

Col 2:11-15 – In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses & the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities & powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

1. In verses 9-11 Paul related certain facts to build the case for the authority of Christ over human philosophy & tradition. Relate those facts.

Col 2:9-11 –

9 For in Him dwells all the ***fullness of the Godhead*** bodily;

“Fullness” – means the ESSENCE of the Godhead. He, as man, was not merely God-like, but GOD (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown).

Paul here answers the Docetic theory that Jesus had no human body & the Cerinthian theory that Jesus the man was separate from Christ the spirit. He asserts plainly the deity & the humanity of Jesus Christ in corporeal form (Robertson’s Word Pictures).

10 and ***you are complete in Him***, who is ***the head of all principality & power***.

Greek order, “Ye are in Him (in union with Him) filled full” of all you need (**John 1:16**). The Colossians needed no supplementary sources of grace. Christ is “the Head of all rule & authority” (**Eph 1:21**) – (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown).

11 ***In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, BY (or the preposition IN) putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, BY the circumcision of Christ,***

In Christ you were (once for all) circumcised at your conversion & baptism (**Rom 2:28-29; Phil 3:3**) with a circumcision made without hands (**Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4; 6:10; Ezek 44:7**).

In putting off - as an old garment (**Eph 4:22**)—alluding to putting off the foreskin in circumcision—“the body of the flesh” (Greek text): desires of the body & mind that cause us to sin (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown; last phrase mine).

2. How is the authority of Christ related to the subject of baptism (Matt 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-38)?

Matt 28:18-20 – And Jesus came & spoke to them, saying, “**All authority has been given to Me in heaven & on earth.** 19 Go therefore & make disciples of all the nations, **baptizing them in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spirit,** 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; & lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

The command to be baptized issues forth from the authority Christ has been given from God the Father (**Jn 5:26-27**).

Acts 2:36-38 – Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that **God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord & Christ.** 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, & said to Peter & the rest of the apostles, “Men & brethren, what shall we do?” 38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, & **let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;** & you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The command to be baptized is correctly expressed as a command that is “in the name” of Jesus Christ, meaning by His authority. And since His authority is from God, then when one is baptized “in the name of Jesus Christ”, he is also baptized in the name of the Father & the Holy Spirit. The three persons of the Godhead stand uniformly behind the command to be baptized.

3. What is “the circumcision of Christ”, & how does it compare & contrast God’s covenant of circumcision with Abraham & the Jews (2:11-12; Gen 17; Lev 12)?

Spiritual circumcision realized [when one is united] with Christ.

It happens when Jesus brings one into a covenant relationship with God. At that point, one is made alive by being forgiven of sins. The circumcision of Christ mirrors His death, burial & resurrection from the dead

Compare: Without it one **was** or **is** cut off from God in sins (**Gen 17:14; Col 2:13**)

Contrast: The fleshly circumcision removed only a portion of the body. Spiritual circumcision removes the whole corrupt, carnal nature, like when a garment is taken off & laid aside (Vincent’s Word Studies).

One was made with hands & the other is made without hands (Dan 2:34, 45; Mk 14:58).

One was performed on a physical man; the other is a “working of God performed upon the spiritual man which, in contrast to Abraham’s covenant, would include females (Gal 3:26-28).

4. What word does Paul use to describe the proper mode (form, method) of baptism (2:12; Rom 6:4; Acts 8:36), & what two things does this mode depict (Rom 6:4-11)?

BURIAL, BURY, BURYING: sunthapto – “to bury with, or together”, is used in the metaphorical sense only [wrong, not “only” a metaphor], of the believer’s identification with Christ in His “burial,” as set forth in baptism, Rom 6:4; Col 2:12 (Vine’s).

Thayer’s Lexicon: “For all who in the rite of baptism are plunged under the water, thereby declare that they put faith in the expiatory death of Christ for the pardon of their past sins.” Yes, & for all future sins also.

This word gives Paul’s vivid picture of baptism as a symbolic burial with Christ & resurrection also to newness of life in him.

5. How does Paul describe one’s state before yielding to Christ (2:13)?

Col 2:13 – And you, being **dead in your trespasses** & the uncircumcision of your flesh,

Paul likens this one as outside the realm of God’s covenant people.

6. How does Paul describe one’s state after yielding to Christ (2:13)?

Col 2:13 – He has made **alive together with Him**, having forgiven you all trespasses

a. How is this accomplished (1 Pet 3:21)?

1 Pet 3:21 – There is also an antitype which now saves us – **baptism** (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but **the answer of a good conscience toward God**), **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ**

7. Assuming the thief on the cross went to Paradise having never been baptized (Luke 23:43), why do we say baptism is necessary to salvation? (Consider 2:14 in your answer).

Col 2:14 – having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

The thief lived under a different covenant than we do.

While Christ was on the earth, He could retain or forgive sins at will.

8. When did Christ receive His authority, & what did He do with it (2:14-15)?

Col 2:14-15 – having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities & powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

When did Christ receive His authority?

When He died on the cross & rose from the grave.

What did He do with His authority?

2:14

Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances – The ceremonial law was against them, for they were bound to fulfill it; & it was contrary to them, as condemning them for their neglect & transgression of it (see **Num 5:23**).

Nailing it to his cross – When Christ was nailed to the cross our obligation to fulfill these ordinances was done away (He fulfilled the requirements of the entire law).

2:15

Jesus had three victories on the cross:

He disarmed principalities & powers – He stripped the Devil & his angels of whatever weapons they held (**Heb 2:14-15**; **Luke 13:16**).

He made a public spectacle of them – He exposed the weakness, vileness & deceitfulness of the Devil's influence, which was apparent in those who put Him to death.

He triumphed over them in it (by the cross) – May be a reference to "The Roman Triumph" wherein a Roman general, after a great victorious battle, would be honored by an official parade.

Jesus Christ won a complete victory, & He returned to glory in a great triumphal procession (**Eph 4:8**). In this, He disgraced & defeated Satan.

We share His victory unless we turn to "philosophy & empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world" (**2:8**).