

Colossians – Chapter 3
“What is the Word of Christ for Today?”
Colossians 3:16

Verse 16

1. Paul said, “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you...*”
 - When Paul refers to “*the word of Christ,*” what does he have in mind? What, specifically, is “*the word of Christ?*” Certainly it is not one solitary word, such as “love” or “grace.”
 - We call the Bible the “**Word**” of God, but it is not one word. We understand that “word” has more than one meaning. The “Word” of God simply means “the volume of words” that God has spoken.
 - We may say at work, “I received **word** from the boss, and he said....” He said more than one word, but his entire communication is called his “word.”
 - So, what is “*the word of Christ?*” This is an important question because Paul said that it needs to dwell in us.
 - There are some who would say that this is referring to the words that Christ spoke on earth. In fact, some publishers have even sold what is called the “Red Letter Edition” of the Bible. This is a Bible that takes Christ’s earthly words and prints them all in red ink (by the way, it is fine if you have one, because most all Bibles come this way today – mine is this way).
 - They say that all of Christ’s words are printed in red ink. Don’t you believe that for a moment! This is a farce, and a sham, and a complete failure to rightly divide God’s Word.
 - Christ spoke more words than just the words He spoke on earth. What about the words He spoke from heaven while ushering in the dispensation of grace through the apostle Paul?
 - Christ spoke to the twelve from earth, but He spoke to Paul from His glorified position in heaven. This is affirmed over and over again. Galatians 1:11-12; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2, 15; 1 Corinthians 11:23, 14:37, 15:3; 2 Corinthians 13:3
 - When did Christ first speak to Paul from heaven? It was at the time of Paul’s salvation on the road to Damascus. Acts 26:16-18
 - Notice that Christ said that he appeared to Paul “*to make thee [Paul]... a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which **I will appear** unto thee.*”
 - Paul did not receive God's Word in one revelation, but rather a series of revelations from Christ. Paul refers to it as an “*abundance of revelations.*” 2 Corinthians 12:7
 - Paul received a revelation from Christ at his salvation, but Christ made it clear that Paul could expect future revelations. Acts 26:16
 - Paul received a revelation concerning the grace and gospel found in the cross. Galatians 1:11-12

- ✓ Jew or Gentile individuals can be reconciled to God through personal faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Romans 3:22
 - Paul received revelations all during the book of Acts (Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Romans).
 - Paul received revelations while in prison after the book of Acts concluded (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon).
- Do you see how deceptive it is to put certain words in red while leaving all of Paul's epistles in black? It leads people to believe that the words Paul wrote were not the words of Christ. Paul's letters **are** "*the word of Christ.*" In fact, they are the word of Christ spoken directly to the church, the body of Christ today.
- Let's do a comparison of Christ's words – His words spoken to the twelve, and His words spoken to Paul.
 - ✓ Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote down some of the words Christ spoke on earth.
 - Paul wrote down all of the words Christ spoke from heaven.
 - ✓ Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote down Christ's words spoken specifically to Israel.
 - Paul wrote down Christ's words spoken specifically to the church, the body of Christ.
 - ✓ Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote down Christ's words spoken while living under the law before His cross-work.
 - Paul wrote down Christ's words spoken while dwelling in His exalted position in heaven, after His cross-work, and after the law was declared dead. Romans 7:6
 - ✓ Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote down Christ's words spoken on earth as the Messiah, King of Israel.
 - Paul wrote down Christ's words spoken from heaven as the rejected King, Head of a new organism called the church, the body of Christ.
- 2. When Paul told the Gentile church at Colosse to "*let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...*," what do you think Paul had in mind - Christ's earthly words to Israel or Christ's heavenly words to Paul?
- 3. There is much we can learn from **all** of Christ's words and from all of the Word of God. But, as a member of the body of Christ today, you desperately need to be rooted and grounded in the sound doctrine Christ has given you through Paul for this dispensation of grace.
- 4. Once the word of Christ (spoken to and through Paul) gets inside of you, you will have the wisdom needed to understand and rightly divide **all** of God's Word.
 - This is why so much of so-called "Christian" music today is very watered down and weak doctrinally. The word of Christ spoken through Paul to the body of Christ is not the focus. The focus is law-based or kingdom-based teaching.

- If people do not understand the dispensation of **grace** that we live in, or the gospel of **grace** given to Paul, how can they really sing with **grace** in their hearts to the Lord?
5. *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...”* How essential and important this is. It is such a key to clothing ourselves in the attitudes and actions of the new man.