

Receiving Christ 2

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev John Macsween

[0 : 00] Words you will find in the epistle of Paul to the Colossians. Colossians chapter 2 at verse 6.

Colossians chapter 2 at verse 6. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abound in therein, with thanksgiving.

Now in continuing your thoughts of these words we may briefly remind ourselves of what is meant by receiving Christ Jesus the Lord.

He is received as the Son of God, the mediator between God and man.

He is received to exercise all his mediatorian officers in the soul as well as for the soul.

[1 : 49] And in walking in him, there is implied the constant dependence upon him that encourages those who are otherwise without strength and without guidance.

They walk in him.

Now we may see how this works out in the actual experience of the belief.

And I do not know of any place where that is set before us more clearly or more pointedly than we have it in that chapter of Ephesians which we read this evening.

Paul says there that the believers should not henceforth walk as others do.

[3 : 38] But their walk as others do. But their walk is to be distinct, distinct, and distinguished from that of the world.

But he should henceforth walk as others do. But he should henceforth walk, not as the other Gentiles walk. Now how do others walk? That is the question.

They walk, he says, in the vanity of their own mind.

You do not walk like this. Why? Why? Because they walk in Christ. To be preserved from walking as others walk is to walk in Christ.

To walk in the spirit. To walk in the spirit. To walk in the spirit. To walk in the spirit. So as not to fulfill the lesson of the flesh. To walk in the spirit. Now the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their own mind.

[4 : 55] Those who walk in Christ do not walk in that way. They have been saved from the dominion of this vanity of mind.

But what is vanity of mind? Or we use the word vanity in a certain, in a certain way, with a certain meaning.

Almost synonymous with the word conceit. But that's not the meaning of it here at all.

At least it is much wider, much broader, and much deeper than that. But that's not the meaning of it. But that's not the meaning of it. They walked in the vanity of their own mind.

Vanity, you remember, is the name often given to idols.

[5 : 53] They are vanity. There is no substance in them. And in that respect the preacher says that all is vanity.

He doesn't mean to say that all is a conceit. That's not the idea. But that everything lacks substance. Things here are a mere shadow.

They pass away with the user. Now it is the contrast between that which is transitory and that which is permanent that we have in that passage of the pictures.

Behold, all is vanity. Everything passes away. Everything that pertains and belongs to this life.

But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. There are things that abide. Things that are permanent.

[7 : 10] Now the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their own mind. Taken up with the things sin and temper.

And let us remind ourselves of this. That religion, considered as mere religion, may be vanity as well as other goods.

And it is precisely in that respect that Paul refers to it. At least, there is a pointed allusion to that. They walk in the vanity of their own minds.

They worship I was. They give their time and their allegiance to the creature rather than to God.

No, to walk in Christ. To walk in Him implies deliverance from the vanity of one's mind.

[8 : 28] That is to say, to walk in Him means to live unto God and not to the Greek.

They walk in the vanity of their minds. Do not ye walk thus? For you have not learned Christ in this way.

That you should walk in the vanity of your own mind. You have been delivered from this snare. The snare of serving the creature.

But the catch it is that this may be the case. While one's self is equal and not.

While one's self doesn't know that that is the case. Thousands, my friends, think that they live to God when they do not know the first thing about it.

[9 : 31] They are persuaded they live to God. They would be indignant. If anyone were to suggest anything else. Of course they live to God.

And they give much of their time and their energy to Him. So they think. And they have never yet understood what living to God means.

And it is here there is room. And I call for examining yourselves.

Now living to God. Now living to God. As distinct from living unto the creature. Means this first of all. Knowledge.

Of the greatness. And glory of God. Knowledge that is the spirit.

[10 : 42] That solemnizes the soul. That puts everything else in its proper life. Its proper perspective.

The knowledge that gives one to realize. That there is none like God. That He is glorious in holiness.

Fearful in praises. Doing wonders. In holiness. We must realize. Our own nothingness.

And God's infinite greatness. Without that. There can be no living to God. Whatever we think.

