

# *You Are Complete In Jesus Christ*

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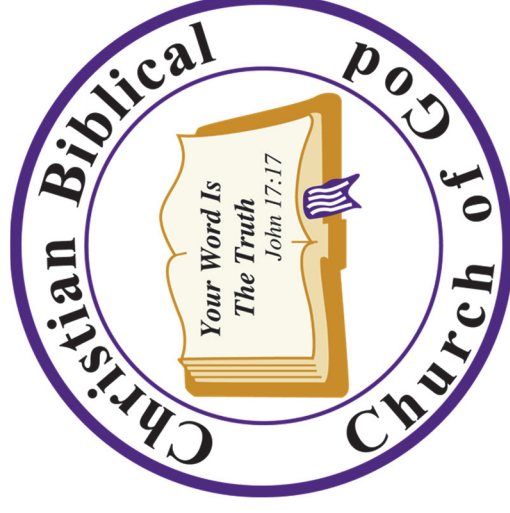
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*by*  
**Fred R. Coulter**

Prophets—complete. Not only was He giving the complete spiritual meaning of the laws and commandments of God as he proclaimed in Matthew five, six and seven, but He was also prophesying that He would complete the Word of God. This He did by inspiring the writings of the New Testament!

The apostle Paul understood this! He wrote, “I became a servant, according to the administration of God, which is given me towards you **to complete** [pleerol] **the word of God**...” (Col. 1:25). Paul knew what he was writing would help “complete” the Word of God. Later, Peter was inspired to add more and then John finally completed the written Word of God with the book of Revelation. God has faithfully preserved His Word for us today!

In other words, what Jesus started in Matthew 5:17-18 was carried on under His personal inspiration, through the power of the Holy Spirit of Truth as He promised, to Matthew, Mark, Luke, James, Peter, Paul, Jude and John to complete the Word of God!

The book of Revelation, which God the Father and Jesus Christ inspired the apostle John to write, fills to the full—*pleeroma*—or **completes the word of God!** That is why this warning at the end of the book of Revelation was written to show the completion of the Word of God! “For I jointly testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, *that* if anyone adds to these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of *the* book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from *the* book of life, and from the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book” (Rev 22:18-19)

**WE ARE TO BE COMPLETE IN CHRIST AND BE COMPLETELY IN CHRIST!** Jesus prayed this prayer for us: “That they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us...” (John 17:21).

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In other words, they were not living by every word of God, they were not complete in Christ because they were not doing the things which made them complete! They were not fully keeping the commandments and laws of God, including the holy days, etc. as the apostle Paul commanded in Colossians Two. Therefore they are not complete in Christ! How can anyone who is close to death be complete in Christ? It is not possible!

Now, let's take this one step further. Consider this for a moment! How can anyone be complete in Christ if he is keeping Sunday, instead of the Sabbath? Or if he is keeping Christmas, Easter, New Years, etc., instead of the Passover and the holy days of God? Or if he refuses to keep the holy days, as do all the "Christian" churches of this world? Or if he refuses to obey the laws of clean and unclean meats, etc.

So we come back full circle, don't we? To be complete in Christ means living by every word of God! This is what Jesus taught! "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God" (Matt 4:4, Luke 4:4 and Deut. 8:3).

### **Christ Brought Completeness To The Law And Prophets**

Jesus Christ made it absolutely clear that He was bringing completeness to the Law and Prophets! In Matthew Five it is recorded that Jesus Christ personally proclaimed: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; **I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.** For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled." (Matt 5:17-18). That is a profound statement! Now let's analyze that just a bit more. The English words "to fulfill" were translated from the Greek word, *pleeroo*, which means "to fill, to make full, to make complete, to complete, to fulfill, to finish, to bring something to completion" (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Arnt & Gingrich).

