

# Colossians (Quality: Good)

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 25 February 1970

Preacher: Farley, J John (1903-1980)

[ 0 : 0 0 ]     The subject which I hope the Lord will help me to make a right use of this evening will be found in the Epistle to the Colossians, the second chapter, verses 6 and 7.

The Epistle to the Colossians, chapter 2, verses 6 and 7. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

A necessary exhortation? I believe those who fear God will agree it is.

The Apostle held these Colossians, at least the church at Colossae, in high esteem, and was able to speak of them very confidently, concerning the work of grace within them.

It clearly indicates, from what we have read, that he believed that the word had been heard by them to profit. He insists that, to an extent, it has had the same effect on them as on other believers.

[ 1 : 5 4 ]     That is to say, it brought forth fruit in them. But, he's also aware that the grace of God is given to sinful human beings, liable to turn aside, liable to falter and fight, and none knew better than the Apostle the need for what we are apt to describe as grace to endure, to continue.

How many friends have I here this evening whose great concern today is, shall I be among the righteous of whom it is said they shall hold on their way?

What makes you say this? What makes you feel so? Well, you've lived to prove that you've made ever so many mistakes so far, haven't you?

Lived to prove somewhat of your own weakness, too. Lived to prove that you're only likely to proceed safely as upheld.

Well, I would say it's a great mercy to have learned as much as that. A very great mercy to have discovered that you can no longer trust yourself.

[ 3 : 3 0 ]     But that your confidence needs to be established in one much higher than can be found upon earth. And consequently, you are now frequently found, I would fervently hope, at the throne of grace, seeking for that power within you which will preserve, protect, uphold, and enable you still to continue.

With these few remarks by way of introduction, I hope the Lord will help me to look in some detail and quite closely at the words I've read this evening.

As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, this is said when very simply described and briefly too to simply mean you as a church to whom I'm writing have professed your belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.

You've openly professed that your dependence for salvation is upon him. that being the case, walk still in the profession you've made.

Keep to the principles you've already declared. Don't attempt any other pathway to heaven than that which you've already professed to believe in.

- [ 5 : 10 ] So, walk ye in him as you've received. just a word here kindly intended too. I hope that before me this evening there are many who have received the Lord Jesus into their hearts.
- There are two or three ways of receiving him. All who hear the gospel preached receive him into the outer ear.
- some receive him into the mind and memory. But to be really fruitful to receive him as the apostle meant concerning these people that he was caring for at the present time they received it into their heart.
- might be well to remind ourselves here of a word in the psalm. I'm finding this extremely important today.
- The entrance of thy words giveth light not remaining on the surface. One's thoughts immediately go don't they to the words of Jesus in the parable of the sower.
- [ 6 : 40 ] You see there was good seed sown presumably by a skillful hand. Some stayed on top and the birds cleared that.
- Some fell among thorns some on stony ground no fruit bearing there. Ah but it says some fell on good ground went in.
- It entered. God grant that in this house of prayer this may very frequently be the case. That's a good wish for you people here that the Lord may cause his word to enter prayer.
- Then you'll receive it in the way the apostle is speaking of and the effect of that word will be to keep you to preserve you.
- Do you feel a need to be kept? Do you acknowledge a need to be preserved? preserved? I hope so because if you remember the apostle Peter's epistle there's an inheritance laid up for those who are kept by the power of God.
- [ 8 : 11 ] And you'll need keeping we shall all need keeping time. Especially so in these solemn times. Matters aren't getting easier for the children of God.
- There's no promise in the word of God that they will as the world slowly proceeds toward its end. You'll find that the Lord Jesus Christ's own words are such as to counsel us to be much on our guard in these latter times.
- For men and deceivers are expected to wax worse and worse and would deceive if it were possible even the very elect.
- So you see my dear friends there's much need of preservation and protection and the keeping power of God if we are to cleave to that which we've made a profession of.
- we've all lived to prove in our measure who are older that youthful enthusiasm passes away. Youthful zeal has gone too.
- [ 9 : 29 ] Varying trials by the way have refined us of these and brought us into a state of dependence on God and upon the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- it's a great mercy to be there. The fire hasn't done any harm if that's all it's burnt. If it's got rid of some of our self confidence some of our self righteousness and some of those things which are only as deterrence to us the fire has done a good work.
- If it hasn't completed it yet you may be sure that he who controls the fire and applies such heat as he sees necessary to purify the gold he has given will attend to that matter in due course.
- But it will be a wonderful mercy if you and I are found presently in Job's condition. Not that we want Job's affliction. No, we shrink from that but we would like to be I believe in his position on one occasion.

