

In order to elucidate this passage I would call your attention first to John 10, the passage we read a moment ago. In this great passage, the Lord Jesus uses a parable, an extended figure of speech. The meaning of the figures are as follows:

- I. Let me set the table:
  - A. The figure of speech and the practice of shepherds in the Middle East
    1. Sheepfold vs. 1: Israel: God had placed his sheep under discipline for order and protection.
    2. Thief, Robber vs. 1: Those who do not come in through the door. Try to climb over and steal sheep.
    3. Door vs. 1: God's revelation: according to the Law and the Prophets.
    4. Shepherd vs. 2: the one properly appointed by God: Only One: Jesus Christ.
    5. Porter vs. 3: Holy Spirit
    6. Sheep: the elect: his own sheep vs. 4: some is Israel were not elect.
    7. Stranger: vs. 5 false prophets
  - B. Vs. 7: I am the door of the sheep: there has never been any other door. The law and the prophets spoke of Him. All others were thieves and robbers; the true prophets did not speak in their own name, or speak their own words; but spoke of Him. He came to the fold through them. Now He has appeared HIMSELF. The elect did not hear the thieves and robbers.
  - C. vs. 11: The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. Note the contrast. There are three classifications:
    1. Thieves: those who kill, destroy, waste.
    2. Hirelings vs. 12: Those are in it for earthly goals.
    3. Good Shepherd, and His faithful ministers: They care for the sheep.
  - D. vs. 16: other sheep: gentiles.
  - E. vs. 16: one fold: the church, the invisible church; not a denomination. Christ's spiritual kingdom.
  - F. Key: the division among the sheep takes place because of the voice of the shepherd. The elect are the called out ones: they hear the voice of the shepherd. See verse 24-30. They did not hear. You cannot play fast and loose with the Scriptures.

Calvin: The Tenth Chapter of John is an exposition of this passage in Colossians: 2:8

- II. Let us now look at the text before us: Colossians 2:8-10.
  - A. vs. 8. Don't let anyone plunder you. Take your treasures as an army would take spoil from a conquered town.
  - B. We walk the same way we came: by hearing the voice of the Shepherd. Do not listen to other voices: Do now allow yourself to be driven off and spoiled by the voices of thieves and robbers. There is only one Shepherd; only one voice; only one fold. Believe and follow the voice of the shepherd. Voice: the Holy Scriptures. Not some inner mystical voice that you have no way of evaluating or distinguishing from your own spirit, or some unclean spirit. The Scriptures are the voice of the Shepherd: See II Timothy 3:15-17
  - C. "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
  - D. Thieves and robbers and Hirelings:

1. Philosophy: "Persuasive speech" Josephus refers to the philosophy of the Pharisees; of the Sadducees; of the Essenes.
  2. Jesus spoke of the "leaven" of the Pharisees; the Sadducees; the Herodians. "elegant and plausible" arguments.
  3. Calvin: "All spurious doctrines that come forth from men's heads." includes things mixed with the pure gospel of Christ.
  4. "Vain deceit" is in apposition: defines philosophy. There is a true philosophy: love of wisdom that is commended in the Bible.
  5. "Not according to Christ:"
  6. "Rudiments [Elements] of the world" badly translated in the RSV and such: "exegetical fallacy: reading into a word, a meaning that was two or three centuries later. Simply means the things that seem good to men, which are abomination in the sight of God. Paul in Philippians:3: All things that were gain to me, I counted loss that I might win Christ.
  7. Paul explains in context: Col. 2:20ff. Commandments and doctrines of men. will worship.
- E. vs. 9: "bodily" The fullness of the Godhead is in Christ completely "as in a body." This is not a reference to the incarnation, because this fullness was in Christ from eternity. But it means that, as much as we can understand, all of God is in Jesus Christ. "as in a body." Completely enclosed in Christ and completely filling. There is nothing of God outside of Christ. This is a great mystery, but of great comfort to the church.
- F. vs. 10. Ye are complete: You are filled full in Him. In Jesus Christ. If the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ as in a body; then if you have Christ, you have all you need. He will supply all you need:
1. This word most often is used in the sense that Scriptures is fulfilled. Completed.
  2. "Every valley will be filled
  3. "Fill the waterpots with water John 2
  4. John 15:11: These things have I written to you that your joy might be full
  5. .Rom. 1:29: the wicked are "filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, etc.
  6. Eph. 3:19: "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God
  7. Phil. 1:11: "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God
  8. Phil. 4:18: "I have all and abound: I am full
  9. Col. 1:25: "To fulfill the word of God" Fully to preach To fill it up.
  10. 1John 1:4: "These things write we unto you, that your joy might be full."
- G. "The head of all principality and power." All things are ours in Christ. We have everything, because He is the head over all things. When we have come to Christ, we have gone to the top; There is no place above Him.
- H. We have then been shut up to Christ. It is in Christ we must seek for all things: to be justified; to be sanctified; to be empowered to do His will. He is the one who sends forth the Holy Spirit; He is the One who has dominion over angels and principalities and powers. He is the Lord of Heaven and Earth. All things of of him, and through him, and to Him. He is the author and the finisher of our faith. We are baptized into Him, and we take His name upon us, and we are called Christians, because we carry His Name. That name, Christian, ought to be for more precious to us than the name Baptist, or Presbyterian, or Reformed, or whatever.

May God bless you.