

Colossians 2:5-15

2:5 – “For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

1. Paul’s desire was to be with them and lead them into this understanding. Paul feels the lack of his presence may be the weak link in the Colossians defense, so he desires to be with them and take command of these troops.
2. But, Paul is present with them “in Spirit” and this could refer to:
 - a. His attitude
 - b. The Holy Spirit
 - c. Paul’s leadership manifested through the Holy Spirit’s leading
 - d. Paul’s ‘spirit’ (wisdom, insight, instruction, leadership) in the form of this letter (or, his words)



1487 [e]	1063 [e]	2532 [e]	3588 [e]	4561 [e]	548 [e]	235 [e]	3588 [e]	4151 [e]	4862 [e]	4771 [e]	1510 [e]	5463 [e]	2532 [e]
ei	gar	kai	tē	sarki	apeimi	alla	tō	pneumati	syn	hymīn	eimi	chairōn	kai
5 εἶ	γάρ	καὶ	τῆ	σαρκὶ	ἄπειμι	, ἀλλὰ	τῷ	πνεύματι	σὺν	ὑμῖν	εἶμι	, χαίρων	καὶ
If	truly	indeed	in the	flesh	I am absent	yet	-	in spirit	with	you	I am	rejoicing	and
Conj	Conj	Conj	Art-DFS	N-DFS	V-PIA-1S	Conj	Art-DNS	N-DNS	Prep	PPro-D2P	V-PIA-1S	V-PPA-NMS	Conj

991 [e]	4771 [e]	3588 [e]	5010 [e]	2532 [e]	3588 [e]	4733 [e]	3588 [e]	1519 [e]	5547 [e]	4102 [e]	4771 [e]
blepōn	hymōn	tēn	taxin	kai	to	stereōma	tēs	eis	Christon	pisteōs	hymōn
βλέπων	ὑμῶν	τὴν	τάξιν	καὶ	τὸ	στερέωμα	τῆς	εἰς	Χριστὸν	πίστεως	ὑμῶν .
seeing	your	-	good order	and	the	firmness	of the	in	Christ	faith	of you
V-PPA-NMS	PPro-G2P	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Conj	Art-ANS	N-ANS	Art-GFS	Prep	N-AMS	N-GFS	PPro-G2P

3. Paul uses two military terms that refers to the Colossian’s camp being in order and the forces of their defenses strong.
 - a. “orderly” is *taxis* and refers to troops being aligned in battle formation.
 - i. “*Taxis*” is used in Greek literature
 - ii. Means “order”, “regular arrangement”, “position”, “rank”
 - iii. and in the LXX for military troops organized in battle formation.
 - b. “firm” is *stereoma* means “a solid body”, “a support”, “strength”, “firmness” and refers to the strength of troops and their power to resist the enemy.
 - i. Here in context their faith was:
 1. their defense and
 2. the strength of their weapons.

- ii. This could be translated, “your orderly formation and the firm front which your faith in Christ presents.”

2:6 – “Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,”

5613 [e]	3767 [e]	3880 [e]	3588 [e]	5547 [e]	2424 [e]	3588 [e]	2962 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]	4043 [e]		
Hōs	oun	parelabete	ton	Christon	Iēsoun	ton	Kyrion	en	autō	peripateite		
6 Ὡς	οὖν	παρελάβετε	τὸν	Χριστὸν	Ἰησοῦν	τὸν	Κύριον	,	ἐν	αὐτῷ	περιπατεῖτε	,
Just as	therefore	you have received	-	Christ	Jesus	the	Lord	in	Him	walk		
Adv	Conj	V-AIA-2P	Art-AMS	N-AMS	N-AMS	Art-AMS	N-AMS	Prep	PPro-DM3S	V-PMA-2P		

1. The readers have already “received Christ Jesus the Lord” or been born again, saved.
2. Basics of Christian life, growth and maturity:

“AS YOU RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS THE LORD, SO WALK IN HIM”

