

TEXT: Colossians 2:6-10

TITLE: Jesus is Enough

THESIS: Our spirituality must surrender to Jesus' sufficiency

Colossians 2:6-10 (NLT)

⁶ And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him. ⁷ Let your roots grow down into Him, and let your lives be built on Him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

⁸ Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. ⁹ For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. ¹⁰ So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

PRAY

MAIN INTRO

Over the past month, we've been in a series called ***Seeing the Invisible***, going through the book of Colossians. This is a letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to early Christians in the ancient Greek city of Colosse.

As Pastor Gerry has said before, Colossians gives us the most complete picture of the work and person of Jesus Christ. That's why Paul's agenda in **Chapter 1** was to highlight the **preeminence** of Jesus: to demonstrate how ***supernaturally powerful, glorious, and amazing*** Jesus Christ really is.

If **Chapter 1** is about ***Jesus' supremacy***, **Chapter 2** is all about ***Jesus' sufficiency***...His "enough-ness". Paul's main emphasis in this chapter is that "***Jesus is enough!***" Throughout this chapter, which we'll cover this week and next week, Paul is going to hammer home over and over and over: "Hey, Christians at **Colosse!** Hey, Christians in **Rocky Mount!** Jesus is Enough!"

TRANSITION TO CONTEXT

Why is Paul so emphatic on Jesus being enough? To answer that question, we need to look at the context of what Paul was writing to.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The church in Colosse was a church that Paul had likely never visited in person. **Colossians 1:7** tells us that the church was planted by a believer named **Epaphras**, and historians believe that Epaphras likely got saved during Paul's ministry in Ephesus.¹

So here's Epaphras; he's ***planted*** this church; he's ***figuring out in real time*** how to ***disciple*** these believers and ***shepherd them*** in the ways of God. And out of Epaphras' ***correspondence*** with Paul, we learn that these

¹ McNaughton, Ian S. *Opening up Colossians and Philemon*. Opening Up Commentary. Leominster: Day One Publications, 2006.

fledgling believers in Colosse had been **duped** by some “**rogue spirituality**”—very **complicated/convoluted** “spirituality” that did not align with the pure, simple Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Some false teachers had **weaseled their way** into the Colossian church, and they were teaching these believers that, “**Jesus is not enough**.”

- “Jesus isn’t bad, He’s okay...if you want to be ‘half-saved’...
- “...but if you want to be **REALLY saved**, and if you want the **inside track** on getting to heaven and being a good-enough Christian, Jesus is **only one piece** of the great big spiritual puzzle...
- “...and faith in Christ alone is **not enough**.
- “You need some **extra rules here**...some **mysticism there**...some Jewish rituals like **circumcision** thrown in as well...”
- “Unless you can **ascend to the elite spirituality** that we have, and unless you get the **same insider knowledge** that we have, you can’t really be fully saved from your sins.
- “Jesus is not enough.”

GNOSTICISM: DEFINITION

Way back in the first message of this series, you might remember Pastor Gerry describing the **name** for this rogue spirituality: we call it “**Gnosticism**”.

Gnosticism = any belief system that exalts **human spirituality** over **Jesus’ sufficiency**. Gnosticism’s main premise is that, “**Anything spiritual is inherently good; anything physical is inherently bad**”. Physical=bad,

spiritual=good.

The ***more physicality*** you renounce → the ***more spirituality*** you receive
→ the ***more knowledge*** you gain → the ***more insider access*** you get to
God.

To the Colossians, Gnosticism at first glance might've ***sounded***
good...might've ***seemed*** inspiring...

...but here's ***Paul's*** take on Gnosticism in 2:8: "Don't let anyone capture
you with ***empty philosophies*** and ***high-sounding nonsense*** that come
from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than
from Christ."

In other words, "***Don't let ANYONE ever tell you that Jesus is not
enough.*** Don't get suckered in to Gnosticism."

TENSION

Now maybe you're wondering, "Jon...why are we spending so much time
on Gnosticism? That was ***their problem back then***...it's ***not our problem
now.***"

Oh reallllly?