Therefore, Jesus Christ, as God manifested in the flesh, as Lawgiver, was making the Law—all of God's laws, and the

## **You Are Complete In Jesus Christ!**

*All true Christians are being confronted with the doctrines and philosophies of the religions of men! They are being led to believe that they cannot be complete in Christ and the Word of God. Rather, they also need the teachings of religious tradition based on the doctrines of the ancient philosophies of Babylon. Is that happening to your church? Is that happening to you? The apostle Paul gives us the clear Scriptural answer to these doctrinal errors.*

### **The Greatness of the Scriptures**

The Word of God is so great, having been inspired by God through the power of the Holy Spirit, that there is no adequate comparison we can make, except one. The Word of God, the Old Testament and New Testament, can be likened to a sphere. It is all interconnected and is so loaded with knowledge, understanding and wisdom that if this sphere represented God's inspired Word, then an infinite number of lines could be drawn through the sphere at almost an endless number of angles so there would be an incalculable number of intersections and connections. Each of these intersections and connections would represent the agreement of Scripture with Scripture, line upon line, precept upon precept. This is how totally the Word of God agrees with itself. And it does so because the mind of God inspired it. Furthermore, only God can give us the ability to properly understand His way through the power of His Holy Spirit, which leads us and opens our minds.

This is the reason the apostle Paul wrote exhaustively that we cannot understand God the Father and Jesus Christ or the Scriptures by man's wisdom. The Greek word for "wisdom" is *sophia*, from which the English word *philosophy*—"love of wisdom" is derived. We will learn about the Scriptural teachings of *Philosophy vs. Completeness in Christ*. Remember, that it is the God of Truth, Who inspired the Scriptures—which is the Word of Truth. He inspired it to be written through the power of His Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Truth, which reveals the spiritual things of God to us.

Inasmuch as this is true, we need to constantly strive to grow in the grace and knowledge of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Foremost, we must study the Word of God in an attitude of loving God the Father and Jesus Christ with all our hearts, all our souls, all our minds, all our beings and all our strength. With this attitude of total love to God the Father and Jesus Christ, there is never any question that we will be obeying the commandments of God and will be determined to do those things which please Him.

### **What Does It Mean To Be Complete In Christ?**

Numerous religious leaders maintain that all one has to do to be saved is to “just believe” and “open your heart and let the Lord in” and “you shall be saved.” It is shouted loudly to “just believe,” and you are complete in Christ! Others signify that, if you have Christ in you, you have nothing to do whatsoever because Christ has completed it all for you when He lived His perfect life. Therefore, there is nothing a believer has to do except “just love the Lord and think nice thoughts—no muss—no fuss.” Since Christ had done it all, and you are complete in Christ, it is rationalized that a Christian does not even have to keep those “old” commandments! This is a degenerative doctrine of “grace” as taught by most denominations of worldly Christianity. A lazy man’s “dream” of Christianity.

In addition, others, such as Catholic and Orthodox, prescribe various traditional religious works and observances which they say are obligatory for salvation. However, most of those practices are merely renamed pagan religious rituals, practices and traditions. What I have just described are doctrines of various counterfeit “Christian” religions, and their religious practices, based on the philosophies of men. With “authority” they claim these divergent beliefs are derived from the New Testament!

The irony of all this, is those who preach such duplicity turn to the very Scriptures, primarily Colossians the second chapter, which specifically teach “against” these practices! They handle the Word of God dishonestly and mangle the Scriptures, recklessly dismissing the very Scriptures, which condemn these methods!

- *Dead to your sins*
- *He has now made alive with Him*
- *Forgiven all our trespasses*
- *He has blotted out the note of debt* [the symbolic notes of debt because of our sins] *against us.*
- *Nailed all* [of our sins] *to the Cross*
- *Stripped away the* [power] *from the principalities and authorities* of the demonic spirits over Christians
- *Publicly triumphed over them* the elemental demonic spirits of this world through the crucifixion and resurrection
- *Eating and drinking* in accordance to the commands of God, rather than the traditions and commands of men. This means that a Christian will observe the laws of clean and unclean meats, and not drink to drunkenness.
- *The observance of Festivals*, which are the annual holy days of God
- *The observance of the new moon*, in particularly meaning the use of the Hebrew calendar as the standard of time, rather than the pagan calendar of Rome.
- *The observance of the Sabbaths*, which means keeping the weekly Sabbath on an on-going basis.

