

Colossians - Chapter 2
“Beware: Don’t Try to Change the Soil”
Colossians 2:7-8

Verse 7

1. Paul's desire was that these believers would be rooted and built up in Christ - not religion, not the Old Testament law, not church tradition. *“Rooted and built up in him.”*
 - *“Rooted”* carries the idea of a person who has sunk deep roots down into the soil of Jesus Christ.
2. When a person gets saved, the Holy Spirit places him in Christ. He is rooted in Him. But then, many believers want to try to change the soil! They begin to try to sink their spiritual roots into church tradition, religious rituals, Christian service, religious rules, etc.
3. This will not work. Paul said that the only way to be *“built up”* is to have a root system that is planted in Jesus Christ.
 - Illustration: If an oak tree is rooted in a small planter which is on concrete, is that oak tree going to be built up? No! Because there is no good soil to send roots down into.
 - So if we are to be built up and truly grow in our Christian walk, we must send down our spiritual roots into the right soil (Christ).
4. This is so crucial. So many churches want to root people in their religious rules and standards. No! We must root people in a relationship and walk with Jesus Christ. This is what will build them up and stablish them in the faith.
 - This word *“stablish”* is a great word. It is also translated *“confirm”* in many places.
 - When I was a young preteen, I went through “Confirmation classes” at the church where my family attended. Unfortunately, these classes never stablished me in a relationship with Jesus Christ, only religion. I finished the classes and went through a baptismal ritual, but I was just as lost in my sins as when I started the classes. I was confirmed in religion, but not Christ.
5. Paul taught that if we want to stablish people in the faith, we must root and build them up in Christ. This is what Paul had taught Epaphras, and this is what Epaphras had taught the Colossians. This is what we teach in our Growth Groups!
6. When we are stablished in Christ, it “stabilizes” us in our Christian walk and protects us from all the many strange religious systems that are out there.
Hebrews 13:8-9
7. When we are built up in our relationship with Christ, it results in so much joy, and a heart that abounds with thanksgiving. It is just a natural and normal thing to be full of thanks when you are walking by faith in Jesus Christ. It is so liberating!

Verse 8

1. Right after Paul reinforces to these people that it is all about their daily walk and relationship with Christ, he says, “Beware!”
 - This is a word we are familiar with: “Beware of the dog.” “Beware: Toxic Poison - Do not ingest.” “Beware: Iron gets very hot. Do not iron clothes while they are on your body.”
 - When we see the word “beware,” we are supposed to pay attention because something could hurt us severely if we don't heed the warning.
2. Paul says, “*Beware lest any man spoil you...*”
 - The word “*spoil*” means “to lead away.” What was Paul's concern? What was he afraid that men would lead the Colossians from? From Christ! Look at the end of this verse.
3. Instead of teaching people to sink down their roots into the good soil of Christ, men would come along and seek to promote other soil - Christ substitutes.
 - “*Philosophy*” - This is man's attempt to explain the origin of things and the causes of phenomena, both of mind and matter, apart from Jesus Christ. Paul taught that Christ is the creator, sustainer, and the center and focus of creation (1:15-18), but philosophy leaves Christ out and offers substitutes to people. Many people have sunk the roots of their hearts into philosophy.
 - “*Vain deceit*” - In 2 Thessalonians 2:10, the antichrist leads people away “*with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.*” He uses power, signs, and lying wonders to do this. The prefix “anti” in “antichrist” means “to substitute.” When people try to attain righteousness any way other than Christ, it is vain deceit. It is an empty lie of Satan.
 - “*The tradition of men*” - The word “*tradition*” means “precepts or commands.” Men will seek to root you in the soil of their own religious rules and denominational commands. cf. Mark 7:8-9, 13
 - “*The rudiments of the world*” - The word “*rudiments*” simply means “the elements or principles” of Satan's world system. Satan has a counterfeit substitute for everything. You want to have a deeper spiritual experience? How about some New Age mysticism? You want to feel more deeply devout and religious? How about some religious laws, rituals, and traditions to keep? You want to feel better about yourself? How about some positive thinking? You want to atone for your wrong-doing? How about some self-afflicted penance and asceticism? Do you want to know the future? Look to the moon and stars, and astrological signs.
4. All of these ultimately do the exact same thing. They lead people away from the real solution and answer - Jesus Christ! The end of the verse says, “*...and not after Christ.*”
5. False teachers were seeking to lead these people away from a personal walk with Jesus Christ by offering them worldly substitutes. Paul says, “*Beware...*”