

Rooted - Part 4
“Treasure Hunters”
Colossians 2:1-5

The Apostle Paul is writing this letter to the Colossian church in 60 AD. There were people called the Gnostics that had crept into the church who were trying to teach things in addition to the gospel saying, *“Hey, Jesus is cool. Jesus is great, but you also need to do other things to really be saved.”* And they started doing things like worshiping angels and bringing in pagan practices from the other religions, and it was starting to get a little convoluted and confusing. So, Paul was writing this letter to them to get them back to the simplicity of the gospel of Jesus. He was telling them to *“keep it simple, saint”* and just make it about Jesus. Paul was telling them that the antidote for confusion and deception is always *more Jesus*, and it’s the same thing for our lives now - it’s always *more Jesus*.

The more confused and deceived we become, the more of Jesus we need to be leaning into in our lives, and Paul says, *“Get back to the basics - more Jesus, more Truth, more of the Word of God. If you'll do those things, it'll diffuse the confusion.”* Paul had a heart for the Colossian church because they were like wet cement. They had just been imprinted with the life-changing grace of Jesus Christ. Their lives had been changed. They were pumped and excited, but they didn't know what they didn't know. And just like wet cement that's easily impressionable until it dries, some of *us*, spiritually speaking, are still *“wet cement.”*

It’s critical that we’re very careful about what’s making an impression into our spirit - what is forming our conception of Truth and reality about how God designed for us to live this life. Because, if we're not careful about receiving just any teaching that sounds good, we may find ourselves in a world of delusion, confusion, distress and deception, and then wondering why this thing isn't working. If we feel like this Christian life hasn't been working so well for us, it could be that the wrong thing or wrong person has been pressing into the wet cement of our soul. But, Paul gave us a recipe to remove wrong impressions and to put the right ones back in.

Colossians 2:1 ESV

“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...”

Paul was saying, *"I've got this special struggle for you newly-formed Christians and churches who I haven't gotten to be personal and face to face with."* The word *struggle* means "great conflict," and the Greek word there is "agon," which is where we get the word "agony." That word for *struggle* or *conflict* literally means "a costly and sustained struggle," or "to be in agony for someone else." Paul says, *"As I think about you and the vulnerable place that you're in spiritually right now, I'm in agony, struggling for you in prayer, struggling to get you what you need so that you will not be deceived and you will not be drifting away from this thing that can change your life - from this Person who will change your life."*

There are forces against us that want us to rely on *anything and everything* except Jesus in our life. If Satan can just get us to add a few more *things* in so we drift a little further away from leaning only on Jesus, that's all he ever really wants for us, by working all kinds of "mess" into our life. Paul recognized this for the Colossians and was in agony over it. He was mirroring the same concern that Jesus has as he agonizes and intercedes for us. The Bible says that *right now* Jesus is in heaven at the right hand of the Father, agonizing in intercession and prayer for us.

Hebrews 7:25 NKJV

"Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

This is what Paul wants for this church and for us today. It's what *Jesus* wants for us, that we be "saved to the uttermost" as we come to God *through him*. He's in heaven right now praying agonizingly over us that we will stay centered on him because that's what we need. We all know Jesus agonized for us unto his death on the cross. He suffered more than any human could possibly imagine in what led up to the cross, and to those who come to God directly through him, he says, *"I won't just save you, I'll save you to the uttermost."*

Colossians 2:2-5 ESV

"...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, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments. 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."

In Jesus Christ are all the treasures that we'll ever need for everything in our life. They are hidden in Jesus. This is the recipe Paul's trying to relay to these guys, which is, *"Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and everything you need, all the riches of the full assurance that you'll ever need. They're in Jesus and Jesus alone."* He's pointing them to the one antidote to the delusion they're threatened with. It's what he's calling the Colossians to, and what we're being called to - to become *treasure hunters*. All of the treasures are in Christ and they're hidden in Christ, and we are called to dig them up. God has called us to become *treasure hunters*.

