

THE SUBSTANCE IS OF CHRIST

COLOSSIANS 2.17

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Old Testament Law and Prophets found their fulfillment in Christ. He is the substance whose shadow is seen in ancient days.
2. Lives are empty when they are not what they were designed to do. *“Fear God and keep His commandments”* (Ecc. 12.13).
3. Even in practice many find that religion is not enough, but in Christ there is substance!

I. THE SUBSTANCE OF FAITH

- A. The substance of faith is substantiated faith. (Heb. 11.1)
 1. Faith that has not been proven does not give much meaning and is ineffective in life. (Matt. 8.26; 14.31)
 2. If faith is not working, it is the result of incomplete applications and poor equipment. (Eph. 4.11-13)
- B. Faith with substance is faith we are not ashamed to share.
 1. Sharing out of guilt or out of compassion? (Luke 19.9,10)
 2. **ROMANS 1.16:** *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation...”*

II. THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR WORSHIP

- A. Worship has two primary functions.
 1. We worship to offer praise to God. (Heb. 13.15; 2.12)
 2. We worship to sustain our faith and hope in the world as well as that of our brethren. (Heb. 10.19-25; Mark 2.27)
- B. Does our worship have any substance? (Matt. 15.8,9)
 1. Worship that pleases God is always worship that is valuable and substantial. (Isa. 1.10-15; John 4.23,24)
 2. You get out what you put into it. (1 Cor. 14.12)

III. THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR HOPE

- A. **1 TIMOTHY 1.1:** *“Jesus Christ, our hope”*
 1. Though Christ we have *“strong consolation”* in which we are immovable. (Heb. 6.17-20; 1 Cor. 15.58)
 2. Have you ever been disappointed looking forward to something that didn't work out? (Rom. 5.5; Isa. 28.15-18)
- B. **1 JOHN 3.3:** *“Everyone who has this hope purifies himself just as He is pure”*

CONCLUSION: Christians keep it real.

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MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS :	9:00AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP:	9:50AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP:	6:00PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS	7:30PM

*Worshipping
God “in Spirit
and truth”
(John 4.23)*

JUNE 14TH, 2009

STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

Christians tend to make assumptions about God and the way in which He involves Himself in their lives. We pray for strength and expect God to remove whatever weakness is hindering us. However, God does not always do what we expect Him to do.

When Paul wrote about the thorn in his flesh, he prayed three times for it to be removed (2 Cor. 12.7,8). Instead of removing it, God replied, *“My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness”* (2 Cor. 12.9). Praying for strength does not mean that God is going to remove the weakness. We are still the same people that we were before with the same challenges, temperaments, and personalities. Yet gives us the tools to be successful with the abilities we have.

When the master gave talents to his servants he gave *“each according to his own ability”* (Matt. 25.15). He did not expect the one with a single talent to produce the same results as the servant with the ten talents. When the servant returned having produced nothing, the master only criticized him for not doing what he could do. Not what the others did (Matt. 25.27).

That we are weak in a particular area of service, be it evangelism, leading in prayer or singing, or being a source of encouragement to others, does not require us to do more than we can. Nor can we use weakness as an excuse to do nothing. God expects us to do the best of what we can do. (Mark 14.8). In our weakness we are reminded of just how much we are dependant on God.

CLP

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INTRODUCTION: [READ COLOSSIANS 2.1-17]

1. The things of the world present themselves as attractive, but they lack the substance that can only be found in Christ.
2. While the judiazing teachers bound Christians to the Law of Moses, Paul ensures his readers that the Law had passed away.
3. **COLOSSIANS 2.17:** “*which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*”

I. THE LAW: A SHADOW OF THINGS TO COME

- A. The Law of Moses was flawed by design as it was always intended to represent that which was real. (Heb. 8.1-13)
 1. The Law was a “*copy and shadow*” (v. 5; Heb. 10.1)
 2. The first covenant was not “*faultless*” (v. 7; Heb. 7.11)
 3. The first was replaced by the second. (v. 13; Heb. 7.18)
- B. The shadow verses the substance.
 1. Animal sacrifices vs. sacrifice of Christ. (Heb. 10.9-11)
 2. The tabernacle vs. Heaven. (Heb. 9.8-12, 23,24; 10.19)

II. CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW

- A. **GALATIANS 3.19:** “*What purpose then does the law serve?*”
 1. **VERSE 19:** “*because of transgressions*” (cf: Rom. 3.19,20)
 2. The Law a “*tutor to bring us to Christ*” (v. 24; Rom. 3.21)
- B. Therefore Christ is the end of the Law. (Rom. 10.4)
 1. Therefore the Law, Prophets, and Psalms were fulfilled through Christ. (Luke 24.25,26,44-47; Col. 2.14)
 2. While the Law of Moses is a mystery, “*the veil is taken away in Christ*” (2 Cor. 3.14-16)

III. CHRIST GIVES SUBSTANCE TO OUR LIFE

- A. The question of the meaning of life is all about finding substance. But where can substance be found?
 1. The things of the world will always be shallow and empty. (1 John 2.17; 1 Tim. 6.10; Col. 2.8; 2.23)
 2. Yet there is substance in serving God. (Ecc. 12.13)
- B. Through Christ there is contentment. (Phil. 4.11)
 1. Christ is the cure for the modern day crisis. (2 Tim. 1.12)
 2. With Christ nothing else matters. (Phil. 3.7,8)

CONCLUSION: In Christ the world makes sense.

PUBLICAN OR PHARISEE?

A Jewish tax collector who recognized that he was a sinner, guilty before God, and who humbly confessed his need for the mercy of God could be justified before God. A Pharisee who trusted in his own righteousness and who thanked God that he was not like sinful men including the tax collector could not, because of his pride and his blindness to his own guilt, be justified before God (Lk. 18:9-14). Such Pharisees justified themselves before men and despised others (Lk. 16:15; 18:9). They were like dishes clean outside and dirty inside, and like whitewashed tombs full of dead men's bones (Matt. 23:25-28). On the other hand, a tax collector was immediately judged by his fellow Jews to be a sinner and thus a base person, though he sought God with readiness to correct any errors in his life.

One is not inclined to seek help or a doctor unless he sees that he has need or is sick. The advantage of the publicans and sinners over the Pharisees was in their recognition of their need for the mercy of God and their need for a Physician. When Jesus said, "For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance," pompous Pharisees and any others filled with pride might have said to themselves, "Well, He's not talking to me, then", but Jesus meant no comfort to them in His statement, for He also said to others, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20). A man who has heart problems but will not admit it to himself or others is in far greater danger than another who has the same problem but seeks help. This is true both physically and spiritually.

If we face reality, we will recognize that God has a plan of salvation for all (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). That same reality compels one to acknowledge his need for faith in Jesus Christ (Jno. 3: 16), for repentance of all his sins (Lk. 24:46,47), for confession of his faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37), for baptism in the name of Christ for remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and for continued growth and development as a new creation in Christ (Rom. 6:3,4; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Pet. 2:1,2). By that same realization, we are bound to acknowledge that we have become a part of the body of Christ, the church of Christ (Eph. 1:22,23; 5:23; 1 Cor. 12:27). We must see that we have duties to the body and with the body to do our part (Eph. 4:15,16). With this reality set before us, will we be like the blind Pharisee or like the observant publican? [Gilbert Anderson]