

INTRODUCTION.

AT PRESENT, ~ WE ARE WORKING OUR WAY THROUGH ~ COL. 2:6-23.

▶▶ As we've noted, ~ in this paragraph, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ Paul lays down a series ~ of five exhortations, ~ calling believers ~ to stay faithful ~ and not buckle under ~ the pressure ~ of false teaching.

▶▶ And again, ~ Paul expands on each one ~ with additional teaching.

AND WITHIN THIS LARGER CONTEXT, ~ THE PAST FEW TIMES WE HAVE BEEN zeroing in on ~ ¶¶

▶▶ the second exhortation and its expansion, ~ verses 8-15.

▶▶ As we have observed, ~ Paul spends the most time with the expansion of this exhortation.

SO FAR, ~ WE HAVE COVERED THE FOLLOWING IN THIS EXHORTATION AND ITS additional teaching.

▶▶ We examined ~ the second exhortation itself.

▷▷ Maintain a constant watch, ~ so that ~ no one takes you captive.

▷▷ Again, ~ the imagery here ~ is that of false teachers ~ taking believers away from the true gospel ~ ¶¶

↪↪ and into ~ the slavery of error. ¶¶ 1/14

▶▶ We have also looked at the means ~ by which false teachers attempt to capture believers.

▷▷ And i.e., ~ through hollow and deceptive doctrines, ~ which promise much, ~ but deliver nothing.

▶▶ Next, ~ we looked at the 2 sources of false teaching.

▷▷ And i.e., ~ the human mind and demons.

▶▶ And then, ~ as we know, ~ in [verses 9-15](#), ~ Paul sets forth a rebuttal of the false teaching threatening these believers.

▷▷ 7 assertions.

▷▷ Last time, ~ we looked at the first three.

▷▷ 1<sup>st</sup>, ~ Paul reaffirmed ~ both ~ the deity and the humanity ~ of Jesus.

▷▷ 2<sup>nd</sup>, ~ Jesus' sacrifice of himself on the cross ~ was ~ 100% sufficient ~ to effect our salvation.

↳↳ Our salvation is complete.

↳↳ We need ~ no one and nothing else ~ to complete it.

▷▷ And 3<sup>rd</sup>, ~ there is no ~ angelic power or authority ~ that can match Jesus, ~ in any way, ~ shape, ~ or form.

↳↳ There is no ~ angelic power or authority ~ that is independent of Jesus.

↳↳ Jesus ~ is the Lord and Supreme Commander of heaven's armies. **⇓ 2/14**

▷▷ And although Paul did not mention it here, ~ he does elsewhere, ~ we noted that ~ ¶¶

↳↳ Jesus is, ~ and will be forever, ~ infinitely superior to all the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

↳↳ There will never be a time ~ ¶¶

→→ when any demonic being, ~ Satan or otherwise, ~ in any way ~ will threaten or rival ~ the absolute supremacy ~ of Jesus.

▶▶ And in closing we said, ~ that ~ neither will there ever be a time ~ ¶¶

▷▷ when any human ~ being, ~ government, ~ or army ~ will threaten or rival the absolute supremacy of Jesus.

AND THAT LEAVES THE REMAINING FOUR ASSERTIONS ~ IN PAUL'S REBUTTAL.

▶▶ Today, ~ no surprise, ~ we won't get very far ~ in Paul's assertions rebutting false teaching.

▶▶ As I was working through the 4<sup>th</sup> assertion, ~ I kept thinking of more things to share.

▷▷ And I just kept building on this.

▶▶ So, ~ the 4<sup>th</sup> assertion ~ is as far as we're going this morning.

ALSO, ~ I THINK ~ YOU'LL NOTICE VERY QUICKLY ~ the somewhat ~ heavy theological content that comes with this assertion.

▶▶ This is another reason ~ to spend our time today solely ~ on this 4<sup>th</sup> assertion. ¶¶ 3/14

OK, ~ PAUL'S 4<sup>th</sup> ASSERTION ~ IN HIS REBUTTAL OF FALSE TEACHING.

VERSE 11.

