

## LESSON 6

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### CHRIST, THE SOURCE OF WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE; PAUL'S PICTURE OF THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST, PART 1

In 2:1–7 Paul informed the Colossians that he wanted them to be encouraged and bound together by love, fully possessing God's knowledge. All the spiritual information they needed could be found in Christ. Therefore, they were to follow Him and not be drawn away from their faithfulness to Him.

#### **PAUL'S DESIRE: THEIR FULL UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S MYSTERY (2:1, 2)**

In 1:28 Paul stated that his goal was to “present every man complete in Christ.” This could be accomplished if the Colossians and others developed in their lives the traits expressed in 2:2.

1. How does the word translated “struggle” in verse 1 illustrate how diligently Paul sought his fellow Christians' spiritual welfare?
2. What does the word “heart” usually mean in the Bible?
3. Where in the New Testament can we see the importance of unity among all believers emphasized?
4. What is the nature of true wealth according to Paul?
5. In what ways can the phrase “God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself” be interpreted?
6. What is the context for the word “mystery” in Greek and Roman cultures?

**HIS REVELATION:  
ALL WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE  
IN CHRIST (2:3, 4)**

Paul was writing about spiritual treasures and wisdom. In the ancient world, before banks, treasures of great value were often hidden in safe places until they were needed. In order to find God's spiritual wealth, the seeker must search where God's treasures are hidden: in Jesus Christ.

**HIS DELIGHT:  
THEIR FAITH IN CHRIST (2:5)**

Seeing in his spirit the good lives the Colossians were living brought Paul joy. God's teacher is filled with gladness when he finds Christians living godly and righteous lives. Good servants of Christ rejoice when they see favorable results of their labors.

7. What did Paul mean by the statement, "I am with you in spirit"?
8. In what context was the word translated "good discipline" commonly used, and in what contexts had Paul used it?

**HIS ADMONITION:  
AS THEY HAD RECEIVED HIM (2:6)**

Knowing that the treasures of wisdom and knowledge were available to them in Christ, the Colossians were to cling to Him alone and to restrict their lives to the parameters of His commands. They had received Him as the source of all truth and as Lord and Messiah, but receiving Christ Jesus is not the end of our obedience to God. Rather, it is the beginning of the Christian walk. The development of the Christian life must remain consistent with its beginning.

9. What five metaphors are used in verses 6 and 7?

**HIS ENCOURAGEMENT:  
TO BE BUILT UP IN CHRIST (2:7)**

To illustrate what Christians need, he used three participles: rooted, "built up," and "established."

10. In what three senses can the phrase "built up" be understood?
11. What is the source of all spiritual growth?

12. Should Christians be seeking new doctrines? Why or why not?
13. For what could the Colossians overflow “with gratitude”?

**A CAUTION NOT TO BE TAKEN CAPTIVE  
BY HUMAN TEACHINGS (2:8)**

Having provided a background of material on which to build, Paul proceeded to emphasize the importance of Jesus. The Colossians were complete in Him, for through Him their sinful past had been removed.

Having also affirmed that Jesus was the solid foundation on which the Colossians had built their faith in verse 7, Paul proceeded to warn them not to let anyone lead them into other teachings.

14. What specific knowledge does Paul show by using the word translated “no one” in this verse?
15. What does the word “philosophy” mean, and how can this pursuit be both noble and dangerous?
16. Are the most dangerous false teachings those which are devoid of truth? Why or why not?
17. Is tradition good or bad? Why?
18. What might the phrase “elementary principles of the world” mean?

**DEITY EMBODIED IN CHRIST (2:9)**

Verses 8 and 9 add to the statements introduced in 1:15–19 and 2:3. Paul wanted to make sure that the Colossians realized the importance of restricting their thinking to Jesus’ teaching.

19. What does Paul say is the reason for following Jesus?
20. How did Christ reveal God in a way that creation could not?