

For In Him Dwelleth All the Fulness of the Godhead Bodily

COLOSSIANS ii, 8, 9.

BEWARE LEST ANY MAN SPOIL YOU THROUGH PHILOSOPHY AND VAIN DECEIT, AFTER THE TRADITION OF MEN, AFTER THE RUDIMENTS OF THE WORLD, AND NOT AFTER CHRIST; FOR IN HIM DWELLETH ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY.

THE apostle, inspired with a view of future things, foresaw dangers to which the Church would be exposed, which are of quite a serious and alarming nature. He foresaw that the followers of Christ would be exposed, and their faith be in danger of being spoiled. He foresaw the very characters who would introduce the evil, and the very manner in which they would succeed in spreading it. He foresaw that professed teachers of divine truth, more fond of philosophical research, than the labor of examining the holy Scriptures, would, after the rudiments of the world, introduce their imaginary discoveries into the sacred desk, and attempt to bring down the system of revealed religion, to the standard of their own conceptions.

He foresaw that after men had thus left Christ, and the plain instructions of his word, to follow the deductions of their own reason, their researches would result, in a denial of the essential divinity of the Saviour; that they would confidently conclude, that the fulness of the Godhead could not dwell bodily in him; that the thing itself is philosophically impossible, and therefore untrue.

He foresaw that many honest minds, which might not be capable of discovering the vain deceit of such reasoning, would, in this way, be in danger of being bewildered, and led to deny an article of the Christian scheme, of such fundamental importance, that a denial of it would spoil them for disciples of Christ.

Foreseeing these dangers, he has, like a faithful apostle, pointed them out. He has plainly told us of the awful consequences of giving heed to such deceit. He has faithfully warned us to beware of the man who would, through philosophy, lead us to doubt, whether the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Christ.

How evident is the very object, which the apostle had in view, when he wrote this passage! How plainly has he pointed out the danger he apprehended! How faithfully has he warned his disciples to beware of it!

How plainly too, has he, in this very place, borne testimony to the essential divinity of Christ! Indeed, had he lived in our day, what stronger, more explicit, and unequivocal language could he have used!

He assures us, that all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Christ. As though he had said, 'Beware that you are not deceived. Be assured of this important truth, the fulness of the Godhead, actually dwells in Christ. Be careful that you be not deceived, in this important matter. Though philosophy may dispute it, and seem to demonstrate to the contrary, yet be not deceived. Listen not to such deceit. If you do it will spoil your faith; it will spoil you for a disciple of Christ.'

My object, at present, is to show from Scripture, that, notwithstanding the objections of philosophy, the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ. By the fulness of the Godhead, we are to understand those attributes, powers and honours, which belong exclusively to the one eternal and self-existent God.

(The Fulness of the Godhead Dwelling in Christ: Illustrated in a Discourse... by Caleb Burge, Boston: J. M'Kown, Printer, e-book, 1814, 3-5)