Because even though you and I are separated from Paul's audience by
thousands of years and thousands of miles...Gnosticism ***did not stay
isolated in their time; Gnosticism has infiltrated our time too.***

GNOSTICISM: MODERN TIE-IN

If you're part of my *parents' generation or older*, you might remember a time in the American church where if you wanted to be saved, Jesus alone was not enough!

Jesus could get you "entry-level-saved", but the *rest* of your salvation depended on a whole bunch of physical rules...

- No *theaters*
- No *bowling alleys*
- No *makeup*
- No *drums*
- No *rock music*
- No *hair below the collar* for guys
- No *skirts above the knee* for girls

If you could just *avoid these physical things* (like bowling alleys)...if you could be *more "spiritual"* and *more "holy"*, your chances of salvation were much more secure. *Physical bad, spiritual good. Sound familiar?*

And not just back then in the **60's** and **70's**, but **even now**, we can slip into this very easily, can't we?

JON'S BIASES from VANGUARD

I remember when I was in Bible College, where we'd have ***Tuesday*** and ***Thursday Chapel*** every week. (Chapel was kind of like midweek church services for all the students.)

During chapel, I remember kind of half-worshipping, half-people-watching...and in the course of worship, I'd always notice the people who were ***going all-out to be spiritual***...

- They'd ***raise their hands*** the ***highest***
- They'd ***pray their prayers*** the ***loudest***
- They'd ***cry at the altar*** the ***longest***

And that was just if they were in the congregation.

If they were ***on stage***...that was a whole other level completely!

- They'd emit the ***most spiritual glow***
- They'd speak the ***most spiritual 'mic drops / one liners'***
- They'd express the ***most spiritual facial expressions***...

Just one look at them and your first instinct was, "Wow! They're so ***spiritual***...they must be ***really*** saved!"

And then maybe I'd see someone off in the corner who's a little ***quieter***...

- Eyes ***closed***
- Feet ***barely shuffling***
- Lips ***barely moving***
- And if they ***did*** raise their hands, it was ***less proud Pentecostal*** and more of a "***Baptist-with-an-identity-crisis***" type of deal

And I'd kind of eye them up and down with some ***pious, self-righteous pity***, and think, "Yeah, you're obviously ***non-spiritual***...if you don't raise those hands higher, you're probably gonna drop out of school and end up in jail 10 years from now."

But guess what?

Fast forward to present day...some of those "***less-spiritual***" classmates...the ones who didn't ***seem*** to have anything going on...***those*** are some of the ones who became missionaries, pastors, and they're still faithful to the call of God.

And by contrast, some (***not all***) of the "***more-spiritual***" students...the ones who made a ***big show*** of how spiritual they were...those are the ones who ended up walking away from ministry and walking away from God when ***their outer spirituality couldn't compensate*** for their ***inner brokenness***.

Outward spirituality is not the basis of genuine salvation. But even with that...

BIBLICAL TIE-IN

...I'm sure all of us have been tempted by that false dichotomy of "***less spiritual*** vs. ***more spiritual***"... "physical=bad, spiritual=good". That's the ***same dichotomy*** that was ***tripping up the Colossians***.

And again, listen to the ***label*** that Paul gives to that dichotomy of Gnosticism:

Colossians 2:8: “Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ.”

Here’s what Paul is getting at:

BIG IDEA: Our spirituality must surrender to Jesus’ sufficiency

He gives two reasons why:

1. Jesus is Enough for God’s Perfection

v.9: “For in Christ lives **all** the fullness of God in a human body.”

Remember the Gnostics’ mantra: “physical bad, spiritual good”. In the Colossians’ case, that mantra was affecting their understanding of Jesus. The false teachers in Colosse were claiming, “Well, Jesus isn’t really man, and He isn’t really God... Jesus is more of a ‘**demigod**’... Kind of this **ooky-spooky shape-shifting spirit** that has some **noble God-like qualities**, mixed in with some **evil man-like qualities**...and He kinda sorta manifests himself as a man. You can’t really figure him out.”

