

Fullness In Christ

Colossians 1:19; John 1:16



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FOCAL Read Responsively {Colossians 1:19} For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;

{John 1:16} And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Looking back on your life to now, can you say truly say “I’ve lived a full life”?

When I was in the library the other day the Lord impressed on my heart how much each of our lives are like a book. Think about that for a minute, your life as a book. You don't write the first page of your book, but your parents wrote that page when they, in love, conceived you. You don't remember a great deal of your earlier chapters. Few of you can remember when you were younger than five years old. Most of the chapters of your life up till age 8 or 9 were largely written by your parents who told you what to do and when to do it. You started writing a few pages about age 8, and every year you aged you wrote more and more pages in your book.

Some of the pages in your book reflect good decisions, other pages bad decisions. I am told that many of our young people make very bad decisions, decisions that will effect the remaining pages in their book. Many teens, seeking happiness in the wrong things, are experimenting with alcohol and drugs. One in ten of these young people will end up becoming addicted during this chapter of their life, damaging the remainder of their book. Five in ten of our young people become sexually active before they graduate High School, and many young women will write dark chapters of abortions and diseases, all because they sought fulfillment in the

wrong person. Seven out of ten of our young people don't know what to write in their books. They have been taught that there are no absolute truths, and are drifting through life without purpose or plan. Some young people will write very short books as they decide to end their own lives. Suicide is up 300% nationwide. Many people are being treated for clinical depression. Many see no reason to live.

Jesus said **“I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10)**. How can we write our books so that they have meaning? How can we live our lives in a purposeful way? How can we insure that the book of our lives have a happy ending? There is but one way, and that way is through faith in what Jesus Christ has done for you. *Let Jesus write the book of your life*. We must all stop penning our lives with our own hands, and put our hand in His hand, letting Him write our life story.

Jesus Christ wants to write the book of your life, and to put your name in *The Book of Life* (**Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 20:12 ff**). Jesus came to this earth to **“seek and save that which is lost” (Luke 19:10)**. Oh that everyone knew Jesus Christ as Savior! He is not just a *future Savior*, preserving us from eternal condemnation, but He saves us day by day by leading and guiding us. We need Jesus Christ in our *daily* lives, for in Him alone is **fullness**.

Humanists would have you believe that our jails are filled with people because of *bad environment, ill treatment*, or some other external reason. Though we like

to blame others for our troubles, God proved that our problems are not because of what is without but what is *within* us. God put our foreparents Adam and Eve in a perfect environment, gave them a perfect job, and surrounded them with His perfect love. Yet Adam decided – HE decided – to do the wrong thing. We are in darkness because Adam made a bad choice. We are in darkness because we make bad choices. Our lives are the products of our bad choices. But there is a good choice you can make: you can believe what Jesus promised ...

{John 12:46} I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

and claim that promise for yourself. Look to Him that is Light and Hope and Love and Joy. Call upon the Name of the Lord and be saved. Choose Jesus and choose wisely. The choice you make will determine whether you live a happy and fulfilled life – or not! The choice you make will determine whether the book of your life continues happily into eternity or not. Receive from Him His **fullness, and Grace for Grace**.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

1. All Fullness Is In Christ

FOCAL {Colossians 1:19} For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;

In Jesus **all fullness dwells**. Think about those words **all fullness**. The word **“all”** means **everything that is**, and

fullness is the opposite of being empty. Our lives are empty without a loving relationship with Jesus Christ.

{Ecclesiastes 1:2} Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

Your life can be filled with riches and yet purposeless, vain and empty. We do not have the ability to be full within ourselves. The Apostle said:

{Romans 7:18} For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Whether Saint or Sinner, a life without Christ is a life without purpose. God is not pleased with any person apart from Christ. Let me say that again:

Though God loved the humanity enough to offer each and every person salvation through faith in Christ, God is not pleased with any person *apart* from Christ.

God is pleased with Jesus, **well pleased** with Jesus. The Father said of the Son at His baptism:

{Matthew 3:17} This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

and again at the Mount of Transfiguration:

{Matthew 17:5} ... This is my beloved Son, in whom I

am well pleased; hear ye him.

God is pleased with His Son. His Son has always sought to be one with the Father, for both the Father and the Son are One. Jesus possessed no sin, but we are natural sinners. How then are we to become *pleasing* to God? Shall we work our way to God through sacrifices? What does the Scripture say?

{Hebrews 10:1} For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

The animal sacrifices of the Old Testament were *teaching tools* given Israel by God. They were **shadow and not substance**. Shadow can never satisfy. Can you eat the shadow of an apple? No! Neither can God's justice be appeased or pleased with the shadows of animal sacrifice.

