

J.J.

ROOTED IN CHRIST
Colossians 2:6-7

Colossians 2: 6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

INTRODUCTION :

I have a confession to make. I don't like gardening. It's a lot of hardwork. One thing that I don't particularly like is planting a vegetable garden. I'm amazed when I see some of you planting zucchinis, tomatoes, fruit trees and etc. I only like eating them but not to plant them and to grow them. I've never planted a vegetable plant in my entire life.

But one time, my wife came home with a small tomato plant given by her workmate. And said to me, "B, plant this and take care of it." Huh? You were the one who brought it home. But me, being an obedient husband, took a big pot, got some soil and planted it. The first few days I saw that the plant was dying. I had to experiment on how and when to water it and where even to put it. I saw that one I don't water it and then it's under the sun for too long, the leaves wither. But I still water it every day and I get excited when the plant is almost like happy. I had to buy those metal things so it could climb there. And then I got more excited when I saw a little flower which means, it's going to start to produce fruit. That's why I was so scared when I came home from Montreal and I was away for three days, I saw the plant almost dying. I had to water it again and put it in the shade and today, I'm so excited because this is what I saw yesterday...

(Show photo of tomato) The fruit has come out. It's not yet edible but now I know that it's growing and healthy because it's bearing fruit. I can't wait to pick the first fruit because I saw in this Italian movie that the best tasting tomato is the one that you picked from the tree, you cut it, put a little olive oil and some salt and voila...I can't wait to try that.

By the way, technically speaking tomato is a fruit and not a vegetable.

Now, I told this story not to show you that I'm a decent gardener after all but it is connected with our final lesson on Rooted IN Christ – how to grow in Christ.

We showed you in the several Sundays, what spiritual growth looks like from a spiritual infant, to a spiritual child, to a spiritual young man and become spiritual fathers.

SPIRITUAL STAGE	CHARACTERISTIC	DEFINITION
INFANTS	CARNAL	Controlled by feelings and appetites
CHILDREN	GROWING	Training in God's Word
YOUNG MEN	STRONG	Living God's Word
FATHERS	DISCIPLER	Imparting God's Word

Now we know how it looks, like, starting today, we'll learn by God's grace how to grow spiritually.

Even here in Colossians, this is the primary priority of Paul when it comes to the church, that we all grow spiritually mature in Christ.

Colossians 1: 28 He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. 29 To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

As mentioned last time,

Quote : We're called to make disciples, not simply converts – R.C. Sproul.

As a pastor, by God's grace, my aim is not only to bring people to Christ but to make sure I see tomatoes in your life. (fruit)

So now, how do we grow spiritually in Christ?

First, it begins with this...

Colossians 2: 6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,

In the KJV version,

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,

Again, if we see the word “therefore”, there is something before.

What was the reason why Paul wrote this letter to the church in Colossae?

- He has never visited this church but he has received report that they were being penetrated by false teachers that were teaching heresy.

What was the heresy? They were teaching that Jesus is not God.

- That's why after sending his greetings and encouraging them that they were growing in the Lord and telling them that he was continuously praying for them, (Colossians 1:1-14) he then wrote to them that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and God Himself.

Colossians 1: 15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Apologetics : The cults will always use verse 15, showing that Jesus was a created being. But the word that was used there in Greek was “prototokos”, which means literally firstborn but can also mean first in rank.

And even if you don’t know Greek, verses 16 and 17 and also reading all the other epistles and even the Gospels will show you that Jesus is the Son of God, the very God Himself.

Quote : “I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: ‘I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept his claim to be God.’ That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things that Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.... C.S. Lewis (Mere Christianity)

This is the reason Paul said...

*Colossians 2: 6 So then, **just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,***

Note :

Christ means – the Anointed One, the one that God has chosen

Jesus means – God is my salvation... Saviour.

Then Paul says : as **Lord...** in KJV Christ Jesus the Lord.

It means that you have received Jesus Christ as your God, as your Lord...

In the Old Testament, God is called Elohim but He is also referred to as “Adonai” which means “Lord.” In Greek, it’s Lord is “Kurios” both mean, MASTER

So when Jesus is called Lord, IT MEANS HE IS GOD AND MASTER.