He knoweth the way that I take and when he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. He will do it and here I would remark since it flashes into the mind the mercy our mercy is that salvation is of God.

[ 11 : 03 ] He was the beginner he will be the maintainer he will be the finisher but I believe I may quote this word in connection with what I just said for this I will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do these things for them and so I might repeat this again yet before I sit down if helped the words of the Lord Jesus are very apt just what we need what were they watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation as ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in him be aware be very wary of the wind of change I thought before

I left home we read of two different things in two different places in the daily paper the wind of change in the word of God we read of the wind of varying doctrines and some of them are very craftily designed and we find they are being promulgated in very crafty hands too that is why the apostle says who was shown clearly shown what would be the trials of the church and those who feared God in the last days for he would never have been able to write to Timothy as he did he was shown what they would have to endure so he says this writing to Timothy but continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them my dear friends

I believe that's a good word for you and for any of God's children today just the exhortation that is needed my friends continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of great mercy to have those things I must pass on to the next verse as I may be helped there's much in it if the Lord will give the needed light upon it and that door of utterance which is needful to speak forth that which may be revealed rooted and built up in him well these two figures which are used are very different but they are intended to convey the same instruction if helped I will try to deal with them separately in the nature of the figure used rooted where's the root well it's in the soil isn't it and it's expected to stop there that's the function of it to maintain the life of whatever sort of tree or bush or whatever is above it it isn't expected to move about that's the point it's planted it's in the appointed place it is where the owner of it intended it to be

I hope you're noticing that these are just hints and you'll see what I mean spiritually considered rooted if you like to turn to varying parts of the word of God notably the prophecy of Isaiah you'll find mention there of plants and planting trees of the Lord some work of his right hand planting the work of his hands you'll find it there rooted now of course some trees well rooted stationary exactly where they were wanted and planted are for ornamental purposes only but there are some from which we expect to gather fruit obviously they must remain well rooted well nourished and those roots to be active in supplying that which the tree needs

I must notice now before I get any further that it says rooted in him now you will see where the nourishment comes from here is clearly the source of the fruitfulness but it's an exhortation to which we are enjoying this evening to pay attention rooted that means growing too things are desperately wrong if growth ceases something terribly wrong at the roots if something's withering up that's above the ground isn't it what does the apostle Peter say he's a brother of this apostle you won't read anything in his epistle contrary to what there is in Paul's epistle there at one in this well he has to say concerning those who are well rooted but grow in grace and in the knowledge of our

[ 17 : 23 ] Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ rooted in him yes it's connected you see I've separated it you will say but then I said I would try to deal with them separately because they're totally different in their application this represents something growing a living plant in the Lord to stay where it is see what I mean to be firmly established to grow where the Lord has placed it that's the lesson this evening that's the message evidently that the Lord intends to be delivered and built up in him this as I've already hinted is something entirely different this means that we go to the apostle Peter again he's a most instructive apostle is the apostle

Peter and we shall find that he says to us ye also as lively stones living stones are built up a spiritual house you don't expect that to move about either do you you expect that to remain just where the builder is putting it together rooted and built up in him it seems to me clearly that the apostle was somewhat fearful that perhaps after his instruction and the gospel he had preached to them there might be someone creeping in with another doctrine a different way of approach something a little easier perhaps to lure them aside

I believe I may say this because I read just now and this I say lest any man should beguile you with enticing words well now the apostle did know that up to that time they had been privileged to listen to sound doctrine the pure gospel of Jesus Christ you can understand that he would be fearful lest anything or anyone should be permitted to contaminate that to spoil these works to in any way militate against the gospel that he had preached to them because he knew that that which he had spoken was of God and honoring to God and that it would be for their good to cleave to that which they had already heard rooted and built up becoming a part of an established foundation and building not to be moved but to stand to the honor and glory of

