

Matt Kruse
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“Hidden Treasure in Christ”
Series: *The Church, The Home, & The School*

Congregational Prayer:

Introduction: Take your Bible and turn with me to Colossians 2, Colossians chapter 2.

As you are turning there, let me remind you of some young men in the Old Testament who were abducted from their homes and their families and carried away into captivity in a foreign land. Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were among a large group of highly skilled and already well-trained young men who were stolen by Babylon to be educated for 3 years so that they might stand before the King of Babylon. In other words, it was part of the bounty of war for the Babylonians – to take the best and brightest from the next generation of the peoples they conquered and make them into nobles and counselors and wise men for the king. But before they could stand before the king and function as rulers of the land, they had to be re-educated and indoctrinated with the way of the Babylonians. Daniel 1 tells us that they were to be educated in literature and language as they were inculcated into the lifestyle of the Babylonian nobility. This incident stands out in the Scriptures as an example of the power of education. Everyone who has ever desired to make an impact and to influence control and wield power has understood that the education of the next generation is the place of greatest potential. And so there has always been a battle for the mind of men and women, and especially of young men and young women. Satan has been furiously at work since the time of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to re-shape our view of the world and re-educate us through deceptive words so that we reject God and go our own man-centered way. He seeks to carry away our finest young men and young women to the education courts of Babylon and re-instruct them and indoctrinate them with a godless view of all things.

Christian education has a constant awareness of this battle. Christian dads and moms and SS teachers and homeschoolers and Christian School teachers know that this is what is at stake – the minds and hearts of the next generation. Two weeks ago we saw from Isaiah 8 that the motto of truly Christian education is “To the Scriptures!” The only way to effectively counter the false and deceptive teaching of the arch enemy of God is to run to the Word to see what God has clearly and authoritatively said. And now, with the text we have before us this morning – we must ask – what will we find when we go there? What wisdom and knowledge will be present in the Scriptures when we take our students there?

The text before us gives the simple and yet eternally profound answer – we will find Christ! We will start reading in Colossians 2:1 and read down through verse 8. *Read 2:1-8.*

The central truth in this passage is found in verse 3 – in whom (in Christ) are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The rest of the text builds up to that truth and then flows out of that truth. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ. This is what education is all about – knowledge and wisdom. Whatever form it takes, the goal of education is to pass on a set of facts and an ability to use those facts for the betterment of life. But this is especially what is at the core of Christian education. There is a body of information – of set facts, of truths – that we must pass on. And these facts, this knowledge, must then be well handed with wisdom for the glory of God.

The church of Colossae was under direct attack by those who were coming in with what they claimed was special knowledge and unique wisdom. They waxed eloquent with the man-centered and man-exalting philosophies of human wisdom, and in so doing they were endangering the Church. Paul heard about their trouble, and even though he had never been there to meet these brothers and sisters, he was gravely concerned about them. He heard that they were standing strong in the faith despite the entrance in of these empty philosophies of those who claimed to have a special and secret knowledge. But Paul wants to see their faith strengthened all the more as they grow in Christ. And so he prays fervently for them, which is detailed in chapter 1, and now here in chapter 2 he cuts to the heart of the issue relating to knowledge and wisdom. And what is the heart of that issue – it is Christ. What did the Colossians need to know? What did they need to learn? They needed Christ! Because in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This means then that Christ is sufficiently exclusive and sufficiently protective.

I. Christ is Sufficiently Exclusive – vs. 2-3

- a. The sufficiently exclusive nature of Christ is spelled out for us in verses 2-3. In verse 3 Christ is metaphorically compared to an unending mine whose priceless treasures of wisdom and knowledge is constantly calling for us to search them out. Notice the exclusivity of Christ in this verse. *All* of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found *only* in Him. There is no secret knowledge to be found through some spiritual ritual or some religious ceremony. Having received Christ Jesus as Lord they did not need to now go on to bigger and better and more complete things. Jesus is complete. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found exclusively in Him.
- b. The world is generally okay with the thought of Christ being part of the equation of a system of knowledge and wisdom. Satan is more than comfortable with people leaning mostly upon human wisdom and philosophy for life's answers and direction and looking for some small part to Christ. But when the claim of exclusive sufficiency is made, then war is declared. It's okay to say that *some* of the treasure of wisdom and knowledge *might* be found in Christ, but to say that *all* of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found *only* in Christ – then the enemy of God will make war about this.
- c. And this is the crux of the warfare of education for the minds and hearts of people. Where do we find all that we need to know? Where do we find answers

