FULL IN HIM



by Grant Hawley

Excerpt from the upcoming *One with Christ: Living Out Our Identity in Him*

> **He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. (Col 1:15-20)**

We live in an age of advertising. Advertisers are adept at creating the feeling of need or want and setting up a product as the answer to satisfying that new found desire. They seek to make us feel like something's missing, and that something is what they have to offer. My son was about 4 when he first watched a TV show on what we call "regular tv" (that means not on Netflix®). That was the first time he had experienced commercials. After almost every commercial—even ones that were for things like car insurance—he said, "Can we get that?" You and I have grown up with advertisements all around and have learned by experience to have a healthy skepticism when it comes to advertisements, but we are bombarded with them. The world around us is aimed at making us feel unsatisfied. Regrettably, messages we hear from many preachers and writers are aimed at creating the same feeling that something is missing. They hope to unsettle us to spur us on to seek that thing we lack. "Christian, have you spoken in tongues yet?" or "Christian, are you truly dedicated to the Lord?" or worst of all, "Are you sure you're really a Christian?"

But in Him we lack nothing. Only a few verses after that most beloved description of our Savior (Col 1:15-20, quoted above), the Apostle Paul says so clearly: "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power" (Col 2:9-10). Lost in the translation here is that the word in verse 9 translated *fullness*, *plērōma*, and the word in verse 10 translated complete, *plēroō*, are closely related words. Paul is stating that just as Christ is full of all the fullness of the Godhead, so we are full in Christ. Throughout Colossians 1-2, there is a contrast between emptiness in the world and fullness in Christ.

This brings me to the purpose of these articles and the book in the works from which they come. To the Christians reading this, I can't promise these articles will give you anything you lack. They won't, because you don't lack anything. My hope and prayer for you is that you will come to know what you have in our shared identity with Christ and to see how our oneness with Christ applies to every area of our lives.

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