

# Explore the Bible: The Gospel's Forgiveness

October 12, 2021

- *The Explore the Bible lesson for Oct. 31 focuses on Colossians 2:4-15.*

All of us, whether saved or unsaved, inherited the consequences of sin from our first father, Adam. In chapters 2 and 3 of Genesis, we learn about Adam and Eve's disobedience—a story taught in church school from early childhood to adults. God had forbidden Adam not to partake of fruit from a certain tree, the Tree of Knowledge and of Good and Evil. God warned Adam he would certainly die if ate the fruit.

One day, while Eve was walking in the garden, she noticed the tree and saw that the fruit was beautiful. The serpent was also in the garden encouraging Eve to eat the fruit, because he stated God really did not mean she would die. After disobeying God and eating the fruit, Adam and Eve hid in the garden. When God confronted them, Adam placed the blame on Eve for eating the fruit, while Eve placed the blame on the serpent. The Bible mentions that Adam was present with Eve and the serpent. It is clear that Adam, to whom God spoke initially, was equally responsible for the action. Sadly, the outcome of Adam and Eve's disobedience was sin placed on all mankind.

However, the story does not end. The good news is that God knew they would disobey. Therefore, God had a plan from the beginning of time to redeem man of sin. "For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" (Romans 5:19).

Paul reminds us that his prayer for the believers is that no one will deceive them with arguments that sound reasonable (v. 4). The mystery Paul speaks about is revealed in Jesus Christ as he paid the penalty for all of mankind's sin through his death on the cross (1:27). Because of the obedience of Christ, our sins are forgiven. "And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:8).

## **Beware of Deception (Colossians 2:4-10)**

False teachers are those who taint the gospel with humanistic teachings. For example, humanistic teaching focuses on human interests or values and are not related to the teachings of Christ. In addition, humanistic teachings in the church causes major divisions among the believers.

Jesus Christ alone is sufficient to meet all of our needs, and he does not require extra help from any other source. The Holy Spirit is the comforter and guide available for all believers.

Another source of false teaching occurs when believers gravitate to palm reading, horoscopes or vain philosophies, specifically when they are faced with difficulties in life. Believers are equipped with faith, upon conversion, to understand that the teachings of Jesus are sufficient for salvation, as well as instruction in righteous living.

Paul commends the church and rejoices in in their strength and faith in Christ (v. 5). It is possible for members to be deceived by false teachers. Remember, Christ is the believer's focus, and you have been filled by him, who is the head over every ruler and authority (v. 10).

Ananias and Saphira deceitfully gave an offering to the church. God was

not pleased with the act. Although the right thing to do, the offering was given with the wrong motive. Their deceit caused them their lives (Acts 5:1-11).

## **Complete in Christ (Colossians 2:11-15)**

Christ in us is the mystery, the hope of glory (1:27). What an honor it is to be the communicators of this hope.

During my shopping sprees at the mall, I purposely find a quiet place to observe the people as they parade down the corridors and move in and out of the stores to satisfy a material need. How many are desiring a need for love, for forgiveness, for security, for freedom, or for acceptance? The world never will completely satisfy the human's need, and the believer has to be careful that no one takes them captive through philosophy and empty deceit (v. 8).

As communicators for Christ, we have the opportunity to extend the love of Christ in all types of places to let others know that Christ can meet the deepest need. We have received Christ Jesus as Lord and we will continue to walk in him (vs. 6). Christ died that we may share the story of how much he loved us by shedding his blood on a cross for our sin. More than anything else, the cross is the symbol of love. "Greater love has no man than this; to lay down one's life for a friend" (John 15:13).

The more Paul knew Christ, the more he became complete in him. Paul recognized his greatest need was to know Christ, and to know him is to love him. Also, he recognized his limitations and was determined to "press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called him heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).

Every believer has the opportunity to be complete in Christ. When we are empty, he fills us. When we repent of sin, he forgives us. Christ is all we need.

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