
But I'm also very aware that there's those out there who would try to beguile me
and to trick me and to lead me astray.
Led by none other than the prince of darkness with their very enticing words.

So now what must I do?
I must remain steadfast.
I mean, you get a bulldog grip and say, I love that old song, I will not be moved.
I will not be moved.
I will not be moved.
But he has conflict for these people.
There's what's going on with them.
But now he moves here in verse 6 and 7.
He gives them sort of a, it's not a strange instruction,
but a very, very clear instruction that can almost seem a little bit confusing
until we look at it.
Look what he says in verse 6.
He says, As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so
walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him,
and established in the faith, as ye have been
taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.
As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.
I'm going to need somebody to talk to me.
I'm going to need you to answer a question here in just a minute.
Well, right now.
How did you receive the Lord?
By the way, you didn't fight and win him.
You didn't tackle him.
You didn't search him out.
You didn't figure him out.
You received him, if you're a Christian.
How did you receive him?
Faith?
By faith?
Did you receive him partially, or did you receive him unreservedly?
Huh?
You received him by faith?
You may not have understood it all.
I know I didn't understand it all, but I'll tell you what I did.
Lord, here's all of me, and I need all of you.
You received him humbly.
You didn't come into the presence of the Lord proud.
You didn't receive the Lord proud.
You received him joyfully.
I mean, we could go on and on and on and on again about the words that we find
of how a man comes to receive the Lord and know
the Lord, and what Paul is saying to them now,
in the same manner, in the same way that you receive the Lord,
that is how you ought to walk in the Lord.
I'm to walk in the Lord joyfully.
I'm to walk in the Lord humbly.
I'm to walk in the Lord unreservedly.
I'm to walk in the Lord in all of these ways.
Every one of those words should describe our Christian walk.
But often you gave the, I'm not going to say it's the best answer,

but it's the most necessary answer.
Folks, it begins and it ends.
Most of all, we received him by faith.
It wasn't blind faith.
It wasn't faith without evidence.
But it was a gift that we got to know God,
and we received it by faith.
We believe.
Why is this so important?
Because faith is not, never has been, nor will it ever be a once and done thing.
We receive this gift of salvation.
We receive this circumcision of the heart.
We receive this baptism of the Holy Spirit.
We receive this adoption.
We receive it.
Even though we didn't understand it all, Heath, we come unreservedly.
We come humbly.
But most of all, we receive this thing by faith.
Now as I walk, I walk by my sight.
No, I don't walk by my sight.
I walk by faith.
I walk by faith.
I walk by faith.
I walk by faith.
He's writing to this church that's under attack,
in danger of being led astray, being torn apart.
By the way, there's nothing that makes Satan any more happy
than to get inside a church and create friction and dysfunction
and tear that thing apart and lead people astray.
Friend, there's going to have to be faith.
There's going to have to be humility.
There's going to have to be love.
We've got to know in whom we believe and why we believe and who he is.
Paul says it all gets back to who the Lord is.
But here's the thing.
Paul says in verse number 5, verse number 7,
6, as you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,
so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him,
and established in the faith, as you have been taught,
abounding therein with thanksgiving.
I want to tell you what I've learned personally,
that the more I walk as I've received him,
the more rooted and built up I become.
And the less I walk as I've received him,
the more fragile and easy to turn and easy to move that I become.
Rooted and built up in him.
That word rooted is a very, it's an interesting word.
Literally what it means is once and for all having been rooted.
It's not a transplant.
It's not a tumbleweed.

That the growing function, the progressing Christian,
the Christian who is truly being sanctified in the life of Christ,
he has been planted in the Lord.
He is in the Lord.
He is his sure foundation.
We're not just blown away with every wind of doctrine.
Why?
Because we know who the Lord is.
Begins in Christ.
It starts with him.
He says you're to walk with him.
You're to be rooted in him.
But I like this word in verse number seven, rooted and built up in him.
Built up in him.
Y'all know that children's song, God's still
working on me to make me what I ought to be.
I don't know the rest of the verses because I just get stuck on that same line.
God's still working on me.
You know what I mean?
Hey, by the way, Christian, God's still working
on you to make you what you ought to be.
How does he do that?
He does it through his word.
He does it through his church.
He does it through his people.
It's that we walk in the Lord, Tal, in the same way that we receive the Lord.
Unreservedly, humbly, looking to him.
And as we do that, the more firm we get, the
more grounded we get, the more planted we get.
I'm telling you, I just got stubborn enough in my own age.
If everybody in this world deny the Lord Jesus, I'm just convinced, I'm telling you.
I'm convinced, I'm convinced, and I ain't a very smart man, but I have met the king.
I have experienced the king.
I've seen him work in my life in countless, countless, countless ways.
And it's not that I'm worth anything, but in my life, I've put him to the test,
and I've seen that he is faithful.
And the more that I do that, the more I see him at
work, the more grounded I get inside this thing.
And what he's doing, it isn't to bring glory.
He's taking that, and he's building me.
He grows us.
We get established in this faith.
All this for the glory of God and not for man.
And look at the end of that verse.
It says, abounding therein, what?
With thanksgiving.
Not abounding with pride, not abounding with look at me.
And so I can stand behind this pulpit tonight, and I can,
this word abounding literally is the same word that is used
for when a river is overflowing its banks.

