Colossians 2:13-14 13Even when you were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ by forgiving us all our trespasses. 14God erased the record of our debt brought against us by his legal demands. This record stood against us, but he took it away by nailing it to the cross.

 This is just one of those texts that is so full of wonder and marvel that a Pastor is just puzzled as to exactly what to preach on. Each sentence could be a page of material in and of itself. But it was that thought that helped me out, that thought on “each sentence.” So I went back and paid particular attention of the sentence divisions. Do you know what I found? In this whole section of 10 verses, there are only two sentences! It is a well-known fact that the Apostle Paul is famous for writing in paragraphs, that is, he writes in long complicated sentences in order to help get his point across.

Well, then, that simplifies everything. Okay, not really. There is still a tremendous amount of information and encouragement given in this section. But, cueing off of the Apostle Paul I will work at summarizing and sharing with you the marvel of what is said here. For our theme I am simply going to use the heading that is found in our EHV Bibles: **THE FULLNESS THAT IS OURS IN CHRIST.**

Please note how our section starts. It is verses 6 and 7 that form that first sentence of this section. That first sentence says, **“Therefore, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to walk in him, by being rooted and built up in him, and strengthened in the faith just as you were taught, while you overflow in faith with thanksgiving.”**

There is a “therefore” that starts out this sentence, actually it is meant to cover the whole paragraph. The “therefore” is a word that reminds you that what was spoken of in the previous paragraph is forming the basis for what is said in this paragraph. In this case the previous paragraph is speaking of the Gospel ministry of Paul and the importance of that gospel ministry for the souls of God’s people. We could sum up the important thoughts of that section in verses 2-3 where we read, **“I am doing this so that their hearts may be encouraged as they are brought together in love, and into all the wealth of assurance that understanding brings, into the knowledge of the mystery of God, which is Christ. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in him.”** Simply put the gospel is the treasure of Christ Jesus our Savior. That’s where everything for us starts: in Christ Jesus, God’s treasure to us.

And what do we have in Christ Jesus? Our text tells us. **“You received Christ Jesus as Lord.”** Yep, we are called to faith, given the gift of Jesus. I love the fact that here it is made clear that the gift of Jesus is not our works, our goodness or anything about us, the gift of Jesus is in the fact that we have come to grasp and understand Jesus is the Lord. Not just some nice guy who showed us we should do this or that. Jesus is the Lord. Jesus is God. Jesus is the one who has become our core and hope. You can see that intent as you just look at how the rest of this sentence lays out.

Let’s do it like this. **“Jesus is Lord, continue to walk in him.”** Simply put, since Jesus is God and Lord, the sovereign power of all the universe, walk with him. More specifically “**walk in him.”** That means he lays out the steps and the path, indeed, the step and path are Jesus.

**“Jesus is Lord…be rooted and built up in him.”** You can’t walk in Jesus by ignoring Him. He is the root of our tree. Jesus is the foundation of our house. Don’t fool yourself. Faith means we “**walk in Jesus.”** We follow Him. We hear Him. Our entire being proceeds and is of Him.

**“Jesus is Lord…be…strengthened in the faith just as you were taught.”** This is a reminder that we don’t get to twist, contort, explain away or snip and cut away the wonder of God. Our faith is based on the Word of God given to us by the Holy Spirit through the Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists. This Word of God is what strengthens us in faith and the assurance of all that Jesus is. To ignore the Word, to ignore the Bible is to ignore Jesus the Lord. Now seriously, who here is going to be standing next to the most powerful being in all the world and when He gives you direction and knowledge are you going to say, “Yeah right, Jesus! That’s what you say but I’ll just do it my way, so bug off!” You are not strengthened by ignoring the Word!

And finally, for this sentence, **“Jesus is Lord...overflow in faith with thanksgiving.”** The best way to get across the power of this is to simply say, “Thanksgiving” is how you live when Jesus is your Lord.

Okay, we are in trouble here. We have only covered one sentence and already we have said a lot! Let’s then get to that last sentence and see what we can learn.

The last sentence is this (remember, in our English translations we tend to break up the Greek into smaller sentences, but trust me, this is all one sentence in our text). **“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, which are in accord with human tradition, namely, the basic principles of the world, but not in accord with Christ. For all the fullness of God’s being dwells bodily in Christ. And you have been brought to fullness in him. Christ is the head over every ruler and authority. You were also circumcised in him, with a circumcision not done by human hands, in the putting off of the body of flesh, in the circumcision of Christ, when you were buried with Christ in baptism. And in baptism you were also raised with him through the faith worked by the God who raised Christ from the dead. Even when you were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ by forgiving us all our trespasses. God erased the record of our debt brought against us by his legal demands. This record stood against us, but he took it away by nailing it to the cross. After disarming the rulers and authorities, he made a public display of them by triumphing over them in Christ.”** Wow, that could make you tired just reading all of that! But what wisdom and awe is found here.