That’s why Thomas who doubted that Jesus rose from the dead and then when Jesus showed Himself to him, he exclaimed.

John 20:28 My Lord and my God.

Apologetics again : If somebody says to you, that Jesus is not God, then tell them that Thomas called Jesus, “my Lord and my God.” And some people will always tell you, specially the Moslems, that Jesus did not refer to Himself as God but why did Jesus not rebuke or Thomas from calling Him “God.”

Now let me be clear. Jesus is the Lord God Himself whether we believe it or not. What is the proper reaction to this?

TO WORSHIP HIM. TO FOLLOW HIM. TO SURRENDER OUR LIVES TO HIM.

Now, it's either we do it today and worship Him as our Lord and Saviour. Or one of these days, we will face Him not as Lord and Saviour but as Lord and Judge.

Philippians 2: 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

And I say this warning out of love, if you are not saved and you face Him as Judge, then you will spend eternity without Him in hell.

Hell is a life without God. Remember, the Bible says, THAT ALL GOOD and PERFECT THINGS COMES FROM GOD. HE IS THE FATHER OF HEAVENLY LIGHTS... What is hell aside from it being a lake of fire? It's the opposite of good and perfect and light...

Have you experienced being in a place where you open your eyes and you don't see anything?

Illustration : In the Philippines, my parking spot was in the 5th level of a basement and you know brown-outs happen there. I entered the parking area then the brown out occurred and then emergency lights weren't working. I turned on my headlights and then parked my car. I said to myself, even without lights, I can find my way to the stairs. So I turned off my headlights (my car did not have a remote) and then it was pitch dark. I tried to find my way to the stairs and before you know it...I hit a wall and I was just traversing the wall, I didn't know where I was. I might be stuck there for a while and so I shouted for "Help! Help!" while I was in a corner.

Hell is like that...it's darkness! It's all evil. The Bible says, you can only hear "weeping and gnashing of teeth" and you are burned for eternity without respite..without water... because that's a life in eternity without God.

People don't go to hell because they are bad person. The Bible says anyway, "No one is good,not even one." People go to hell because they have rejected Jesus Christ AS LORD AND AS SAVIOUR!

So the question is, HOW CAN ONE BE SAVED?

Romans 10: 9 If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

We need to truly believe that God who became man died on the cross for our sins and He rose from the dead showing that He is truly God and you need to confess it with your mouth.

Evangelistic : Lead into prayer

Now, if you have truly believed that, who are you now?

John 1: 2 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

This means you are born again... it's not joining a religion. It's A SPIRITUAL REBIRTH!

It's because if you are not saved, YOU ARE SPIRITUALLY DEAD!

Ephesians 2:1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins

That's why Jesus said :

John 5:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life.

I mentioned last week that eternal life is A LIFE WITH GOD.

*He does not come into judgment, **but has passed from death to life.***

You are now alive spiritually.

Ephesians 2:5 Even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

Now why is it important that you are alive spiritually and NOT DEAD? WHY DID I TAKE TIME TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE SAVED.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH STARTS FROM BEING SAVED.

IMPORTANT : BECAUSE ANYTHING THAT IS DEAD DOESN'T GROW, CANNOT GROW AND WILL NOT GROW SPIRITUALLY INSIDE.

Then you might say, there are some people, they are very religious, they are very kind and they are doing things for God and it looks like they are following but haven't received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour... it looks like they are growing...

The Bible calls that "dead works"

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

Illustration : We have a green plant at home, you know those plastic ones that look like real grass. I noticed that it's always wet and the styrophone is wet. Every week, I noticed that it's wet until one day I saw my wife watering the plastic green plant.

It's like that, spiritual growth comes from a person who is spiritually alive. The grass looks healthy and beautiful but it's plastic. It's not real... it's not alive!!!

SPIRITUAL GROWTH STARTS FROM BEING SAVED.

And what do we need to in order to grow spiritually, to become mature?

It has to do with,

WALKING, TRUSTING, OVERFLOWING

Walking with Jesus

Trusting In His Word

Overflowing with Thankfulness

We will talk about this next week by God's grace.

S.G.D.