**CONTINUE TO LIVE IN CHRIST**

Colossians 2:6-23

Key verse 6

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him.”

**Introduction**



 The previous two verses reads, **“**I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how disciplined you are and how firm your faith in Christ.” Apostle Paul encouraged the Colossians to overcome false teachings in their church, for their enemy endeavored to let them drift away from their simple faith in Christ. So today Paul encouraged them to continue to live in Christ without losing their faith. Our enemy, Satan also tempted us with all false hope so that we may abandon our faith and commitment to our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. But we know how powerful Christ and His words are. May the Lord help us to stand firm and continue to live in Him only.

1. Read verses 6-10. What does Paul encourage the Colossians to do? (6-7) What does Paul warn them about? (8) What have we been given in Christ? (9-10)

1-1, Read verses 6-10.

 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, **7** rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. **8** See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29503a)] of this world rather than on Christ. **9** For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, **10** and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.

1-2, What does Paul encourage the Colossians to do? (6-7)

 ***So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,***

* They had received Christ as Lord. After we believed Christ, the next step is to receive Christ Jesus as Lord.
* The Colossians were their own lords. Their lives had been their own lives. They had lived in their own way. They had done their own thing.
* They had no commitments other than the commitments they had in their daily lives and common to most people.
* But no sooner did they hear the Gospel and believe it, they had made Christ the Lord of their lives.
* They had surrendered their lives to Jesus. They had committed their lives and all to Christ. In that way they had received him as Lord.
* Today, Christians talk of Christ as if he were their friend and no more. And the concept of Lordship of Jesus is vague and almost non existent.
* But Christ is more than a friend. Christ is the Lord of heaven and earth. He is the Lord of life. he is the Lord of our lives, for we are saved by his blood on the cross.
* The Colossian Christians must have understood that believing the Gospel is good, but that they should take a further step to surrender their lives to Christ as Lord.
* Paul was very happy that these Colossian Christians had surrendered their lives to Christ, offering him the Lordship in their lives.

***continue to live your lives in him,***

* Now Paul urged them to continue to live in him. Jesus once taught us that Christians must remain in him, that he might remain in us.
* He taught us that we should remain in his word and that his word should remain in us. He taught us that the life of following Christ is a lifelong commitment.
* It is not easy to continue living in him when this world calls us always to its ways, to follow its way.
* Even Christians sometimes become weak to the ways of the world. They hear the Gospel, believe it, and many also surrender their lives to Christ as Lord.
* But when the difficulties of life occur, they compromise with the world little by little until they give up the Christian life in order to follow the ways of the world again.
* It is a commitment no one can keep if Jesus himself does not help us. So we must ask God to help us continue living in him.
* When Paul encouraged the Colossian Christians to continue living in Christ Jesus, he did not leave them without wisdom how to do so.

***7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught,***

* Paul gave the Colossian Christians perfect advice on how to continue living in him.
* **First, Rooted in him.** As a root tenaciously takes hold and buries itself in the soil to anchor itself in it, so also a Christian must anchor himself, root himself or herself in Jesus and in his words.
* We must take root in him, so deeply that nothing can remove us from him. Taking root in Jesus demands that we love him and love his words and his ways above all else.
* Paul used these words so that the Colossian Christians commit their lives to Jesus completely.
* Many believers even think that taking root in one place, or making a commitment is not good, that it is better if a man or woman remain free to go where they want.
* But in truth it is only an excuse to maintain the freedom they cherish more than they do Christ, for taking root is essential in the process of Christian growth.
* To take root in Christ is to commit to Christ absolutely. To have our roots so deep in Christ Jesus so as to give the devil no room to move us in the direction that he would have us go.
* **Second, built up in him.** After the roots have taken, the time comes for the plant to build up its stems and leaves so as to be able to bear the fruit of its life.
* When they build on something that is of this world. When they build on human philosophies and different teachings that seem appealing and good, but which are empty and hollow and have no spiritual content to them.
* In Paul’s time, there were those who did not believe the full Gospel. They believed in their own way. They did not listen carefully to the teaching of Jesus. They did not take spiritual life very seriously.
* They made excuses why they were doing so. When their foundation was so shaky, their houses were on the verge of disaster.
* But we are not talking about houses here, but talking about a man’s destiny in life and after life. we cannot afford to build on sand. We must build on rock.
* Building on rock is building on Jesus’ words. Building on rock is to take Jesus at his word, to take it to heart, to embrace it, keep it, hold it, struggle to obey it.
* When God called **Abraham**, he called him and gave him promises. The promises were almost unbelievable.
* But he built on God’s word of promise. He kept those promise in his heart. He built on them. He believed them. and he kept them.
* But, Lot his nephew did not take God’s promises seriously. He build on the world’s foundation. He loved the life of pleasure. He built his life based on his own.
* When the time of test came, Lot fell and his house fell on his head. And Abraham’s house remained standing because it was built on God’s promises.
* **Third, being strengthened in the faith.** This world is very discouraging, urging even Christians to live by the ways of the world, to submit to the worldly ways.
* But God urges us that the righteous, those who are in Christ Jesus, who have tasted the grace of God, should live by faith to the end. (Romans 1:17)
* So to live by faith we must continue to deny ourselves, and live by faith in him.
* Paul must have really prayed that the Colossian Christians’ faith may be strengthened in all situations.
* **As you were taught,** - They were taught by those, esp., Epaphras who brought the Gospel to them.