to life's toughest questions? Who do we turn to? I'm afraid that for most Christians this is a more complicated answer than it needs to be. So, when we are asked – what does Christianity have to offer? What does it give as the answer to the complex and constant ills and pains of our day? What does the Christian have to offer to the hurting, the broken, the dying, the destitute, the homeless, the hopeless, the helpless, the victim, the criminal, the war-torn, the refugee, the wealthy, the poor, the addicted, the murderer, the immoral, the abuser, and the abused? What answer do we give? This is really a more simple answer than we often give. And that answer is simply Christ! That is who we offer to all of those people? He is the solution, the savior, the redeemer, the restorer, and the Righteous Judge. But in contrast to Him, if you compiled all of the human originated answers of all time from the lips of every philosopher, educator, doctor, professor, politician, and wise man – you would still lack a true solution to it all. You would still lack the knowledge and the wisdom you need to deal with it all. But in Christ we have all that we need – we have in Him the storehouse of wisdom and knowledge.

- d. This exclusive sufficiency of Christ has been the drum which Paul has been beating, and will continue to beat throughout this letter to the Galatians. So, you might wonder – what does it mean that all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are stored up in Christ. You might think about some of the things that we need to know which don't seem to connect directly to Christ – so how is it that we can say that all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Him? Well, the answer to this is found in the truth about Christ which is presented just in this short letter. We could look to all of Scripture to see how this is true, but let's just confine ourselves to this book. So, the question on the table is – how is it that Christ is the place where we find all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge? What qualifies Him for this designation?
 - i. He is Lord – 1:3 – meaning that all things are under Him and answer to Him.
 - ii. He is the image of the invisible God – 1:15 – meaning that in Christ we have God exegeted to us (Jn. 1:18) – He makes God known to us because He is God in the flesh.
 - iii. He is the firstborn of Creation – 1:15 – meaning that He existed before all of Creation. So, we are created beings living in a created world, trying to make sense of it all. We need knowledge of where we came from, how we got here, and why we are here, and where we are going. Who better to turn to than the One who was around before anything else was around? He is the firstborn of Creation.
 - iv. He is the Creator of Creation – 1:16 – Not only was he around before it was spoken into existence, but he is the one who brought it into existence. Who better to consult about our created life in this created world than the One who brought it all into being? Everything that was made was made by Him – not anything that was made was made of its own accord – it was all made through Him.

