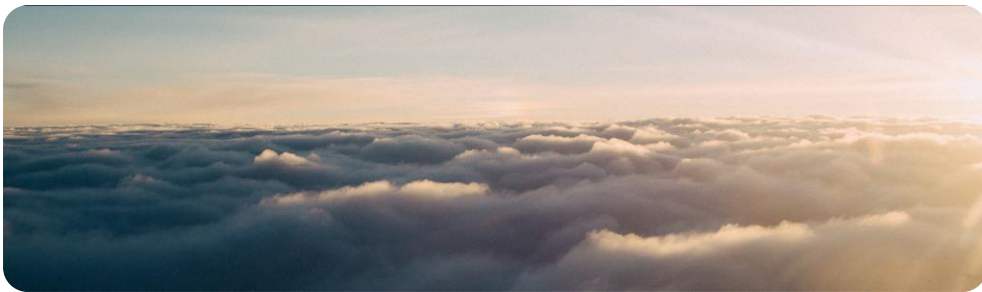


# Preeminent. Christ's Place in The World

WEEK 6  
CHRIST, OUR  
WISDOM



***“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving” (Col. 2:6-7).***

Practically speaking, that which is principally required of us when we encounter aberrant teaching is to remain in the faith that was delivered fully and finally to God’s people. This can be a hard concept to grasp, for often we read passages like Jude 3 and believe contending for the faith begins with learning all that we can about a false teaching or teacher in order to offer a refutation. Certainly there is a place for this as a part of what it means to give an answer for the hope that is within us (1 Peter 3:14–16). But the first step is always to be solidly grounded in the orthodoxy we have received, for only then will we have a foundation to stand upon as we combat error.

This is precisely Paul’s point in today’s passage as he exhorts the Colossian Christians — and all believers after them — to walk in Christ Jesus as they received him (Col. 2:6). The Greek verb translated “received” in this passage, *paralambanō*, is the same one used elsewhere to speak of the reception of the apostolic traditions about the life, work, and significance of Jesus (1 Cor.

COLOSSIANS 2:6-7

CORAM DEO

Discontent in our lives and envy of the blessings of others is the opposite of thanksgiving, and these things threaten to plunge us back into the darkness of sin.

John Calvin comments, “Ingratitude is very frequently the reason why we are deprived of the light of the gospel, as well as of other divine favors.”

Walking in thankfulness for salvation keeps us in the light of the gospel, which reminds us always how grateful to God we should be.<sup>1</sup>

11:23; 2 Thess. 3:6). Such traditions are not secret through the centuries; rather, they comprise the teachings of the apostles, which are now known to us as the New Testament. So, then, Paul is exhorting believers in Colossians 2:6 to hold fast to the Christ spoken of by the prophets and apostles.

Walking in Christ Jesus is nothing less than submission to His lordship. Our Savior calls us to obedience, not that we might earn our salvation but that we may display our gratitude for His grace. If we love Him — if we have love for God poured into our hearts (Rom. 5:5) — we will keep His commandments, which are not burdensome (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3). We will reflect the fact that we are in union with Christ, and we will grow in our knowledge and application of the gospel as we bow to Him as Lord (Col. 2:7). Matthew Henry writes, “If we live in him, we shall be rooted in him; and the more firmly we are rooted in him, the more intimately we shall live in him.”

Following Jesus as Lord does not manifest itself in checking off a list of rules, though our Savior has given us rules to follow. Instead, obedience to Jesus is a humble embracing of His way as we reflect on and proclaim our gratitude for His salvation (Col. 2:7). The true Christian life is, first and foremost, a life of thanksgiving.

## OPEN IT



Describe a time when you were able to watch something grow or be built. What things did you learn about the growing or building process?

## READ IT | Colossians 2:6-7

## EXPLORE IT



1. What did Paul tell the Colossians to do after receiving Christ?
2. According to verse 7, how would the Colossians know how to grow in their relationship with Jesus?
3. What attribute should come as we grow in our relationship with Jesus?

## GET IT

*Paul begins this passage with the phrase “just as you accepted”—the assumption being that his readers have chosen to make Jesus their Lord and are actively following him. Paul then focuses on the “what next” of being a Christian. Faith isn’t confined to saying a simple prayer and deciding to follow Jesus. This is only the beginning of our journey with Jesus. Paul says that just as you received Christ into your life, you also must continue to grow in Christ and in your knowledge of Him. Without roots, the tree won’t live! This lesson is all about developing spiritual roots. For Paul, godly living is about being rooted and growing in Jesus—becoming a person who has a strong faith and is filled with gratitude.*

4. When did you receive Christ as your Savior and Lord? What were the circumstances? What were your expectations about being a Christian?

**“Rooted”** suggests stability, nourishment and life derived from contact with Christ (**“in Him”**). As a tree’s roots sink deep into the earth for stability and nourishment, so too our faith should strike deep into the sound doctrine and solid food found in the words and ways of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

5. What does it mean to be rooted in Christ? How would you explain this to someone who recently became a Christian?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Read Colossians 1:3-14. What are some words or phrases from this passage that relate to the idea of being rooted in Christ?

What is Paul attempting to communicate through these verses?

What ideas resonate most strongly with you, and why?

7. What are some practical steps you can take to strengthen your spiritual roots this week?

**Established** (GK. Bebaioo) means to make firm or reliable so as to warrant security and inspire confidence. The passive voice indicates that the effect of this establishing is the product of an outside source (the “divine passive,” the Holy Spirit). The present tense indicates that this is an ongoing process in every believer’s life. The more we walk in Him, totally trusting Him, nourished by His Word and our Teacher (His Spirit), the more established in the faith we become.

8. What does it mean to you that this “establishing” is something done by God, but requires that we are active in it at all times?

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.preceptaustin.org/colossians\\_24-71.htm#2:6](http://www.preceptaustin.org/colossians_24-71.htm#2:6)

“As you were **taught**” (GK. *Didasko*) refers to the passing on of information – often, but not necessarily, in a formal setting. It focused on content, with the purpose of discovering the truth – contrary to the forums so popular among Greeks, where discussion and the bantering about various ideas and opinions was the primary concern (see **Acts 17:21**). Synagogue teaching, as illustrated by that of Jesus, was basically expository. Scripture was read and explained section by section, often verse by verse. <sup>2</sup>

9. Who have some of your teachers been that have impacted you and helped to grow you in your walk with Christ?

10. What was it about their teaching that was so helpful and valuable?

11. What are some ways this week you can take new steps to feed others spiritually?

12. How can we challenge each other to grow spiritually?

## **Group Exercise: Identify two or three ways we can help each other as a small group?**

*In this letter, Paul emphasizes thankfulness several times. N.T. Wright, a well-respected Christian author, links this reference to worship: “**The church that truly learns to worship God is a church growing to full maturity**”.* <sup>3</sup>

13. How do you link thanksgiving and worship?

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<sup>2</sup> John MacArthur: **Matthew 1-7 Chicago: Moody Press**

<sup>3</sup> N.T. Wright *Colossians and Philemon*; Tyndale New Testament Commentaries

14. How is thanksgiving part of your personal time of worship? Corporate worship?

15. Why does Paul say that we ought to be overflowing with thankfulness?

How is being thankful connected to growing spiritually?

16. What does a person's life look like when the habit of thankfulness is lacking?