***and overflowing with thankfulness.***

* **Fourth, overflowing with thankfulness:** to continue living in Christ the Christian must be thankful.
* In spite of his hardship Paul himself set a good example and remained thankful to God. He suffered so much. But he remained thankful.
* He would not let a spirit of bitterness or anger rule him. Paul wanted the Colossians not to be just thankful but overflowing with thankfulness.

1-3, What does Paul warn them about? (8)

 ***See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.***

* The words “elemental spiritual forces” are repeated twice (8, 20), and refer to false teaching handed down as human tradition, which can ultimately be traced to the demonic influence.
* It seems to be dynamic, giving answers to life’s problems. Those who spread these teachings are eloquent and persuasive. Many people seek their help, and they offer seemingly profound advice.
* But in actuality it is hollow and deceptive. The Colossian heresy promoted itself as traditional. It could trace some or many of its ideas back to traditions among the Jews or the Greek philosophers or both.
* But they have no authority nor power like the word of God. But in reality they had all proven to be hollow and deceptive.

1-4, What have we been given in Christ? (9-10)

***9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority.***

* As we have seen, false teachings are hollow and deceptive. In contrast, there is in Christ all the fullness of the Deity.
* Jesus’ incarnation, his life, his personality, his ministry, his death and resurrection, his ascension and reign - these all reveal the fullness of the Deity in His body.
* When believers receive Christ, they receive the fullness of the Deity in him. Since he is the head over every power and authority, they have access to mighty strength.

2 Peter 1:3-4 reads,

 “His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.”

* Through Christ everything we need for life and godliness has been given to us. In the past we were doomed due to our corruption.
* But God delivered us from the darkness and brought us into his wonderful light. As we participate in his divine nature, we can enjoy a holy and godly life.

2. Read verses 11-15. What is the true circumcision done by Christ? (11-12) What was our former condition? (13a, Eph 2:1-3) What has God done for us through Jesus' cross? (13b-15)

2-1, Read verses 11-15.

In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29506b)] was put off when you were circumcised by[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29506c)] Christ, **12** having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. **13** When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, **14** having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. **15** And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

2-2, What is the true circumcision done by Christ? (11-12)

***11 In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh[***[***b***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29506b)***] was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.***

* Paul says that we were circumcised, not by human hands, but by Christ. This circumcision was not just removing a bit of flesh. It was cutting away the whole self, ruled by the flesh.
* Spiritual circumcision refers to baptism. Baptism here means union with Christ through his death and resurrection.
* When Christ died on the cross, we died with him. When Christ was buried, we were buried with him. When Christ was raised from the dead, we were raised from the dead with him.
* Through baptism we are united with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. Our old self has died and a new self has been born. So we are a new creation in Christ Jesus. The old has gone, and the new has come (2 Cor 5:17).