### **Warning Against Incomplete Works Even While You Are In Christ**

With what we have just learned from Colossians Two, we can now understand the warning given by Jesus Christ to the church of Sardis in Revelation 3:1-6. He says, “And to the angel of the church in Sardis, write: These things says He Who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your works, and that you have a name as if you are alive, BUT ARE DEAD. Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, which are about to die. For **I have not found your works complete** [pleeroma] **before God**” (Rev. 3:1-2).

tiousness, and are personally denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.” These corrupt the Truth of God. Many such men now sit on the doctrinal committees of various churches theological institutions and are the ones who are promulgating these false doctrines.

In the 45 years that I have been a minister in the church of God, I have seen many ministers and brethren get carried away in the vanity of their minds, in empty deceit—as Paul says, and do and preach every one of these heresies which Paul condemns in Colossians Two! What a shame! In varying degrees, many have left Christ and forsaken the Truth of God’s Word to follow the philosophies and religions of men! The Apostle Paul wrote that we are to reject these teachings of men and **be complete in Christ**.

### **The Things Which Make Us Complete in Christ**

Here is a summary of the things which Paul taught that make us complete in Christ and the list itself is quite complete:

- *The full assurance of understanding*. The full assurance is a derivative of *pleeroma*, meaning *fullness*.
- *The knowledge [gnosis] of the mystery of God and of the Father and of Christ*
- *In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom [sophia] and knowledge [gnosis].*
- *The steadfastness of your faith in Christ*
- *Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him.*
- *Being rooted and built up in Him*
- *Confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving*. This means the full teachings of the New Testament as taught by the apostles and preserved for us.
- *Circumcised with ... the circumcision of Christ*
- *Putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh*
- *Buried with Him in baptism*—the death of baptism
- *Raised with Him, through the inner working of God*

This is not what the inspired Word of God teaches! We must “rightly divide the Word of God.” The true answer to this question has “huge” meaning for us. The entire second chapter of Colossians teaches us how we are complete in Christ. God wants us to know and understand what it means to be **complete in Christ!**

### **The Completeness of Jesus Christ**

Let’s start with the completeness of Jesus Christ Himself, because if Christ is not complete, how can you be whole in Christ? The apostle Paul wrote, “For in Him dwells all the **fullness of the Godhead bodily**; And you are **complete in Him**, Who is the Head of all principality and power” (Col. 2:9-10).

These verses tell us that there is the fullness, or completeness of Christ. We are in turn, complete in Christ. To begin, we will look at the meaning of two Greek words, which will give us added insight as to the full meaning of being “complete in Christ.”

The Greek word translated *fullness* in verse 9 is *pleeroma*, which means “that which fills, that which is brought to fullness or completion, that which makes something full or complete, the sum total, even (super) abundance, the full measure, the fulfillment and the state of being full” (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Arnt & Gingrich).

The literal translation, which reveals the full meaning of verse 9 is this: “For in Him dwells the full measure of the God-head bodily” In other words, Christ is the full measure or the completeness of what it means to be God, as God is God. The apostle John wrote that Jesus Christ said of Himself: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; **NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER EXCEPT THROUGH ME**” (John 14:6).

There is no other path, there is not another religion or philosophy which needs to be added to Christ, or to the Word of God, so that a believer can come to Christian perfection and the attainment of eternal life The life Jesus Christ lived in the flesh, through the power

of God the Father, completed every thing that was necessary for the plan of salvation and for Jesus Christ to be the perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin. He was resurrected from the dead, back to eternal life as the Son of God, to “the full measure of deity bodily.” There is no need for philosophy—the religious wisdom of men, pagan, Eastern Mysticism or Judaism, to complete your relationship with Jesus Christ, or to make a devoted follower complete in Christ. Only God the Father Himself can bring that completeness through Jesus Christ.