But the Bible teaches that Jesus is **not** “partially” man and **not** “partially” God...He is **100%** man and **100%** God, the “Word made flesh” (**John 1:14** says). Based on that truth, Paul’s words in **v.9** are a **direct rebuttal** against the false teachers in Colosse. “There’s **no contradiction** of ‘physical bad,

spiritual good' with Jesus," Paul says. "Jesus has **100% divinity** in a **100% human body**; He's 100% God, 100% man, 100% sinless, 100% perfect."

Jesus is enough for **God's Perfection**...but then He's also enough for **Our Completion**.

2. Jesus is Enough for **Our Completion**

v.10 "So **you** also are complete through **your union with Christ**, who is the head over every ruler and authority."

"**Jesus is enough**," Paul tells the Colossians. "You are **not** the incomplete, **unspiritual loser who's missing out**, like the Gnostics would have you believe. Because of your union...because of the relationship with Jesus that you have **right now**, His sufficiency makes you **complete**."

Pay attention to that. We are **complete**—we are **perfected**—we are **saved**—by our "union with Christ."

- Not complete by our **spirituality**...
- Not complete by **how good we've been**...
- Not complete by **how high we raise our hands**...
- ...or **how many points** we **think** we **scored with God** this week...

No, it is the **sufficiency**, the **mercy**, and **perfection** of Jesus Christ that makes us complete and allows us to find salvation and rest in Him.

This is why Paul shouts loud and clear: **Our spirituality must surrender to Jesus' sufficiency.**

TRANSITION: Flipping the Script

Now before we go any further...we need to ***flip the angle on spirituality*** a little bit.

By now, you might be thinking, "Ok, so, spirituality doesn't save us, I get it...but Jon, ***if spirituality can't save us...why bother being spiritual at all?*** Why bother ***raising our hands?*** Why bother ***praying?*** Why bother ***trying to connect with God?*** ***What good is spirituality if it can't save us?***"

Here's the deal: ***even though our spirituality can't earn salvation, spirituality can still enrich our salvation.***

ILLUSTRATION: Family Relationships

I was texting with my Dad about how to articulate this truth for the sermon...and my Dad had a great insight. He said:

"Think of a relationship analogy. You are my son legally and factually, but you and I still want to do actions that ***enrich*** and ***build*** our relationship, like phone calls and visits etc."

And of course, my Dad is also married...so for all you married people, my Dad tied in the marital angle as well:

“Your mom and I have a covenant marriage relationship, and doing the little things doesn’t make it so, but it sure makes the daily relationship stronger and more enjoyable.”

Think of our spirituality in that same way. It can’t earn our salvation, but it does enrich our salvation.

ILLUSTRATION: Cruise Ship Vacation Package

Or another way that I was thinking about this was in terms of a cruise. Anybody here ever gone on a cruise?

Imagine if you asked a certain rich person for a free cruise. And in response, with no hesitation, that person immediately gives you that free cruise. Boom. Done. Immediate. No questions asked.

And it’s not just **any** cruise that they’ve given you, but this is a ***top-of-the-line, all-inclusive, fully-funded, first-class Royal Caribbean cruise.***

This cruise is ***all-sufficient***. Comes complete with:

- ***First-class flights***
- all the ***best excursions***,
- all the ***best hotels***,

- the ***most desirable cabin*** on board with ocean-view balcony
- fastest ***WiFi***, fanciest ***soda packages***,
- ***every restaurant, every amenity***
- ***unlimited spending on your cruise card***

...this is a ***no-limits, all-access*** cruise.

- Now there's no way you can ever ***earn that cruise on your own***
- You can never ***repay the donor*** who gave you that cruise
- And there's ***especially*** nothing you can do to ***improve the cruise***, because it's ***already the most costly, most perfect and most sufficient option available***

So imagine you've been given this all-sufficient cruise package...