 - a. This phrase may be either a comparison clause of explanation or emphatic clause:
 - i. Comparison clause of explanation, then this provides a model for continued growth. The verses below indicated the model is the all-sufficiency of Jesus in salvation and growth. Basic he is the vine we are the branches.
 - ii. Emphatic clause, then the point is the Colossians had to remember the original commitment they made to Jesus and his ways when they “received Christ Jesus. They had committed to the program. Now, they needed to stick with their commitment.
3. A key point is the construction of the phrase “Christ Jesus the Lord”
 - a. This construction does not occur anywhere else in the New Testament.
 - b. This actually says in the Greek “THE Christ Jesus THE Lord” and not the typical “Lord Jesus Christ.
 - c. The point here is building on the Christology of chapter one.
 - d. This is making a clear connection that THE JESUS CHRIST is and was received by the Colossians as THE LORD (God, Deity)
 - e. Their salvation, their security, their life, their growth is in THE MAN JESUS who is the CHRIST (promised Messiah) who is the eternal LORD, the creator and supreme deity over all.
4. “received” is used here with a personal object → “the Christ Jesus the Lord”
 - a. This is the only place in the NT “received” is used with a personal object.
 - b. Other places “received” is used with:
 - i. “teaching” – 1 Cor. 15:3; Phil 4:9
 - ii. “gospel” -1 Cor. 15:1
 - iii. “word” – 1 Thes. 2:13; 2 Thes. 3:6
 - c. The Colossians are embracing a person, Jesus, and not merely:
 - i. A philosophy
 - ii. A teaching
 - iii. A legal system
 - iv. An ascetic system
5. If the Colossians are going to experience their fullness in the person of Christ, then they are going to have to continue to live focused on the person of Jesus Christ the Lord.
6. Their temptation is to be distracted into some philosophy, some system or something other than the person Jesus.

2:7 – “rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

4492 [e]	2532 [e]	2026 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]	2532 [e]	950 [e]	3588 [e]
errizōmenoi	kai	epoikodomoumenoi	en	autō	kai	bebaioumenoi	tē
7 ἔρριζωμένοι	καὶ	ἐποικοδομούμενοι	ἐν	αὐτῷ	, καὶ	βεβαιούμενοι	τῇ
having been rooted	and	being built up	in	Him	and	being strengthened in	the
V-RPM/P-NMP	Conj	V-PPM/P-NMP	Prep	PPro-DM3S	Conj	V-PPM/P-NMP	Art-DFS

4102 [e]	2531 [e]	1321 [e]	4052 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]	1722 [e]	2169 [e]
pistei	kathōs	edidachthēte	perisseuontes	en	autē	en	eucharistia
πίστει	καθὼς	ἐδιδάχθητε	, περισσεύοντες	(ἐν	αὐτῇ)	ἐν	εὐχαριστίᾳ .
faith	just as	you were taught	abounding	in	it	with	thanksgiving
N-DFS	Adv	V-AIP-2P	V-PPA-NMP	Prep	PPro-DF3S	Prep	N-DFS

1. Four participles modify the greek verb *parelabete* translated “as you received” (2:6):
 - a. “rooted” – rooted in him
 - b. “built up” – built up in him
 - c. “strengthened” – strengthened in the faith
 - d. “abounding”- abounding in all of these (hearing, learning, being rooted, being built up, growing, being strengthened in the faith) with thanksgiving
2. “Rooted” and “built up” in Him
 - a. Roots sinking deep into the knowledge you were taught about Jesus Christ creating faith
 - b. Building up a strong above ground structure that stands on the knowledge you were taught about Jesus Christ creating faith
3. “Being strengthened” or “being established” in THE faith (not “faith”, but “the faith”)
 - a. This refers to the doctrines and the truth of Christianity
 - b. This is not referring to active acts or positions of faith
 - c. But, the knowledge and understanding of THE FAITH will produce FAITH in the believer who will naturally produce the FRUITS OF FAITH
4. “just as you were taught”
 - a. All of this information, knowledge, and THE FAITH were taught to these believing Colossians
 - b. This information was not developed on their own
5. This verse is similar to Colossians 1:23:

“if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.”

Colossians 2:1-7 connects Paul and his situation in Rome under house arrest with the Colossians Christian growth which has led to their conflict with the heretical teaching in Colossians which is threatening to undermine their faith and Paul’s Gospel. So, Paul and the Colossians interests are aligned at this time because they are both fighting the same enemy.

