

Sermon: Heads Up

Text: Colossians 2:6-15

Introduction:

Are fish aware of the water that they swim in?
Are we aware of the air that we breath?

No...we completely take for granted the environment that we are constantly surrounded by.

The same is true with our culture—and the beliefs that permeate (fill) that culture.

There are a numerous ways to define or describe culture. One of those ways is to look at the various (many!) shared ideas and values that underlie our culture. These shared beliefs are repeated and repeated so often, that they are simply taken for granted. Few people question them. Just like air for a human, or water for a fish, they are simply the commonly understood way things are.

As we come to our study today from Colossians chapter 2, we find the Apostle Paul refuting some false beliefs that were threatening to mislead the people (Christians) in Colossae. In fact, the reason that Paul wrote this letter is closely tied with his passion to keep the Colossian believers on the right track—believing the right (true!) things. Paul is being SO VERY CLEAR about some of the biggest and most important questions that we face in this life, questions like: Who is God? (the Father of our Lord Jesus) Who am I? (an enemy of God, separated from Him by my evil thoughts and actions prior to coming to faith) Who is Jesus? (He is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation...) What is the Gospel? (Christ in you, the hope of glory!) Why did Jesus come to this earth? (He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of His blood on the cross)

Before we dig into the text this week, I want you to take some time to think about some of the values and beliefs that so many people simply take for granted as a part of our culture.

- What does our culture generally accept to be true about God?
- What does our culture generally accept to be true about happiness?
- What does our culture generally accept to be true about the origin of man?
- What does our culture generally accept to be true about heaven/afterlife?
- What does our culture generally accept to be true about wealth & possessions?
- What does our culture generally accept to be true about sin?
- What does our culture generally accept to be true about Scripture / Absolute authority?

Examination:

- Read **Colossians 2:6-15**

- Jesus, in his conversation with Nicodemus in John chapter 3, made it very clear that there is only one way to become a child of God—you must be born again. And there's only one way to be born again—you must repent of your sins, believe in the work of Christ, and surrender control of your heart to Him. Conversion is far more than simply "agreeing" that God exists, or saying a prayer so that you won't go to hell. Discuss with the group the transformation that occurred in your own life when you received Christ and became His child.
- Why do you think Paul says that we ought to continue living our lives "in the same way you received Christ"? (v. 6)
- We often use the language of Jesus being our "Lord and Savior." The fact is, this particular phrase rarely occurs in the Bible (only 4 times, all in Peter). In the book of Acts: the word "Savior" occurs twice; the title "Lord" is mentioned 92 times; "Lord Jesus" 13 times; and "The Lord Jesus Christ" 6 times. Why do you think we so often want to acknowledge that Jesus is our Savior—but not our Lord?
- After we have received and believed the truth of the Gospel, how much still depends on our actively "going on" with the Christian life? In what ways?
- How does Paul's metaphor of "being rooted" (v. 7) complement and clarify the other metaphor of "being built up"? Why are both needed?
- We discussed in the Introduction the many "deceptive philosophies" in our world that can mislead us, and entice us to believe things that aren't true. What things today are most likely to captivate Christians by the "principles of the world"?
- Paul uses the word "fullness" twice in vv. 9-10. Take some time to discuss what Paul means in both of these references.
- In verse 11-12, Paul mentions two things (circumcision and baptism) that people do on the outside of their bodies. The hazard lies in thinking that these outward things "save" us—or somehow change our hearts. What does Paul say in these two verses to refute that false notion?
- There is also a danger of treating baptism as unimportant—or not necessary. Paul seems to assume here that every believer that he's speaking to has been baptized. They have "been buried with Jesus in baptism" and "raised with Jesus through faith." Why is baptism such an important thing to do as a follower of Jesus? What are your views on baptism? Have you been baptized? If not, why not? What would it take for you to decide to take this step? Is infant baptism something Paul has in view in this passage?
- Verses 13-15 give an excellent description of what took place when Jesus died on the cross. Make a list of the various things in these verses that Jesus accomplished for us on the cross. Why are these things so important?

Application:

What are you doing today to remain **rooted** in your faith in Christ? What are you doing today to **build up** your faith? How are you **strengthening** your faith today? Are you overflowing with **thankfulness** today? Are you being taken captive by deceptive philosophies today?