

## **The Brother King; to be conformed**

Today: Colossians 2: 1-12. The Series: Romans 8: 28-39

Notes from the final Sunday at Café Church

### **Intro**

- Recap of series (see summary sheet with questions also attached to website).
- Why have we had this series and focused on this single Scripture for five weeks? Why all the effort? As well as absolute assurance, amazing truths and wonders there are difficulties with what we have looked at; some hard teaching and truths. Simple answers to this question may include, "Because God instructs us to look to the Scriptures," or "If we are to Conform to the Likeness of His Son we need to understand what it all means." These answers are true but we can gain deeper understanding from our main passage today (Colossians) that can motivate us in this endeavor. The Scriptures often give pictures to help us with our understanding. The Bible tells of the gardener and their care, the soldier and his training, the athlete and their discipline. Each example (when unpacked) involves **discipline**, all require **devotion**, all face **danger** of some sort or difficulty; all though have a **destination**, a goal a purpose. We see in our Colossians reading today these four factors and they help us answer the question of why we have studied the Scripture so carefully in Romans. Firstly:

### **Discipline**

- **Mystery**; (vs. 2b-3). There is an element of mystery in what we have looked at that we may never know the answer to. God reveals to us what we need to know, what we can cope with and what is beneficial for us. He retains what is not necessary for our time here on earth. God is God and we need to understand and respect that truth (Romans 11: 33-36). We need to live with that tension of not knowing all. What we do know and can grow in the knowledge of, is the deep mystery that has been revealed; Jesus Christ. All we need to know about God can be found in Jesus. He is the mystery of God revealed that we seek to know, that we seek to conform to. So

a discipline of living by faith with the tension of mystery is required.

- **Hard work and effort;** (vs. 1 & 5) as with an athlete though it takes hard work and effort to grow in that knowledge and conformity; basically discipline. Paul here talks about how hard He works for the faith and church in vs. 1 and is pleased to see the effort and discipline of faith that the Colossians are showing in vs. 5. We need spiritual discipline in our lives; the effort for times of study, prayer, teaching and faithful fellowship with the Church.
- In this discipline we need:

### **Devotion**

- **Deeply Rooted;** (vs. 6-7a) if we wish to conform to the likeness of Christ we need to be deeply rooted in Him. We see in these verses a connection to Christ's teaching in John 15 where He tells us that we as the branches need to be grafted into Him the Vine. A branch literally roots itself into the parent plant when grafted; the sap flows into it and gives life. If we are grafted into Christ, deeply rooted in Him, the sap of the Holy Spirit flows into us giving us life and helping us to conform. Then we truly grow into Him and become like Him. We need the discipline of devotion. Learning these difficult and wonderful truths takes us deeper into Him and therefore He:
- **Strengthened and Thankful;** (vs. 7b) strengthens us in our faith. We get to know Jesus, we begin to be transformed through the process of sanctification which results in deep joy for us. The strength of God is within and we know joy; being able to ask Him anything in His name (John 15: 7 & 11). In our Discipline and Devotion though we will face:

### **Danger**

- **Deceiving Arguments;** (vs. 4). Knowing these truths also help us to see the falseness and hollowness of deceptive arguments. Here we can warn ourselves and each other of falling foul of arguments that replace Christ and the truth of God. False relations, false explanations offered instead of God. False arguments of how we can be made right with God without Jesus Christ. If we are in Christ and grow deeply into Him we will see these falsehoods and also:

- **Deceiving Philosophy;** (vs. 8) knowing these truths will also help us steer clear of worldly philosophies that sound loving but actually drive us away from God. It will prevent us from falling foul of the culture of the world that is not of God. These philosophies have the appearance of truth and love but can in fact love and guide people into eternal separation from God; the worse situation that can befall any human being and the very state that the Romans Scriptures show that God is seeking to prevent.
- All of this effort and truth has a purpose, a:

### **Destination**

- **Unity;** (vs. 2). We saw last week that this purpose this destination that we are predestined for is Unity with God and one another. Here we can be united in God's love in the knowledge of Jesus with all the wonderful riches He blesses us with. This is for now and eternity
- **Fullness;** (vs. 9-12) and in this unity we will be conformed to the likeness of the Son and have the fullness of God dwell within us. We are IN Christ, we have died with Him and have been raised in Him by the power of God which is now working in us to fill us with Himself so that we are conformed to our Brother King

### **Conclusion**

So as a gardener works and cares to produce fruit, as a soldier trains to fight for peace and victory and as an athlete competes for a crown may we work for fruit that will last, contest for the peace, justice and righteousness of God and compete for the Crown of Life that God has awaiting us. Know therefore that all our effort study will equip us for such activity; it IS worthwhile. We discipline ourselves because we are devoted to Christ, we are aware of the dangers but put the effort in as we know our ultimate and wonderful destination. Knowing the three foundations of life and the five affirmations of our faith that we have studied truly enable this discipline and devotion.