The first chapter of the Gospel of John illustrates this absolute spiritual truth about the deity of Christ! “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **THE WORD WAS GOD!** He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him...**and the Word became flesh**”(John 1:1-3, 14).

Jesus Christ is the completeness, the fullness, the full measure of deity—very God. He needs nothing from men. He needs nothing from the religions of men. He needs nothing from the philosophies of men to perfect Him—**HE IS THE COMPLETE PERFECTION OF GOD THE FATHER.**

What an absolute arrogant, effrontery it is to God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the calling to which God has called us, to even suggest that the rotten inspired religion of philosophy is needed to make Christ or Christians perfect! There is not any such requirement in the Word of God that true Christians are to use the religion of philosophy in order for them to become complete in Christ Jesus. Neither is there any basis to the assumption that philosophy is an “additional” so-called revelation of God, which Christians are obligated to use to attain the perfection of God in their lives.

Emphatically, the New Testament teaches precisely the opposite and most profoundly so in Colossians Two! Yet, it is this very chapter which they twist and misinterpret to make it appear to say diametrically opposite of what it actually teaches! What a tragedy it is! What an irony it is! These very verses which strongly uphold the requirement for a Christian to obey the command-

self-abasement, and unsparing treatment of *the* body, not in any respect to the satisfying of *the needs* of the flesh [as a means to restrain from lust and corruption]” (verses 18-23).

### **The Things Which Take You Away From The Completeness In Christ**

Let’s go back and summarize those things in Colossians Two which takes the true Christian away from his completeness in Christ. Which things, indeed, cut a person off from Christ, because they cause you to follow men and their religious philosophies and traditions and not Christ. These things are:

- *Persuasive speech* vs. 4
- *Philosophy and vain deceit* vs. 8
- *Traditions of men* vs. 8
- *Elements of the world* vs. 8
- *Allow anyone to judge you* in your Christian behavior and obedience to Christ. vs. 16
- *Doing the will of men* vs. 18
- *Self-abasement* self-imposed pseudo-humility vs. 18
- *The worship of angels, or demons* vs. 18
- *Intruding into things that he has not seen* vs. 18
- *Vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind* vs. 18
- *Not holding fast to the Head* vs. 19
- *Living in the world* vs. 20
- *Subjecting yourselves to the decrees of men as if you were living in the world* vs. 20-23

Jesus Christ inspired the apostle Paul to write the book of Colossians and has preserved it for us so that we can “know and understand” the things which make us *complete* in Christ. He also reveals how deceitful men use the demonically inspired religions of the philosophies of men as a counterfeit for the Truth. Through their decrees, doctrines, commandments and traditions they seek to corrupt the Truth of Christ and draw us back into the religions of the world. Worse yet, as Jude was inspired to write “For certain men have stealthily crept in, those who long ago have been written about, condemning *them* to this judgment. *They are* ungodly men, who are perverting the grace of our God, *turning it* into licen-



commands of God rather than the traditions and commands of men. This means that a Christian will observe the laws of clean and unclean meats, and will not drink to drunkenness.

- *The observance of Festivals* which are the annual holy days of God.
- *The observance of the new moon*, in particular meaning the use of the Hebrew calendar as the standard of time, rather than the pagan calendar of Rome.
- *The observance of the Sabbaths*, which means keeping the weekly Sabbath as an on-going practice.