▶▶ In him also ~ you were circumcised ~ with a circumcision ~ made without hands, ~ by ~ putting off the body of the flesh, ~ by ~ the circumcision of Christ.

▶▶ The false teachers at Colosse ~ may have emphasized ~ the importance of Jewish circumcision.

▷▷ Perhaps that it was necessary ~ in order to ~ complete or help bring about ~ salvation.

▶▶ As we noted at the beginning of our study of Colossians, ~ the false teaching ~ contained a mixture ~ of Jewish ritual practices.

▶▶ False teachers in Galatia ~ had also urged physical circumcision. ⇨⇨ Trace Gal. 5:1-12.

▶▶ Paul's reply to the Colossians ~ was that ~ ¶¶

▷▷ they had already been circumcised, ~ even though most of the Christians there were Gentiles.

▷▷ And this applies to all believers.

▶▶ This circumcision ~ had not been a physical operation, ~ however, ~ for it had occurred ~ "without hands."

▷▷ I.e., ~ it was not ~ a physical procedure.

▶▶ Paul is referring here ~ to ~ spiritual ~ circumcision. ¶¶ 4/14

▶▶ That elsewhere ~ he called a circumcision of the heart.

▷▷ Rom. 2:29a, ~ But a Jew is one inwardly, ~ and circumcision is a matter of the heart, ~ by the Spirit.

PAUL DEFINED IT ~ NOT ~ AS MERELY A REMOVAL OF A PORTION OF FLESH, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ but removal ~ of "the body of the flesh."

▶▶ Since we just indicated ~ that physical flesh and its removal ~ is not meant here, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ the reference ~ must be to flesh as a metaphor ~ for our sin nature.

▶▶ For your homework, ~ you can compare the similar use of "flesh" in Gal. 5:19-21.

▶▶ We also see it in Romans 7:18a.

▷▷ There Paul says, ~ For I know ~ that nothing good ~ dwells in me, ~ that is, ~ in my flesh.

▷▷ Sin nature.

▷▷ The NIV brings out the meaning quite well here.

↪↪ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.

▶▶ This refers to our sinful nature ~ and applies to all believers.

AND "THE BODY OF THE FLESH" ~ MEANS ~ THE ENTIRE "OLD SELF." ¶¶ 5/14

▶▶ This removal ~ occurs at conversion ~ when the miracle of new birth ~ ¶¶

▷▷ strips away ~ the old nature as the dominating force in our life, ~ and "the new self" is created.

▶▶ We see the description in Ezekiel.

▷▷ Ezek. 36:26.

↳↳ And I will give you a new heart, ~ and a new spirit I will put within you. ~~ ¶¶

→→ And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh ~~ [i.e., ~ a tender, ~ responsive heart]."

▷▷ This happens ~ when we accept Jesus as Savior and Lord.

▷▷ At that moment, ~ God, ~ by His immeasurably great power, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ removes our sin-hardened hearts, ~ gives us "a new heart," ~ and puts "a new spirit within" us.

▷▷ "a new heart" and "a new spirit," ~ which by instinct ~ wish ~ to please, ~ to live for, ~ and to serve God.

▶▶ Believers ~ are new persons ~ with brand new natures.

▷▷ As Paul says in 2 Cor. 5:17, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ Therefore, ~ if anyone is in Christ, ~ he is a new creation. ~~ The old has passed away; ~~ behold, ~ the new has come. ¶¶ 6/14

RECALL PAUL'S DESCRIPTION IN EPHESIANS ~ OF OUR UNSAVED LIFE, ~ particularly regarding our sinful nature.

▶▶ When we were spiritually dead, ~ Paul said ~ that ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we were dominated on a daily basis ~ by our sinful nature and its sinful desires.

▶▶ In brief, ~ when we were spiritually dead, ~ we were slaves to our sinful nature and its sinful desires.

▶▶ And he goes on to say ~ that we habitually ~ carried those sinful desires out.

WE WERE ENSLAVED, ~ BUT, ~ HERE'S THE GOOD NEWS, ~ MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS in Christ.