You say, why is a man so thankful?
Because he knows what he used to be.
He knows what God has done.
He knows who did it.
He knows what God is doing in his life.
And now he just begins to bubble up out of him.
He's like a river, and a flood has come in, and it's just
coming out, and it's coming out, and it's coming out.
Even in the midst of being led away captive and torn apart.
Christians, I'm not asking you if you're going through things, because every,
that's one thing I have learned, though, since I was gone for 11 years.
I got to be the associate pastor of my home church.
I got to pastor two other churches, and I got to preach a whole bunch of revivals.
You know what we all got in common?
Everybody's burying people.
Everybody's got somebody sick.
I mean, remember when we were in India, and that man's brother died.
We're in a revival with all these preachers.
And this guy just, it's like somebody, death disrupted it.
It's everywhere.
You can't outrun it.
Who am I not to experience it?
Nevertheless.
But because of who he is, and what he's done, and
I'm rooted, and I'm grounded, and I'm planted.
Why?
Because in him are hid all the treasures and the wisdom of God.
That thankfulness just oozes out of our lives and out of our testimonies.
It's not denying difficult times.
It's just having the right perspective.
Paul says, I got great conflict for you.
I got great.
I ain't even seen you.
I ain't even seen you.
But I know what you're going through, and it troubles me.
But you're not without a defense.
Walk in the Lord as you have received the Lord.
Verse 8 through 12.
I titled this,
Beware and be certain.
Beware and be certain.
Paul says in verse number 8, Beware,
lest any man spoil you.
Hey, if you're a young'un.
What's a young'un?
Somebody younger than me.
If you're under 54, you're a young'un.
Listen to what the preacher says.
Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy
and vain deceit after the tradition of men,

after the rudiments of the world.
And this last phrase is what's most important.
And not after Christ.
Beware.
Beware.
A philosophy.
What is philosophy?
Philosophy in itself isn't wrong.
It's referred to as this, you know, these deep thinkers.
New age thinkers.
What about this?
What about that?
How can this be this?
How can that be that?
And before you know it, you're turned around like a Rubik's Cube.
Talking about things that nobody even knows the answer to.
You know what I'm talking about?
And you're taken captive.
Vain deceit.
Empty words.
But they're enticing words.
Paul mentions the rudiments of this world.
What is that?
It's the principles of this world.
Young ladies, life is short.
Play hard.
Get it while you can.
It's my life.
Make the most of it.
It's the same principles that most people operate by.
So what happens?
I mean, I'm thinking deeply.
I'm thinking about things much bigger, you know.
And before I know it, what's happening to me, I'm beginning.
I'm like this tumbleweed, man.
And I'm just going around and I'm listening.
I've got an ear here.
I've got an ear there.
And I'm listening to these different things.
And they're very smooth talkers.
It's vain deceit.
But their words are empty.
And I begin to operate by the very principles of this world.
The rudiments of this world.
Those are the things that guide me.
Those are the things that lead me.
Those are the things that I count on.
And then there's one more thing here.
Look what he says in verse number eight.
Beware lest any man spoil you to philosophy and vain deceit.

I like this.
I hate this.
But I like this.
After the tradition of men.
Folks, the tradition of men is just as dangerous as empty words,
godless philosophy, and the principles by which this world operates.
I'm telling you, I have seen it.
I'm telling you, I have seen it for myself.
And I could preach on it for days.
It is the sin of the scribes and the Pharisees.
You say, what was that sin?
He says, you are teaching for doctrine the tradition of men.
Let me say this first of all.
Tradition is not sinful.
It's a tradition that we have revival here, I believe, the second week of July.
And we have it in the, you know, we've had to mess April around.
We have decoration, I think, the second Sunday in August.
Anything wrong with that?
No.
Not a thing in the world.
Where it gets people carried away and led astray is when we take our
traditions and we place them on the same level as thus saith the Lord.
It carries just as much weight.
It's just as much important.
And in some cases, even more important.
Folks, that would lead people into high weeds and it would destroy things.
But I love what he says.
See, here's the main problem.
We find it at the end of verse number 8.
The main deceit at the tradition of men, at the
rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.
That is the problem.
You say, preacher, how do I know if I'm going the right way?
How do I know if I'm listening to the right voice?
All you got to do is ask yourself this.
Is this about the Lord?
Is it about him?
If it's not, no thank you.
See, the solution to this is after Christ.
That the surest way to not be led astray, the surest way to
not be enticed is to keep Christ our pursuit and our treasure.
I love that song that Randy sings.
It's all about him.
It's all about him.
But folks, that's got to be more than a song.
If all that is is a song that we sing here at New Bethel, and
it is not our life, and it's all about him, we are in danger.
We are in danger.
We are in danger.
We are in danger.

