

Walk This Way

(Colossians 2:6-15)

(preached 4/18/16; Sunday AM)

Introduction

I don't know why I often use amusement parks in my introductions and messages, but they just seem to fit..

Last March, Carowinds opened their latest ride.

It is called Fury 325, and a picture of it is on the screen...

Here are the facts about that roller coaster...

It has a height of 325 feet.

It is the fifth highest roller coaster in the world, and Carowinds actually had to get permission from the Federal Aviation Administration before they could even build it...

It reaches a max speed of 95 miles per hour.

It is over a mile long and it takes a rider over the entrance of Carowinds and under the entrance of Carowinds.

The vertical drop is at an angle of 81 degrees.

In case its been a while since geometry, 90 is completely vertical...

So, this roller coaster is incredible to say the least, but know I want to show you how people are held in it...

If you notice, the restraint is simply a bar on the floor that is placed over the rider's waist...

I am sure there are people who get on this ride and reach up for something to pull down over their shoulders...

I am sure there are people who get on this ride and ask the ride attendant...

Is this ALL that holds me in here?

Because it seems like a ride that was dropping almost 90 degrees and reaching speeds of almost 100 MPH would have you secured a little better to the seat...

But that is all you get.

A nice lap bar to keep you safe and sound on the 5th tallest roller coaster...

In some ways thinking about this helps us relate to the Colossians struggle...

They were a church who was trusting in the gospel of Jesus alone to save them....

But they were people all around them standing near the tracks telling them...

Jesus ain't enough to hold you in...

You are going to fall out...

You need a shoulder harness of following these rules we will give you...

You need a belt around your waist in this secret knowledge that you need to be saved...

Jesus ain't enough to keep you safe and sound in salvation...

That is what the Colossians were hearing and some were getting off the ride so to speak...

They were being led astray by these false teachers and their fancy teaching...

And it had caused the pastor of the Colossians church to to head out and settle this once and for all...

Was Jesus enough?

So the pastor came to Paul who had been taught by Jesus Himself and asked him to calm their fears...

And Paul sat down and wrote a letter to the church at Colossae with every word being breathed out of the mouth of God.

That letter become the book of Colossians that we have been studying for a few weeks now...

And Paul has addressed some of their questions so far in the verses that we have looked at in chapter 1 and chapter 2...

But today, we come to Colossians 2:6-15, and here we find the heart of this letter...

Today, Paul is moving from appetizer to the main meal as he begins the section of this letter that details why Jesus is enough..

He has offered a few proofs in chapters 1 and 2, but today, the Colossians will get the full picture..

And Paul is concentrating his teaching in this section to those who have claimed to know Jesus Christ in a saving way...

He is writing to folks who claim they have repented and trusted completely in Christ to save them..

He is writing to those who say, “Yes, I am sure I am saved. I am sure Christianity is the only true faith in the world.”

Paul is writing to that crowd today to tell them how to walk if that is their claim..

And by “walk,” Paul is teaching them how to live in light of what they claim is true about them...

So this morning, we arguing to see 4 aspects of truly walking with the Lord..

4 Features of what it is like to walk with the Lord...

You can see these 4 aspects on the screen and in your bulletin...

Let’s begin in verses 6-7 as we see...

I. The Instruction to Walk in Him (6-7)

6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so [e]walk in Him, 7 having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established [f]in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing [g]with gratitude.

Last week in verses 1-5, Paul gave instructions on how to be assured of your faith...

And the simple answer is this....

Assurance comes from a complete understanding of the gospel, which is more than Jesus died for sinners..

A full understanding of the gospel requires a person to see their sin as departing them from a holy God...

And it requires them to see Christ as their substitute who died in their place to satisfy God's wrath against their sin...

And it requires them to repent of their sin and put their trust alone in Jesus Christ to save them...

And assurance also comes as people fill their mind with the treasure of Jesus Christ...

Seeing to understand him more and be filled with more knowledge of Him and His wisdom...

And all of that assurance comes from daily Bible reading and study and application of what the Bible says...

And Paul also says that assurance is a great treasure of wealth and something that anyone who claims to be saved should want..

And now in verse 6, he moves from how to get assurance to how to live if your have assurance...

And he simply writes...

Therefore (if you have assurance) that comes from receiving salvation Jesus Christ, then walk in Him...

And that simply means live like He lived...

And it no accident how God inspired Paul to describe Jesus in verse 6...

He is described as Christ Jesus the Lord..

If you read the Bible, you will find a number of titles given to Christ...

