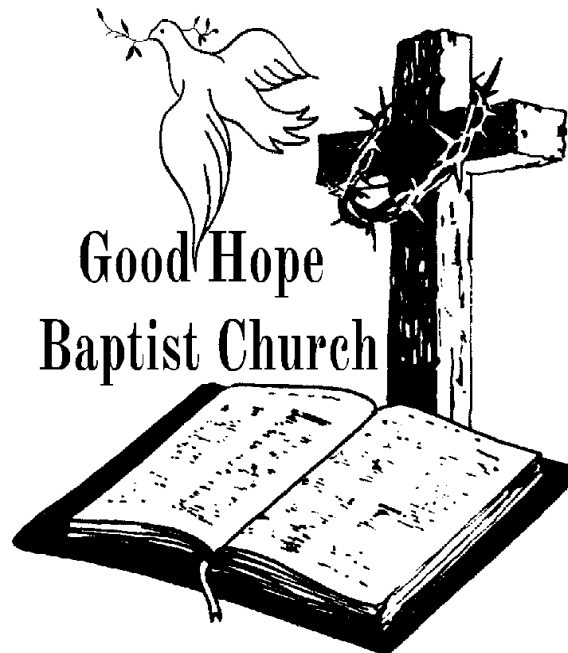


Receiving Christ

Colossians 2:6



Good Hope
Baptist Church

Living Together In The Love Of God

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FOCAL Read Together Colossians 2:6 ^[KJV] As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk ye in Him.

While Sherry and I were in Tennessee staying with friends a few weeks ago I saw a commercial that was creative, and very true. I'm not going to tell you what the product is, but I want to read the words to you. Listen ...

“Nobody ever set their sights on second place. Who aspires to be almost remembered? There's a reason there are no giant foam fingers that say, *We're Number 3*. No one wants to tell an average joke, make an underwhelming entrance, go out with a whimper. No one ever stood in front of the mirror with a hair brush pretending to be the tambourine player. And there are definitely more kids dressed as Batman than Robin. We all aspire.”

The word **“aspire”** is another way of saying **“being number one”** or **“being center stage”**. We all want to be the center of life. We all put a lot of effort into ourselves. We all want to make life about **“me”**.

Illustrate Think of this illustration for a moment. Suppose you were a young person who wanted to be an actor. You sell everything, go to Hollywood, and struggling and starving you eventually get an **“extra”** part, one where you just walk past the main actor during the movie. When the movie comes out you call your parents. **“They're making a movie about me”**, you say. Your parents are so excited that they buy out the theater, and invite all their friends and family to come and see the

movie. A few days after the movie releases your parents call up. “**Where were you in the movie?**”, they ask. You say, “**Didn't you see me? I was in that one second shot when I walked past the main actor.**” That would be silly, wouldn't it?

If life were a movie, most of us want to be the lead actor. The truth is, none of us are the lead in this movie called “Life”. God is the lead. The Bible says:

Psalm 19:1 ^{ESV} **The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.**

Illustrate God is to be glorified. God is to be worshiped. The Creator God Who made all things is IMMENSE! He created over **350 billion galaxies** that, up until recently, none of us knew existed. The Creator is a Master of Detail and Architecture. The lowly **caterpillar** He created has 228 separate and distinct muscles in its head. The **average elm tree** has six *million* leaves on it. God put 3000 different species of trees in just *one square mile* of the **Amazon jungle**. The Creator made **spiders**, then gave them the power to make *three different kinds of silk*, and then gave the spider power to walk on its silk without being trapped. God is huge. He is immense. He is everywhere in His immense creation. God should inspire our awe, and our praise! It is God Who has given us life. The Bible says:

Psalms 100:3 ^{KJV} **Know ye that the LORD he [is] God: [it is] he [that] hath made us, and not we ourselves ...**

God has given us life as a gift. Sadly, too many people squander the great gift of life that the Lord has given them. American writer and theologian **Frederick Buechner** wrote:

“Intellectually we all know that we will die; but we do not really know it in the sense that the knowledge becomes a part of us. We do not really know it in the sense of living as though it were true. On the contrary, we tend to live as though our lives would go on forever.”

This life is not guaranteed to us forever. What is the most important thing for us to do while we have life, while there is breath within us.

Receive Christ Jesus The Lord

The Apostle told the Colossians:

FOCAL **Colossians 2:6** ^[KJV] **As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord**

What does it mean to “**receive Christ Jesus the Lord**”?

