

All the Treasures: Colossians – Week 5

HOOK – “Sell Me This Pen.”

Have you ever had someone try to sell you something you didn't need... at all?

The Value-Added Approach

The seller attempts to create interest by highlighting the various features making it desirable.

- *"This pen is gold — that positions you as a person of value to your peers."*
- *"This pen has refillable ink cartridges, so you'll never need to buy a new one."*
- *"Compared to other pens, this pen is very smooth and comfortable to hold."*

The Solution-Based Approach

The seller asks about what they're looking for in a pen and if they have any problems with my current one. Then, they build the case that this pen will solve their needs.

- *"What is the most important thing for you when buying a pen?"*
- *"What color pen are you in the market for?"*
- *"What were the strengths and weaknesses of the last pen you owned?"*

The Problem-Creation Approach

Seller lead the buyer unknowingly using questions that make them concerned about problems they didn't even know they had in the first place. The buyer arrives at a pre-set conclusion which the sales representative has orchestrated. This is the best possible outcome.

- Convince the buyer they could have better/need better.

At any moment, the buyer could cut through the smokescreen the seller is creating by remembering that they have a totally sufficient pen already.

BOOK: Thesis: Jesus is sufficient. In Him, we already have all we need in Him.

Colossians 2:1 - *For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face,*

- Laodicea was the closest city to Colossae; Nine mi away. In Rev.3 they received a letter of John from Jesus. They were reprimanded for being lukewarm, but it was left open to them to repent and receive rewards for turning back to God.
- Paul's struggle for Colossae is mentioned by him over and over.
 - **V.9** – *we have not ceased to pray for you...*
 - **V.24** – *I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake...*
 - **V.28-29** – *that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil...*

- Even though he hasn't met them (and others) face to face, he still feels deeply for them, loves them, and is joyfully working - even suffering - for their sake to know the gospel.

Colossians 2:2a - *...that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ,*

- **What is the outcome Paul is struggling, toiling, suffering for?** That they'd be **encouraged, unified**, and have **assurance**. But these three are not abstract ideas. They are the outcome of something reached. Something which was a mystery.
 - **1:26** – *“the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. [...] this mystery which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”*
 - **Why are Christians encouraged?** Because Christ is in us.
 - **Why are Christians unified?** Because Christ is with us.
 - **Why do Christians have assurance?** Because Christ is taking us.

Illustration: 1970; **Willis Reed**, Knicks vs. Lakers, NBA Championship game at Madison Square Garden. Reed was the MVP of the league and unquestioned leader on the Knicks. He tore a thigh muscle in game 5, completely missed 6. The Knicks and Lakers were tied 3-3. Game 7 would decide the NBA National Champion, and Reed was unsure if he'd be able to play.

At the time, the Knicks were huge underdogs. The Lakers had Wilt Chamberlin, the greatest scorer ever – the only man to ever score 100 points in one game.

When Reed showed up, he came limping down the bleachers. One announcer said he was almost “dragging his leg.” But the sight of him had an exhilarating effect. The crowd erupted in deafening applause. The Knicks found their confidence and rallied to him. The crowd was saying, “Everything's alright. The captain is here.” “When I saw that,” Knicks guard Walt Frazier said, “something told me we might have these guys.” His entrance was so explosive, the Lakers themselves paused their warm up drills and watched as he joined his team.

We was only able to play for the length of scoring two jump shots, but the momentum he catalyzed carried the team to victory. Just seeing the power of their brother coming back from injury and taking his place ready to play inspired the determination and hope his teammates needed to win an unlikely victory.

How much more **encouragement, unity**, and **assurance** should we have knowing that the risen Christ has joined us and is leading us to certain victory. That truth should bolster our spirits and give us energy, endurance, and hope.

- **2 Sam.22:2-4, 31** – *“The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence. I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. [...] GOD’s way is perfect. All the LORD’s promises prove true.*
- To Paul, THIS reality is the most valuable thing they can have. It’s worth his own suffering for them to “reach” it. **It’s the understanding and knowledge of Christ Jesus.**

Colossians 2:3 -...*Christ...in whom are hidden all the treasures of **wisdom** and **knowledge**.*

- Paul is priming the pump for dealing with the Colossian heresy in a couple verses. Wisdom was the focus of the Greek/Roman philosophers. That was what was most revered as the highest achievement and treasure. And Paul is making a clear statement: **Those who are “in Christ” lack nothing.** They (already) have in Jesus **ALL** wisdom and understanding. He is the “ultimate storehouse of divine wisdom... (ESV Study Bible);” Totally sufficient.

