

Christ as the Reality of All Positive Things

*Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ
Let no one defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize...*

Colossians 2:16-18a

I. As with a man's physical body, the body in 2:17 is the substance, and like the shadow of a man's body, the rituals in the law are the shadow of Christ, who is the substance and reality of the gospel; Colossians unveils such an encompassing Christ as the center of God's purpose

- Colossians 1:17-18 — And He is before all things, and all things cohere* in Him...He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

II. Daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly, Christ is the reality of every positive thing, implying the boundlessness of Christ:

A. Daily, Christ is our food and drink for our satisfaction and strengthening

- 1 Corinthians 10:3-4 — And all ate of the same spiritual food,/And all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of a spiritual rock which followed them, and the rock was Christ.

B. Weekly, Christ is our Sabbath for our completion and rest in Him

- Matthew 11:28-29 — Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest./Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me...and you will find rest for your souls.
- Matthew 12:8 — For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath

C. Monthly, Christ is our new moon as a new beginning with light in darkness

- John 1:5 — And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
- 8:12 — Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

D. Yearly, Christ is our feast for our joy and enjoyment

- 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 — Purge out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened; for our Passover, Christ, also has been sacrificed. So then let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth

Question: *What is one experience of Christ that you had for one of these items?*

Question: *Discuss how these time frames are seen in the corresponding verses, and what this progression means to us.*

III. According to the context, “the prize” in Colossians 2:18 is the enjoyment of Christ as the body of the shadows; to be defrauded of our prize is to be defrauded of the enjoyment of Christ

- Genesis 15:1 — After these things the word of Jehovah came to Abram in a vision, saying, Do not be afraid, Abram; I am your shield and your exceedingly great reward.
- Philippians 3:8 — But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

IV. Whatever we do day by day should remind us of Christ as the reality of that thing; if we follow the practice of taking Christ as the reality of all the material things in our daily life, our daily walk will be revolutionized and transformed, and we will be full of Christ

- Philippians 1:13 — So that my bonds have become manifest as being in Christ among the whole Praetorian guard and to all the rest.
- 1:19-21a — For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ/According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death./For to me, to live is Christ

V. We need to enjoy Christ day by day as the reality of all our necessities:

A. Christ is our breath

- John 20:22 — And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit

B. Christ is our drink

- John 4:10 — Jesus answered and said to her, If you knew the gift of God and who it is who says to you, Give Me a drink, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.
- 14 — But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life.
- 7:37-39a — Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink./He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water./But this He said concerning the Spirit...

C. Christ is our food

- John 6:35 — Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.
- 57 — As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

D. Christ is our light

- John 1:4 — In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- 8:12 — Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

E. Christ is our clothing

- Galatians 3:27 — For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

F. Christ is our dwelling place

- John 15:5 — I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- 7 — If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

Question: *What are some other things Christ is to us as revealed in the Bible?*

Question: *How do we take Christ as these things in our experience?*