These sacrifices – or GOOD WORKS – could not **make the comers thereunto perfect**. Adam brought sin into the world, not a sheep or a dove. God said these sacrifices gave Him no pleasure.

Hebrews 10:6-10 IN BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES FOR SIN THOU HAST HAD NO PLEASURE. {7} Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. {8} Above when he said, **Sacrifice and**

offering and burnt offerings and OFFERING FOR SIN THOU Wouldest NOT, NEITHER HADST PLEASURE THEREIN; which are offered by the law; {9} Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. {10} **By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

We are sanctified – set apart for God's use – through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ONCE FOR ALL. This is what pleases God. The Son in Whom God was well pleased made payment for our sins.

The Law – offered to sinful man *through* sinful man (the Law was given by Moses) – could not please God. God offered salvation to sinful man *through* *sinless Redeemer*. In Christ is all fullness, for **grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:16).**

When Christ cried out from Calvary “**It is finished**” (John 19:30) this was no cry of defeat but a cry of victory. **When sin is finished it brings forth death, but when Christ died He finished sin and brought forth life!**

There is all fullness in Christ, for Christ **fulfilled all righteousness (Matthew 3:15)**. Though falsely accused by evil people and tried on charges of blasphemy the Father is well pleased in the life of Christ, and well pleased in His death on Calvary. God is well pleased with all who have called upon the Name of Jesus for

salvation not for our sake, but for Christ's sake. We bring absolutely nothing of ourselves to God to be saved. In Christ alone is God pleased. **It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell.**

We can call Him “**Father**” because of what Christ *did for us*. All fullness is in Christ, and **all the fullness of the Godhead resides in Him.**

Colossians 2:9-10 For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. {10} And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

I am saved and *remain saved* because **I am complete IN HIM**. My salvation is not composed of what Jesus has done for me PLUS my works, but it is because of His work alone. **Ye are complete in Him**. When you come to God through Christ you receive **all fullness** – God does not partially save those who come unto Him by Christ. Him in Whom God is well pleased:

Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

There is but one Mediator between God and man, and that Mediator in the One in Whom God is well pleased. We are **saved to the uttermost** because all fullness is in Jesus, and Jesus speaks for us.

There is nothing you can ever do to add or subtract to what Christ has done. **“Christ openeth, and no man**

shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth”
(**Revelation 3:7**). You either are saved by coming unto
God by faith in Christ, or you are forever shut away from
Heaven – **for in Him alone is all fullness, in Him alone
is God well pleased.**

2. We Were Saved By Redemption, We Live As The Redeemed

FOCAL {**Colossians 1:19**} **For it pleased the Father
that in him should all fullness dwell;**

{**John 1:16**} **And of his fullness have all we received,
and grace¹ for² grace.**

Are you one of the **redeemed**? If so then you were only
redeemed by believing on Jesus, by ...

Romans 3:24-26 Being **justified freely by his grace
through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: {25}**
**Whom God hath set forth to be a {satisfactory
payment} through faith in his blood ... that he might
be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in
Jesus.**

If you are a Christian then you are a **redeemed person.**

- 1 G5485, χάρις, charis, *khar'-ece*, From G5463; *graciousness* (as *gratifying*), of manner or act (abstract or concrete; literal, figurative or spiritual; especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including *gratitude*): - acceptable, benefit, favour, gift, grace (-ious), joy liberality, pleasure, thank (-s, -worthy).
- 2 G473, ἀντι, anti, *an-tee'*, A primary particle; *opposite*, that is, *instead* or *because of* (rarely *in addition to*): - for, in the room of. Often used in composition to denote *contrast, requital, substitution, correspondence*, etc.

What does that mean? Let me illustrate.

ILLUSTRATION When I was a young boy Momma used to collect S&H Green Stamps. Each time we shopped at the local Piggly Wiggly food store each dollar we spent at the store brought us a certain number of Green Stamps. Momma used to collect these stamps and, periodically, we'd have to paste these stamps in books. The S&H Green Stamp catalog listed a number of items that we could turn in or “redeem” these books for. In short, we took a certain number of books to the catalog store, and gave these books to the store in return for other items. We turned in stamps, we received pots, pans, toys, or whatever we wanted – as long as we turned in the right number of stamps.