Whatever we say. And whatever we do.

we do it is not unto God there must be this basic knowledge of his greatness and it is this greatness that subdues the vanity of the mind what are we to confront the vanity of the mind with what is it that can overcome it nothing my friends nothing but that true sense of the infinite greatness of God nothing else we can argue with it but it will have no effect it is the knowledge of this greatness an overpowering sense of the infinity and the infinitude of the divine being and that is what is conspicuous today in this age by its absence conspicuous by its absence

[12 : 58] God is not treated merely as an equal he is often treated as an inferior and the awe that should characterize man in the presence of God is lacking why the vanity of the mind still reigns now to walk in Christ to live to God means first of all deliverance from this vanity this levity this likeness of spirit and what next why was that itself there well as we have indicated it was because of ignorance of God being ignorant of the life of God by reason of the darkness that is in them through the hardness of their heart he have not learned to walk in Christ in this way to walk in the darkness of your mind due to the hardness of your heart no he have not as he have received him walk in him that again implies this being saved and preserved from the dominion of a hard heart the hardness of your the darkness that is in you by reason of the hardness of your heart and here again we have that connection between the intellect and the emotions or the heart that we find so often in scripture and to which we have drawn your attention not so long ago error generally speaking is placed to the understanding but there is such a thing as an error in the heart and Dr.

Shedd says that error in the understanding is the result of error in the heart that is to say we want to think in a certain way because we are already inclined that way the heart is already inclined the heart has already gone out after something then we want to think in such a way as to rationalize that is to justify the error of the heart that is not walking in Christ as he have received him walk in him and you will notice that so far we are dealing in particular with his office of a prophet how is this darkness that is in us by reason of the hardness of our heart to be removed by walking in him by receiving him yea and by walking in him and here again we have that marvelous connection between walking and knowing to which

Christ himself refers in the gospel of John when he says if any man will do his will that is the will of the man if any man will do his will he will know of the doctrine whether it is of God now that connection is most significant if any man will do he will know usually we take the other order and once again we repeat the other order was that which prevailed in pagan philosophy if you will know you will do one of the outstanding philosophers of Greece says that nobody will do evil if he knows that it is evil that is to say virtue is knowledge and there is much of that philosophy abroad today the idea is teach people what is good and they will do it that's the social gospel in essence give them good surroundings improve their circumstances and virtue will automatically prevail that's the social gospel no hard be it from us to suggest but that it is good that people should have should be in comfortable circumstances it is very good very desirable should be worked for but it has no connection in the world with spirituality the history was brought out of

Egypt out of the slavery of Egypt it was a great change for them to be free it was a great improvement in the lot but did that change them were they better only in one sense they were better as the power of God dealt with them not as a result of coming out of Egypt as someone has put it God took the children of Israel out of Egypt in one day but it took 40 years to take Egypt out of the children of Israel 40 years now this does not come we say by association amelioration of people's circumstances

Jesus well that is desirable in itself it has no connection in the world with what the apostle is talking about ye have not so learned they were not to walk in the vanity of their own minds by reason of the darkness that was in them to the hardness of their heart it is the teaching of Christ as prophet we say that comes into the fore here and what does that do well many things it gives them to be rooted and grounded in the faith the reason why there are so many people going from one thing to another anything new especially in religion there are certain people who are sure to be there why they are not wounded and grounded in the truth they are driven about with every wind of doctrine note who are in

[21 : 42] Christ in Christ who be rooted and grounded in him as the truth and in the truth as it is in him rooted and grounded the apostle dispenses with the niceties of rhetoric he is not concerned with the rules and regulations of grammar here he is guilty of the grammatical error known as mixing of his metaphors he says walk he says again be still walk in him but be rooted and grounded in him but only walk in him he told where they walked if they were going to be rooted and grounded oh well that might be a violation of the rules of grammar it is certainly not a violation of the life of the

Christian because only as he is rooted and grounded can he walk in Christ he must be rooted and grounded in him Scottish picture of a bygone age in this connection he used the illustration of a compass not a compass for telling direction but the instrument for making circles you know the compass that we use for making circles see one end of it is fixed and the other moves around that fixed end so that the compass is at one and the same time stationary and moving at this one part of it is fixed the other part is moving now in the case of the

Christian being grounded and rooted he is grounded and rooted in Christ as to doctrine to teaching to enlightenment and because of this he walks in him and being hooded and grounded is absolutely essential to the walk in him so that he is not tossed about with every wind of doctrine with the slate of men and cunning craftiness wherewith they lie in way to deceive maybe it's a characteristic of our day a stronger word might be used maybe it's a judgment that has come upon us that those who propagate error are so set us this heartbeat passes but somebody comes to the door propagating error the most injurious error not so long ago a certain man came to the door of the man he was quite very bizarre preaching there and his theme was

Christ is not God well I usually argue with these people but I didn't that time I told him to leave I couldn't listen to such things but the scene for the propagation of error has come to the proportions of a judgment why why is this truth because we haven't received the love of truth and why is it that the people who propagate error are so successful because of course the mass of old people have not rooted and grounded in the truth as it is in Christ they don't know what to walk in