Word Study The word “**receive**” is a Greek word (paralambano) which literally means “**to draw to oneself in an embrace. To take to oneself. To have faith in to the exclusion of all else**”. In the Gospel of John we are told that:

John 1:10-12 ^(KJV) {Jesus} was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name:

1 The Christian receives Jesus Christ as the **Creator**. Jesus Christ **made the world**. It is He Who is Creator God. God the Father planned the Creation, God the Holy Spirit moved on the Creation, but it is Jesus Who made all things. He is the long awaited Messiah. He came to His own – His chosen nation Israel – **and His own would not receive Him**. They rejected Him as Messiah and as Creator. They saw Him as a great Teacher, and even called Him Rabbi (Master Teacher), but rejected Him as the Messiah. The Apostle Paul said:

Romans 1:16 ^(NIV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

Jesus came to this earth, Creator God coming into His Creation. He said, “Here I am, receive Me!” The Jews said, “We receive You as a Teacher, but not the Creator, and certainly not the Savior.” They rejected Christ. Jesus told the Jews, “**Before Abraham was, I AM**” (John 8:58), and the Jews picked up stones to stone Him, believing Christ to be a blasphemer and a liar. But Jesus Christ is the Creator. In our context the Apostle wrote:

Context Colossians 1:15-17 ^(KJV) {Jesus} is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Jesus Christ is the Eternal Creator. It is He Who made the Heavens and the earth in six days. Not only this, but **by Him all things consist**. Another translation puts it this way:

Context Colossians 1:17 ^(HCSB) {Jesus} is before all things, and by Him all things hold together.

It is Jesus Who made all things, and Jesus Who holds all things together.

2 The Christian receives Jesus Christ as the **Redeemer**. This is a fallen Creation. It's not fallen because God made it that way, but fallen because man has made it that way. Adam sinned – and we continue to sin. Adam failed, and we continue to fail. As a fallen Creation and as fallen Creatures we could not have access to God in our own power. But the Scripture says:

Context Colossians 1:12-14 ^(KJV) Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us {acceptable} to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated [us] into the kingdom of his dear

Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, [even] the forgiveness of sins:

The Scripture says that we are all sinners who have a debt to pay to God. The only problem is, we cannot pay the debt ourselves.

What payment can a sinner make to the Sinless and Holy God?

As Sinners we could not make payment for our sin. So the Creator of all things allowed Himself to be created. He entered this life born of the Virgin Mary through the operation of the Holy Spirit of God. The Bible says that in Jesus ...

Ephesians 1:7 ^(KJV) In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

He has delivered us from darkness, and into light. He has delivered us from death and into life. If you have **received Christ Jesus the Lord** then the Bible says:

1 John 5:11-12 ^(KJV) ... God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; [and] he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

As the song says:

He paid a debt He did not owe,
I owed a debt I could not pay,

I needed someone to wash my sins away,
Now I sing a brand new song, Amazing Grace,
Christ Jesus paid a debt that I could never pay.

3 The Christian receives Jesus Christ as the Reconciler. The Bible tells us that:

Context Colossians 1:20-22 ^(KJV) having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, [I say], whether [they be] things in earth, or things in heaven. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in [your] mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

The Bible teaches that man is quite naturally at war with God. We were **alienated**, that is, separated from God by our very nature. The unsaved person who has not been **“born again by hearing and responding to the Word of God”** (1 Peter 1:23) sees nothing wrong with sin. The unsaved person who is not **“born of the Spirit”** (John 3:6-7) hears the Word of and Will of God, but is **“enemies in their mind by wicked works”**. They do evil. They violate God's Laws without concern. They violate the Ten Commandments without thought. Most of all, they violate the Two Great Commandments. Jesus was asked:

Matthew 22:36-40 ^(KJV) Master, which [is] the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,

and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

By His shed Blood Jesus Christ reconciles us to God. When we receive Him to ourselves His Blood marks us as “**holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight**”. What of those who have not received Christ? They are “**unholy, blamable, and reproveable in God's sight**”. They are – even now – in a state of condemnation. The Bible says:

John 3:36 ^(KJV) He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Can you imagine the **abiding wrath of God**? God so loved you all that He gave His only Begotten Son. He gave Him to stand in judgment in your place. The Father gave Christ to bear your failures in righteousness. Pastor **Jonathan Edwards** wrote in his sermon *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*:

“O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: it is a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you, as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and

ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment.”

Our Lord Jesus said:

Luke 12:3-5 ^(KJV) Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. 4 And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

Hell is real, a real place that real lost people really go to! No one needs to go there, and no one will go there who **receives Christ Jesus the Lord**.

4 The Christian receives Jesus as the Head of the Body, the Church. The Bible says:

Context Colossians 1:18-19 ^(KJV) {Jesus} is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all [things] he might have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased [the Father] that in him should all fulness dwell;

It is Jesus Who paid for my sins, and for the sins of every

believer. He owns us, Beloved. He owns His Church! He directs His Church. His Word is our Law. What He has said, we must do. There are local Churches today that have begun to make compromises in what the Word of God teaches in order to be more “politically correct” to those around us. The Apostle warned the Church of Colossae:

Context Colossians 2:8-9 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. {9} For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

The local Church can become **spoiled or taken captive by the world** when it stops letting its worldview be influenced by Christ and His Word and starts letting the world dictate how we believe.

