

Filled with Christ

Colossians 2:8-10

8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, 10 and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

“Freedom comes from fullness” is the theme of these three verses. Paul commands us to preserve our freedom in Christ in verse 8, and then he informs us that Christ, who has the whole fullness of deity in bodily form, gives us fullness in Him (verses 9 & 10).

- I. **The imperative command is, “See to it that no one takes you captive” (verse 8). The two key words in this verse that explain it are:**
 - a. “By,” showing the means by which someone might take us captive
 - b. “According to,” showing the source and subject of the empty, deceitful philosophy
- II. **The indicative declaration is, “In him [Christ] we have fullness” (verses 9-10). The two key words in these verses are:**
 - a. “In him,” showing the source of our fullness through mystical union with Christ
 - b. “Fullness,” introduced in 1:19 and meaning completion, satisfaction, and abundant life

Discussion Questions

1. (Ice-breaker) Mick Jagger and Keith Richards of “The Rolling Stones” wrote “I Can’t Get No Satisfaction” way back in 1965. What other song, movie, poem, or popular culture reference would you choose to illustrate “fullness”?
2. (2:8) Do you think that Paul is against all philosophy or only against the particular kind of philosophy that is empty and deceitful, like the false teaching in Colossae? What evidence can you think of from the rest of the New Testament to support your answer?
3. (2:8) Do you think it is more important to understand what the false teaching in Colossae was “according to” or what it was “not according to”? Explain your answer based on this verse.
4. (2:8) Can you think of a time when you had to stand in defiance against a false teaching, or can you imagine such a time in the future? What is a good illustration for you of this kind of defiance against false authorities?
5. (2:9) According to this verse, how much of God does the incarnate Christ possess? What are the implications of your answer for the need for Christianity to borrow from other philosophies, theologies, and religions?