Christ is not to walk in darkness no it is to walk in the light if any man follow me he shall not walk in darkness but he shall have the light of life if any man will do his will he will know of the doctrine whether it be of God that is to say this doctrine takes to do not only with the intellect but also with the will it is not a cold scheme of truth it is something that captivates the heart the truth as it is in Jesus it is to do with the hardness of the heart my friends there may be much light and no softening of the heart no change of heart there is a light that freezes as well as a light that pause there may

be like the light of knowledge while the effect it has is to make the heart harder than it was before take a moonlight night for instance it's much brighter than a moonless night but very often accompanying that light there is frost often hard frost there's no dawn no there is no dawn until the sun comes out in its breath and then there's not only light but there's a taking away of the hardness that is due to coldness and coldness that is due to hardness it is the sun that pass then those who walk in

[29 : 08] Christ are saved in a measure from this hardness of heart yes and they walk in Christ because of this walk in furthermore they have been saved from their ignorance of the life of God those who walk in Christ Jesus the life of God they walk in Christ Jesus them all because of life they have life as we have indicated last Sabbath Christ to them is the life even the life of God they are not strangers to the life of God but this life has been communicated to them and here we have them walking in

Christ as their king the giver of life and walking in him according to his direction in as far as they walk in him at all it must be according to his rules and regulations it is walking in the light they are not strangers to the life of God though that might mean many things but this is implied in a dead way they know that God lives that God is that he lives that he is the living God God lives blessed be my rock so sings the psalmist

God lives and he lives from everlasting to everlasting he alone has immortality dwelling in life of which none can approach but this life of God in Christ Jesus is communicated unto them they know what it is to live and they know to this extent at least that perhaps one of their most outstanding and one of their commonest petitions is this let my soul live and then it shall give praises unto thee let my soul live live why do they pray like that because they have experienced life they know the difference between life and death hence their prayer let my soul live live in the energy of this life that God gives us that it may walk in Christ to walk in him to the glory of God the Father they are not aliens to the life of God strangers to it and hence they walk in it and this life of course is communicated to them in and through Christ hence to them he is the life I am the resurrection and the night I am the night the way the truth and the life they walk in him thus now in doing so in walking in him they have a special aim a special end in view and what is the way do they walk in Christ why do they decide to walk in Christ why do they pray let my soul live while he tells us that it may give praises to thee very peace to be glorified to God to please me to be pleasing unto God walk in him walked it and grounded in him not hast abode with ever wind of doctrine no but steadfast in him steadfast in the faith which to us means this among other things let us know what we believe and let us know why we believe so many people say that they believe something and they don't know in the universe what it is after all they believe and certainly they don't know why they believe they are in a haze in a mist and of course these these cannot give a reason for the hope that is in them no well we say that there may be the life of

[35 : 38] God where there is very little ability to put that the exercises of that life in systematic order but that's not desirable it is desirable that we should know that we should know where we are and why we are what we believe and why we believe why we walk in one way and not in another and above all we should be convinced of this and this is a criterion by which we can test ourselves what is the aim of walking we must walk either in Christ or in some other way we must walk we cannot stand still but what is the aim of a walking is it self gratification or has it any connection with the chief end of man which is to glorify and to enjoy

God now let us again refer to the solemn fact that we are at the threshold of another hero of life the first sabbuck of another is what is our war what is our age what is our chief end not absolutely considered but considered from our own point of what do we make our chief end well that is a criteria that infallibly determine our state and our condition walk in them glorify to God in your walk and of course other things will take care of themselves if we could only put this first or how often the redeemer himself emphasizes this seek ye first the kingdom of

God and his righteousness and all other things will be added to you you don't need to worry about them instead of giving all your time to worry about seek this first and then all things will be added all things that God sees necessary it is so difficult to believe that of course it is difficult to believe that very difficult and it is very difficult to act on that yes if it weren't difficult it wouldn't be of God that is difficult for the natural man it is not difficult for faith it must be difficult for the man in whom there is faith there is no doubt in faith but there may be much doubt in the man who has the faith it's not in his faith or no faith fights doubt it fights against it that's its very nature there's no doubt in faith there

may be much doubt in the mind in which that faith is doubt about what about many things and especially in relation to your text doubt as to the profitableness or wisdom of walking as God commands us no man believes that of heart oh no my friend no no to believe that we must have the faith which is of the operation of God nevertheless this is not only our good this is what's of supreme profit to us in the last analysis everything else is but vanity it passes with the use may God grant us them to walk us to receive to be right at the beginning that we may be right at the end and to walk in him whether our life in this world be long or short that we should walk in him rooted and grounded in the faith until we come to the full stature of the measure of Christ she got to