



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Colossians 2:6–15

“The Principles of a Winner”

Paul and the Ministry

TRANSCRIPT

Let’s open our class with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the opportunity that is ours again to turn to the word of God, to consider some of the great passages written by the Apostle Paul. We thank Thee for the magnificent conception of the ministry that he did have, and we ask, Lord, that as we turn to another section of his writings that the Holy Spirit may teach us the things that we need to know.

We know that in the things that he has written, there is admonition and instruction, and there is the basis for correction, for strengthening of our Christian lives, and we ask that, in our time together tonight, there may be some of that for each one of us. We need the ministry of the Holy Spirit constantly through the word of God to lead us in the paths of righteousness, correction, admonition, and all of the things that will enable us to be more pleasing to Thee. We commit those who are here to Thee, and we ask, Lord, that Thou wilt minister to them in the problems of their lives and the trials of their lives and also in the aspirations of their lives. Be with us now in this service.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.

[Message] To Shakespeare’s question, “Hast any philosophy in thee, shepherd?,” many Christians would reply firmly if not indignantly, “No,” and possibly also add some popular definitions of philosophy, such as: philosophy is man’s attempt to befuddle himself scientifically. A model—modern philosopher is a person who redoubles his efforts after he loses sight of his objective. But if we do not mean human speculation, but the search for clarity and understanding of the whole of reality, then of course, all of us must have a philosophy. We may not like to call it philosophy, but we cannot live without philosophy, and when we say that we do not have a philosophy, of course, that’s our philosophy. Our philosophy is the philosophy of no philosophy.

Every Christian in his life needs a worldview and also some life principles. And in fact, everyone has a life view, and everyone has life principles. You can tell a person’s life view by observing the kind of life that he lives, and you can ultimately ferret out his life principles by observing also, the things that dominate him in his daily life. Aristotle was right, “Whether we will philosophize or whether we will not philosophize, we must philosophize.”

The apostle, in Colossians chapter 2, raises the question of philosophy among some other things, and in the course of this passage, gives us the philosophy of a Christian winner. They were in being—they were in danger of being swept away by—from their moorings in the truth of the gospel to intellectual exclusivism of a gnostic, Judaistic kind. Now, what I mean by that is simply this; that the things that are reflected in Epistle to the Colossians are the things that later came to be associated with Gnosticism, and yet at the same time, with a Gnosticism that was mixed with a little bit of Judaism, so that the heresy that the Colossians were in danger of falling for was a combination of a Gentile kind of philosophy, or a worldly kind of philosophy, and a Jewish kind of misuse of the Old Testament. The apostle speaks of it as “enticing words” in verse 4 of the same chapter where he says, “And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.” So the false doctrine that the Colossians were exposed to was one which Paul describes as a philosophy with enticing words.

His exhortation and his admonition to the Colossians is to return to the superior fundamentals of the word of God, and he spells out what that means in this passage, in a way that I

think is particularly helpful to us in the consideration of the kind of Christian life that we should live, and the principles by which we should live it.

And I'd like for you to look at it for a few moments, beginning with the sixth verse and the seventh verse, where the apostle speaks giving us an exhortation to walk in the faith. These two verses, incidentally, have been misunderstood, and have been misunderstood largely, because they can mean in our English versions, something quite different from that which the apostle does mean I think. Let me read the two verses. Speaking to the Colossians he said,

“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, abounding with thanksgiving.”

You know, we often have—we often use an expression in the twentieth century, particularly in the age which we live, by which we signify that we occasionally have to go back to the beginning of things, and so we say, “Well, we've got to go back to the drawing board.” Well, that is what Paul is telling them to do here. What we need is to go back to the drawing board, and they are urged to advance in the life of faith, in the light of the great principles of which they had accepted when they came into the faith.

Now, it's possible to understand verse 6 in two ways. It is possible to understand it this way, and it has often been understood this way by popular Bible teachers. “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,” and that expression is designed to mean, “the manner in which you received Christ Jesus the Lord is the manner by which we are to walk in him.”

Now, the question is often asked, “How did you receive Christ Jesus the Lord?” Well, Christians frequently respond to that very simple. “Well, I received him by faith.” So, “As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk ye in him.” You have received him by faith, therefore, walk in him by faith.