Messiah, Savior, Lord and others....

And when talking about how believers should live,
Paul uses the title of Lord...

And here is the bottom line...

If Jesus is Lord of all creation, He is also Lord of
your life...

He is your commander in chief...

He is your boss.

He is your authority...

Yes, he saved you, but HE also rules over you as
Lord...

Anyone can say "I love Jesus," and many people
have, but how do you know if your truly love
Him...

Well, the Bible gives us a clear answer...

John 14:15...

Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commands."

And all Paul is writing here is a repeat of those
words of Christ...

If you claim to have assurance and have received Jesus as Savior and Lord, live according to his commands..

And then he adds in verse 7...

This shouldn't be difficult since you are rooted in Him...

And since He is building you up and establishing you in your faith...

And that was true for the Colossians, they had heard the true gospel...

They had believed in it to save them, and Paul simply says live out what you say saved you...

This is the old saying of “You need to dance with the one who brought you.”

If you get us the courage to ask your dream date to the dance and he or she says yes...

Make sure you don't dance with somebody when you get there....

Dance with the one who brought you....

That is Paul's point...

You heard about the glory of Christ in the gospel...

You believed in Christ to be saved...

Now dance with Christ in life...

Don't abandon him for false teachers and live like the world...

Live like Christ.

Follow in his footsteps...

There is nothing worse than going through a drive through and ordering a sweet tea and then taking your first sip and realizing it is unsweetened...

Your taste buds are all prepped for that dose of sugar and you get colored water...

Yet as bad as that is, it is much worse and more disappointing to see people who claim to know the Lord live like Satan in the world...

If you are saved in here this morning, walk in Christ...

If you trusted Him to save, trust him to teach you how to live..

So, read his word and follow His commands and then all will know you love Him..

If you don't, you are just like unsweet tea in the world..

So, there is the instruction to walk in Him, but now Paul need to follow up the positive command with a negative one...

And he does that in verse 8 with...

II. The Prohibition to Walk with Them (8)

Verse 8....

8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, [h]rather than according to Christ.

The Colossians were being taken captive by the philosophy and empty words of the false teachers...

They were being led astray by the traditions of men, and the ways of the world...

They had started with Jesus but they were dancing with men who were agents of Satan..

Philosophy simply means the love of wisdom, and there are people since the beginning of time who have claimed to have the art of living wisely figured out...

It started in the garden as Satan tempted eve by telling her that he had a better way of life than God, and if she would just eat he fruit, she would be on the pathway to true wisdom...

Ever since that day, men have been filled the desire to have other follow their philosophy of living...

And those men had come to Colossae and were leading others to follow them through empty words, traditions, and their simple man made philosophy...

And verse 8 is clear....

DO NOT FOLLOW THESE MEN...

And all of you would probably say this morning....

No danger in that for us...

We don't follow false teachers...

Well, you better re-think that...

Ever turned to a friend for advice on your marriage and get counsel that wasn't based on the word of God...

Well, you followed the philosophy of men...

Ever bought a book on how to parent better than didn't base its teachings on Scripture but instead turned to child psychologists for advice.

Then you followed the traditions of men...

Ever wanted to be a better leader and went to a seminar on leadership that got its material from the

the thoughts of other leaders and not leadership principles of the Bible?

Then you followed empty and deceptive words of men...

It is easy to do, especially when you don't know what the Bible teaches...

But it says much about parenting, marriages, and leadership...

However, if you fail to read it and study it to understand it, you are only left with the philosophies of the world...

And everyone is full of their own man-centered advice to offer you...

And many of you are willing to accept it...

However, Colossians 2:8 forbids you from being led astray by those worldly ideas, advice, and counsel...

Instead, the command at the end of verse 8 is rather simple..

Stick with Jesus Christ over all that worldly philosophy and tradition...

And if you were wondering why Jesus is a better option...

Paul offers some motivation to stay with Christ in verses 9-10...

III. The Motivation to Walk in Him (9-10)

Verse 9...

***9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in
bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made
[i]complete, and He is the head [j]over all rule and
authority;***

Let me cut to the chase here on Paul's point...

In verses 9-10, here are 3 motivations to follow
Christ over the wisdom of the world...

*#1- Verse 9...All the fullness of Deity dwells in
Christ...*

In other words, Jesus is God in every way...

And the idea is this...

Why would you choose the wisdom of man over the
wisdom of God?

Why would you hold to the teachings of men over
the teachings of Christ?

Why would you call an unbelieving friend seeking
advice on any subject over the advice of God found
in His word?