2-3, What was our former condition? (13a, Eph 2:1-3)

***13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh,***

* We were dead in our sins and ruled over by our flesh. Sin requires death, for the wages of sin is death. We have a huge debt to pay for our sins.

2-4, What has God done for us through Jesus' cross? (13b-15)

 ***God made you[***[***d***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29508d)***] alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.***

* God made us alive with Christ by taking our sins away. Our criminal record as a sinner, which followed us wherever we went, has been erased completely.
* Furthermore, God gave us great victory. “And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”
* Here, “powers and authorities” refer to Satan and the evil angels. Since Adam’s fall, man became a slave of Satan. Satan used the power of death to torment people and make us fearful and useless (Heb 2:14).
* When Jesus was nailed to the cross, Satan thought he won the victory. But Christ rose from the dead, crushing Satan’s head, winning eternal victory over him, as well as sin and death.
* In this way, Christ disarmed Satan and exposed his defeat publicly. In the past the cross was a symbol of shame. But through Jesus’ victory, the cross has become the symbol of glory.
* Now we can live a truly victorious life. In the past, we were always defeated in the end. He has given us eternal life. We have life and victory through the cross of Jesus.
* Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” We can live a victorious life, not just for a day or a month, or for a year, but eternally.

3. Read verses 16-23. What false teachings were spread among the Colossians? (16, 18, 22-23) How can we be set free from those false teachings? (17, 19, 20-21)

3-1, Read verses 16-23.

 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival,a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. **17** These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. **18** Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. **19** They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

**20** Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: **21** “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”?**22** These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. **23** Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

3-2, What false teachings were spread among the Colossians? (16, 18, 22-23)

* Especially Paul warned about three false teachings in this passage: Jewish legalism (16-17), Angel worship (18-19), Asceticism (20-23)

***16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.***

* Jewish legalists judged others based on what they ate or drank, and on the observance of Jewish religious festivals, New Moon celebrations or Sabbath days.
* They insisted on all these things as a matter of salvation. To eat or drink is related to the clean and unclean foods in the book of Leviticus.
* Religious festivals refer to all the sacred days of the Jews, such as Passover, Pentecost, the Feast of Tabernacles, and so on. They taught that the Sabbath day must be kept absolutely.

***18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind.***

* Those who worshiped angels claimed that, in order to approach the Holy, Almighty Creator God, people needed angels as mediators.
* In this way they nullified Christ as the only mediator (1 Ti 2:5). Such people talked a lot about their spiritual experiences, visions and mystical insights.
* But their unspiritual mind puffed up with idle notions. They became proud. They seemed humble, but it was a false humility. In truth, they only speculated in the realm of notions, and didn’t do anything productive.

***22 These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.***

* The underlying philosophy of asceticism is dualism, which claims that spirit is good and matter, including the body, is evil.
* Ascetics made all kinds of rules and regulations, such as “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!” They thought that by keeping these rules they could make themselves pure and righteous.
* But these rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. They have an appearance of wisdom, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

3-3, How can we be set free from those false teachings? (17, 19, 20-21)

***17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.***

* When the reality comes, the shadow is not needed any longer. All these things are fulfilled in Christ Jesus. So all we have to do is to accept what Jesus has done for us and to live by faith.

***19 They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.***

* Paul says that they had lost connection with the head, Christ. Only those who are connected with Christ receive spiritual nutrition and grow, as God causes them to grow.
* They participate in the body of Christ, which is joined together in love, just as sinews and ligaments hold the bones of our bodies together.

***20 Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: 21 “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”?***

* Man’s sinful desires cannot be controlled by rules and regulations. We need a right view of the body. Our bodies are the temple of God, where God dwells (1 Cor 6:19).
* We should not offer the parts of our body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but to God as instruments of righteousness (Ro 6:13).
* The problem with all of these false teachings is that they cause us to lose connection with the head, Christ. Then we lose our source of life and cannot grow.

**Conclusion**

 In this passage we have learned the importance of continuing to live in Christ. We have learned practical instructions about how to continue to live in Christ. May the Lord help us to lay the solid foundation on Jesus and His words so that we may continue to live and grow in His image! Amen.

**One word: Continue to live in Him!**