Jesus is not hiding from *any* of us. He's right here. He's readily available, but there are treasures hidden *in Jesus*. Many of us know Jesus at some level, but haven't even begun to know the treasures that are hidden in him as we make him the center of our life. We haven't begun to unearth the treasures that come out of a deep abiding relationship with him. Paul is desperate that the Colossians would dig in and get the treasure - that they'd get the riches of a deep relationship with Jesus, not just a surface-level relationship with him. Jesus set this all up for us to live *life*. We have a homing device in us that's designed to search for and to seek out eternal treasure. And Paul's saying all of that treasure is hidden in *Jesus*.

Matthew 11:25 NLT

"At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: 'O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike.'"

Jesus has called us to go on an adventure and live on a treasure hunt to dig and unearth all the treasures that are hidden in a deeper and deeper relationship with him. Yet, so many of us are content to stay on the surface and not dig at all. The world tries to get us to "grow up" and get past these ideas and to give up the hunt. When we're kids, we love treasure and treasure hunts and believe that these things are possible, but then we grow up and we're like, *"Well, that's not realistic. You know, I need to just get past these childish ideas."* But Jesus said, *"Hey, all the treasure I have for you, I hid it, and I hid it on purpose to provoke you to come find it, to provoke you to begin to dig, to provoke you to be a treasure hunter."* Because the joy isn't just in the treasure itself, it's in the hunt and who you go on the hunt *with* - and that's Jesus.

Proverbs 25:2 ESV

"It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out."

Matthew 13:44 NKJV

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

God's not hiding things *from* us, he's hiding them *for* us. In the hunt and in the searching will come the value, worth, and the weightiness of how valuable the things are that he's hidden for us. There are things that if God just gave to us right now, we wouldn't value them at all. Some of us would even think we somehow produced those things for ourself - that we're so great and smart that we don't really need Jesus. We worked it all out for ourself. So God hides these treasures so that we have to seek him, search for them, and depend on Jesus so that when the treasure finally comes, we know *where* it came from, *who* it came from, and how we found it. Then, we value it because we had to go on the hunt to *find* it.

We're not seeing God more in our life because we're not a "treasure hunter." He doesn't just lay everything out on a freebie table at a work conference just to be picked up and then thrown away the next day. We're going to have to decide that this is going to be more than a Sunday hobby - it's going to be a *lifestyle*. The hidden treasure that Jesus has for us isn't just a thing, it's a *secret place* where God's treasures are. Psalm 91 says, "*He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*" The secret place is where we're in Christ and Christ is in *us* - deeply and richly abiding at the center of every area of our life.

When Jesus found us, he had so much joy over us that he gave his life. He sold all that he had and he bought our hearts. He bought our "field." He gave everything he had for it. Also, when *we* discover the treasures in Jesus, we respond by giving everything *we* have to enter into kingdom life and life in Christ. Jesus died to come and live on the inside of us, but he's also called us to come and live in *him*.

By ourselves, we are like a crusty old dried-up sponge and Jesus is like a bucket of pure, living water. We can be a sponge *near* the bucket. We can be resting up *on the edge* of the bucket. We can even *lean against* the bucket in times of trouble. But there are those who are *in* the bucket, *fully saturated with the water* - they're *in Christ*. And when a person is in Christ, Christ is in *them*. In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge of God. All the riches of full assurance of understanding. All of that gets soaked into our heart like a sponge - it's *in* us. Are we in Christ and Christ in us - or have we just been hanging out on the surface? Jesus said, "*I've called you to a treasure hunt to dig in and to stay in there because it's not just the treasure - it's the place where the treasure is.*" And the place of that treasure is *in him*.

Philippians 3:8 AMP

"But more than that, I count everything as loss compared to the priceless privilege and supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord [and of growing more deeply and thoroughly acquainted with Him - a joy unequalled]. For His sake I have lost everything, and I consider it all garbage, so that I may gain Christ."

Proverbs 2:1,4,5 NLT

"My child, listen to what I say, and treasure my commands... Search for them as you would for silver; seek them like hidden treasures. Then you will understand what it means to fear the Lord, and you will gain knowledge of God."