The local Church can be captured by Satan and by his evil forces when we accept the word of man over the Word of God. The slide into destruction never comes immediately, but the slide is always gradual. The Church backs away from one of God's truths in favor of one of man's truths. Having compromised once the local Church decides - for the sake of peace - to compromise once more. One after another the local Church fails to advance to the high ground of Christ likeness and becomes more and more like the world. In the end the local Church that follows this path cannot be distinguished from the world.

When we become *comfortable* in this life, and begin to make concessions for comfort's sake rather than for God's sake, we begin to lose the battle.

If we lose enough battles then we *will* lose the war in America. Our hope is to stay firmly in step with Christ! He is our Master! The strength of the Christian is that we live according to His Word. The strength of the Church is that we follow His directions without question. So many local Churches and professing Christians put their love into the world. This world is not our home. The Bible says:

1 John 2:15-17 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. {16} For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. {17} And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

Illustrate In 1927 **Eben Byers** injured his arm. He went to his doctor and was given an elixir called **Radithor**. Bailey Radium Laboratories produced Radithor, and marketed it as “**harmless in every respect**”. The elixir actually turned out to be a type of *radioactive water*. Two years after taking his medicine Byers lost his teeth, then his jaw rotted away. He died when holes formed in his skull, and he was buried in a lead lined coffin. The world doesn't know up from down many times, but Jesus does. He loves us, and wants the best for us. We should

strive to follow His will in all things, not compromise with this fallen world.

5 Having received Christ Jesus the Lord, the Christian keeps on walking in Him. Again our focal text says:

FOCAL Colossians 2:6 ^[KJV] As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, **walk ye in Him.**

IF you are a Christian, IF you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, THEN you must walk in Him. The Bible uses **walking** to illustrate the Christian way of life.

When you walk, you put one foot ahead of the other, taking one step at a time. As Christians we are to heed Christ's Word, doing what He tells us to do. We can only walk *today*.

We walk in the LIGHT, not in DARKNESS
Ephesians 5:8; 1 John 1:6-7

We walk as NEW CREATURES, not LOST CREATURES
Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:6

We walk in GOOD WORKS
Ephesians 2:10

We walk in WISDOM and TRUTH
Colossians 4:5; 2 John 4; 3 John 3-4

We walk in LOVE toward God and others
Ephesians 5:2; 2 John 6

We walk REJECTING SIN and EMBRACING CHRIST
Romans 6:1-6

We walk in DIGNITY as sons of God
John 1:12

6 Having received Christ Jesus the Lord, our goal is to lead others to receive Christ. In his book *Crazy Love* Pastor Francis Chan talked about a 14 year old girl named Brooke Bronkowski. Brooke is a Christian, and wrote this piece called "Since I Have My Life Before Me":

"I'll live my life to the fullest. I'll be happy. I'll brighten up. I will be more joyful than I have ever been. I will be kind to others. I will loosen up. I will tell others about Christ. I will go on adventures and change the world. I will be bold and not change who I really am. I will have no troubles but instead help others with their troubles. You see, I'll be one of those people who live to be history makers at a young age. Oh, I'll have moments, good and bad, but I'll wipe away the bad and only remember the good. In fact that's all I remember, just good moments, nothing in between, just living my life to the fullest. I'll be one of those people who go somewhere with a mission, an awesome plan, a world-changing plan, and nothing will hold me back. I'll set an example for others, I will pray for direction. I have my life before me. I will

give others the joy I have and God will give me more joy. I will do everything God tells me to do. I will follow the footsteps of God. I will do my best!!!”

Isn't that beautiful? The Lord called Brooke home to be with Him when she was but 14 years old. Francis Chan wrote:

“Nearly fifteen hundred people attended Brooke's memorial service. Everyone spoke of her example and her joy. I shared the Gospel and invited those who wanted to know Jesus to come up and give their lives to Him. There must have been at least two hundred students on their knees at the front of the Church praying for salvation. Ushers gave a Bible to each one of them. They were Bibles that Brooke had kept in her garage, hoping to give out to all her unsaved friends. In one day, Brooke led more people to the Lord than most ever will. In her brief fourteen years on earth, Brooke was faithful to Christ. Her short life was not wasted. The words from her essay seemed prophetic: “You see, I'll be one of those people who live to be history makers at a young age”.

Don't waste your lives. Receive Christ Jesus the Lord, and walk in Him.