Wisdom is a treasure! (direct reference to **Proverbs 2:1-6** - *My son, if you receive my words and **treasure** up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to **wisdom** and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for **hidden treasures**, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the **knowledge** of God. (**Where does wisdom come from?**) For the LORD gives **wisdom**: from his mouth come **knowledge** and understanding;*

What is godly WISDOM? **Ephesians 5:15-17** – *“See then that you walk carefully, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”*

- For a Christian, **wisdom** is not just a skill of knowing what to do (what’s best) in life situations but **knowing the will of God for life’s situations.** **“What is God’s will for how I handle money, friendships, marriage, etc.?”**

What is godly KNOWLEDGE? **John 17:3** - *...this is eternal life, that they **know** you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*

- Knowing Jesus = knowing God = relationship with Him = having life.

Paul – (paraphrase) **“Those who are in Christ have everything they need for daily life in this world (wisdom) and for eternal life (knowledge of God).”**

Colossians 2:4 - *I say this (= all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ) in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.*

- The reason he’s saying this is because there are people trying to delude them with arguments that sound reasonable.
- **2 Timothy 4:2-4** - *...preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.*
 - Paul is redirecting them back to the supremacy (**Ch. 1**) and sufficiency of Jesus. **Why? It’s a subtle and powerful temptation to turn away from truth, which is often uncomfortable, and buy into “plausible arguments,” distortions, and even “myths” when they are appealing to our desires.**

Colossians 2:5 - *For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.*

- Paul is imprisoned and wishes he could be with them, but notes that they’re a part of the same Holy Spirit. Plus, their strength doesn’t come from Paul being able to visit, but that they are IN Christ.
- **(reread)** Paul is gently encouraging them to not lose steam by praising them for what they ARE doing.
 - **“good order”** and **“firmness”** are both military terms. **“good order”** meaning to line up in battle formation. **“Firmness”** refers to the stability and strength of the formation. **Their faith unifies them and their unity “in Christ” gives them strength and stability.**
- Paul is being preemptive warning them before there’s a real issue. **Isn’t it better to heighten our awareness to avoid a problem than have to clean up the consequences in the aftermath?** You don’t wait until the pressure is on in a situation to decide who you serve (Jesus or self).
 - **E.g. What will you do?** - backseat, party, tempted to lie, cheat, etc. **Who will you be? Who do you serve?** Answer these now.

Colossians 2:6 - *Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,*

- “Lord” = Master. Who do you serve?
- Paul is only going to give them two instructions here: **1. Walk in Him** in the way you were taught about Him. Don’t give in to any other teaching.
 - **Galatians 1:9** - *If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.*
- “Walk” is a metaphor for daily life decisions, routines, and purpose. **Are you willing to obey and follow Jesus’ words on life’s path when it’s uncomfortable because He’s your Master?** THIS is where your **strength** and **stability** come from. **Walking with Jesus**, especially walking in unity together with Jesus.

Colossians 2:7 - *...rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*

Two metaphors and references here:

1. “**rooted**” – **Psalm 1:1-3** – *Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law (instruction) of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.*
2. “**built up**” – **Matthew 7:24-25** - *Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.*
 - a. **What were they “taught?”** In Christ and His teachings is the only stable place to stand – to be **rooted** and to **build**.
 - b. Our theology effects every decision, word, action, purpose, community, and every aspect of our lives. **We must develop a hunger for rich theology.** It’s far superior to our “faith” being based on our feelings.

Colossians 2:8 - *See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.*

Paul has told them that he wants them to be **encouraged**, to have **unity**, and to rest in **assurance** because of their Captain, Jesus. In Christ, who is totally

sufficient, **they already have all the wisdom (for daily life) and knowledge (for eternal life) they need.** And, he's warned them not to give in to plausible arguments, but to anchor themselves in the firm foundation of Jesus and His teachings. Here, Paul finally pokes at the issue at hand. **There is a tempting teaching threatening the church.**

- There is the Greek article “*tes*” included with the word “philosophy” = “the philosophy” which alludes to the false teachers calling their way of thinking “THE philosophy.” Remember, wisdom and philosophy were all the rage in those days throughout the Hellenized world.
 - “captive” was commonly associated with a cargo ship being attacked and its cargo plundered. Paul wants them to see “The Philosophy” as alarming and threatening.
- Whatever the false teaching is, it's promoting human traditions rooted in “elemental spirits” – “*stoicheia*.” This word was widely used for “spirits” in pagan religious texts like magical and astrological documents. These false teachers are trying to infuse into the church practices which come from the pagan worship of demonic spirits. We'll get more clues in [vs.20-23](#) where Paul mentions the “*elemental spirits*” again and says that the false teachings have “*the appearance of wisdom.*”

Despite the appealing offer of wisdom and knowledge through “The Philosophy,” it's nothing more than “*empty deceit.*” “YOU NEED THIS NEW PEN.” **They already have all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ.** Don't be fooled!!!