- ***Sailing day*** comes
- You ***board*** the ship
- You ***go*** to the cabin

...***aaaaaaaaaand that's all you ever do.***

- You never use the ***soda package***...
- You never eat at any of the ***restaurants***...
- You never go on any of the ***excursions***...
- You never take in the beauty of the ocean...
- You never ***explore*** or ***discover*** or ***implement any*** of the amazing gifts that were given with your cruise...

...you just **hide in your cabin...turn off the lights...close the curtains...never set foot on your ocean-view balcony**...and you just wait for the cruise to be over.

CRUISE ILLUSTRATION: APPLICATION

Obviously, you and I would never treat an expensive cruise like that...but ***sometimes that's the way some people treat the gift of salvation***.

The salvation of Jesus is an **all-sufficient gift**—and ***spirituality*** is a **God-given means of engaging with that gift**.

God did **not** create us as ***strictly physical, non-spiritual*** beings.

- God **created** us with a ***spirit, soul, and body***...
- ...with the capacity to **engage** with the ***spiritual realm***...

...and when we **surrender that spirituality** to the sufficiency and the lordship of Jesus Christ...

...we get to ***experience spirituality*** in ***the way God intended for it to be***...

...again, not as a means of ***earning salvation***, but **enriching salvation**.
You go, “Ok...***but what does surrendered spirituality actually look like?***” Glad you asked!

Let's **backtrack** to **vv.6-7** and let's break down the instructions that Paul gives us for surrendering our spirituality to Christ's sufficiency:

⁶ And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him. ⁷ Let your roots grow down into Him, and let your lives be built on Him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

In these verses, Paul gives us **3 Directives of Surrendered Spirituality**...3 **biblical action steps** that you and I can **apply every day** to surrender our spirituality and discover an **enriched relationship** with Jesus Christ...

Number one, Paul says, to surrender your spirituality... **Keep Following Christ.**

1. Keep Following Christ (v.6)

"And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him." The **original language** here is even stronger; it's not just "**Follow** Christ," but "**Walk** with Him."

ILLUSTRATION: MOM – "STAY CLOSE!"

I remember being **four years old** and walking to **Kingsway Garden Mall** in **Edmonton** with my mom and my sister. As my parent, Mom knew it was **essential** for me to **walk close** to her and hold her hand, because there

were **dangers** to my safety that I had no clue about (**fast cars in the parking lot**, getting **lost**, getting **hurt**, or **something worse**).

And whenever I'd get **distracted** by a **coin-operated ride**, or a **toy display**, or **anything else that took my eyes off her**, Mom would always squeeze my hand a little firmer and say, "**Stay close!**"

That's what Paul is saying to the Colossians. "**Stay close!** Don't get sidetracked; stay with Jesus. Follow Jesus. Walk with Jesus."

As you and I follow Christ on this side of eternity, there will **always** be **other voices** and **other leads** that will try to **turn our attention away** from Him.

We will always be tempted to follow something or someone else:

- ...whether that's **money**
- ... **ambition**
- ...the latest **influencers**
- ...the latest **social trends**
- ...the latest **spiritual fads**

...just like how the Colossians were tempted to **follow after Gnosticism**.

Paul says, "Colossians...EAG Church...**stay close** to Jesus. Don't walk with anyone else. Walk with Jesus and keep following after Him."

To surrender your spirituality...keep following Christ. But then number 2...

2. Keep Growing in Christ (v.7a)

“Let your roots grow down into Him...”

Sometimes during the week, I'll help out with weeding at the church...and I find it interesting how oftentimes, ***some of the biggest weeds have the worst roots.***

This is a picture of a weed that I pulled up from the front of the church on Friday. And just to be scientific, I measured it! You've got over ***20 inches*** of ***impressive, slender, grassy growth above*** the surface...but only about ***3-inches-worth of roots. One simple tug*** and that was all it took.

