



A new creation focus through Colossians ...

Completeness

The scripture, in describing Christ, abounds in superlatives. The apostle Paul, in painting a picture of the Jesus who now is, stated that He is "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that named, not only in this age but also in the one to come" (Ephesians 1:21). Because language seems inadequate to address fully the awesomeness of the great and eternal God, these "over the top" statements are sprinkled through the sacred writings — after awhile they could lose their intended punch for the reader if he is not carefully processing

every word which proceeds from the mouth of God. But of all the elevated language, loaded with all the powerful expressions that words can bear, there is none more superlative than this statement to the Colossian brethren: "In Him *all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form.*"

- **Complete** — The apostle Paul is going to build from this statement. After noting that through Christ in the Spirit everything about God pervades the body of Christ, he then adds, "and in Him you have been made complete" (Colossians 2:10). Everything about God dwells in the church, and everything about God dwells in the individual Christian. The Spirit dwells in the saint, and, as Jesus put it, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and *We will come to him*, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23). Since everything about God dwells in the individual Christian, it is logical that in Christ each Christian has been made complete. What else could there be? After all, Christ "is the head over all rule and authority." More superlatives!

- **Spiritual circumcision** — When a person is growing up and reaches sufficient maturity for God to hold him responsible for his actions, his first sin results in the formation of a spiritual body of sin within him. Much like the scales which formed over the eyes of Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus Road, this body of sin drops like a spiritual sheath around the core of the individual and prevents his inner man from seeing the glory of God or having fellowship with Him. Hence, like a spiritual crucifixion which takes place in immersion to remove this "body of sin" (Romans 6:6), a spiritual circumcision is also used to describe the removal of this sheath or "veil" (2 Corinthians 3:16). "And in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands," Paul informs us, "in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in immersion" (Colossians 2:11,12). With the body of the sins of the flesh removed in this spiritual circumcision, the individual's inner man is seeing the glory of God and is being renewed day by day, even if the outer man is decaying. The question is whether the saint will look at the things not seen (the eternal), or whether his focus will be on that which is seen (the temporal). Paul's writing here is clearly intended to assist the disciple of Christ to direct his attention to Christ on the throne.

The loving Father earnestly desires that His spiritual children adopt and imitate His character, to be truly complete or perfect in Christ. Hence He arranged the spiritual circumcision to get rid of the old self, and to make way for the new self in the image of Christ. Similar encouragement comes from the writer of Hebrews: "Let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, *fixing our eyes on Jesus*, the author and perfecter of faith" (Hebrews 12:1,2). The One who is "the head over all rule and authority" is the One who has made the saint complete, and who in all His fulness dwells in the collective body of Christ. How could any thinking Christian, then, be pulled back into the weak and elementary principles of the world?

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JAY WILSON