God in another epistle the apostle writes and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone in whom all the buildings fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord it says something else the last verse in that chapter says in whom ye also are built together through the spirit see how important it is to be established it's in the text isn't it and if helped I shall have to have a little look at it rooted and built up in him what a wonderful mercy that the architect of this building is

God he who forms the foundation of it is the son of God in another epistle the apostle says other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ and the the one who is shall I say it reverently actively concerned in building at the present time because he's working in the hearts of these children of God and fitting and preparing them for the place that he's appointed to put them in whether it's a large place or a little tiny place he's the one who's doing this work it's the precious spirit of truth you see you see you see that God in his trinity of persons is concerned at the present time with this wondrous building and I did say ye are what a mercy it will be if it proves that each of you who've met here so many times are to be found among those who are in this building now I want to look if helped at the next clause and established in the faith established in it this hasn't moved very far from the two previous figures it's to be stable read somewhere about being immovable steadfast do you feel to need grace in this matter do some of you with myself begin to have a few qualms when you hear these words spoken been shaken so many times some of us haven't we know what it is to stumble a little and occasionally to fall and then to be exhorted to be established to be stable to be well rooted to be built up into something of a solid building and there to stand oh you say sometimes can it possibly be that such a poor weakling as I should be found possessing these virtues well

[ 24 : 52 ] I'd rather know that you are in that condition of mistrust of yourself than that you should say very boldly oh I feel quite certain that I should be found at the right hand of God at last because I don't doubt for one moment what he has wrought for me you haven't got me for a companion there I must admit but there's this word my friends which is in the word of God and we'd better keep as close to that as we possibly can let him that think if he standeth take heed lest he fall gone to the apostle Peter again he's a great favorite of mine such a wonderful instructor is the apostle Peter he came up the hard way if we may use such a word but what he learned he learned a prophet and he has this word to support his brother apostle but the

God of all grace who has called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus after that ye have suffered a while make you perfect complete establish strengthen that'll you I'm sure that some of my friends feel to need the grace which alone can accomplish this in them and their prayer is strengthen oh God that which thou hast wrought for us maintain the life of God within feed me with that food which will keep thy work alive well then you'll pray that the ministry may be blessed to you that when you come to the house of God on the

Lord's day or in the week you'll pray seeing that you feel a need of strengthening mercifully spread the gospel table Lord grant food convenient for me give me that which shall nourish me when I leave thy house may it often be my privilege to feel a little strength within so that I may hold on press forward go forward well in another place we read this let us run with patience the race that is set before us how what a mercy we're not left guessing on these matters or having to speculate clearly we're told how to run with patience looking unto

Jesus I should have failed in my duty this evening seriously if I neglected to lead you to him as far as that's possible but it's my desire to because if we look to him and trust in him and call upon him and savingly believe in him he will maintain the life he has given and honour all who come to him and call upon him here's a good word you've often heard it hope you won't hear it too often all that the father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out established in the faith

I hope you noticed in my poor prayer the desire that was expressed to be kept to be found often at the throne of grace to enjoy access and communion with God why did I ask this why do you ask it because there's no other way of being established in the faith than to keep close to the throne of grace find access and enjoy communion such proceed on their way safely established in the faith means that you'll be prepared to hold to it against all opposition I'm not a prophet but I do read the word of

[ 30 : 12 ] God I've already hinted that the Savior with the apostles indicates there are troublous times ahead that's why this word is needful my friends rooted and built up in him and established in the faith so that in that great day of trial we may be found complying with another word in another epistle which goes like this having done all to stand to stand and be of great mercy to stand because all who do in the sense that the apostle meant will presently be found standing at the Lord Jesus Christ right hand that will be the rich reward for standing in the hour of temptation which says the