Another thing that is absolutely clear, in these verses is that Paul is upholding the commandments of God as binding practices for true Christians, so that they may be complete in Christ. In other words, if a person is not keeping these laws and commandments of God on an ongoing basis, HE CANNOT BE COMPLETE IN CHRIST! In fact, he makes it very clear that if you are not doing these things of God and are instead practicing the religions and philosophies of men, you are going to lose your reward in Christ! Notice, His warnings become even more specific and pointed. He makes it absolutely plain and clear! “DO NOT ALLOW ANYONE [literally, no one] to defraud you of the prize [your reward] by doing *his* will in self-abasement [self-imposed humility] and *the* worship of angels [fallen angels or demons], intruding into things that he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his own carnal mind and not holding fast to the Head [Jesus Christ], from Whom all the body, being supplied and knit together by the joints and bands, is increasing *with* the increase of God.”

The warning continues, “Therefore, if you have died *with* Christ [through baptism] from the elements of the world, why are you subjecting yourselves to *the* decrees of *men* as if you were living in *the* world? *They say*, ‘You may not handle! you may not taste! you may not touch!’ The use of all such things leads to corruption, **according to the commandments and doctrines of men**, which indeed have an outward appearance of wisdom [*Sophia—through philosophy*] in voluntary worship of angels and

ments and laws of God have been so subverted and so twisted as to give the appearance of rejecting the commandments of God. The commandments which are hated the most are the Sabbath, the holy days, clean and unclean meats, etc.

The truth is, we are to reject completely the religious philosophies, commandments, doctrines and decrees of men to be “complete in Christ!”

Few acknowledge that the religion of philosophy, which means “the love of religious wisdom,” teaches that there are various stages which are required in order to attain to their version of “the fullness of deity.” These stages range in numbers up to 9. This is exactly what the so-called “new agers” of today flaunt. But their “new age” religion is a revival of ancient satanic religion of philosophy, which is inspired by the demonic “principalities and authorities,” who are ruling this world (Eph 6:12-17). The Apostle Paul wrote the book of Colossians to combat this ancient heresy, which was actively being preached by “cunning tricksters” as another gospel in Paul’s time, just as it is today!

### **What It Means To Be Complete In Christ**

The apostle Paul continually taught that Jesus Christ was and is the “full measure of deity—the Godhead.” Consequently, we do not require the philosophies of these religions to be complete in Christ. This is why Paul wrote that “you are complete in Christ!”

The Greek word translated “complete” in verse 10 comes from the verb *pleeroo*, which is the verb form of the noun *pleeroma*. *Pleeroo*, means “to fill, to make full, to make complete, to complete, to fulfill, to finish, to bring something to completion” (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Arnt & Gingrich).

The participle of *pleeroo*, as used in verse 10, contains this full meaning: “You are totally complete in Christ.” It is through the Spirit of Christ in us that we are complete (Rom. 8:9-14). Paul wrote, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27). The final completion of the mystery of God for us is the

resurrection to eternal life. Colossians the first chapter—especially verse 27, is the foundation upon which Paul wrote the second chapter.

In Chapter Two of Colossians, Paul clearly teaches what it means to be complete in Christ now. He illustrates that the true Christian will be living by every word of God. Also, a dedicated respondent will reject the teachings and dogmas of philosophy—the demonically inspired religions of men with all their own commandments, decrees, and traditions, which even includes the worship of fallen angels.

This is what he wrote “That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, unto all riches of the **full assurance of understanding, into the knowledge of the mystery of God and of the Father and of Christ**; in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (verses 2-3). Paul is clearly saying that the religion of philosophy, with its so-called “wisdom”—*sophia* and “*knowledge*”—*gnosis*, does not have, nor can it provide that which only God has and which He alone can provide. These are:

- *The full assurance of understanding*. The full assurance is a derivative of *pleeroma*, meaning *fullness*.
- *The knowledge [gnosis] of the mystery of God and of the Father and of the Christ*
- *In Whom are all the treasures of wisdom [sophia] and knowledge [gnosis] are hidden*.

Assuredly, these things can only come from God the Father and Jesus Christ and not from philosophy, or the teachings of the religion of philosophy.

Paul gives this warning against such teachings of men; “Now this I say so that **NO ONE** [literally, “*not anyone*”] **MAY DECEIVE YOU BY PERSUASIVE SPEECH**” (verse 4).