- v. He is the Ultimate Purpose of Creation – 1:16 – He is the creator, and He is the reason for the Creation. All things are made through Him and all things are made for Him. So, if you want to know something about how everything is working together so that you can know what part you play, who better to seek out than the One who this is all about? It is all for Christ.
- vi. He is Before all of his Creation – 1:17 – This means that he preexisted His creation – which is logically obvious – but it also means that He is preeminent over His creation. He is before it in the sense that all of it points to Him, answers to him, finds its meaning in Him, and is all for Him – He is before it all!
- vii. He is the Sustainer of Creation – 1:17 – Not only did He bring it into being, but he also sustains all things by the power of His Word. Nothing flies apart into the bazillion atoms that it is made up of because Jesus Christ holds all things together in Himself.
- viii. He is the Head of the Church – 1:18 – Meaning that his people are especially under his authority and leadership. So, if we want to know the fullness of knowledge and wisdom as it pertains to doctrine and practice, then we ought to run to the Head of the Church and seek for it in Him.
- ix. He is the beginning – 1:18 – meaning that he is the source and genesis of all things. And Revelation 1 tells us that he is the ending of all things – both the Alpha and the Omega – the first and the last – the beginning and the ending.
- x. He is the firstborn from the dead – 1:18 – meaning that He preexisted death, and is preeminent among the resurrected from the dead. Only He was raised incorruptible and undefiled, meaning that others who are in Him can also be raised incorruptible and undefiled.
- xi. He is preeminent in everything – 1:18 – there is nothing which exists which exalted above Him or rises higher than Him or is deserving of more honor and authority and power than Him.
- xii. He has dwelling in himself all the fullness of God – 1:19 – He is not partially God, or almost God, or one of the gods, but rather He is fully and completely and totally God. In His flesh the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.
- xiii. He reconciles all things to himself – 1:20 – and this is especially true of those who are saved by the blood of His cross. He gave himself for the purpose of reconciling us to His Father. This is foolishness to a lost and dying world, but to those who are being saved Christ is the wisdom of God – as 1 Cor. 1 says.
- xiv. He is the hope of glory which dwells within us – 1:27 – we can be assured of our coming day of glory because Christ is in us.
- xv. He is God's mystery – now made known to us – 2:2, 4:3-4. In this He is the perfect fulfillment of all the Old Testament shadows and prophecies. All of them pointed to Him and He is that mystery now revealed!

- xvi. In Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily – 2:9 – There is not a partial deity in Him, or a glimpse of deity, or moments of God-like wisdom and knowledge. No – the whole fullness of deity is in Christ!
 - xvii. He is also said to be the head of all rule and authority – 2:10b. There is no authority or standard or rule or ruler of anything at all that is outside of the headship and authority of Christ.
 - xviii. He triumphs over all spiritual rulers and authorities who are waging war against Him and His Church – 2:15 – meaning that He is the ultimate victor. He will not be defeated!
 - xix. He is the true substance of the OT Law – 2:17 – all of the stringent stipulations point to Christ who perfectly fulfilled them all.
 - xx. He is the Head through which the whole body is nourished – 2:19 – meaning that there is no nourishment for the body of Christ if there is no head which is Christ.
 - xxi. He is seated at the right hand of God above – 3:1 – He has sat down in His place of exalted completeness. He has done His work to pay for our redemption, and now He sits down and awaits His soon return.
 - xxii. Our life is hidden with Him – in other words, He is our life – 3:3-4 – Just as He himself said – I am the way, the truth, and the life – no man comes to the Father but through me.
 - xxiii. He is the maker and the giver and the sustainer of peace – 3:15 – we will never have true peace apart from Him, and we will never walk in ongoing peace if do not have Christ.
 - xxiv. He is our Master – 4:1 – meaning that he gets to call the shots and be over all things.
- e. So, why should it be said that in Jesus Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge? Because Christ is the Preeminent Creator, sustainer, and Lord of all things which He has created. Christ is before all things, and all things hold together in Him. Christ is the purpose of all things. He is the beginning and the ending – God in the flesh in whom all the fullness of deity dwells bodily. He is the hope of glory, our life, our peace, and God’s mystery now revealed. He is the victor and Head and He is seated at the right hand of God. He is Wisdom and Knowledge Incarnate!
 - f. The question is not, why should we seek knowledge and wisdom from Christ, but rather, why would we go anywhere else? Do you want to know why you’re here, what life is all about, where it all ends and who it is all for? Then look no further than Christ. Go nowhere else than Christ. Do not go outside of Christ, but rather more fully into Christ.
 - g. These treasures of wisdom and knowledge are not hidden away in Christ so as to never be found, but rather they are buried in the cave of Christ, waiting to be unearthed afresh and anew by every miner who enters. He is the storehouse in which everything relating to true knowledge and true wisdom are deposited. And this is exactly what human philosophy does not tell you. Humanistic teaching takes you outside of Christ. It launches from a different starting point. It denies

that He is the preeminent Creator of all things. It denies His central position as Lord and Sovereign over all. It abandons the thought that this is all about Him and His glory. Mankind rejects that thought under the deceptive re-education of the master deceiver and we build demonic systems of wisdom and knowledge which are absent of Christ. Those are not true knowledge and wisdom because they are absent of Christ! There is no true wisdom and knowledge outside of Christ. He is sufficiently exclusive.

