

I want to start with prayer. Almighty God thank you for your Holy word the Bible and for the book of Colossians that teaches us that we can be complete in Jesus Christ. God please bless us all here today and help us to understand just a little more of your greatness. I know your word says that no man can fathom your greatness. But I want to ask you to help us understand a little more of your Greatness and help us day by day to be more like your son Jesus. In Jesus wonderful name I pray Amen!

I want to back up a little to Colossians chapter one the beginning of verse 24 I now rejoice . Remember Paul is in prison and he has joy!!

Have you lost your joy? Joy is the deep – down confidence that God is in control of your life.

When you see somebody without joy it's because they're selfish and they think they deserve better than what they have.

Let me also say that once your joy is gone, you're in a lot of trouble, because everything you try to do is going to be done out of legalism and will have little effect.

Four thieves of joy are

1. circumstances can steal your joy
2. People can steal your joy
3. Possessions can steal your joy
4. Worry can steal your joy

I have some good news!!! We have three things that protect our joy

1. Humility will protect your joy
2. Devotion to Christ will protect your joy
3. And trusting in God will protect your joy

I just love Colossians 1:27 and 28

Let's read it now.

²⁷ To them 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. ²⁸ Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Paul is also the writer of Ephesians.

Now let's read Ephesians 3: 14-21

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— ¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. ²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

The beginning of Ephesians 3:17 says that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

The end of Colossians 1:27 says Christ in you, the hope of glory

Our message is to tell people that the living God wants to come and dwell in their lives.

A child matures because he eats. A Christian matures because he feeds on the word of God.

I want to read my Bible and pray everyday because I want to grow and be more like Jesus.

Now let's get into Colossians chapter 2:1-10

Let's read

For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, ² that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and *attaining* to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴ Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. ⁵ For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your *good* order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. ⁶ As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. ⁸ Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

I want you to be encouraged today!

If you are knit together in love you will be strong.

Let's now read Philippians 2:1-4

Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, ² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. ³ Let nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Being united in love is so important.

Let's read 1 John 4:7 > chapter 5:3,

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *as* Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. ¹⁷ Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us. ²⁰ If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

Colossians 2:7 says rooted and built up in Him. God is love! Christ is love! We have got to be rooted in love! May our roots go down deep in His love!! Amen

Colossians 2:10 says you are complete in Him. You could substitute the word whole for complete. When someone becomes a Christian he is spiritually whole or complete. A spiritually health man doesn't need any more medicine. There's nothing missing Christ fills you up! There isn't any other thing to add to that. Please believe you are complete in Christ.

Let's finish reading Colossians chapter 2:11-23

¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. ¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. ¹⁸ Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false* humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, ¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase *that is* from God. ²⁰ Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, *why*, as *though* living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—²¹ “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,” ²² which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? ²³ These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, *false* humility, and neglect of the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Remember if you're in Jesus Christ you are complete!

Verse 16 says so let no one judge you.

If Christ has given you complete salvation , complete forgiveness , and complete victory, if everything is complete in Him, then don't let anyone make a spiritual judgment of you that is dependent on what you do or don't do.

God is worshiped only when His word is obeyed! Do you want to worship God?

Then obey His word. So let's get into the Bible! The more you study the word the more you are saturated by the word, the more the word controls your thinking and the more the word dominates your thoughts, the more Christ is in the front of your mind.

Once you have really made the commitment to think and to concentrate on Jesus Christ, to pour your thoughts into Him, and to allow Him to be the center of your life, then you're going to see some things happen in your life that you never saw before.

I want to end today with a true story from first Kings 12:26 > 13:33 King Solomon has just died and 10 tribes of the kingdom have been given to Jeroboam who had once been a servant of King Solomon.

Let's read it now.

²⁶ And Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: ²⁷ If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah.”

²⁸ Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” ²⁹ And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. ³⁰ Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to *worship* before the one as far as Dan. ³¹ He made shrines^[a] on the high places, and made priests from every

class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi. ³² Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that *was* in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made. ³³ So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised in his own heart. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense.

And behold, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. ² Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, "O altar, altar! Thus says the LORD: 'Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.'" ³ And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This *is* the sign which the LORD has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out." ⁴ So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Arrest him!" Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could not pull it back to himself. ⁵ The altar also was split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. ⁶ Then the king answered and said to the man of God, "Please entreat the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me." So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him, and became as before. ⁷ Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." ⁸ But the man of God said to the king, "If you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you; nor would I eat bread nor drink water in this place. ⁹ For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'You shall not eat bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came.'" ¹⁰ So he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel. ¹¹ Now an old prophet dwelt in Bethel, and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; they also told their father the words which he had spoken to the king. ¹² And their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" For his sons had seen which way the man of God went who came from Judah. ¹³ Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him; and he rode on it, ¹⁴ and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak. Then he said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" And he said, "I *am*." ¹⁵ Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread." ¹⁶ And he said, "I cannot return with you nor go in with you; neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place. ¹⁷ For I have been told by the word of the LORD, 'You shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.'" ¹⁸ He said to him, "I too *am* a prophet as you *are*, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.'" (He was lying to him.) ¹⁹ So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house, and drank water. ²⁰ Now it happened, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back; ²¹ and he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you, ²² but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the place of which *the LORD* said to you, 'Eat no bread and drink no water,' your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.'" ²³ So it was, after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, the prophet whom he had brought back. ²⁴ When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his corpse was thrown on the road, and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse. ²⁵ And there, men passed by and saw the corpse thrown on the road, and the lion standing by the corpse. Then they went and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt. ²⁶ Now when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard *it*, he said, "It *is* the man of God who was disobedient to the word of the LORD. Therefore the LORD has delivered him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to him." ²⁷ And he spoke to his sons, saying, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled *it*. ²⁸ Then he went and found his corpse thrown on the road, and the donkey and the lion standing by the corpse. The lion had not eaten the corpse nor torn the donkey. ²⁹ And the prophet took up the corpse of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back. So the old prophet came to the city to mourn, and to bury him. ³⁰ Then he laid the corpse in his own tomb; and they mourned over him, *saying*, "Alas, my brother!" ³¹ So it was, after he had buried him,

that he spoke to his sons, saying, "When I am dead, then bury me in the tomb where the man of God *is* buried; lay my bones beside his bones. ³² For the saying which he cried out by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the shrines on the high places which *are* in the cities of Samaria, will surely come to pass." ³³ After this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but again he made priests from every class of people for the high places; whoever wished, he consecrated him, and he became *one* of the priests of the high places.

I want you to notice the man of God was not intimidated by the king when asked to come to his house and eat and drink and get a reward. But when he heard the older prophet talk about an Angel he got sucked in and it cost him his life. The lion killed him that same day.

Let's remember to keep doing what we know is right!

Don't be sucked in by the lies of this world!

I want to close in prayer now. Great are you Lord and most worthy of praise! We want to praise your name everyday! God we confess that we are weak and we sin. I am thankful that we are complete in Christ. Lord you forgive us all our sins! Everyday is a new day with you. Hallelujah!! Help us to be more like you each and everyday. God we need your blessings! We need more of you, your love and changing power in our lives

I pray for Alistair and Wendy give them a great trip and bring them back to Japan safely.

In Jesus wonderful name I pray amen.