**Sermon Title: The Priority of Christ Over Human Wisdom**

**Sermon Text: Colossians 2:1-3**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to realize the absolute necessity of knowledge and wisdom about Christ.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 2 main points on Christ and human wisdom.**

**Introduction:** “In the early church, as in our own day, it was vitally important to have a grasp on Christ’s deity. No one can be a Christian at all without a true knowledge of Jesus Christ as the Incarnated God. *That knowledge or awareness may start out as a grain of a mustard seed, but must blossom into a mustard tree over time.*

Yet MacArthur states, ‘So many Christians who affirm the deity of Christ live as if He were not the One in whom all spiritual sufficiency resides.’”

[**John MacArthur Commentary, Colossians & Philemon, p. 91 (*italics are not part of the original quote*)**]

“Christ alone is sufficient. The word hidden used in (Colossians 2:3) is from “apokruphos,” from which we get the English word “apochrypha.” It was used by the herities to refer to the writings containing secret knowledge. But there is no hidden *secret* or spiritual knowledge necessary for salvation and sanctification outside of Christ.

Because Christ is sufficient, there is no need for the writings of any cult, philosophy, or psychology, or *sociology* to supplement the Bible. He is the source of all true spiritual knowledge.”

[**Ibid. p. 91** **(*italics are not part of the original quote*)]**

**I. Paul’s stated passion is that Christians might be united in maturity. V.1**

The word “conflict” or “struggle” means striving and comes from the same root in 1:29. Both the Colossians and Laodiceans were among those Paul struggled so hard in order to bring them to maturity. Understand that love and labor go hand in hand. Paul’s labor of love and labor was not limited to those he personally knew, it extended to all who had not met him personally.

(**2 Corinthians 11:23-27 suffering; 2 Corinthians 11:28 struggle for the churches**)

**2 Corinthians 3:2** You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men;

**2 Corinthians 6:11** O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open

**2 Corinthians 12:15** And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

**Philippians 1:7** just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace.

**1 John 4:2** By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,

**II. Paul’s stated purpose is that Christians might be united in manifestation. V.2**

A. The manifestation of a heart of **encouragement**. V.2a

The idea is of being strong inwardly. The basic meaning of parakaleo (encouraged) means “to call or come alongside.” It is Paul’s desire that the church may be filled with a strength and a courage that can cope with any situation. When used figuratively in the Scriptures the word “heart” is usually more general and refers broadly to the inner person, the center of life.

**Revelation 2:23** "I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works. **John 17:9** "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

**Psalm 53:1** The fool has said in his heart, "*There is* no God." They are corrupt, and have done abominable iniquity; *There is* none who does good.

The emotions tend to respond to what goes on in the heart (inner man) this leads to what the mind perceives. When the mind is filled with biblical truth, the emotions respond appropriately.

(**Colossians 3:16-17**)

B. The manifestation of united **love**. V.2b

Fervent love is the necessary balance to a strong mind. Sumbibazo (knit together) means to unite or bring together. The aorist participle explains the main verb (may be encouraged) by further defining the strengthened heart as a heart filled with godly love. Believers now share a common life with love as its basic component. (**John 17:20-23**)

**Ephesians 4:16** from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

**Colossians 2:19** 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.

**1 Corinthians 12:11-13** But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. **12** For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ. **13** For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free-- and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

**Galatians 3:28** There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

C. The manifestation of a common **understanding**. V.2c

There is no complete understanding apart from moral commitment. The understanding (syneseos) means insight.

1. This understanding is Christ-centered.

2. This understanding is the fullness of the gospel, along with inner encouragement, and shared love, mark mature believers who, as a result, enjoy the “assurance” of their salvation. (**2 Peter 1:5-8**)

**1 Corinthians 2:14** But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

**Romans 8:5** For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

**Ephesians 4:18** having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

“Confidence and full understanding, strength of conviction, as well as cohesive unity yield a full understanding of the truth.”

This understanding is also related to the knowledge of the mystery of God, which God in Christ, in human flesh.

**1 Timothy 3:16** And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Christ is the only source required for wisdom and knowledge. The Colossians and modern day church don’t need to add or look through the lens of any man made human wisdom, ideology, philosophy, man made tradition, elemental (cosmic, earthly, angelic sources).

**John 14:6** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

**Acts 4:12** "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Jewish writers often used this imagery to encourage the reader or seekers to dig deeper when looking for truth.

The false teachers threatening the Colossians (as well as the church today) claimed to possess a secret wisdom and transcendent knowledge available only to the spiritual elite. In a very sharp contrast, Paul is declaring that all treasures of truth necessary for either salvation, sanctification, or glorification is found in Jesus Christ, who Himself is God revealed in human flesh. (**Ephesians 3:8-9**)

**John 1:14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

**Romans 11:33-36** Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out! **34** "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" **35** "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?" **36** For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

**1 Corinthians 12:8** for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,

**1 Corinthians 1:21-25** For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. **22** For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; **23** but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, **24** but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25** Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

The knowledge about Christ, and the wisdom of Christ is sufficient to save, sanctify, and for spiritual maturity of all true believers.