The Holy Spirit’s plea is this: don’t let this wonder and thanksgiving of faith, rooted and founded in Jesus, get lost. The plea starts like this: **“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, which are in accord with human tradition, namely, the basic principles of the world, but not in accord with Christ.”** Dear people, there are all sorts of things we could speak of here. Whatever you are doing, make sure it is rooted and founded in Jesus. The world is full of ideas, wisdoms, insights and lessons and most of them mostly undermine and destroy what we have in Jesus. Take the world’s ideas on love. To the world, love is sex, love is never saying “No,” or love is some sort of high falootin, breath taking emotional ride. None of that is true. In God’s Word, God is love. Love is commitment. Love is discipline. That is just one example! Make sure that your attitude, view and the path you are walking is of Jesus and not the world!

The next portion is a causal clause, in other words what causes us to be this way. We read, **“For all the fullness of God’s being dwells bodily in Christ. And you have been brought to fullness in him. Christ is the head over every ruler and authority.”** We keep faith alive and well because we grasp that in Jesus is the Almighty, all-knowing, and eternal God. Mind boggling, isn’t it? The Infinite God is found in finite human form! Yet that is the very testimony of God. Jesus is everything. He fills everything, rules everything, yes, He is the final and absolute authority in everything. Nothing happens in this world without His will and purpose being accomplished.

But be careful. Remember God’s will and purpose is not just about our eternal life and salvation. God’s purpose and will is also that those who do not believe will be condemned! I tell you that because the false religious world has concluded that believers can do anything and God will forgive them. Nope! God draws what I think are clear and precise lines. You can’t be filled with greed and be a believer. You can’t be sexually immoral and be a believer. You can’t be idolaters, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, slanderers and swindlers and still be the children of God. You can’t persistently and purposefully embrace sin and think you are a person of faith. I believe the point here is clear. Are you following the world and destroying your faith or are you following the Lord Jesus?

Paul next words draw us back to contemplate who we follow. (Actually, do you see how these thoughts progress and lead us deeper into the wonder of Jesus?) “**You were also circumcised in him, with a circumcision not done by human hands, in the putting off of the body of flesh, in the circumcision of Christ, when you were buried with Christ in baptism. And in baptism you were also raised with him through the faith worked by the God who raised Christ from the dead. Even when you were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ by forgiving us all our trespasses. God erased the record of our debt brought against us by his legal demands. This record stood against us, but he took it away by nailing it to the cross. After disarming the rulers and authorities, he made a public display of them by triumphing over them in Christ.”** This is one awesome thought for us to contemplate.

In this section, circumcision is used as the application of our lives, but it is made clear that we are not talking about something physical but rather something spiritual. Just as circumcision was a physical alteration of the body to show you belonged to God, so it is being emphasized that spiritual circumcision, faith worked by the Holy Spirit, makes you a different and new person.

The next powerful point is in the idea of being buried with Christ. In faith, we put on Christ. On the cross, Jesus died to sin. In Jesus, through baptism, we also are to grasp that we died to sin. That means that Jesus rules in our hearts not sin. Our desire is to do and live in a God pleasing way because of Jesus. Thus, we are told we are raised with Christ through baptism. Our baptism puts on us the victory of Jesus. He lives and so shall we. He was raised triumphant and new, so in baptism, God calls upon us to be new in Christ. All of this because of the resurrection of Jesus.

And the pointed and joyful words of the importance of the resurrection: **“Even when you were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ by forgiving us all our trespasses. God erased our record of debt brought against us by his legal demands. This record stood against us, but he took it away by nailing it to the cross.”** In Jesus we who were lost in sin, damned by nature, inclined to evil and enemies of God, God changed all of that. He did it by the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus proclaims the victory, assures of forgiveness and calls us to faith.

Again note how this thought ends by reminding you the victory of Jesus is absolutely complete. Jesus is God and Lord who rules over all, disarmed all and has triumphed over all in his work of redemption. Clearly the Holy Spirit’s plea is that we (it is the only way) triumph in Christ Jesus by reveling, living, and standing with Christ Jesus, Lord and Savior of all.

There it is. A quick and rather brief look at this section of joy and encouragement in Christ our Lord. I don’t know if I brought complete justice to this section, but I do think we have the wonder and marvel of this section to contemplate. Christ Jesus is Lord! Amen.