Jesus never commands us to do anything that isn't for our utmost benefit, that doesn't save us to the uttermost, that doesn't produce the highest joy, the highest blessing, and the highest favor in the life of anybody who will dig in and see what he means in his commands and follow them. Hebrews 11:6 says that whoever would come near to God must believe that God exists and that He is the rewarder of those who earnestly and diligently seek Him.

There is a way that we can behold Jesus in our spirits - that our spirits can see him in worship and in prayer and through the Word as we obey him. As we purpose our lives to be in him, we begin to see him, and as we see him and behold him, the treasure begins to come to the surface. Treasure, by nature, is hidden where most people normally and naturally don't go. That's why it hasn't been found, which means if we don't conduct our Christian life in such a way that is beyond the average of what most people would naturally do, we're probably not going to get into the treasure zone. It's not for the common, casual, non-seeker. It's for those who seek him *diligently*.

We live in this culture now where everything's about progress. But, we need to unearth the old, ancient things and retrace the steps that God laid out long ago that still work today. The way to do this is not new. It's old, and we have to dig it up. It's an *ancient* way. It's steps that need to be retraced. It's not a commonly-treaded path. Jesus spoke to a group of people as he was ministering that didn't recognize him for who he was, and in Luke 19:42 he said, *"How I wish today that you of all people would understand the way to peace. But now it is too late and peace is hidden from your eyes. I'm literally right here in front of you and you can't even see me. It's hidden from you."* They still couldn't see him because they weren't *treasure hunters*. They were *surface-dwellers*.

Ephesians 4:15-16 NKJV

"...but [you], speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ - from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

How can we reach the riches that are in Christ? It's when we begin to allow God through the Holy Spirit to knit us together as his body in his love. In other words, treasure hunters operate in groups. We'll never find what God has for us apart from his body. No "lone ranger" Christians. No, *"I come in on Sunday, don't talk to anybody, and just go live my life as if none of this even happened."* We have to dig in, get knit together, and get on the hunt *together*.

His love is the thread that knits us together. And that thread is *scarlet red*, because it's dipped in his *blood*. What will quiet the noise of all of our preferences and complaints and annoying things that we have against other people is the shed blood of Jesus. When we realize how much we don't deserve it, we can all just shut up and be knit together. Our hearts are the fabric and Jesus is the *Tailor* who knits us together.

Ephesians 3:12 NLT

"Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence."

It's impossible for us to live in the love and the joy of the Lord with real passion and power and purpose unless we're sure of our standing with him because we're *in* him. God wants us to reach the full riches of the assurance of our position in Christ. We live in a day and age right now where there are so many voices teaching and shouting so many things, many of which *sound* good, *sound* kind of godly, *sound* kind of *plausible*, that if we don't *know* that we are in Christ, we can easily be deluded and drawn astray by plausible-sounding arguments that will lead us into all kinds of error and sin.

What's the recipe to fix that? There are borders and boundaries in Christ that keep us safe, and whenever something comes along that says, *"Hey, come over here,"* we go, *"Nope, that's outside the boundary. That's not in Jesus. That's not in His Word. That's wrong. I know because I'm in Christ."* This is what Jesus told us to do. Paul was able to see what was going on with the Colossian church because spiritually, he was with them contending and agonizing with, for, and over them just like Jesus does for *us*. He wants *us* to become a *treasure hunter* and to purpose ourselves to be *in Christ*. ...*not just near or around him!*

Prayer

Father, in Jesus name, we pray that You would have Your way in our hearts. We make a decision by faith to dive all the way in, to get wet, and to be baptized in the life that You bring. Jesus, grip our hearts, convict our spirits, and Holy Spirit, we welcome You to come in and have Your way in our hearts right now. Begin to give us an image of Jesus in our spirits that we may behold and see Him and walk with Him and begin to experience the treasure that only He can bring. Lord, we love You, we honor You, and we pray that in Jesus' name. Amen