Now, that is an appealing interpretation, because the term “as” taken by itself could mean that. It could refer to manner. “As,” or in the manner in which you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him. You received him in the manner of faith, walk in the manner of faith. And since that’s a biblical doctrine taught in other places of the Bible, it’s—there’s nothing wrong with that teaching, and since the word “as” is in harmony with it, it has been popularly set forth as the apostle’s point here.

But I think if you will read through Colossians, you will find that the Colossians were not troubled by the manner in which Christ was to be received. They were in danger of accepting principles that were contrary to the principles that they had accepted when they became Christians. So when the apostle says, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord,” he’s not talking about the manner in which they received Christ, he’s talking about the doctrines that they accepted when they received Christ, and the manner in which they received him is a doctrinal manner; that is, it is a circumstance in which they were taught certain doctrines of the faith, and they received him by the acceptance of particular doctrines. And so Paul is talking about particular doctrines. You can see that from the next verse. He says, “Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith.” So he is talking about the faith; not faith as the means by which we receive him, but the faith—the body of truth—that we accepted when we came into the body of Christ.

So this is a doctrinal exhortation. This is an exhortation to the apostle to remember the theological bases upon which you became Christians. Well, how did they receive Christ Jesus the Lord? Well, they received him in this way; they accepted the doctrine of the deity of Christ. They accepted the doctrine of the Trinity. Now, they may not have spelled out the doctrine of the Trinity as the Church later did—Father, Son and Spirit; three persons subsisting in one essence—but they accepted the deity of the Son of God, the deity of the Holy Spirit, the deity of the Father, and nevertheless at the same time, affirmed that there was one God. They also accepted the atonement. They accepted the atonement that the Lord Jesus Christ offered, and they accepted that atonement as the payment for our sins. They accepted the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus. They accepted the

fact of his second coming, and they also accepted the fact that there was salvation only in these doctrines, and the realities of which they speak. In other words, they accepted the Christian doctrine that we think of as Christianity.

So Paul says, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.” That is, live your life recognizing that in Jesus Christ, we have the Son of God who has offered an atoning sacrifice, who has been resurrected to the right hand of the Father, and who lives to bring his saints through sanctification into, ultimately, the possession of likeness to God, and ultimately, life with him for the ages of eternity. In this sense the apostle says, “Walk in him.”

Now, if you will read over and over the Epistle to the Colossians, you will, I’m sure, become convinced of this, because almost all of the students of the Epistle to the Colossians have ultimately come to real—come to realize that, that is the force of Paul’s words. So he is exhorting it—he is giving them an exhortation to walk in the faith.

Now, of course, when we walk in the faith, we do it by believing those doctrines, so the other ideas—a biblical idea just isn’t what Paul is talking about here. “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 you have been taught, abounding with thanksgiving.”

One of the greatest reasons why the church today is so weak and so failing is that they have failed right here. About ten or eleven years ago, I read one of the most unusual and one the—one of the saddest things that I think I’ve read in the newspaper. Let me read you a couple of articles. This appeared in the *Dallas Morning News* in 1970. “Susan Wiley, thirteen, of Arcadia, California, has the mental age of a one year old, and the physical age of a ten year old, according to officials. The girl who is now undergoing special treatment at Children’s Hospital by speech therapists and other experts, was kept in virtual isolation from society all her life. The case came to public attention with the arrest of the parents Clark Wiley, seventy years of age, and his estranged wife Irene, fifty. They are out on twelve hundred and fifty dollars bail each, and face child abuse charges. Sergeant Frank

Linley of the sheriff's office said the father would not talk about the girl, and the mother was little help. Hospital nurses have made her first joy; a necklace.”

Now in another article, “Girl's father shot to death.” And then in the description of the condition of this girl, it is stated, “Wiley and his estranged wife Irene were arrested Monday after child welfare workers found the child Susan in their home. She was unable to walk—thirteen years of age now—unable to walk, wore diapers, and had retarded muscle development. Authorities said the child had the mental capacity of a twelve to eighteen month old infant. They said with proper therapy she has a chance to become a normal teenager.”