Colossians 2:8-3:4

1. Colossians 2:8-3:4 is the theological portion of the epistle. It is upon this portion that the rest of Paul's admonition finds its basis.
 - a. Part one: 2:8-2:19 – Soteriology - theology of salvation
 - i. 2:8-15 –
 1. Angels - spiritual beings (worship of angels) and
 2. Law - bondage to the law (practice Law for salvation)
 - ii. 2:16-19 – ties spiritual beings and bondage to the law together
 - b. Part two: 2:20-3:4 – Sanctification –
 - i. two subjects are introduced with “since” and both are followed by commands that should be our appropriate response
 1. 2:20 – “**Since** you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belong to the world, do you submit to its rules: ‘Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!’?”
 2. 3:1 – “**Since**, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.”
2. 2:8-3:4 focuses on the two leading fallacies of the Colossian heresy and both are identified with the article **tes** – “the” – in the Greek:
 - a. “*tes philosophias*” – “philosophy” (or “the philosophy”) – which may be the phrase used by the false teachers in Colossae to identify their teaching: The Philosophy
 - b. “*ta stoicheia*” – “the principles”, “the elemental spiritual forces”, “the basic principles”, “
 - i. See also 2:20
3. Beginning in 3:5 Paul focuses on true and righteous sanctification.
4. In Colossians Paul used 33 words which are only used one time by Paul in the NT.
 - a. In 2:8-3:4 Paul uses fifteen of these thirty-three words used only one time in his letters. (45%)
 - b. It is possible that Paul was taking the heretics vocabulary and using it against them.
5. The heresy had threatened two areas of Christian theology:
 - a. Soteriology – the work of Jesus Christ on the cross for salvation
 - b. Sanctification – the holiness that grows in a believer's life after salvation by faith.
6. “In Christ” from chapter 2
 - a. 2:3 – “in whom are hidden all the treasures of **wisdom** and **knowledge**”
 - b. 2:6 – “**walk in him**”
 - c. 2:7 – “**rooted** and **built up in him**”
 - d. 2:9 – “in him all the **fullness of deity** dwells bodily”
 - e. 2:10 – “**you** have been **filled in him**”
 - f. 2:11 – “**you** were **circumcised in him**”
 - g. 2:12 – “in him **you** were **raised up**”
 - h. 2:15 – “**triumphing** over them in him”

2:8 – “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.”

991 [e]	3361 [e]	5100 [e]	4771 [e]	1510 [e]	3588 [e]	4812 [e]	1223 [e]	3588 [e]	5385 [e]
Blepete	mē	tis	hymas	estai	ho	sylagōgōn	dia	tēs	philosophias
8 ΒΛΕΠΕΤΕ	μή	τις	ὑμᾶς	ἔσται	ὁ	συλαγωγῶν	διὰ	τῆς	φιλοσοφίας
Take heed	lest	anyone	you	there will be	-	taking captive	through	-	philosophy
V-PMA-2P	Adv	IPro-NMS	PPro-A2P	V-FIM-3S	Art-NMS	V-PPA-NMS	Prep	Art-GFS	N-GFS

2532 [e]	2756 [e]	539 [e]	2596 [e]	3588 [e]	3862 [e]	3588 [e]	444 [e]	2596 [e]	3588 [e]
kai	kenēs	apatēs	kata	tēn	paradosin	tōn	anthrōpōn	kata	ta
καὶ	κενῆς	ἀπάτης	, κατὰ	τὴν	παράδοσιν	τῶν	ἀνθρώπων	, κατὰ	τὰ
and	empty	deceit	according to	the	tradition	-	of men	according to	the
Conj	Adj-GFS	N-GFS	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Art-GMP	N-GMP	Prep	Art-ANP

4747 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]	2532 [e]	3756 [e]	2596 [e]	5547 [e]
stoicheia	tou	kosmou	kai	ou	kata	Christon
στοιχεῖα	τοῦ	κόσμου	καὶ	οὐ	κατὰ	Χριστόν .
principles	of the	world	and	not	according to	Christ
N-ANP	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Conj	Adv	Prep	N-AMS

