

“¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: ¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins: ¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: ¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence. ¹⁹ For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fullness dwell;” (Col 1:13-19)

Introduction: A test of what kind a person you are is what you will settle for. Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Judas sold the Lord for 30 pieces of silver.

Many people are willing to settle for a taste of the good things to come. They learn the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, but are content to rest in surface things, and the doctrine never penetrates to their hearts. They may dispute over external ceremonies, but they never go on to the fullness that is in Christ.

Others seek fullness, but they seek it the wrong way. They may think that it rests in exploring secret and hidden knowledge. The word "occult" means hidden, and those who fancy that they have found the hidden meaning of life--the hidden doctrine that is hidden from the majority of the people--are all occult to one extent or another. They would even turn the Bible into an occult, book, seeking for hidden meanings; for strange interpretations, for secrets which will make them superior in knowledge over other people.

Some seek the fullness in experiences. These restless souls are not content with seeking fullness in Jesus Christ, and finding in Him a complete and perfect Savior. No, they are like children who pass up solid food, for the froth of cotton candy, because it feels good, and looks impressive. They think the world is ruled by hidden forces and evil, dark things that need to be exposed and warned about, for salvation depends upon the world becoming aware of the evil, for there is no real sin, just ignorance of the evil forces: if we can expose the evil forces, then the good people will rise up and put them away. The people just do not know any better.

Most of the stuff that passes around as the occult, whether in the churches or not, is not really secret. The Kabbala; the conspiratorial theories, the "secret" knowledge has been around along time, and always results in the same effect. Tearing people away from the simplicity that is in Christ, self-righteous boasting in "superior" knowledge and elitism, separation from the body of Christ in order to seek some higher form of Christianity: all of these have been around for a long time, and the reason they are secret is because most Christian's don't bother with them and have rejected them long ago. They only surface when people turn from the purity and simplicity of the Gospel, in the end of an age that is being ripened for judgment.

They had such things at the church in Colosse. Pre-Gnostic influences were there. Pre-Caballistic Jewish doctrine was around, and mystery cults were prolific in the Roman Empire.

Paul writes to the Colossians to warn them, and to point them to Jesus Christ, where all the fullness dwells.

But let us look at the words themselves: You remember that Paul's prayer begins in verse 9, and He prays for the church at Colosse, that they would be strengthened with might [in the inner man], so that they might be patient (faithfully running the race); longsuffering [enduring trials]; joyful [the strength of the Church.]

In all of this must be thankfulness to the Father, who has made us meet [fit] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. It is God who makes us fit. The inheritance is not for those who are fit, but for those who have been made fit to be partakers. None are worthy except those who are washing in the blood of the Lamb.

The following verses tells us how we are made fit for the inheritance:

vs. 13: **Delivered from the power of darkness:** There is no bondage like the bondage of your own imaginations and the darkness of your own mind. Those who reject the pure and enlightening doctrine of Christ are doomed to the power of darkness: to disillusionment, to despair, to the dead end of pseudo-science and philosophy. Just listen to the conspiratorialists talk: they remind me of the father, who set his boy on the fireplace mantle and told him to jump. When the boy hesitated, the father said, "Trust me, I will catch you." The boy jumped, the father ignored him and the boy fell to the floor and burst into tears. Dad said, "See, Son. Trust nobody."

One of the names that the Jews gave to Satan was "Darkness." Those under his power are darkened in their minds, in their morals, in their unbelief. None of these will bear the scrutiny of the light, and that is the reason they wall themselves off from others, for they cannot bear to have their ideas and their thinking exposed to the light: so they live in secrecy and in dark corners.

Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, and those who believe do not walk in darkness but they have the light of life. Satan knows this, and the Prince of Darkness will do everything he can to separate you from Christ and from the simple truth of Christ.

Because of God's broken law, the Kingdom of Darkness has legal right to the souls of men. They are born into his kingdom, under his power and authority, and can only be delivered by God Himself. This He has undertaken to do through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. Jesus Christ is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. He is dear to the Father, because He is God's only begotten Son, as we will see in the following verses.

"Translated" means removed from one place to stand in another. God "removed Saul." It can be used figuratively for change of mind and heart: Acts 19: Demetrius the Silversmith said that Paul had "turned away" the people from following Diana: their minds had been made to stand in another place.

Our minds and our hearts stand in another place: not in darkness and conspiracy, but in openness and light. This idea is found in Paul's summary of his ministry in Acts. 26:17: "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

Vs. 14: **In whom we have redemption:** This redemption is through the payment of a price: the price is the blood of Jesus Christ: his obedience and sufferings on the cross. His death frees us from guilt, so that we might receive the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

WHO IS THIS REDEEMER? the following verses answer this question:

vs. 15. **The image of the invisible God** John 1:18: God is known only in Jesus Christ. We see His works in Creation: we see His person only in Jesus Christ. Christ is not the image of God with respect to God's essence, but with respect to God's revelation of Himself to us. God, with respect to essence is invisible: unknowable to man. He is revealed only in Jesus Christ. If you want to know the wisdom, power, righteousness, glory, love and holiness of God, then you must seek them in Jesus Christ, and you will find them nowhere else. They are not found in the hidden wisdom, but have been openly and plainly preached in Jesus Christ.

The Firstborn of Every Creature. Not what He is in Himself, but what he accomplishes in others. He is begotten of the Father from eternity, so that He might reveal God in time.

The world was not created by an emanation from God, as if the world was in some way made of God's substance. Even Christ is not that, for in the begetting of the Son, God did not lose something of Himself. Father/Son etc. indicate that there are different relationships in the Godhead: these incommunicable distinguishing properties we call "persons," who exist within the essence of the Godhead, the term used to denote God's essence.

vs. 16, 17. read. These are great beings to act in terms of God's power and glory. Jesus Christ is before all these things, and all of them consist by him. As Calvin says: they may not obscure His glory:

1. Because they were created by Him.
2. Their creation has a relation to Him, as their legitimate end.
3. He existed before any of them
4. He sustains them by his power, and uphold them.

vs. 18. read

HEAD OF THE CHURCH: Vitality; life; government. The unity of the Church depends on Him, not even to angels and powers: surely not the Pope, or any other creature.

BEGINNING: He is God. He is before all.

FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD: The root of the life of the church: our resurrection was in His. I Cor. 15:20

PREEMINENCE: He is above all, and is to be so esteemed in our minds and hearts. How wide is the scope of this preeminence? vs. 19 answers: all fullness dwells in Him.

vs. 19: All fullness dwells.

1. Wisdom:
2. Righteousness
3. Sanctification
4. Redemption
5. Power, and every blessing.

To take anything away from Christ is to put yourself in opposition to His eternal decree. All fullness dwells there: Seek the fullness in Christ.