Now, we have a lot of child abuse in the church of Jesus Christ. We have a lot of this same thing, because we are not teaching the Word of God in the sense in which the apostles would have it to be taught. And when he exhorts the Colossians here as he does, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in the faith,” he's trying to prevent those who have come to faith in Christ—in Christ from being as this young girl was, retarded in her development. Retard—retardation in spiritual development is the condition of many in the church of Jesus Christ today. I hope that when the time comes for us all to stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ, it will not be said, that the ministry at Believers Chapel is responsible for spiritual child abuse.

Now, having said that, the apostle admonishes the Colossians to walk in the faith, and specifically with regard to the false teachings. He says in the eighth verse,

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

Now, this warning is based upon these things: in the first place, philosophy is contrary to faith. Philosophy by—in the nature of the case, is the attempt to find out the basis of ultimate reality and the principles of it from the standpoint of human reason. In the case of the doctrines of the

word of God, we have things that are given us by divine revelation. Philosophy is the attempt by human reason, to come to truth. Divine revelation is the unfolding by God of those principles from God himself. So that in the case of the faith, and in the case of human philosophy, we have things that operate on diametrically opposed principles. Human philosophy and rationalism go together. On the other hand, divine revelation and faith and trust go together.

So Paul says, “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men.” He speaks of that system, which has no place for Christ, because that is divine revelation. It has no place for a true understanding of sin, because that too is given us by divine revelation, and certainly no place for salvation, for that too is the product of divine revelation.

Furthermore, he says that philosophy—now, I’m going to be a little bit arbitrary without explaining why but give you what I think is the meaning of the Greek text in verse 8. Due to the construction, I think that verse 8 should be rendered something like this, “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy which is vain deceit.”

In other words, the words “vain deceit” are designed to describe philosophy. It is vain deceit. And then further to explain, the apostle writes, “After the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” Now, when he says “the rudiments of the world,” that is a word that re—was frequently used for the “A, B, Cs,” so he’s talking about the rudiments, in the sense of the elements of the world. Speculative philosophy is what the apostle has in mind; this philosophy of the stoics, or the philosophy of the blatantists, that kind of philosophy. Godless philosophy; not the philosophy that we were talking about in the introduction, which everybody has to have, and certainly, not the Christian philosophy of life, but the philosophy which is vain deceit; the type of philosophy of which a person is speaking when he says, “Philosophers are people who talk about something they don’t understand, and make you think it’s your fault,” but the kind of philosophy that is based upon human reasoning, which after the powers of human reasoning, seeks to find the explanation for the ultimate things of this life.

There’s nothing wrong with the study of philosophy, if we’re interested in studying philosophy from the standpoint, of what men have said concerning these things. Occasionally, it’s useful in understanding the Bible. We wouldn’t understand certain passages like 1 Corinthians chapter 15, for example, if we didn’t understand something about the history of philosophy, and the philosophy that the Greeks had been exposed to. But when Paul warns against philosophy, it’s not against reading a philosophy book, he’s talking about—he’s warning against philosophy and imbibing of its essential principles, human reasoning, and the attempt on the part of individuals to seek by human reasoning, divine truth, rather than by dependence upon the divine revelation of the Word of God, as it is taught to us by the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Paul goes on to say in the concluding word, “and not after Christ.” Philosophy is inferior to God’s truth. It is possible—I know this may seem surprising to you—but it is possible in some fairly conservative seminaries to attend the seminary and to finish the seminary and not have many course at all in the Bible itself. In fact, H. A. Ironside a few years back, was speaking with a minister of an orthodox church who said to him, “I could have graduated with honors from my seminary without o—ever opening the English Bible.” That is possible today. That is possible. It’s possible to go to certain seminaries of certain well-known—known denominations, and to never take a course on the Bible itself. You study “Introduction to the Scriptures, Introduction to the Old Testament, Introduction to the New Testament, Apologetics, Theology, Church History, History of Christian Doctrine, Liturgy, Practical Theology, Homiletics” and so on, and you’d be surprised how few seminaries really teach the Scriptures. Now, I will say this for some seminaries; they presuppose that you know certain things about the Scriptures, and require you to take an exam on the English Bible before you graduate, but they don’t teach the English Bible themselves.