Weeds or plants with ***shallow roots*** are ***easy*** to pull up. But the plants that have ***deep, grown, and established roots...that's a different story!***

- You often don't see the ***full extent*** of the biggest roots.
- And these roots ***never grow all at once in one day***
- They ***grow slowly over time...***
- ...with growth that happens from ***consistent watering, fertilizing, and cultivating.***
- Nothing ***dramatic...just consistent...***

Surrendered spirituality is the same way. ***Not dramatic...just consistent...***

Paul says, “**Consistently grow your roots deep in Christ.**”

- Don't **skimp out** on your relationship with God.
- ***Cultivate*** that relationship; ***nurture*** it; ***invest*** in your walk with God
one prayer at a time...one Bible reading at a time...one day at a time...

And just like how you can't see physical roots underneath the soil...you probably won't see the full effects of your spiritual roots right away.

- But as you keep on praying...keep on “Bible-ing”...keep on investing in your roots one day at a time...
- ***All*** of those **small investments** will eventually **accumulate**,
- And your ***roots*** will ***grow strong and deep***...

...so that when ***temptation, discouragement***, and ***spiritual warfare tries to take you down***...the roots that you've built in ***Christ***—roots you might not realize you even had—those roots will keep you **securely anchored in Him**.

To surrender your spirituality...keep **following** Christ...keep **growing** in Christ...

Thirdly, Paul says...

3. Keep Building on Christ (v.7b)

“...and let your lives be built on Him.”

Let me ask you this morning...**what foundation are you building your life on?** Where do you find your identity?

- Are you building your life on **past success? Future dreams?**
- Is your identity in your **work ethic**...your **reputation**...your **social status**...your **income**?
- Are you building a life **for yourself?** Or are you building a life for **something** and **Someone greater** than yourself?
- Are you building a life **wrapped up in the here and now?**
- Or are you building a life **with eternity in mind?**

Church...**let your lives be built on Jesus Christ.**

Because **any foundation other than Jesus will fail.**

Like Paul warned the Colossians...

- Building on **empty philosophy** will fail
- Building on **high-sounding nonsense** will fail
- Building on **work ethic** or **achievements** will fail
- Building on **feelings** and **ambition** and “**good vibes only**” will fail
- And even building on **your own spirituality** will fail

Will you build your life on Jesus Christ? And will you allow your spirituality to be surrendered to His sufficiency?

Because when we do that...

...when we **surrender our spirituality** to Christ by **following** Him, **growing** in Him, and **building** on Him...**look at the end result.**

v.7c “Then your faith will **grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will **overflow** with **thankfulness**.”**

When we **surrender our spirituality** to **Jesus’ sufficiency**...

When we **anchor ourselves** in the **reality** that **Jesus is enough**...

...that surrender will allow our faith to **grow strong**...and our lives to **overflow** with thankfulness.

Not **drama**...not **dysfunction**...not **confusion**...but **thankfulness**.

- “Thank You Jesus that **You are enough**”
- “Thank You Jesus that **You make me complete**”
- “Thank You Jesus that **You don’t expect me to rely on my own spirituality...**”
- “...but **You invite me to surrender my spirituality to Your sufficiency.**”

CLOSE & APPEAL

Some of you might be wrestling with that today.

Maybe you came to church this morning, and you've found that relying on your own spirituality has come up **short**.

- You've tried to be "**good enough**", "**strong enough**", "**spirituality enough**"
- But it feels like **nothing's working**...
- You've ***run yourself into the ground*** trying to ***connect with God***
- And as a result, maybe your spirituality—something that was intended to **enrich your relationship with God**—is **complicating your relationship with God** instead

If that's you today...**surrender your spirituality to Jesus' sufficiency**.

Jesus said in **Matthew 11:28-29 (NLT)**: "Come to Me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you. Let Me teach you, because I am gentle and humble at heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

If you're looking for that rest today...we're going to create time and space for that to happen.

ALTAR

If you feel the Holy Spirit prompting you to **surrender your spirituality** and **rest in Jesus' sufficiency**, **don't put that off! Today** is the day; **today** is the moment.

If you want to find rest in Jesus' sufficiency, I want to invite you to this altar for prayer.

- Come receive **prayer**
- Come receive **hope**
- Come receive **rest**

You can receive all of that today and more...because ***Jesus is enough.***

Will you rest in Him today?

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