Why would you trade the eternal words of God for the best a man can come up with and write in a book?

The motivation is this...

If you follow Christ, you have access to the wisdom of God....

If you follow a man, you have access to the wisdom of a fool...

Here is what Harry Ironside said...

“Christ is a substitute for everything, but nothing is a substitute for Christ.”

A rich man walked into a dealership with the keys to a brand new Cadillac and handed them to the salesman and told him...

I want to do an even swap.

I want to trade this brand new car for the worst looking car on your lot...

The salesman asked, “why would you want to do that?”

The man replied, “I want to know what it feels like to be poor.”

The salesman answered, “Well, here you go. Now take this car and drive it straight to Harvard.”

The man answered, “Why would I go to Harvard?”

The salesman replied, “So you can know what it is like to feel smart.”

Let me be clear...

When you trade the wisdom of the word of God for what some man says...

You have traded a Cadillac for a Pinto.

The second motivation to follow Christ is found in the beginning of verse 10...

Jesus has made you complete...

In other words, what can the world offer you that Jesus hasn't already given you...

Do you think that there is some wisdom or teaching out there that exceeds the wisdom and teaching available to you in the Word of God?

Is it possible that God missed something or that He is unaware or doesn't have access to some wisdom in the universe?

And the full answer is “No way.”

You are ready for life if you are truly saved...

You have packed your car with the Scriptures that show you the way to go...

You have prayer right beside to talk to your Guide.

You have been forgiven of sin that slows you down as you travel..

Smart phones are incredible inventions..

They can hold an entire map of the world...

They can hold an entire set of encyclopedias..

They can hold 50 rolodexes of phone numbers and contacts..

They can play millions of movies and hold a whole library of books...

Even if you had nothing else and were stranded in the desert, you could just about survive with access to so much knowledge in that little phone...

The same is true but to a much greater degree for all those who have Christ...

You have been made complete...

Doesn't mean you are perfect but it does mean that anything you lack can be found in Christ...

Motivation #3 - Follow Christ and not men because Jesus is the ultimate authority in this world...

Let me sum it up this way...

I don't care how wise someone may seem, every knee will one day bow in submission to Jesus Christ as the sole authority in this universe...

That doesn't mean that all will be saved, but it does mean that all will acknowledge His authority...

The BBQ restaurant that I worked in was a great learning experience in how to deal with people...

One Saturday, a man walked in to eat lunch with us...

He ordered and paid for a plate of hash and bbq and ate very bit of it...

But as he left, he stopped by the counter and asked for his money back saying that the potato salad tasted spoiled...

Well, the older gentleman who founded the restaurant worked on Saturdays...

So, the guy comes up and asks him for his money back, and Jack tells him...

Well, you ate every bite of it, so when do you determine it was spoiled?

But the man kept insisting, and so Jack offered to give him back just the cost of the potato salad since everything else must have been good...

Well, the guy wanted a full refund, and then he said, "I want to see a manager."

Well, I was the manager standing right there, so Jack said, "there he is."

But before I could get a word out, Jack said this, "Do you know what he is going to tell you?"

And the man said, "No."

He said, "well, he is going to tell you that he has to talk to the owner about that, and guess what I am the owner, so can skip that step."

"You eat the food, you pay the bill. Good afternoon."

Why would you choose to listen or follow the teaching of a lesser authority when Jesus is the ultimate authority on all things...

So, the motivations to walk like the Lord Jesus Christ are clear...

He is God and possesses all wisdom you will ever need...

He completes you when you are lacking wisdom..

His word supplies all the wisdom you need...

And He is the ultimate authority...

Everyone will submit to him, so there is no need to go outside of him to get wisdom...

He has authority over it all..

Finally, now that we have the instruction to walk in Christ, the motivation to follow Christ...

Let us ask a simple question...

How can I walk in Him?

And Paul is going to answer that in verses 11-15 with....

IV. The Provisions to Walk in Him (11-15)

If a kid wants to play a sport, every good parent would do what they could to equip their child to succeed...

They would buy the best baseball bats or gold clubs or soccer cleats...

You wouldn't send your kid to track practice in pants and cowboys boots...

In the same way, God doesn't command us to walk in Christ but leave us unequipped to do it..

Walking in Christ is not all dependent upon your reform...

For those whom God saves, he also equips to walk in Christ..

We will see how God has equipped us in verses 11-15..

Let me read these verses and we will make a list of our equipment...

Verse 11...

11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 When you were dead [k]in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 When He had [l]disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through [m]Him.

