

**THE ALL-INCLUSIVE, EXTENSIVE CHRIST  
REPLACING CULTURE FOR THE ONE NEW MAN, Week 1**

**KEY STATEMENTS**

The Christ who replaces our culture with Himself for the one new man is the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, the preeminent One, the centrality and universality of God's economy.

When we have the vision of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, experience Him as our life and the constituent of our entire being, and live Him instead of our culture, the one new man will appear among us in a practical way, and we will realize the life of the new man.

We need to be renewed day by day with the fresh supply of the resurrection life to replace our culture and to become the one new man in reality by becoming as new as the New Jerusalem.

We need to live the life of the one new man instead of our culture by learning Christ as the reality is in Jesus;  
the way the Lord Jesus lived on earth  
is the way the one new man should live today.

**The Urgent Need for Our Culture to Be Replaced by the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ**

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:12-13, 15-18, 27; 2:8, 14-15; 3:4, 10-11

- Colossians 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the **allotted portion** of the saints in the light;
- Colossians 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and **transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love**,
- Colossians 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
- Colossians 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; **all things have been created through Him and unto Him**.
- Colossians 1:17 And He is before all things, and **all things cohere in Him**;
- Colossians 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Colossians 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
- Colossians 2:8 Beware that no one carries you off as **spoil through his philosophy** and **empty deceit**, according to the **tradition of men**, according to the **elements of the world**, and not according to Christ;
- Colossians 2:14 Wiping out the handwriting in ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.
- Colossians 2:15 Stripping off the rulers and the authorities, He made a display of them openly, **triumphing over them** in it.
- Colossians 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be **manifested with Him in glory**.
- Colossians 3:10 And have put on the **new man**, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
- Colossians 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but **Christ is all and in all**.

This mixture of **cultures** flooded the church at Colosse. The church should be a house filled with Christ and constituted with Him. Instead, the church there had been invaded by culture. To a large extent, Christ as the unique element in the church life was being **replaced** by various aspects of this mixed culture. The constituent of the church should be **Christ and Christ alone**, for the church is the Body of Christ. Therefore, the content of the church should be nothing other than Christ Himself. Nevertheless, the good elements of culture, especially philosophy and religion, had invaded the church and saturated it.

The main point in the Epistle of Colossians is the fact that in the eyes of God **nothing counts except Christ**. This fact excludes both good things and bad things, both sinful things and cultured things. In particular, it eliminates **all the good aspects of culture**. We have pointed out again and again that the enemy of God utilizes culture to replace Christ. This is offensive to God. If Satan cannot corrupt us with evil things, God knows that he will try to use the good aspects of culture to replace Christ. Among today's Christians, where can you find a group of believers with whom you can sense nothing but Christ? Among the various Christian groups we see many good points. However, these good things are not the Person of Christ Himself, but something that has replaced Him in a subtle way. For this reason, in many groups of Christians it is difficult to meet Christ. Some may preach Christ or teach the doctrines regarding Christ, but even this preaching and teaching becomes a substitute for Christ Himself. If we have a clear view of the situation among Christians today, we shall realize that the background of the book of Colossians exactly corresponds to today's situation. This book was written for us, not only for the saints at Colosse. (*Excerpt from the Life-Study of Colossians, chapter 1, section 2*)

## Day 1

**I. The book of Colossians was written because the church in Colossae had been pervaded with **culture**, and the saints had been **dis-tracted from Christ by culture**-2:8, 16-17; 3:10-11:**

- A. In Colossae **culture** had flooded the church, **replaced** Christ, and **carried off the saints as spoil**-2:8.
- B. The enemy of God uses **culture** to replace Christ; he will try to use the good aspects of culture to replace Christ-*cf.* Phil. 3:4-8.
- C. According to the book of Colossians, **Christ is replaced by culture**; Colossians indicates that the ultimate replacement for Christ is our culture.

## Day 2

- D. In Colossians the authority of darkness refers especially to the **good aspects of culture** and of our **natural being**-1:12-13:
  1. The saints in Colossae came under the authority of darkness by **allowing** the highest aspects of culture to invade the church-2:8.
  2. The highest products of culture are nonetheless aspects of the authority of darkness by which Satan controls people-1:13.
  3. Anything that is a **substitute** for Christ becomes the authority of darkness to control us-v. 13.

Today we are in an era in which human culture is already six thousand years old. In these six thousand years human society has had many inventions, and the first invention was **human culture**. Genesis 1 shows us that God's purpose in creating man in His image and according to His likeness was that man might express Him. Regretfully, before this purpose could be fulfilled, Satan came and tempted man to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The result was that man was joined to Satan. Thus, **man fell away from God's will and lost God**. Once man lost God, he did not have any protection, satisfaction, or joy. Therefore, man invented culture as a substitute for God. Genesis 4 shows us that the first few generations of human beings invented different kinds of weapons for self-defense; they invented different kinds of tools for cattle-raising and farming to feed and satisfy themselves; and they invented musical instruments for their amusement. (*Excerpt from Christ in His Excellency, chapter 2, section 1*)

## Day 3

**II. Human culture arose after the **fall of man**-Gen. 4:16-22:**

- A. After leaving God's presence, Cain constructed a **city** for his protection and self-existence-vv. 16-17:
  1. Within this city he produced a **culture without God**, a godless culture.
  2. In the garden **God was everything to man**-his protection, maintenance, supply, and amusement; when man lost God, he **lost everything**.
  3. Man's loss of God forced man to **invent** human culture, the main elements of which were cities for existence, cattle-raising for making a living, music for enjoyment, and weapons for defense-vv. 20-22.

