



COLOSSIANS

Centered on Christ

Mike Taylor

www.TaylorNotes.Info



LESSON 2: EIGHT MARKS OF THE CHRIST-CENTERED CHURCH

Paul, recognizing how the church in Colossae was being confronted with false teachings about Jesus Christ, struggled (agonized) over the situation there. His struggle was that this Church, and the nearby church in Laodicea, would be centered on Christ. In doing this he gives eight marks of what a Christ-centered church does.

A. The Central Question

What does a Christ-centered church look like?

B. The Text: Colossians 2:1-8

“For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, 2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, which is Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. 4 I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. 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. 6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. 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...” (Col. 2:1-8 ESV)

C. Eight Marks of a Christ-Centered Church

1. Mark No. 1: A Christ-centered church has the courage to resist false teachings about Christ (2:2).
2. Mark No. 2: A Christ-centered church stays united (knitted together) in Christ-like

love when threatened with false teachings (2:2).

3. Mark No. 3: A Christ-centered church knows the truth through wisdom and knowledge, that salvation is found only in Christ (2:3), not through a “secret knowledge.”
4. Mark No. 4: A Christ-centered church is not deluded (swayed) by worldly, cultural values (2:4, 8).
5. Mark No. 5: A Christ-centered church maintains a military-like discipline against false teachings and is firm in its faith in Christ. (2:5).
6. Mark No. 6: A Christ-centered church teaches Christ and is rooted in him (2:6-7).
7. Mark No. 7: A Christ-centered church knows and teaches sound biblical truth (2:7).
8. Mark No. 8: A Christ-centered church is not based on man-made rules (legalism) (2:8).

D. Discussion Questions

1. While Paul desired these eight qualities for the Colossian and Laodicean churches it is likely that no church meets all of them perfectly. Is prayer the only means for a church to attain them? If not, what other ways are possible?
2. What are some examples of false teachings today that might threaten a church?
3. What can a church do to become “knit together in love”?
4. What do you suppose Paul meant by the word “rooted” as in “rooted in Christ” (2:7)?

E. Application: Five ways to be centered on Christ

1. I am to align my life in accordance with _____ and follow his example in all aspects of my life.
2. I am to spend time regularly _____ on God's Word.
3. I am to be knowledgeable about _____ that may lead me away from the truth of God's Word.
4. I am to participate in a _____ in my church where I can encourage and be encouraged.
5. I am to pray regularly for my _____.

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