Illustration 1: Adam and Eve – the tempter proposed they could be like God when they were already made in the image of God. **The temptation, “There's more than what you already have” is powerfully attractive.**

Illustration 2: Clickbait – Picture: Running faucet of water. Eggshell being cracked open. **Title:** “Top Heart Surgeon: This Simple Trick Helps Empty Your Bowels Every Morning.”

Illustration 3: Two tables with covered glass jars; 3 on one, 1 on the other. A “salesman” will be behind both tables.

Me: “Beneath these four jars, there is a sum total of \$10. Several of you will have the chance to select one jar. Here’s the best part. You get to keep whatever you find.” Lift the fabric cover over one jar revealing \$10.

Salesman 1 behind that jar: “Look, all \$10 are here. From what Pastor Dom said, it’s obvious you should pick this one.”

Salesman 2 behind the others: “He’s lying. I saw him slip \$X under this one. He’s trying to throw you off. Don’t give in. What’s under these is way better.”

There are many voices. They use the attractive nature of mystery, sensational promises, and fast gratification to convince you that what they have is better than what you already have. But, Jesus is ALL wisdom and knowledge – totally sufficient for all your needs. There is nothing but deceit and emptiness in any other philosophy. [How can we know we can trust Him?](#)

[Colossians 2:9-10](#) - *For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.*

- Jesus IS God, Himself. He has all power and authority. AND, you are IN Him and He is IN you.

LOOK

Two Attractive Philosophies To Watch Out For:

No Objective Truth (outside the church)

Reject that there’s objective truth or objective morality. You can have freedom in your expression, identity, and morality. Do and be whatever you feel. You be you. Live your truth. No one is allowed to infringe on your truth with saying your wrong. It’s attractive because everyone gets to do whatever is right in their own eyes and says they have the right to do so. Anyone who is against their choices is in the wrong by default.

Word of Faith movement (in the church) AKA, the Prosperity Gospel

God has given you some of His sovereignty. He has health and wealth and ultimately, what you want stockpiled. BUT, He’s waiting for you to unlock them by doing certain things or praying certain prayers. You just have to have enough faith. But sadly, if you don’t muster up the faith, you won’t see God’s blessings or healings. It’s attractive because it puts the power in our hands to have more, but completely ignores God’s sovereignty over our lives. He knows the future of your life, because He does the future of your life.

RECAP

- We can be encouraged, be unified, and rest in assurance because of Jesus.
- In Christ we have all we need for life (wisdom) & eternity (knowledge of God).
- It's in God's word that we find solid foundation and formidable construction.
- Don't be deceived by philosophies from outside the church or in the church which are counter to Biblical teaching.
- We already have ALL we need. Everything else is empty.

TOOK

Remember that tree that's planted by the water? That house built on the rock? How are we anchored and built up? By a steady diet of God's word. With a sound understanding of Biblical theology. That's why the **Bricks & Mortar** series.

We must study (not just read) the Bible.

We must seek out a steady stream of anchored Biblical teaching.

This means we get picky with the preachers and podcasts we listen to. Find several solid preachers who have long-term biblical teaching experience – yes, old guys.

- **Illustration:** Jacqui and sugar. Once she's pulled away for a time, she doesn't even care for it anymore. She's developed new tastes for health.

Challenge 1: Identify a philosophy contrary to scripture and text your eGroup leader before next Wednesday.

Challenge 2: Go searching for a solid preacher via YouTube or podcasts. If you're looking for suggestions, ask your eGroup leader.

~ *Soli DEO Gloria*

eGroup Questions /// “All the Treasures” Week 5 of Colossians

Pray:

Key Verse:

Colossians 2:3 -...*Christ...in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

Colossians 2:8 - *See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.*

Questions:

1. What are some tactics of commercials and salesmen which make what they offer appealing?
2. Why can Christians who have Jesus be encouraged?
3. Why should Christians who have Jesus be unified?
4. Why do Christians who have Jesus rest in the assurance of glory?
5. If you were to ask Paul, “Why is scripture so important?” how would he answer?
6. What was the meaning behind the covered bucket illustration that pastor Dominick did?
7. What is the difference between objective truth and subjective truth?
8. How can we know what truth is objective (actually true)?
9. Can you think of popular philosophies in our world, at your school, in media today which are contrary to objective truth?
10. Thanks for your answers... What scriptures would you use to back that up?

PS. “Don’t forget to text me before next Wednesday of a deception being promoted.”

Ask for prayer requests: Pray

Fill out student contact sheet if there are any new people.