Lord shall come upon all the earth but those who trust in him believe in him and commit themselves and all that concerns them into his gracious hands will be upheld in that hour now the next clause says as ye have been taught I shall have to become rather personal here and come quite close to that which you have experienced in the past for a moment or two you have been taught faithfully you've been favored over the years many years with a very gracious ministry scriptural instruction has been given you you've heard it you've received it in this sense oh I certainly hope that many of you all if

God's holy will have received that divine instruction gracious instruction gospel preaching into your hearts you have been taught you've heard the word of God you've been shown what is right you've been warned against that which is wrong you're in a dangerous position if you turn aside it will be in that sense against light and knowledge the Lord preserve you in the truth that you've listened to for so many years some of you and may you hold it fast cleave to that truth following the path that has been set so clearly before you I feel persuaded it's the path that leads to heaven that has been laid before you and you've been exhorted to walk therein so far as grace may be given the Lord grant that

I'm going to quote a scripture now it's very solemn to bring this matter before you but there it is I feel I must may it prove that he being dead yet speaketh even now among the offices which the Lord Jesus mentioned the Holy Spirit should fulfill is that one which we so much need some of us in addition to teaching you all things and guiding you into all truth we have this office mentioned he shall bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have spoken unto you or said unto you that is what is needed today and I feel you need it my friends when you gather here that the Lord should be your remembrance and bring to mind the things you've been instructed in and then may you be given grace to cleave to those things walk in them this is said kindly the Lord knows I came over here with no intention of using the whip it's not my duty at all

I wish to encourage the people of God I would comfort all that mourn if I could I would set before you a most wondrous and powerful savior at the same time a cautionary word is sometimes needed and it is the duty to warn didn't I read it I certainly did I just looked at it again whom we preach warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom yes it is necessary to warn you see in our nature we do not like hardness we do not like an afflictive pathway we do not like being scorned we do not like to be humiliated or to be thought little of this is the portion of those who fear

[ 35 : 54 ] God or they go a different way to what their Lord did he said when he was upon earth and he said it to his disciples marvel not if the world hates you you know that it hated me before it hated you you mustn't expect the world to love you then must you but the point is that our nature doesn't like being looked down upon doesn't like being scornfully treated it and grace is needed to bear it grace is needed to still press on in spite of it grace is in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ God is the God of grace and the spirit is he who knowing the grace we need will give all needful grace to all whom he has called to walk in this pathway

I sincerely hope that the few things I've tried to speak to you this evening have in no way conflicted that which you've been accustomed to hear from your late pastor I'd rather be found a companion of his preaching the same discriminating gospel and yet seeking at all times to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ as you've been taught well it's a wonderful mercy to be a ready listener a willing learner I'm never at all concerned when I hear people say and I have reason to believe it's sincere I find myself a learner yet unskillful weak and apt to slide

I don't feel glad that they feel like that in one sense but in another sense I do I feel they're the people whose ears are open to receive instruction and since the greatly blessed psalmist David found it necessary to use a prayer like this lead me in thy truth and teach me every one of us are in the same position surely have you ever been thankful for the answer to that prayer we'll find it in psalm 32 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou should go I will guide thee with mine eye I know at least one poor sinner who tried to thank

God for that because that's just what he needs to you as you've been taught one last clause in two or three minutes abounding therein with thanksgiving everything that I've mentioned so far that is to say receiving Christ Jesus the Lord being able to walk in him in any measure being rooted and built up in him established in the faith and being taught by the Spirit of God are all undeserved blessings given to the children of God freely without any merit on their part whatsoever but it's given to them now there is just something that's required of them and that is to acknowledge these mercies and thank the giver on every possible occasion as often as your heart feels constrained thank God for his mercy

I wish we were often engaged at this but we've got to be more engaged in it my friends as we journey on and presently to be ceaselessly so engaged the scripture to warrant this yes this people have I formed for myself they shall show forth my praise Lord help you and I to do it often I'm not going to say a word against thanksgiving days don't misunderstand me what I do hope is that their thanksgivings won't be confined to one day per year daily we receive God's mercies daily may he help us to render thanksgiving amen in 939 to 247 totally added

[ 41 : 33 ] Jesus immutable the same so true and living find around thy also sent out fever arms out crying 939 amen and time love and living kind her Psalm 01

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father, fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.