- h. And there is great benefit to finding all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ. I told you already that verse 3 is the central truth in this text. Verses 1-2 build up to this truth, and then verses 4-8 flow out of this truth. In verse 1 Paul says that he has a great struggle for these believers even though he has never seen them face to face. His struggle for them is for the purpose of their hearts being encouraged or strengthened, and for them to be knit together in love, and for them to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery which is Christ. That is a mouthful of things that Paul is longing for them. But just work your way backwards in verse 2 to see how it is all met in Christ. It all climaxes in Him. So, he longs for them to be strengthened in a knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ. But not just a knowledge of this, but an understanding. And not just an understanding, but the assurance of understanding, and not just the assurance of understanding, but the full assurance of understanding. And not just the full assurance of understanding, but the riches of the full assurance of understanding. And not just the riches of the full assurance of understanding, but all of the riches of the full assurance of understanding. In other words – he struggles for them to know Christ. The all of verse 2 is matched with the all of verse 3. The riches of verse 2 are swallowed up in the treasures of verse 3. The full assurance of understanding and knowledge of verse 2 are found in the treasures of wisdom and knowledge of verse 3. And the mystery of God in verse 2 is matched with the hidden treasures waiting to be discovered in verse 3. In other words – it is all found in Christ.
- i. To make it even more clear consider the contrast. According to verses 2-3 there is strengthening of heart in Christ – but there is hopelessness and fear in any system of thought which is absent of Christ. There is united love in Christ, but there is self-serving lust and relationship breaking selfishness in anything outside of Christ. There is unending richness in the full assurance of understanding in Christ, meaning we can be ever more confident and assured, but there is nothing but the unsteady, ever-shifting sands of a lack of assurance outside of Christ. And there is ultimately then, all the treasure of wisdom and knowledge hidden in Christ, but there is empty treasure chests and vain promises in things that call themselves knowledge outside of Christ.
- j. So, my friend, if you need to be encouraged in your heart you need Christ Jesus the Lord. If you need the building up of love in the body of Christ, you need Christ. If you need full assurance of understanding because you are lacking confidence in what you know – then you need Christ. And if you long for the treasures of wisdom and knowledge because you are confused and searching –

then you need Christ! In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

II. Christ is Sufficiently Protective – vs. 4-8

- a. And if you go deeper into Christ and you unearth these treasures of wisdom and knowledge, then you will be sufficiently protected from the delusive arguments of men. So, we see this is in verses 4-8. Because Christ is sufficiently exclusive in having true wisdom and true knowledge, He is also sufficiently protective. So, look at verse 4 – “I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.” Paul was confident that if the Colossians would unearth the unending treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ then they would be protected against the plausible arguments of men which would seek to delude them. Both of the words for delude and for plausible arguments are compound words which have the word “logos” as part of their makeup. In other words, deception is dependent upon words, and these words which are absent of true wisdom and knowledge of Christ are seeking to lead them away from Christ. But they wouldn’t be prone to be led away into these deceptive systems of words if they were fully assured in their knowledge of Christ.
- b. Paul confirms this in verse 5 when he rejoices in their good order and their firmness of faith. These terms have military overtones in the original and so Paul is saying that he is glad to see they are well fortified and well protected because they are strengthened in Christ. They are not susceptible to the attacks of the enemy because they are well-fortified in their faith in Christ. They have been built up in Him.
- c. But that is not enough. It is not enough to stay where they are, but Paul calls them in verses 6-7 to continue walking in Him. They are to walk in Christ in the same way that they received Christ – which was by faith in all that He is and claimed to be. This reception of Christ is a very personal and relational statement. Each of them personally had to come to understand and believe and receive the truth of Christ and the work of Christ and the salvation of Christ. That phrase – Christ Jesus the Lord – is a quick synopsis of the Gospel in that each title signifies a body of truth which must be believed, accepted, and relied upon in saving faith. Christ signifies the fulfillment of all God’s prophecies and plans in this one man who is God in the flesh. Jesus signifies His human nature, and His full and complete work to save His people from their sins by giving His life on the Cross as a substitute. Lord signifies the absolute sovereignty He has over each disciple who has personally received Him, and over all Creation. Just as you have received Him by faith, so now walk in Him. Don’t move past Christ. Don’t start with Him and go on to bigger and better things, because there is nothing bigger or better. Christ is all!
- d. This walking in Christ is further defined in verse 7 with a string of 4 participles – rooted, built up, established, and abounding. Glance with me back at chapter 1 – verses 9-12. Paul is giving a report of how he was praying for them and he says that he asks the Lord to fill them with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding. When we pair that with 2:3 we realize that Paul is

