

(Anno Domini, abbreviated AD or A.D. expressly complies with Isaiah 61:2 & Luke 4:19, i.e. "To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." (Isaiah 61:2)



<sup>5</sup> Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: <sup>6</sup> For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: <sup>7</sup> In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. <sup>8</sup> But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. <sup>9</sup> Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; <sup>10</sup> And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: <sup>11</sup> Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Col 3:5-11 (KJV)

If I were to ask you, dear reader, to peruse the above textual passage to determine the leading point of the text, how would you respond? Would your answer claim that those sins of the 5<sup>th</sup> verse amount to idolatry and is, therefore, the salient point in the entire text? Or, would it be that the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience? Would it be the putting on of the new man that stands starkly out in the text? While all of these are vitally important to us, all of Scripture is comprehended in the last verse (11<sup>th</sup>), final clause: "***Christ is all, and in all.***" This is another vivid example of the succinct and meaningful manner of God's expression of His Word. No other author can express so much in such few words. As a matter of fact, mortal man can write tomes and volumes on expository understanding of Holy Scripture and still say far less than a single line of God's Word. This is so because God's Word is unadulterated Truth. Man's word is mere opinion, though often informed by the truth of God's Word.

The proof of a doctrine is the benefits obedience to it yields. Remember back to the time when America was a predominantly Christian nation who practiced the doctrines of the faith and obeyed the moral law. What was the beneficial result of that faith and obedience? Flash forward to our modern day when every solution to moral depravity is more teaching of the same to our youth. Every solution seems acceptable to the modern humanist American mind EXCEPT the clear and beneficial teaching of Holy

Scripture. The absolute remedy for example of the AIDs epidemic is an absolute adherence to a chaste life. The family circle, well guarded, yields protection for every sexual disease. Biblical abstinence outside of marriage answers the problem of abortion and homosexual miseries. Honesty, not just in banking, but at all levels of human behavior (including most notable, politics) will render great rewards in the common welfare of any society. So Godly righteousness yields material, as well as spiritual, benefits. There was a time in America when our youth were not drugged zombies, when pregnancy of high school girls was cause for headlines in the New York Times, when homosexual deviancy was just a bad rumor, and a man's word and handshake was as good as gold. What of the present?

*"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."* Our physical members that are subject to these sins do not act without a mental impulse. The deed is first conceived as a thought before it is acted out in the members of our bodies. Any and all things that obscure our focus on God is idolatry. A married man may become enamored with another woman by disregarding God's counsel against harboring the thought and giving it life. His inordinate affection, allowed to grow through sensual cultivation, may reach the point that committing the forbidden sin takes precedence over obedience to God. Is this not idolatry of the sorriest dimension? We all are subject to these failures of character if we remain not stayed upon Christ as our shepherd, Savior, and Master. When in elementary school, we were required to memorize a poem entitled, *The Camel's Nose*, by Lydia Sigourney published in *The Posey Ring*, 1903:

#### *The Camel's Nose*

*Once in his shop a workman wrought,  
With languid head and listless thought,  
When, through the open window's space,  
Behold, a camel thrust his face!  
"My nose is cold," he meekly cried;  
"Oh, let me warm it by thy side!"*

*Since no denial word was said,  
In came the nose, in came the head:  
As sure as sermon follows text,  
The long and scraggy neck came next;  
And then, as falls the threatening storm,  
In leaped the whole ungainly form.*

*Aghast the owner gazed around,  
And on the rude invader frowned,  
Convinced, as closer still he pressed,  
There was no room for such a guest;  
Yet more astonished, heard him say,  
"If thou art troubled, go away,  
For in this place I choose to stay."*

*O youthful hearts to gladness born,  
Treat not this Arab lore with scorn!  
To evil habits' earliest wile  
Lend neither ear, nor glance, nor smile.  
Choke the dark fountain ere it flows,  
Nor e'en admit the camel's nose!*

Such a poem would be considered anathema in the public classroom today simply because it is also MORAL. How did we reach the decline so reminiscent of the Fall of the Roman Empire? What drove a moral and civilized society to opt for calling those things which are good, evil; and those things which are evil, good?