Taken captive, carried away.
He says, beware.
Beware, beware, beware, beware.
Boy, y'all, I've been, I've, man, I've, I've sat in some pulpit committees, and I've sat in, somebody wants
to interview you about being a preacher or a pastor, and some of the nonsense hogwash that I've been asked.
Makes me nauseous.
I go, that's what you're worried about?
That's what you're worried about?
New Bethel, what are we concerned about?
What are we concerned about?
If it's not after Christ, it's got to be after Christ, it's got to be after Christ, it's got to be after Christ,
it's got to be after Christ, it's got to be after Christ, it's got to be after Christ, it's got to be after Christ.
He said, beware, lest anyone spoil you.
You know that word spoil, with me, with the Old Testament, what is the spoils?
Huh?
They'd come in, they would go into a place, and they would take over a place, and whatever they could get
that's left there that isn't damaged or burned, the money, the treasure, the loot, those were the spoils.
But it also included the people who were taken captive.
So the language is very, very strong, Nicky.
You better beware, lest the enemy itself, through these means, philosophy, vain deceit, empty words,
the traditions of men, anything other than Christ, before you know it, you're taken captive as a spoil.
It's a warning to this church, beware, but I want to end with this.
He says, be certain.
Look at verse number 10.
Verse number 9.
Verse number 9.
For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.
Over and over and over in this book.
What is he trying to get them to see?
What he says in verse number 10.
And you are complete in him.
No reason to look anywhere else.
No reason to listen to anything else.
Everything that you need for yourself, for your family, for your church,
for your home, for your fulfillment in life, for the salvation of your soul.
It's not anywhere else.
He says it's all in him.
He's the fullness of God in the flesh.
Don't diminish him.
He's God.
But he says, be certain, and you are complete in
him, which is the head of all principality and power,

in whom also you are circumcised with a circumcision made without hands,
and putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ,
buried with him in baptism,
wherein also you are risen with him through the faith of the operation.
I love that.
Circumcision by Christ,
the operation of God,
who hath raised him from the dead.
Paul says, in him all fullness dwells.
Be certain, be certain, be certain, be certain.
And be certain of what he's done.
That through the spiritual circumcision of the spirit of God,
he has cut away that sinful nature
and given us a new nature
that enables us, y'all listen to what I'm about to say here,
that enables us through the power of God
to say no to this world
and say yes to him.
Do I believe in sinless perfection?
Absolutely, I do not.
But I tell you what I do believe,
every single one of us could live a whole lot
holier than we give ourself the ability to
or the thought of.
I'm just a sinner saved by grace.
No, you used to be.
You used to be.
Y'all understand that?
I heard Donna say that out too long ago.
I said that preach.
Anybody who's ever been saved was a sinner saved by grace.
What's the Bible say about me now?
I'm a saint.
That's what it says.
And that Christ come in and he did spiritual surgery upon me,
that now through the spirit of God and the power of God,
I have the ability to say no to flesh,
that I can live the life, not by my own strength,
but by the Lord himself,
I can live as a child of God.
He says buried with him.
The end of this verse.
And whom you also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands
and putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ,
buried with him in baptism,
wherein also you are risen with him
through the faith of the operation of God
who hath raised him from the dead.
What was circumcision in the Old Testament?
These two things are right next to one another.

I'm going to put you on the spot.
Not the act of circumcision,
but it was a sign.
It was a sign of God's covenant people.
Circumcision saved no one.
It was a sign.
Those are my people.
Those are my people.
Baptism.
The watery part.
It's a sign.
A sign of what?
That I am dead to myself.
I am dead to this world.
That I died with the Lord Jesus Christ.
That I have gone through the watery grave.
And now through the operation of God by faith,
I'm risen.
I'm a new man.
So Paul says, Beware of all of these things,
but make sure you're certain, number one,
of who he is.
Of what he's done.
Steadfastness with one another.
Love for one another.
The assurance that comes in these things.
Folks,
this was going to be the defense
for this little church 2,000 years ago.
And it is going to be the defense
for our church today.
Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word.
Thank you for your truth.
God, that you do a spiritual surgery.
You make people new.
You remove our sins
as far as the east is from the west.
But Lord, we live in a world of deceit.
We live in a world
of vain thinking.
We live in a world that is dark.
Lord, there's an enemy
who seeks to spoil your own.
But Lord, we do not have to live in fear.
We are complete in you.
We are strong through you.
God, make everything that we do here
Lord, be after you.
After you.
After your son.

Lord, for your glory
and our gain.
Lord,
in Jesus' name I pray.
Amen.
Let's stand please.
Out there.
If you'll lead us in a verse.
Randy,
you go ahead my friend.
So I'll stand.