## Day 4

- B. Apparently, a culture without God was invented by the man who **refused** to go God's way and thereby lost God; actually, the intrinsic factor of culture was the instigation and incitement of Satan, God's enemy, **within** the man who departed from God-vv. 7, 16-17; Matt. 12:26:
  1. Such a culture, which was without God and was united with Satan, became a model representing all human cultures throughout the ages and signifying that these cultures are **without God** and have **followed Satan** and are **united with Satan**-*cf.* Luke 4:6, footnote 1.
  2. The godless culture began as a seed in Genesis 4, and it will develop throughout the history of the human race until it consummates in Babylon the Great in Revelation 18.
  3. The Lord's word in Matthew 24:37-39 indicates that the godless culture at the time of Noah will develop to its uttermost in the period of the Lord's coming.

When man lost God and all the blessings that come from God, he became a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, a person who had no goal, no satisfaction, no rest, and no protection. Hence, man invented a godless culture apart from God for self-preservation, self-support, self-amusement, and self-defense. The intrinsic factor that caused the formation of the godless culture was **Satan's instigation and incitement within the man who had left God**. Man, who had left God and thereby lost God, followed Satan and cooperated with Satan, even to the extent of being united with the angels of Satan. This brought **confusion** into the human race through marriage, thus inviting God's judgment for the purpose of clearing up the human race. Such a culture, which was without God and was united with Satan, became a model representing all human cultures throughout the ages and signifying that these cultures have departed from God and are without God and that they have followed Satan and are united with Satan. Consequently, they will be cleared away and judged by God. (*Excerpt from Truth Lessons, Level 2, Vol. 2, chapter 16, section 3*)

## Day 5

**III. Culture is a **frustration** to God's purpose concerning Christ and the church-Eph. 3:10-11; 5:32:**

- A. Something very **subtle** stands in the way of Christ and the church; this subtle opposing element is **culture**-Col. 3:10-11; Eph. 2:14-15; Col. 2:14-15.
- B. Culture is a great frustration to experiencing Christ; **unconsciously** and **subconsciously**, we are frustrated by culture from the experience and enjoyment of Christ-Phil. 3:7-8.
- C. Our growing up into Christ in all things and arriving at a full-grown man is hindered by our **subtle, hidden culture**-Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:13, 15-16.

## Day 6

**IV. Human culture stands in **opposition** to the kingdom of God-Matt. 10:16-25, 34-39; 12:29, 46-50:**

- A. Sinful things do not oppose the kingdom of God **as much as human culture does**.
- B. Human culture has become a basic part and a great portion of the kingdom of Satan-v. 26.
- C. Culture has become a stronghold of Satan; in a subtle way he **maintains a hold** on culture and utilizes it to oppose God's kingdom-Acts 26:18; Col. 1:12-13.

**V. Christ as the **all-inclusive, extensive One** is versus culture and should **replace our culture with Himself-v. 18; 3:4, 10-11:****

- A. The purpose of the **extensive revelation of Christ** in the book of Colossians is to **deal with culture**-2:8; 3:10-11.
- B. In this book Paul presents a vision of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ to impress us with the fact that this Christ should replace our culture-1:27.

**VI. The kind of Christ who replaces culture is the **all-inclusive, extensive Christ, the preeminent One, the centrality and universality of God's economy**-vv. 15-18; 2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11:**

- A. **The Christ who can replace our culture and become everything to us is the all-inclusive, extensive Christ**-1:15, 18.
- B. The book of Colossians was written in order to **reveal** the all-inclusive, extensive Christ who deals with our culture and replaces our culture with Himself-3:4, 10-11.
- C. In His salvation God not only **saves us** from sin, judgment, the lake of fire, the world, and the self; He also saves us from everything that replaces Christ, including our culture-Heb. 7:25.
- D. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is **in us**, and we need to **allow** Him to fill our entire being and replace our culture with Himself-Eph. 3:17a; Col. 1:27; 3:11.

**CHRIST AS OUR EVERYTHING**

The last main point concerns Christ being everything to us. Christ is not only everything, but **He is everything to us**. We must learn how to experience Christ as everything to us. Christ to us is our food and drink, and He is also our patience. Many times we are short of patience. When we are short of patience, we should realize that we are actually short of Christ. Christ is our patience. Do we desire humility? Christ Himself is our humility. Do we want to honor our father and our mother? The honor that we render to our father and mother must be Christ. Christ is even the way for us to honor our parents. There is no need for teaching concerning the way. If we love Christ and fellowship with Him, we will have Christ as the living way. We will know how to honor our parents, and Christ will become the strength for us to honor our parents. Christ is everything to us.

The book of Colossians was written because many of those believers did not know how to experience Christ in such a way. They were **distracted** from Christ to pay attention to other things. Colossians was written to tell them that they must **realize Christ as their everything**. We also must learn to experience Christ in such a real and living way. Even from our youth, we should begin to experience Christ. I thank the Lord that I was saved as a young man. However, I did not receive the proper help. I received great help in studying the Bible according to the letter, but I was not helped to know the Lord in a living way, to experience Him as my life and everything. After about seven or eight years had passed, I began to receive help in knowing Christ in a living way. Praise the Lord that many of you who are still in your teenage years can receive this help now! You should not take this in a light way. You should appreciate that you are being shown the way to take Christ, experience Him, and apply Him as everything. I hope that the younger generation will pay their **full attention** to this matter. Then they will be the living witnesses, the living testimonies, of how dear, how real, how precious, how rich, and how living Christ is. Let us learn to experience Him in this way. (*Excerpt from A General Sketch of the New Testament in the Light of Christ and the Church - Part 2: Romans through Philemon, chapter 19, section 5*)