

Colossians Devotionals

Read Colossians 1

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell Colossians 1:19

It must be weird to longer be President of the United States. Presidents keep the title as an honor throughout the rest of their lives, but their power is gone. No longer do world leaders prioritize the ex-President's phone call. The Secret Service protection remains, but not to the level of their active presidency. Various changes occur after that January 20th in which his term ends, and his civilian life resumes. The person has remained the same, yet the power has vastly changed.

The Person of Jesus can be both a simple, yet confusing topic. When theologians make the point that Jesus was "fully God and fully man", it can be a confusing discussion. Essentially the idea is that Jesus is God and has been an eternal person of the Trinity since before human time began. The struggle for some with Jesus is that He was clothed with flesh and looked outwardly like any other person. Yet inwardly, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell. Not some of God, not part of God, but all of Him. Jesus did choose to limit His access to certain elements of that divine power in order that He would have moments of relying on the Father for information and leading that served as an example to the humans around Him. However, at no time was Jesus any less God, and at no time could He be any more God. **How does that knowledge affect your attitude towards Jesus? Do you pray to Jesus? Do you seek guidance from Him? Jesus reconciles us through salvation to the Father for salvation, yet as our Savior and Lord, He is not merely a spiritual fixer, but God Himself. Take time to pray today to Jesus? Offer up a prayer of thanksgiving for the direct work He did in the flesh for your sins as well as the work He does today as an intercessor for you to the Father.**

Read Colossians 2

I say this that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. Colossians 2:4

How should we interact with conversations on evolution, gender-identity, and other discussions in which society rails against Christianity? First of all, we should interact. It's important to not payback their dismissal of scripture with our dismissal of their arguments, thus shutting down the chance to really talk. At the same time we must be careful of what one professor calls "intellectual snobbery." Some Christians have been influenced by "plausible arguments" that perhaps God used evolution in Genesis 1, or if someone's gender struggle must come from the God who made them.

So how do we avoid falling to these arguments? Previously Paul encourages the church to seek greater understanding of God through study and greater wisdom from God through prayer. People find themselves speaking and believing contrary to God and His Word when they have failed to take the time to interact with God and His Word. He warns in verse 8 to beware that

no one “takes you captive” by philosophy and empty deceit. So the question becomes how do we interact with these arguments? As Christians, we must work to keep disagreements as conversations. Once two people start yelling, posting vigorously to Facebook, or calling names, the opportunity to communicate the truth has been lost. We must not prioritize winning an argument above winning a soul. My evangelism professor once said, “No one has ever been argued into Heaven.” They’ve been listened to and convinced lovingly. **So how do your conversations go with unbelievers? Do you cut them off quickly? Do you let your blood boil and your words fly? We have an opportunity to be prepared by prayer and devotion to address every objection, argument, or philosophy the world might offer to sway us. Be ready to respond, not for the argument primarily, but for the gospel.**

Read Colossians 3

Whatever you do, work heartily as for the Lord and not for men Colossians 3:23

During my time in college I had three income sources. I served in the National Guard, worked for an insurance company, and served my church as a part-time youth pastor. While each was an earning opportunity, I didn’t approach them the same. The Guard simply felt like a duty, insurance felt like a job, and youth ministry felt like a joy! After a time, I realized my approach to each job needed to be the same. God wasn’t merely interested in how I did my work at church, but how I worked in all my jobs. Each vocation was an opportunity to honor God.

What’s the motivation behind your work? Making money to take care of our needs and our families is the common answer, but that usually doesn’t satisfy us long-term. A friend once told me that he hated his job, but made such good money, he could never quit it. I suggested he look at it as more than a job. What if it were a mission field; a place that he had a unique opportunity for the gospel among his co-workers? If we’re simply working a job for money and men, we miss our chance to find ways to honor God and spread the gospel. If we do our work at church to receive the applause of men, instead of doing so to honor our Lord, we miss the true blessings of service. **What necessary job do you lack motivation? Consider how you can do that work for the Lord and not for men. This may be an outward action, or simply a change in your heart. But we must never consider ourselves to be doing earthly work in one moment and Christian work in another. As Christians, everything we do is an expression of our relationship and devotion to God Himself. Pray for a change of attitudes where they stink, and even for a change of perspective on how opportunities exist to honor your Lord.**

Read Colossians 4

Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in the will of God.

Colossians 4:12

Your prayer life can be a struggle, but I love three encouragements we get from this passage on prayer. First, keep on praying (v.2). Sometimes prayer is difficult because our time is short, we overslept, we don’t know what to say, or we fear our prayers are ineffective. God invites us to pray and to leave the results with him. Secondly, we’re told to pray for opportunities to share

the gospel (v.3). Has it been a while since you shared Jesus with someone? When's the last time you prayed for the chance? My missions professor challenged us to pray for "divine appointments" in seminary, seeking opportunities to share the gospel with people. I find God ready to answer this prayer as quickly as any I lift up.

But my favorite prayer encouragement is in v.12 where we see the faithful servant and Christian, Epaphras, had a ministry of prayer as he "struggled" in prayer on behalf of the Colossian church. What was the struggle? Perhaps remembering to pray for them amongst all his other prayer requests. Probably he struggled to pray like he wanted to on very busy days of ministry and even family commitments. Sometimes he felt like he was praying the same old prayers and was there any point? Despite these issues, he struggled on. **The Christian life is so much about the struggle, doing what you ought instead of what you selfishly want to do with the time. To struggle is not the worst place to be when you consider how many defeated Christians give up on daily prayer. Keep on praying and you'll find the struggle revealing strength as your difficult prayers find answers that could only come from the hand of your heavenly Father.**