This is exactly what is happening in “normal” Christianity today! The false doctrines of men, of the religions and philosophies of men and Eastern spiritism are being persuasively present-

of the wise, and I will nullify the understanding of those who understand...did not God make foolish the wisdom [*sophia*] of this world?” (1 Cor. 1:19-20).

Surely it is not possible for those who do not know Christ, nor have been called of God to make us complete in Christ through their worldly philosophies, or through the religious traditions of men, is it? Of course not! And as we shall see, such philosophies can even include the worship of fallen angels. They do not have any right or authority to judge true Christians who have the Holy Spirit of God and are obeying God and keeping His commandments and laws! That is God’s right alone!

This is clearly what Paul is saying! Notice: “Therefore, [in the light of all that has been written up to this point] **DO NOT ALLOW ANYONE TO JUDGE YOU** in eating or in drinking, or with regard to a festival, or new moon, or *the Sabbaths* [plural in the Greek, which shows continuous Sabbath-keeping], which are a foreshadow [the observance of them] of the things [in God’s plan] that are coming, but the body of Christ” (verses 16-17). The meaning of the phrase “the body of Christ”, is showing that the reality of observing these things is found in the body of Christ—which is the Church (Eph 1:22-23).

Please understand that these Christian converts in Colosse were Gentiles, uncircumcised in the flesh (1:27; 2:11, 13). They were not observing the commandments of God prior to conversion. Therefore, contrary to the teachings of worldly Christianity, the apostle Paul was not abolishing the commandments and laws of God. In fact, he was upholding the observance of them by these Gentile converts as the proper thing to do! He was in fact teaching them that their observance of these things listed in verses 16-17 should not be subject to the judgments of carnal men steeped in philosophy! In fact, these are the very things which make us complete in Christ!

As we review verses 16-17 of Colossians Two, we find these additional specific things which reveal the meaning of being complete in Christ! These things are:

- *In eating or in drinking* in accordance to the



an irony it is that men would use these very verses to proclaim that Paul abolished the commandments and laws of God when these very verses expose the exact opposite!

Paul warned in verse 8 that such claims are in fact the deceitful teachings of men! Let's look as that warning again: **"BE ON GUARD so that no one takes you captive [hunting you down to victimize you] through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements [the elemental demonic spirits] of the world, and not according to Christ."**

### **Do Not Allow Other People To Judge Your Obedience In Christ Jesus**

After all that Paul has written up to this point about what it means to be complete in Christ, he urges each Christian not to allow others to judge your own personal obedience to Christ. The kind of judging, which Paul is warning against, is the criticism and censoring which the people, who believe in the religion of philosophy, or the religions of this world, bring against true Christians who are keeping the commandments and laws of God. In particular, he specifically warns against allowing people to call you into question concerning clean and unclean meats, the observance of Festivals, new moon, and the keeping of the Sabbath. If you are complete in Christ, who are they to judge you because you are observing these things in obedience to God the Father and Jesus Christ? They are not to judge us. Christ is to judge us!

The Scriptures teach that we "shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" and render an account of himself to God (Rom 14:10). Why then, should we allow others to judge us in these things pertaining to God? It is our obedience and completeness in Christ as the Word of God requires. Who are they to judge? They do not know Christ. They do not understand His Word nor His commandments and His laws!

Paul shows that this kind of judgment against true Christians, by the religionists who are practicing philosophy, is foolishness to God "For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom [*sophia*]

ed in the "double-speak" of tricky "new understanding!" Hence, we are told that such things are the will of God, and the believer must accept these "new doctrines." It is trumpeted that these "positive" doctrines will make you more secure as a Christian. But these teachings will actually make you incomplete in Christ and deficient in understanding. Instead of leading you to the completeness in Christ, such errors take you away from Christ. They steal you away from the true knowledge of God's Word. Such ravings are the teachings and doctrines of humanly devised philosophy and do not point you to Christ and salvation!