*"For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."* Mankind is not my brother! Only those elect few out of all mankind who profess the Lord Jesus Christ are my brothers and my sisters. The claim of the Brotherhood of Man is as false as the pit of Hell is hot. There are two families: 1) those who are the elect and chosen of God and who profess a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and 2) the children of disobedience upon which the Prince of Darkness lays claim. There are no in-between families. We are all one, or the other. Nations, too, experience the wrath of God coming down on a collective family of disobedience.

*"In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."* Here is ground that often causes some very zealous Christians to miss the mark. We declare strong judgment against the lost sinner who behaves precisely the way we behaved 5 seconds before we came wholeheartedly to Christ. Some have told me they would never admit a prostitute or a homosexual to the worship service. That attitude is not the character of the true Church of God. A church is to the sinner as the hospital is to the injured. Is it possible for a prostitute, or a homosexual to be accepted of God? Were YOU? Yes, if you were accepted, so can any other sinner be accepted....only, we must forsake our sins when we come to Him with contrite hearts. You may say, "Yes, Mr. Commentator, I am a sinner who has been forgiven, but God says that no thief or homosexual will enter Heaven. That would bar homosexuals, right?" *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."* (1 Cor 6:9-10) Well, that text does seem fairly straight forward in condemning all homosexuals to the fires of Hell along with adulterers, thieves, covetous, drunks, dishonest businessmen, etc. But we need not lift verses out of context and build a doctrine thereupon. Read the rest of that passage: *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."*<sup>1</sup> (1 Cor 6:11) We were all out of sorts until the Holy Spirit drew us to the heart of God and made us into new Creatures in Christ.

*"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds"* Our old man (sinful souls) were twice dead in that they were already dead to God before being quickened by the Holy Ghost. And when that old man of sin comes to Christ, he dies again to make way for the new man of creation. *"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."* That old fruit of which Adam ate dies with the eating of the same sins of Adam; but the new man is fed by the fruits for the Tree of Life and is made to have knowledge of his first depravity and subsequent regeneration. Our minds now think in the Way of Christ and not the Adversary.

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<sup>1</sup> Never forget the one who wrote these words, Paul, Saint Paul, the scribe of almost half the New Testament, was once Saul of Tarsus, the leading persecutor of the very early Christian Church. If God chose Saul to be Paul, can He not work the same miracle in you?

Now we come to the crown jewel of today's text – verse 11! ***“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.”*** This verse, first of all, tells us that we are not saved by virtue of the faith of our parents, or the blood that runs through our veins, or by our race, or social status – we are saved by Grace through Faith. If we have come to Christ by way of faith, then we are indeed the children of Abraham. Human blood has nothing to do with our salvation except that shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Jew has no privilege greater than the Gentile, nor the Gentile over the Jew. But let us examine with particular interest the last part of this verse: ***“Christ is all, and in all.”***

1. Christ is all in Creation. He created the world and all that is in the world. ***“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”*** (John 1:1-3)
2. Christ is all in Providence and consistency of being. ***“And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”*** (Col 1:17) All things, including our very lives, are upheld by the power of His Word moment by moment: ***“...being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power.”*** (Heb 1:3)
3. Christ is “All in All” of redemption. ***“There is no other Name given under heaven whereby we may be saved.”*** He is the Author and Finisher of our Faith. You have no faith if it were not granted by Christ. ***“And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,”*** (Rev 1:5)
4. Christ is “All in All” of truth. He is the ***“Way, the Truth, and the Life.”***
5. Christ is “All in All” of the preacher's every sermon. We preach Christ, and Him crucified!” He went through the waters of baptism before us; He was not only the first to serve the Lord's Supper, but was the central theme of it in the elements of bread and wine.
6. Christ is “All in All” of the believer's privilege and blessing. We are justified by His Grace, by Faith in His Name. From the Lord Jesus Christ we are granted the privilege of adoption into the household of God.

Christ is “All in All” to us in all of the above ways and far more than just these. He loved us while we were yet enemies of God. He is the first fruits of those who arise from the grave. He was first from the beginning, and BEFORE the beginning. He is Alpha and Omega. He is the Light of Life and the Bright and Morning Star. He is more than enough to fill every volume ever written on this sphere.

Is Jesus “All in All” to you? Do you study His Word as if this is the true?