1. Paul is addressing an intentional and purposeful attack on misguided Christians.
2. “See to it” or “Take heed” from – blepete (a form of blepo) – means “to look at!” and here it means “Look out!” or “Beware”
3. The Greek word **estai** translated “there will be” (interlinear) that follows *Blepete* (“Beware”) is in the future indicative middle third person singular.
 - i. Future Tense – it is coming
 - ii. Indicative Mood – it is a fact. This is a real threat. This is not subjunctive which means a potential.
 - iii. Third person – means they, them
4. “taken captive”
 - a. Indicates the believers were:
 - i. Unwilling to be taken captive
 - ii. Unaware of the trap that was being set for them
 - iii. But, these Christians were willing to follow these ensnaring hunters
 - b. “taking captive” – *sylagogon* – means “to carry off as spoil”, “to kidnap”
 - i. Used to say “plunder”, “lead captive” and “I make victim by fraud”
 - ii. Paul uses *sylagogon* here to refer to carrying someone away from the truth into the slavery of philosophical error.
5. “Philosophy” – philosophias – means “love of wisdom” or “pursuit of wisdom”
 - a. KEY POINT: this is the only time the word “philosophy” appears in the NT and the only time Paul uses the word “philosophy” in his letters.
 - i. This makes this verse unique and the use of the word here purposeful
 - ii. Philosophy in Paul’s world was very common. Both, Greek philosophy and Jewish philosophy.

- iii. The use of the word “philosophy” may indicate the false teaching did not have religious or theological roots, but rather secular, intellectual tendencies.
 - b. Important is the article in front of “philosophy” (singular in the Greek).
 - i. *tes philosophias* – “The Philosophy” – which may indicate the particular teaching infecting the Colossian church. Maybe even the name by which it was known: THE PHILOSOPHY, which would be contrary to Paul’s teaching.
 - ii. This is not saying in the Greek “philosophies” in general. Some critics, skeptics and failed commentators use this verse to argue that Paul was anti-intellectual and rejected all human reason. The critics’ false claim against Paul was he was teaching “spiritual”, unseen, untestable faith instead of practical, intellectual, provable concepts. This, of course, is false. Paul is criticizing here a false philosophy (The Philosophy) and supporting true philosophy (reason, love of wisdom, pursuit of wisdom) revealed in the laws of nature and the laws of God throughout this letter and the entire New Testament
- 6. “Empty deceit” – *kenes apates* –
 - a. *Kenes* – “empty” – meaning “empty”, “empty of moral content”, “vain”, “ineffective”, “foolish”, “worthless”, “false”, “unreal”
 - b. *Apates* – “deceit” – “deceit”, “deception”, “delusion”
- 7. “THE PHILOSOPHY” is described with three characteristics:
 - a. “according to the tradition of men” - Human –
 - i. Man attempting to find truth
 - 1. This is not Romans chapter 1 pursuit of general revelation revealed to all men and accessible through reason and natural law.
 - 2. This is referring to man seeking to understand and explain the secret things of God that are only revealed by God through his revelation to the prophets and apostles, and his Christ. As it says in Deuteronomy: *“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”* – Deut. 29:29
 - b. “according to the principles of the world - Elementary –
 - i. *Stoicheia* – “basic principles” –
 - 1. Originally in the Greek this word referred to the four basic elements: earth, fire, wind, water. All seen in conflict with each other
 - 2. Then, the word began to refer to the basic elements of words, the alphabet, or the ABC’s of something. Like saying, “the basics”, or “the ABC’s”
 - 3. The signs of the zodiac and the powers that occupied the planets and stars were the “elements” or the “*stoicheia*”
 - 4. In Jewish thinking the *stoicheia* began to refer to supernatural beings who ruled over the world, the nations, the political leaders and local peoples. These are the rulers and authorities in heavenly places and the demons. This is the meaning Paul is using here and in this letter.
 - c. “Not according to Christ” – Non-Christian –
 - i. The heart of the issue now is obvious. Instead of continuing in Christ, the false teaching, “THE PHILOSOPHY”, was leading believer’s captive into an intellectual, academic spiritualism of demonism.