Paul says that this type of godless philosophy is “not after Christ,” and that trend in our seminaries is certainly something to deplore. The thing that the apostle would have us realize is that the Christian life is a life of faith and trust. Now, that means it’s a very exciting life. That means that often we don’t know just exactly what may lie ahead of us, and that’s very difficult for human beings



to experience, because we like to have everything spelled out. Some of us more than others of course, but we like to know what lies before us.

Many years ago I read a book about Paget Wilkes. He was an outstanding missionary to the land of Japan, and in his book he wrote of an experience he had, which I thought was rather interesting, and shows you the excitement of the life of faith. You're really missing something if you don't live the life of faith, because that is the exciting life. Well, he was describing an experience he had. He said he was on the way to the hills for a rest and a change, and he drew from his bank the sum of fifteen pounds. Now, this was some time ago, and fifteen pounds was—well, it was a nice sum of money then; enough for a vacation. He said, “All that I then had, together with another ten pounds, which a lady had asked me to draw from her account at the same bank. Twenty-five pounds in all. On my way, my pocket was picked, and I lost the whole amount. Several weeks had elapsed before our remittance was due.” He was a missionary who received remittances for his support, and he said he had only a few shillings in his pocket.

He said, “My wife and I were very kindly invited to spend our holidays as the guests of the lady whose ten pounds disappeared with my money. So God temporarily provided. But we left the matter in the hands in prayer, and failed to recover the stolen money. About five weeks later, I received a letter,” he said, “from a friend who said he had been much impressed of the Lord to send me a check.” Well, what do you think was the amount of that check? Don't answer. I know you all know that it was a check for twenty-five pounds. And he had written on the check, “For your own personal needs; not for the work.” And then Mr. Wilkes said, “As far as I could gather, the Lord was putting it into the heart of his servant ten thousand miles away to supply my need at the very time that the devil was putting it into the heart of his servant to pick my pocket.” That letter had actually been written just about the time that his pocket had been picked. Now, that's excitement. That's the excitement of the life of faith, and Paul I think, is speaking of that.

Well, the major part of what he has to say follows in verse 9 through verse 15, where the apostle gives us instruction in the walk of faith. And notice the ninth verse, which begins with “for.”

“For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power.”

Now, why should we abandon philosophy—which is vain deceit—after the elements of the world, after the tradition of men, and not after Christ? “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” We have everything in him. That’s why we ought to abandon all the errors of the gnostic Judaists who were seeking to de—disturb them in their faith; make them think that they must do this or that, in order to have the assurance of eternal life. The apostle says, “We have everything in Christ. In him. For”—remember, notice these little words like “for,” “on account of,” “therefore.” These are the words that are important in Bible study. “Beware of philosophy, for in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” So he speaks in verses 9 and 10 of the believers’ position.

There are two important things that are set forth here in verse 9 and verse 10, and I’d like to just expound these words in a little more detail, because these verses are extremely important. If I were looking for a text in Colossians chapter 2, to expound just as a text for a relatively short message—I know you are encouraged by that—I would pick—I would pick these two verses. “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” And then in verse 10 he says, “And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power.” Two important things set forth here in his expression of the believers’ position. First, the fullness of Jesus Christ. “In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead.” Now, isn’t that an amazing statement? All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ. All the fullness of deity.

In other words, “You Colossians, as you receive Jesus Christ the Lord as the Lord, as the sovereign Lord, as the one who is very God of very God, remember all the fullness of deity dwells in him.

Now, if all the fullness of deity dwells in him, then the powerful arm of the Godhead is there to protect and to keep you. Why do you have any need of human philosophy? Why do you seek after

the elements of the world? Why do you go running after the traditions of men and not after Christ? For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” But he also says, it dwells in him in “bodily fashion.”

Now, that is of significance too, because what is suggested by that, is the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fact that this individual who possesses all the fullness of deity—he’s a divine person, but at the same time he took, at a point in time, an additional nature—a human nature—and became one of us. And because he came—became one of us and entered into our life, and had experiences that are similar to ours, he is able to be our high priest, and therefore, able to empathize with us to understand the trials that we must undergo.