When Adam disobeyed God he forfeited his spiritual life, along with the spiritual lives of all his children. Adam brought both physical as well as spiritual death on all his children. All have sinned because their forefather, Adam, sinned. God's *redemption price* for sin was *life*. A perfect life had to be surrendered to pay for Adam's failure. Adam could not do this, for he himself was a sinner. Now enters Christ. Jesus, perfect and sinless

**Hebrews 4:15 ... in all points tempted like as we are,
yet without sin.**

Immaculately conceived between the Holy Ghost and a virgin called Miriam **Jesus was born THE Lamb of God.** We are all redeemed – if we are redeemed – because

Jesus paid it all,

**All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow!**³

As our text tells us, **Of His fullness** have we all {who know Christ as Savior} **received, and grace for grace.** Focus on that last phrase, **“and Grace for Grace”**. Most translations of the Bible just don't do justice to this phrase, though the King James translation makes much more sense. For instance, the **Holman Christian Standard** renders this verse as:

John 1:16 Indeed, we have all received GRACE AFTER GRACE from His fullness,

The **New American Standard** states:

John 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and GRACE UPON GRACE.

The **New International Version** doesn't even come close, rendering the text:

John 1:16 From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.

What a travesty, and what a missed mark! In the phrase that the King James renders **grace FOR grace** - and quite rightly I might add - is the Greek word *ἀντι* (*pronounced anti, an-tee'*). This particle's *primary meaning* is **“instead of, for, or in place of”**, not **“after”** (Holman) or **“upon”** as the New American Standard

³ *Jesus Paid It All*, Words: Elvina M. Hall, 1865. Music: John T. Grape

renders it. The word GRACE is a Greek word meaning **“a free gift”**. **Dr. A. T. Robertson** states⁴:

“Grace for grace (*charin anti charitos*). The point is in *anti*, a preposition disappearing in the *Koiné* and here only in John. It is in the locative case of *anta* (end), “at the end,” and was used of exchange in sale. See [Luke 11:11](#), *anti ichthuos ophin*, “a serpent for a fish,” [Hebrews 12:2](#) where “joy” and “cross” are balanced against each other. Here the picture is “grace” taking the place of “grace” like the manna fresh each morning, new grace for the new day and the new service.”

This phrase is best translated as:

Indeed, we have all received “a free gift” in place of “a free gift”.

In Christ we give Him one free gift and receive, in exchange, a free gift from Him. **This is the heart of redemption.** Just like the illustration that I gave you earlier with the S&H Green Stamps, we take something useless to the store (the Green Stamps) and exchange it for something useful. At the point of salvation I took my life - which is mine to give, but *useless* - and gave that life to Christ. I gave Him a free gift. He, in turn, **redeemed** what I gave Him, and gave meaning and purpose to my life.

We gave Christ a free gift (our lives) and He, in turn,

⁴ *Word Pictures in the Greek New Testament*, Dr. A.T. Robertson

exchanges that old useless life with an eternal, purposeful life!

Now follow the analogy. Christ died on Calvary **redeeming** us. Jesus traded in His Blood and His life for our life. Salvation is all of Him. But listen Beloved: Once saved, we now *belong to Jesus*. The Scripture says:

1 Corinthians 6:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Jesus owns the believer – we are His and He is ours. Many believers, misunderstanding the Doctrine of Salvation, believe they have been saved to no purpose. **Our God is a God of purpose. You belong to God.** Just as Jesus had to be about His Father's business we who are His *must be about our Father's business!* **We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works (Ephesians 2:10).** God called each and every one who is a Christian

2 Timothy 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

Saved by Christ, you will never find purpose in this life outside of Christ. We who are saved are linked to Him both now and into eternity. **Of His fullness we have received, and Grace for Grace.** You who are Christians are **saved by redemption**. Jesus exchanged

your old useless life with a new, exciting, ever growing life. Jesus said:

Matthew 9:16-17 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse. {17} Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

Jesus didn't just *patch you up* when He saved you. Jesus exchanged your old life for a new, exciting life! The Blood of the New Testament brings with it New Life.

There is a joy and a peace that every believer gets when we begin to understand that **Christ in His fullness has redeemed us**. We belong to Him. Our imperfection, our works, our sins, our lives, our money, our families, our all belong to Him Who loved us, and gave Himself for us!

The Scripture says:

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

God took your lives at the point of salvation and *changed* them – and we who are His are called to follow that change. You surrendered to Christ at the point of salvation, surrender to Christ now. He gave to **the free**

gift of salvation in place of the free gift of your life.

You are, dear ones, **born again** to serve Him Who saved you. You belong to Jesus if you have called upon Him for salvation.

And if you have not been saved, then remember **whosoever calls upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.** May God touch your hearts with His Word.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