▶▶ But God, ~ being rich in mercy, ~~ because of the great love ~ with which he loved us, ~~ even ~ when we were dead in our trespasses, ~ made us alive together with Christ ~ ¶¶

▷▷ by grace you have been saved. (Eph. 2:4-5)

↪↪ We have been delivered from this slavery.

▶▶ In Rom. 6:14, ~ Paul says, ~ "For sin will have no dominion over you, ~ since you are not under law but under grace."

▷▷ Because we are now under God's grace, ~ neither sin ~ nor our sin nature and its sinful desires ~ is master over us any more.

▶▶ And in Rom. 8:2, ~ Paul writes, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ "For the law of the Spirit of life ~ has set you free ~ in Christ Jesus ~ from the law of sin and death." ¶¶ 7/14

HOWEVER, ~ IN THIS LIFE, ~ WE STILL HAVE THE PRESENCE OF OUR SIN NATURE.

▶▶ So, ~ it is still possible ~ for believers ~ to allow themselves ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to be dominated by the sinful nature and its sinful desires ~ and to carry out those desires.

▶▶ And we must reject this.

▷▷ The old life ~ has no business intruding ~ into the new life.

AS WE'LL SEE, ~ PAUL ADDRESSES THIS ISSUE AS IN COL. 3.

▶▶ A preview.

▶▶ 3:5, ~ CSB ~ Therefore, ~ put to death ~ what belongs to your earthly nature.

▶▶ And then in verses 8-10, ~ CSB.

▷▷ But now, ~ put away ~ all ~ the following: ~ anger, ~ wrath, ~ malice, ~ slander, ~ and filthy language ~ from your mouth. ~¶¶

↳↳ Do not lie to one another, ~ since you have put off the old self with its practices ~ and have put on the new self. ~¶¶

→→ You are being renewed ~ in knowledge according ~ to the image of your Creator.

▷▷ Now, ~ this is not a comprehensive list. ⇔⇔ Representative list.

↳↳ things like these. ¶¶ 8/14



OVER IN EPH. 4:24a, ~ Paul says ~ THAT BELIEVERS ARE TAUGHT ~ "TO PUT ON THE NEW self."

▶▶ Again, ~ believers ~ are new persons ~ with brand new natures.

▶▶ And Paul is saying here ~ that believers are taught ~ to be that new person, ~ to live as that new person, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and to be guided by that new nature, ~ which by instinct desires to please, ~ to live for, ~ and to serve Jesus.

▶▶ My . . . , ~ the old life ~ must go.

AND PETER ADDRESSES THIS ISSUE AS WELL ~ IN 1 PET. 1:14.

▶▶ He writes, ~ "As obedient children, ~ do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance ~ [refers unsaved life]."

▷▷ And the implication ~ is that ~ it is possible ~ for us to still ~ be conformed to the passions of [our] former ignorance."

▶▶ When Peter commands this, ~ he is issuing a call to believers ~ to totally ~ leave our unsaved way of life, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ including our thought processes and attitudes ~ behind.

A CALL PETER REPEATS IN 4:3.

▶▶ For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles [unbelievers] want to do, [then gives examples] ~ living in sensuality, ~ passions, ~ drunkenness, ~ orgies, ~ drinking parties, ~ and lawless idolatry. ¶¶ 9/14

▶▶Peter declares, ~ "Don't involve yourselves ~ in the things you did in your unsaved life."

▷▷"You have had enough in your past life ~ of the evil things ~ that non-Christians desire."

▶▶Basically, ~ Peter is saying, ~ "Enough already, ~ Put sin in your rearview mirror."

▶▶Peter is driving the point home ~ that the past is the past.

▷▷It is over and done with.

▶▶There must be no going back ~ to the things we were involved in before we came to Christ.

▶▶There must be a complete break ~ with every part ~ of our unsaved lifestyle.

### AFTER THE EXODUS, ~ THE ISRAELITES WERE OFTEN TEMPTED TO RETURN TO EGYPT

▶▶So we might be tempted to return to our unsaved lifestyle.

▶▶However, ~ both Peter and Paul clearly warn us ~ that ~ that ~ is not a valid option for us.