Now, someone might say, “Well after all, he was God. He could not have sinned.” Well, that is true. He was God and he could not have sinned, but at the same time, he was exposed to testings and trials. They were not testings from a sin nature, such as yours and my testings are, but testings are testings to turn away from the will of God. Essentially, all divine—all testing is a testing to turn away from the divine will of God. It doesn’t make any difference whether it comes from within the sin principle or without; from the world or from Satan. In essence, the temptation is the same, but if you should say, “Well after all, he was God and he could not sin, so he doesn’t feel the same things that I feel.” No. He’s felt a lot more than you ever felt. You know why? Because he is God.

Let me explain to you. Testings come to every one of us. The weakest fall out when the tests are weak. The stronger fall out when the tests have become stronger. The strongest fall out when the tests have become the strongest. Those who are the strongest know temptation far more than the weak who fail in the beginning. Our Lord, however, never failed and therefore, he knows testings and trials to the infinite degree. He knows exactly what you have felt, because he’s felt it and overcome. He knows exactly what you would have felt had you overcome because he has overcome. And so the fact that he is the divine Savior means that he understands testing, exactly the testing that you have, and furthermore, being a divine person, he knows how to overcome. He has overcome.

So contrary to the opinion that people often have, “Well, he was the divine Son of God, and he doesn’t understand how I feel.” No, because he is the divine Son, he knows exactly how you feel. It’s the man who’s weak and fails who doesn’t understand you. It’s the man who sins like you sin who doesn’t understand you, because he’s failed. He doesn’t understand the testings of the fellow who’s advanced to the next stage. The fellow who falls out at the beginning cannot understand the fellow who has persevered for a while before he fail—falls. It’s not that fellow who can sympathize with you. It’s the Lord who can sympathize with you. That’s why we should go to him with our trials, and not go to the brother who’s fallen so many times. He won’t help you. He’ll teach you how to fall quickly, such as he did.

So “In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in bodily fashion.” He’s one of us. He’s the lamb in the midst of the flock; not only the shepherd, but the lamb. I think one of the most outstanding comments that John the Apostle makes in the book of Revelation is, that when he looks into the future and sees that great multitude which no man could number. They’ve come out of the great tribulation, and there in the presence of the Lord it says, “And a—and a lamb shall lead them to living fountains of waters.” Why, the lamb—lamb’s one of the flock. Well, our Lord is the lamb and the shepherd. He’s one of us, and as the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews puts it, “Because he’s one of us, he’s able to sympathize with us.” And because “In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form,” the Godhead—he has the powerful arm of deity to protect and keep us.

Further, Paul says,

“And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power.”

He’s the “head” in the sense that, he’s the fountain of life and the supreme authority. Worship him. Why should you live by faith in human reason? Why should you follow after human philosophy? Live by faith on the source of life; “the one in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” He has supreme authority. Don’t run after these little authorities that the Gnostics

talked about—the ions who have been created by a god who was one who cannot really enter into relationship with us directly, but must create someone who is a little less holy than he, who in turn creates another, who in turn creates another until finally, there is an ion that is unholy enough to be responsible for this unholy creation. That’s their explanation of things. Those little mediators that the Gnostics talked about, are not mediators that can compare with the mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ; the fountain of life and the supreme authority. He’s the head of all principality and power. All the angels—all the ions if there were such, but there are none—all of them would be under him. So that’s the fullness of Christ.

But look at verse 10 in the opening clause. “And ye are complete in him.” Now, the word “fullness” in verse 9 has the same root as the word “complete” in verse 10. I’m reading from the Authorized Version. I’m not sure what your version says. If it has “filled” or “full,” in both cases you will see the relationship. We could render it something like this, “For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you have been filled full in him.” So the fullness dwells in him, and you have been filled full in him.

Dr. Chafer was a man who never studied Greek, but if you read his theology, you’ll find a reference to a lot of Greek words. He learned them from other Bible teachers. One thing about Dr. Chafer, he didn’t know Greek, but he appreciated it. He wished that he had known it. So he had students down at the seminary take a lot of Greek. He made them take more Greek than was taken in any other seminary, because he didn’t have Greek. He thought everybody ought to have Greek, so whenever anybody would preach, and mention a Greek word and make a point, well he—I don’t know how he did this, whether it was in his mind, or whether he wrote it down, but he was very impressionable because he used to give us more Greek than the fellows who knew Greek. He appreciated what he didn’t have, and he used to talk about the *pleroma*.