praying for them to be strengthened in Christ. He longs for God to give them knowledge and wisdom – meaning he longs for God to give them more of Christ. And then verses 10-12 lists the results of this knowledge and wisdom as it is given to the believer. They will walk in a manner which is worthy of the Lord – and now there is a string of 4 participles which defines what this worthy walk looks like – bearing fruit, increasing in knowledge, being strengthened, and giving thanks. These are not identical, but they are synonymous to the things listed in verse 7 of chapter 2. In other words, if we are filled with the knowledge and wisdom of Christ then our walk will be changed. How we live will reflect Christ. We will be further rooted in him and built up in him and established in him and abounding in thanksgiving to Him. In other words – since all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are stored up in Christ then we should walk in Christ in that we go deeper and more fully into Christ. To use the metaphors of verse 7:

- i. Like a tree in good soil, we should put our roots down deeper into Christ.
 - ii. Like a house built on a firm foundation, we should add on another level.
 - iii. Like a well-established rule of Law and life, we should stand strong no matter the attack.
 - iv. Like an ever-flowing spring, we should abound more and more with thanksgiving for the treasures of wisdom and knowledge we find in Christ.
- e. This walk in Christ must finally then be circumspect and wise. Verse 8 tells us to be on guard and to watch out to make sure that we are not carried away like spoil on a pirate ship. Mankind's love of wisdom which is absent of true wisdom and the empty deceit which flows out of that philosophy are nasty foes. They are seeking to constantly take us captive by luring us away from the strong castle of Jesus Christ our Lord. They will speak words according to human tradition and according to the base elemental spirits of the world. They will speak with human cunning and demonic deception, but they will not speak according to Christ. So we must be on guard by being in Christ and going further into Christ and testing all things according to Christ.

Conclusion: And here is where this all ties into Christian education. The motto of truly Christian education is “to the Scriptures”, and the goal of truly Christian education is to firmly establish the faith of the student by opening the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are hidden in Christ. We must bring the student to Christ Jesus as Lord as we call them to go deeper into the unending excellencies of Christ. This is true for all subjects of learning because all things find their beginning and the ending in Christ. Their origin and their purpose are in Him. So the science lesson is not just about the different classifications of animals on the Earth, but rather it is about the Preeminent Creator who made all of these animals by the powerful Word of His mouth. It is about how those animals fit into the greater plan of God to make himself known and to glorify himself on the Earth. It is about how we should think about and take care of and not idolize these animals because they are creatures and not the creator.

Or, the PE class is not just about teaching the student how to play an organized sport against others, but it is an opportunity to speak of Christ who in all knowledge and wisdom made man

with bodies to be able to exercise, and who gave us creativity to come up with different games, and about how Christ delights in our enjoyment of His good gifts to us – so it is okay to enjoy this game, but also He is honored in how we play and so we do all to His glory.

I could go on and on from Math to language to literature to history – beloved – we must go deeper into Christ in all of these things – whether in the official classroom of education, or just in the classroom of life as we continue to learn and grow. We must go deeper into Christ in all of these things because they all speak of Him, they are all from Him, they are all about Him, and they are all for Him! In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving! Let's pray.