2:9 – “For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,”

3754 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]	2730 [e]	3956 [e]	3588 [e]	4138 [e]	3588 [e]	2320 [e]	4985 [e]	
hoti	en	autō	katoikei	pan	to	plērōma	tēs	Theotētos	sōmatikōs	
9	ὅτι	ἐν	αὐτῷ	κατοικεῖ	πάν	τὸ	πλήρωμα	τῆς	Θεότητος	σωματικῶς ;
	For	in	Him	dwells	all	the	fullness	of the	Deity	bodily
	Conj	Prep	PPro-DM3S	V-PIA-3S	Adj-NNS	Art-NNS	N-NNS	Art-GFS	N-GFS	Adv

1. Two parts:

- a. Full deity of Christ – “For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells...”
- b. Full humanity of Christ – “For in him...bodily”

2. The words are important:

- a. “For” – links this verse and the following verses to what is said in verse 2:8 about being taken captive by The Philosophy and the rebel spiritual powers.
- b. “in Him” – the position in the Greek sentence makes this emphatic, the most important part forcibly and clearly presented in the sentence and the topic: “In Christ”
- c. “dwells” – *katoikei* –
 - i. present indicative active:
 1. present –
 - a. continuous or uninterrupted action
 - b. action that happens over and over
 - c. customary or habitual action
 - d. Useful words: continuously, repeatedly, over and over, uninterruptedly, constantly, deep on, customarily.
 2. Indicative – the mood of reality indicating this verb really happened, at least, in the mind of the speaker
 3. Active – the subject causes or produces the action of the verb.
 - ii. *Katoikei* – “dwells” – means “to inhabit”, “to settle” referring to dwelling, settling or being established permanently to inhabit.
 - iii. Philippians 3:21 – “our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”
 - iv. The fullness of the Godhead exists permanently in Jesus’ who once mortal body has been glorified into an eternal body.
- d. “all the fullness” – *pleroma* – (used in 1:19 – “For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.”) – the word means “fullness”, “a filling up”
- e. “of the Deity” – *tes theotetos* –
 - i. *Theotetos* is only used here in the NT (*theiotes* is used in Romans 1:20 to denote divine nature, but only the divine nature). This word *theotetos* captures not only divine qualities and divine attributes, but also the very essence of God.

3. Full Deity: John 1:1 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

4. Full Deity in full humanity: John 1:14 – “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

2:10 – “and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.”

2532 [e]	1510 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]	4137 [e]	3739 [e]	1510 [e]	3588 [e]	2776 [e]	3956 [e]	746 [e]	2532 [e]	1849 [e]			
kai	este	en	autō	peplērōmenoi	hos	estin	hē	kephalē	pasēs	archēs	kai	exousias			
10	καὶ	ἐστὲ	ἐν	αὐτῷ	πεπληρωμένοι	,	ὅς	ἐστίν	ἡ	κεφαλὴ	πάσης	ἀρχῆς	καὶ	ἐξουσίας	,
	and	you are	in	Him	complete		who	is	the	head	of all	rule	and	authority	
	Conj	V-PIA-2P	Prep	PPro-DM3S	V-RPM/P-NMP		RelPro-NMS	V-PIA-3S	Art-NFS	N-NFS	Adj-GFS	N-GFS	Conj	N-GFS	

1. The full sufficiency of Christ for the believer:
 - a. ESV: “you have been filled in him”
 - b. Literal from Greek: “you are in Him complete”
2. We are not perfect or sinless, but all of our spiritual needs (life, deliverance from sin, forgiveness, justification, union....see the forty things that happen at salvation here:
<http://generationword.com/40things/>
3. There is no need to seek spiritual fulfillment or deliverance from sin by:
 - a. Following “The Philosophy” – Greek intellectualism creeping into church
 - b. Obeying religious rituals or seeking purity from the Mosaic Law – Jewish Legalism
 - c. Enquiring of spiritual beings or seeking help from angelic (fallen or not) beings - Pagan
4. “head of all rule and authority”
 - a. “head” – kephale – meaning “the head” used to express “the head”, “ruler”, “lord” and “a corner stone, uniting two walls”
 - b. Jesus is not only the Creator and Lord of all spiritual beings, but he continues to be their source of life and existence and freedom. They exist by Him and through Him.

2:11 – “In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,”

2:12 – “having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.”

2:13 – “And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,”

2:14 – “by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.”

2:15 – “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”