Well, he didn’t have the accent on the right sylla—on the right syllable, but nevertheless, he had the essence of it. And he would say, “For in him all dwells all the *pleroma* of the Godhead bodily. And ye are pleromatized in him.” And then he would ask us to turn over to John chapter 1 in verse

16. He loved this passage. I can just see the smile on his face right now when he turned over here, because he knew we'd be surprised, but here we have that same word, and John says in the first chapter of the Gospel, “And of his *pleroma* have we all received, and grace for grace.” “In him dwells all the *pleroma* of the Godhead bodily, and of his *pleroma* we have all received, and grace for grace.” And he liked to stress the same point here when he says, “And you have been pleromatized in him.”

Now, I want you to think about this for a moment. He says, “in him.” In other words, no subordinate power, no demonic power, no angelic power is the source of our power, but we have been filled full in him. “In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form, and you have been filled full in him.” This is your position. You are in Christ. You share with him the things that he is. Filled full. Pleromatized.

There's an old story that Guy King tells about a—about a beggar who was walking down the street, and he didn't have anything, and he was hungry and thirsty. And as he was walking down the street, the houses were alongside the—the street, just like in Charleston where you have half houses. You know, Charleston, South Carolina; America's most historic city; where they actually Cooper's—in Cooper Rivers meet to form the Atlantic Ocean. Remember? I want you to get that. When I'm gone, you'll have some truth. This is the faith.

Well, anyway, the half houses in Charleston are turned like this so that the living rooms are often right on the sidewalk. So as you walk down the street, don't have anything to do, you can see what Brother Smith is doing—excuse me, Brother Smythe is doing. I know “Smiths” are out in Charleston. “Smythes” are in. “Smythe” is one of the old names, the old families. You could walk down a street. You could walk down a street, look in, “Well, I see Smythe sitting, reading such-and-such.” Next house, “Well, there's Pralow, and Pralow's doing this, and Girados are doing this, and—and so on.”

Well, this beggar was walking down the street, Guy King said, and he looked in. He was hungry and thirsty, and he looked in and he could see the dining room, and the family was gathered around the dining room, and the butler was there. Everybody in Charleston has a butler of course,

you know. So the butler was there, and the family was there, and they were just getting ready to eat, and the beggar had his nose up against the window like this. And oh, he couldn't hardly stand it, to see all of that food which he wanted, and at just about that point, the owner of the house looked up and saw him looking in the window. He motioned to the butler to do something, and soon the butler came out the side, walked out the front door, came down the piazza, came to the door that went out to the street, opened it and said, “Come in.” Well, he didn't know what to do, but he followed in, and as he walked in they said, “Sit down at the table.” And Mr. King said, “You know, that's like what it is when we come to be in Christ. All of our need, all of our longings are met in the fullness of Jesus Christ.”

Just as the beggar's needs were met by the fullness of that table, so all of our fullness is met in the Lord Jesus Christ, with whom we have been united, and in whom we have been pleromatized. Isn't that magnificent? “In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you have been filled full in him.” Why should we run after other philosophies? Why should we run after the psychologists? Why should we run after the psychiatrists? Why should we run after some fadism, some kind of Christian fadism, when we have the Scriptures and the fullness of life in the Lord Jesus Christ, when the remedies for our problems are found right here in the sufficiency of Holy Scripture? It is just like the banqueting table that that beggar was introduced to. All of your full—all of your need is met in the fullness of Holy Scripture. May God help us to walk in the faith that we have received when we receive the Lord Jesus Christ. Our time is up. Let's close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for these wonderful truths. O God, help us to remember, Holy Scripture is sufficient, for Holy Scripture points us to him who is our sufficiency, the Lord Jesus Christ. May we go to him for our needs, and give us patience as he dispenses the blessings of the Triune God to us to meet our needs. O Father, we pray for each individual in this room, that there may be a new determination to feed upon the word of God and to be satisfied with Jesus Christ.

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We pray in his name. Amen.