Next, Paul shows the way to keep the true faith of Jesus Christ and be complete in Him. It is through the "...steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord [this means as they had been taught by the apostle Paul—the true teachings of the apostles], be walking in Him; being rooted [caused to take root upon the foundation of Jesus Christ] and built up in Him [a constant on-going process of growth in Christ], and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving" (verses 5-7).

Paul expounds further on our completeness in Christ:

- *The steadfastness of your faith in Christ*
- *As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him*
- *Being rooted and built up in Him*
- *Being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught.* This means the full teachings of the New Testament as taught by the apostles and preserved for us. This does not mean the partial teachings of any minister or church. Today, the "Christian" professing churches are extremely deficient in the full teachings of Jesus Christ and the fullness of the teachings of the original apostles.

Again in verse 8 Paul warns strongly against the teachings of philosophy: **"BE ON GUARD so that no one takes you captive [hunting you down to victimize you] through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men, according to the elements [the elemental demonic spirits] of the world, and not according to Christ."**

All the way through this chapter we see that Paul is teaching the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and God the Father as compared to the erroneous teachings of philosophy and the traditions of men! Such teachings were making an inroad into the churches of God in Colosse, Laodocia and Heirapolis in Paul's time. It has also made inroads into "Christian" churches in our day!

Notice the distinct two part pattern which Paul used to write the second chapter of Colossians:

A. The Truth of Jesus Christ and God the Father, which makes you complete in Christ—verses 2-6, 9-17.

B. Warnings against the deceitful teachings of men, which take you from Christ and make you incomplete in Christ—if not rejected by Christ—verses 8, 16, 18-23.

These comparisons are seriously important! We need to see these contrasts, as it will help us to understand what Paul wrote.

Paul continues to show what it means to be complete in Christ Jesus. "In Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with Him, through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead."

"For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt [the symbolic note of debt because of our sins] against us *with* the decrees of *our* sins [the symbolic note of the debt of our sins], which was contrary to us; and He has taken it [with all of our sins] away, having nailed it to the cross. After stripping the principalities and the powers, He made a public spectacle of them, *and* has triumphed over them in it [the crucifixion and resurrection] (Col. 2:11-15)."

Colossians 2:14 does not in any way communicate that the commandments of God were nailed to the cross. The phrase "note

of debt against us with the decrees of our sins" means the note of debt, or the listing of our sins against God. Our sins and the debt of our sins were nailed to the cross when Jesus Christ was crucified and died. Upon true repentance of sins to God the Father, Jesus Christ blots out the note of debt through the remission of our sins. Jesus Christ, Who knew no sin, was made sin for us. He was nailed to the cross as a sin offering for the sins of the whole world. The note of debt of our sins was symbolically nailed to the cross, not the commandments of God which stand forever.

In these verses Paul continues to show that there is more to our completeness in Christ:

- *Circumcised with the circumcision of Christ—the circumcision of the heart.*"
- *Putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh.*
- *Buried with Him in baptism—the covenant death of baptism.*
- *Raised with Him through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead.*
- *Were dead in your sins.*
- *Made alive with Him.*
- *Forgiven all your trespasses.*
- *Blotted out the note of debt against us with the decrees of our sins.*
- *Nailed it [note of debt of our sins] to the Cross.*
- *Stripping the principalities and the powers [of the demonic spirits over Christians]."*
- *He made a public spectacle of them [the elemental demonic spirits of this world] and has triumphed over them in it [the crucifixion and resurrection].*

Notice! Paul did not write nor teach that the commandments of God were nailed to the cross. Worldly Christianity motivated by the philosophies and lies of men actually teach that these verses mean that the commandments of God were nailed to the cross. They teach that since they were nailed to the cross, we are no longer required to observe them! Hence, it is reasoned from this perverted interpretation of these verses that God did indeed abolish the Law! Yet, these are the very verses which literally uphold the keeping of the commandments and laws of God! What