Here are three ways you are equipped to walk in Christ...

#1- Verses 11 and 12....***You have a new heart.***

Most of us understand the idea of circumcision, and it is not usually a pleasant picture that is paint in our minds when we hear it...

But the word circumcise simply means to cut around or to cut out...

However, since it has always been associated with the Jewish act of circumcision, no one rarely uses it in other contexts...

You could say, "I am going to circumcise some coupons from the newspaper today, and it would be fine."

You are simply going to cut out some coupons, but we have lost the word to the practice..

However, to circumcise is simply the process of cutting out...

And what Paul is saying here is this...

All Christians have been circumcised in that their old heart, their old way of life has been cut out and replaced with a new heart and a new way of life...

Notice what he says about this circumcision...it is a circumcision made without hands...

In other words, this isn't a normal circumcision that requires the use of a doctor's or priest's hands...

This is the supernatural act that happens at salvation when a sinner repents and believes alone in Christ to save Him...

God supernaturally acts to cut out his heart of disobedience and replace it with a heart that can obey him..

I dont have much time to spend here...

But I would simply say to those who call themselves Christians but complain that they “can’t live” the Christian life....

They better make sure of their repentance and belief in Christ....

Because no true believer still possesses their old heart; they do fight against an old flesh but now they fight with a new heart..

And remember from last week, the heart is not the organ in the chest that pumps blood, and it isn't the place of emotions...

Herat here is mainly concerned with a way of thinking and the mind and the intellect and the will that causes us to act..

Paul also uses the picture of baptism here to reinforce the truth that true followers of Christ can walk with him because they too have died to themselves and been raised with Christ...

Which is what baptism symbolizes...

The second way you are equipped to walk in Christ is this...

You have a new heart, but you also have *new senses...*

Look at verse 13...

Before salvation, believers are dead to the things of God...

They are literally dead men walking..

But look at the great reality of salvation....

You get a new heart, but you also get new senses...

Look back at verse 13...

You have been made ALIVE....

Salvation brings you to life like never before...

You can walk in Christ because now you SEE him....

You even HEAR him as you read the Word...

Long story short, you have been given the ability to discern and make decisions....

What can dead men do?

They can't do anything?

What can people who come to life do?

They can do everything, and salvation brings believers to life for the very first time...

I never knew what living was until I drank of the living water...

One more way the believer is equipped to walk in Christ is found in verses 14-15...

Salvation takes the sin of the sinner and nails it to the cross forever..

And how does this equip us to walk in Christ?

Simply put, you are not weighed down by the sin that burdened you before salvation...

Though no unbeliever ever understands this...

Sin carries an incredible burden in your life..

It creates multiple problems...

Unemployment, unwed pregnancy, diseases,
depression, anger are all the result of unforgiven
sin...

Most people just artificially medicate the burden of
sin that weighs them down...

That is why alcohol abuse and meth and
prescription medication is so attractive to so many
people...

For a while, it makes them forget of the
consequences of unforgiven sin and eases the
weight of sin that burdens their mind...

However, other people turn to other things to make
them forget the burden of sin...

They look to their spouse for help; they ease the
burden by worshipping their kids...

They find the burden goes away if they pour
themselves in a career or hobby...

Yet, there is but one cure for the burden of sin and
that is repentance and faith in Christ..

And let we testify of how it feels to be free from the
burden of unforgiven sin...

It is the greatest truth a man or woman can possess...

To know that your sins are forgiven forever and that a home in heaven is not your destination...

That truth alone will equip you to all with Christ...

Because it will give you freedom to serve the Lord, but more importantly it fills you with a thankfulness to God that causes you to want to walk with Christ all the more...

The greatness of God is that he commands you to walk with Christ, but he also equips and provides the way for you to do it as well....

Conclusion

The Colossians were wavering in their walk...

They were on the platform of the roller coaster, but they didn't really know if Jesus was enough to keep them on the ride with all the twists and turns of life..

God, through the apostle Paul, has simply reminded them that Christ alone is enough to secure their salvation..

But he is also enough to help them enjoy the ride, and he is also enough to bring them safely back into the station...

And Walking with Jesus really isn't an option.

It is a command for the believer, and for the unbeliever alike...

Who guides you through life this morning?

There's only two options...

You follow your wisdom and knowledge or you follow the Lord's.

I assure you...

The wisdom of man is foolishness to God.

Stop being wise in your own eyes...

Repent of your sin and trust alone in Christ...

And you will have your eyes truly opened for the first time...

Let us pray.