▷▷We are not to look back ~ but rather forward.

▶▶As the author of Hebrews says in 12: ~ 1-2a CSB, ~ "let us lay aside every hindrance."

▷▷"every hindrance" ~ refers to hindrances ~ which may not be sinful in themselves ~ ¶¶

↪↪but ~ which would prevent or hinder ~ our spiritual growth. ¶¶ 10/14

▷▷ The author of Hebrews tells us, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ Therefore, since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin ~ [in general] ~ that so easily ensnares us. ~~ ¶¶

→→ Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, ~ keeping our eyes on Jesus, ~ the source and perfecter of our faith.

→→ When Jesus walked on water . . . .

↳↳ But when he saw the strength of the wind, ~ he was afraid, ~~ and beginning to sink ~ he cried out, ~~ "Lord, ~ save me!" (CSB)

### COMING BACK TO COLOSSIANS, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ Paul further explains this spiritual circumcision ~ as occurring ~ "by the circumcision of Christ."

▶▶ This refers ~ to the spiritual circumcision ~ that Christ performs.

▶▶ And is another name for regeneration.

▷▷ I.e., ~ the work of God ~ in which he imparts new spiritual life ~ to the believing sinner, ~ effecting the new birth.

▷▷ That ~ it is another name for regeneration ~ seems clear ~ from the fact ~ ¶¶

↳↳ that ~ 2:13 indicates ~ uncircumcision to be ~ the state of spiritual death.

▶▶ Spiritual circumcision must therefore refer ~ to the imparting of spiritual life. ¶¶ 11/14

▶▶It is Christ's act that is in view, ~ not the physical rite imposed by the Mosaic legislation.

PHYSICAL CIRCUMCISION ~ WAS A SIGN ~ OF GOD'S COVENANT WITH THE JEWISH people.

▶▶Though it was a physical operation, ~~ it had a spiritual significance.

▷▷The trouble was ~ that the Jewish people depended on ~ the physical ~ and not the spiritual.

▷▷A mere physical operation can never ~ convey spiritual grace.

▷▷Often in the Old Testament, ~~ God warned His people ~ to turn from their sins ~ and experience a spiritual circumcision of the heart.

→→E.g., ~ Deut. 10:16 ~ CSB. ~~ Therefore, ~ circumcise your hearts ~ and don't be stiff-necked any longer.

▶▶People make the same mistake today ~ when they depend on some religious ritual to save them, ~~ such as baptism.

▷▷Baptism is the symbol ~ of what has already occurred in the heart and life ~ of one who has trusted Christ as Savior and Lord.

▷▷It is simply a declaration of salvation.

▷▷To attach saving significance to baptism ~ is an attack ~ on the sufficiency of the work of Jesus on the cross.

AS WE OBSERVED LAST WEEK, ~ MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TODAY ~ are trusting in their religion ~ to get them into heaven. ↯↯ 12/14

▶▶ They may think ~ that practicing their religion and its rituals ~ will get them into heaven.

▶▶ These things ~ will not get anyone into heaven.

▷▷ These too ~ are hollow and deceptive doctrines.

▷▷ Only saving faith in Jesus Christ, ~ and in Jesus Christ alone, ~ will get a person into heaven.

### CONCLUSION.

OK, ~ LET'S BRING THIS HOME.

▶▶ Paul's 4<sup>th</sup> assertion.

▶▶ This is the truth of the matter.

▶▶ At conversion, ~ our old nature ~ 77

▷▷ as the dominating force in our life ~ was stripped away ~ and the new self was created.

▷▷ A finished act.

▷▷ We need to do nothing else.

▷▷ There are no religious rituals needed ~ to complete this act ~ or to help create this new self. 77 13/14

▶▶ And Paul makes it very clear ~ that ~ it was Jesus who brought this spiritual circumcision about.

▷▷ Being a spiritual circumcision ~ there is no way ~~ any of us could have brought this about.

↪↪ Or ~ even helped ~ to bring this about.

▶▶ My ..., ~ believe no teaching ~ that says otherwise.

LET'S PRAY ..... 14/14