

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Christ is the center of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians. The high Christology of his Epistle can be clearly seen in his assertions regarding the Divinity of God the Son. In Him, in Christ, in the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, in Mary's Son, in the Man who suffered and died, dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

God the Father is spirit only. God the Spirit is spirit. But God the Son, the Person through whom the Trinity is revealed, has a Body. And that Body is filled with the Godhead not in part, but in its fullness.

But while it is ripe with Christology, the Epistle to the Colossians is a letter from a Pastor to the churches. His concerns are Pastoral as well as doctrinal. As much as he wants the Colossians to know the Divinity of the Son, he also wants them to know the implications of that unfathomable Mystery. Christ is God. But more, He is God for them. He is God for you.

In Him, Paul writes, you are complete. Without Christ, you are as a body without a head. If life is possible at all, it is short, and without direction or protection. So are all those who reject Christ. They are headless, scurrying around frantically and about to die.

When one is headless, any direction seems good. So the Apostle writes "Beware lest anyone cheat you..." God has won for you the riches of Paradise in Christ. But there are those who will try to cheat you out of what Christ has won for

you. The Apostle gives several ways in which they will try: through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

Philosophy has become the antithesis of theology. Luther called Adam the greatest philosopher that ever lived. Adam had, in the image of God, a wisdom that no one after him received. But philosophy is no longer centered in the Wisdom of God, which is Christ. Philosophy has become ungodly, man-centered, false wisdom, and harmful to faith.

The secular ramblings of the academy are, as the Apostle calls them, empty deceit. With the influence of secular progressivism, what are supposed to be the greatest minds in the world can no longer even discern male and female. Rejecting God, their words and teachings can only harm.

So too the traditions of men. Even inside the visible church the traditions of fallen men war against the Apostolic tradition, and pull souls away from Christ and towards empty words and works.

This world is fallen. It is a hideous distortion of what it was created to be. Although the whole creation cries out that there is a God, through creation man cannot know God aright. The basic principles of the world lead men to worship the creation, not the Creator.

To these, to philosophy, to empty deceit, to traditions of men and to the basic principles of the world your flesh has been drawn. They form a fallen chorus, a siren song, inviting an ignorant literati to use God-given intelligence to push

themselves and their followers farther and farther from God, finally crashing on the rocks of complete unbelief.

But that you be saved, that you come to true wisdom, that the Apostolic tradition norm your faith and life, you were circumcised. But that circumcision wasn't by Rabbi and flint knife. It was not a circumcision of the flesh. It is the circumcision of Christ. He, being Flesh, was cut off and cast away, and with Him your sins.

So it is in Baptism that you are circumcised, the circumcision made without hands, the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh. Baptism is for you a burial and a resurrection, in which Christ's death becomes your death, and your sins are forgiven.

You are raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And so you, being dead in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all your trespasses.

By the indwelling of His Spirit you receive a better wisdom than the world can give. You have the Scriptures, the Word of God. You know God, the God who created you, the God who redeemed you, the God who sanctifies you.

That is true wisdom. It is Divine Wisdom that avails unto eternity. You know Christ, who is the Wisdom and the Power of God. He brings you into Communion with Himself, and with His Holy Church, and you are complete in Him.

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