

I Intro. (Feb. 1, 1987, ACC; Feb. 4, 2007)

The previous section had a single command, “walk in Him” (Col. 2:6b). Likewise, this section also has a single command, a negative one this time, “See to it that no one takes you captive” (vs. 8). Then follows the reason why we should not be taken captive (vv. 9-10). Moreover everything has been done to equip us for successful and victorious Christian living (vv. 11-12).

II Beware of Being Taken Captive By False Doctrine (2:8-12).

A. Danger lurks (2:8).

1. (vs. 8) The expression, “See to it (βλέπετε – *present, active, imperative*),” translates a common Greek word for “see,” here, “applied to mental vision, and is...used by way of warning to take heed against an object,”¹ and implies that the reader should, “be ready to learn about someth. that...is hazardous, *watch, look to, beware of*.”² “The form of the sentence is a measure of the imminence of the peril. The usual construction with βλέπειν μή is a conjunctive...Here the substitution of an indicative shows that the danger is real.”³ This calls for a serious application of the mind in order protect oneself against dangerous doctrines.

The stated negative purpose of that of which they were to beware was, “that no one takes you captive (μή τις ὑμᾶς ἔσται ὁ συλαγωγῶν),” literally, “lest someone is (‘to be’ by nature – Sellers) who takes (or is taking – voluntative/tendential present, D&M p. 186) you captive,” literally, “to carry off as booty a captive, slave, maiden.”⁴ Here of course the use is figurative, “in (the) imagery of carrying someone away fr. the truth into the slavery of error.”⁵ In such a case, the false teacher, “whom (Paul) knows well enough but does not care to name,”⁶ of which there was likely, “one outstanding leader

who was doing most of the damage,”⁷ would endeavor, “to gain control of,”⁸ a brother or sister in Christ by causing that person to believe lies “through philosophy (φιλοσοφίας, lit., ‘love of wisdom,’ used only here in the NT) and empty deception (κενῆς ἀπάτης),” which is deception that inevitably leaves a person “devoid”⁹ of anything with “intellectual, moral, or spiritual value.”¹⁰ Because καὶ is “oft. explicative; i.e., a word or clause is connected by means of καὶ w. another word or clause, for the purpose of explaining what goes before it,”¹¹ and because of “The absence of both preposition and article in the second clause,”¹² it appears that καὶ is “epexegetical,”¹³ so that “the same thing”¹⁴ is “meant by”¹⁵ “philosophy and empty deception.” So “empty deception” “describes and qualifies”¹⁶ “philosophy.” So it is “*philosophy which is an empty deceit*.”¹⁷ As a result, “Clement therefore...had a right to contend that St Paul does not here condemn ‘philosophy’ absolutely.”¹⁸ We conclude that Paul did, “not condemn knowledge and wisdom (see verse 2), but only this false philosophy, ‘knowledge falsely named’ (ψευδωνυμος γνωσις...I Tim. 6:20).”¹⁹ In the end, “the Apostle is here flinging back at these false teachers a favourite (sic) term of their own, ‘their vaunted *philosophy*, which is hollow and misleading.”²⁰

This philosophy was in keeping with a certain standard, “according to the tradition of men (κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων).” “Tradition,” literally a, “a handing down or over,” refers to, “the content of instruction that has been handed down...of teachings, commandments,

1Vine, W.E. and F.F. Bruce. Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words : W.E. Vine ; Old Testament Edited by F.F. Bruce. electronic ed. Old Tappan NJ: Revell, 1981; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996. 124.

2William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). 179.

3Joseph Barber Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon., 8th ed. (London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886). 176.

4Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

5William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). 955.

6Joseph Barber Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon., 8th ed. (London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886). 176.

7Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

8William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). 955.

9William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). 539.

10William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). 495.

11William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). 495.

12Joseph Barber Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon., 8th ed. (London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886). 176.

13Alford, Henry, *Alford's Greek New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Book House) 1980. Vol. III, Page 218.

14Alford, Henry, *Alford's Greek New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Book House) 1980. Vol. III, Page 218.

15Alford, Henry, *Alford's Greek New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Book House) 1980. Vol. III, Page 218.

16Joseph Barber Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon., 8th ed. (London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886). 176.

17Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 176.

18Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 176.

19Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

20Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 177.

narratives et al.”²¹ It is “colourless in itself”²² or benign, and may refer to either “good (II Thess. 2:15; 3:6) or bad (Mark 7:3)”²³ instruction. A “mystic theosophy,”²⁴ the “teaching about God and the world based on mystical insight,”²⁵ was part of the tradition. “The teaching might be oral or written, but it was essentially esoteric,”²⁶ that is, it was, “Intended for or understood by only a particular group,” and therefore generally, “Not publicly disclosed; confidential.”²⁷ Such tradition, “could not appeal to sacred hooks (sic),”²⁸ like the Bible, “which had been before all the world for centuries.”²⁹ Nevertheless seeking validation, “The various Gnostic sects, their direct or collateral spiritual descendants, almost without exception traced their doctrines to a Similar (sic) source.”³⁰ Remarkably, “So too a later mystic theology of the Jews, which had many affinities with the teaching of the Christianized Essenes at Colossæ, was self-designated *Kabbala* or ‘tradition,’ professing to have been handed down orally from the patriarchs.”³¹ The Kabbala or Cabala was, “A body of mystical teachings of rabbinical origin, often based on an esoteric interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures...A secret doctrine resembling these teachings.”³² The similarity between this and Gnostic heresy is easy to see. “The most one can say of the error in Colossians is that it was a syncretism of Jewish, Gentile, and Christian features that diminished the all-sufficiency of Christ’s salvation and His personal preeminence.”³³

The false doctrines being taught were also said to be, “according to” the standard of “the elementary principles of the world.” “Elementary

principles” translates a Greek expression, τὰ στοιχεῖα – *ta stoicheia*, which is nicely summarized by A. T. Robertson accordingly; “Old word for anything in a *στοιχος* [*stoichos*] (row, series) like the letters of the alphabet, the materials of the universe (II Peter 3:10, 12), elementary teaching (Heb. 5:12), elements of Jewish ceremonial training (Acts 15:10; Gal. 4:3, 9), the specious arguments of the Gnostic philosophers as here with all their aeons and rules of life.”³⁴ It seems that in general the best way to understand the meaning of “the elementary principles of the world” here is that they refer to certain assumed ideas by unbelievers, perhaps inspired by “evil spirits,”³⁵ about how to live this life and about how to prepare to meet God, whatever that may mean to them. Inevitably that implies legalism, as is the case here. We are surrounded by a world with very similar notions about the mystical, experiential things, the origin of the universe, and about being good enough to be accepted by God into heaven one day. After all, Paul says that these principles are, “of the world,” that is their source, “rather than according to” the standard of “Christ” Who is, “the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation” (1:15), “by” Whom, “all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” (vv. 16-17). He is the One Who redeemed us and in Whom we have, “the forgiveness of sins” (vs. 14b), Who “is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything (vs. 18). “For” as we see in our next verse here as well, “it was the *Father’s* good pleasure for all the fulness to dwell in Him” (vs. 19). Consequently Christ is the standard by which *all* things, all “philosophy and all phases of human knowledge,”³⁶ are to be measured (2:8b). “The Gnostics were measuring Christ by their

21 William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 763.

22 Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

23 Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

24 Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 178.

25 Merriam-Webster, Inc. Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary . electronic ed of the 10th ed. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 1993; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996.

26 Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 178.

27 *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition* copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from InfoSoft International, Inc. All rights reserved.

28 Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 178.

29 Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 178.

30 Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 178.

31 Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 178.

32 *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition* copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from InfoSoft International, Inc. All rights reserved.

33 Tom Constable, *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003). Col 2:8.

34 Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

35 Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Scripture Press Publications, Inc.) 1983, 1985.

36 Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

philosophy as many men are doing today. They have it backwards.”³⁷

B. The reasons why we should take care not be taken captive (vv. 9-10).

1. (vs. 9) As believers we are not missing anything that is necessary for life and godliness. There is no reason to contact an aeon, angel or spirit, or ascetically to punish oneself through “self-abasement and severe treatment of the body” (vs. 23b). We should take care not to be seduced by such ideas that would lead us to conclude otherwise, “For (ὅτι ‘because’) in Him,” that is, in Christ (vs. 8b), “all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.” This is a comprehensive and final statement affirming the deity and humanity of Christ. “Dwells (κατοικεῖ – ‘has its fixed abode.’³⁸)” means, “to live or dwell in a place in an established or settled manner.”³⁹ That is exactly what “all (πᾶν)” not some of, “the fullness (πλήρωμα ‘a total quantity, with emphasis upon completeness’⁴⁰) of Deity (θεότητος),” i.e., “the state of being god...used as abstract noun for”⁴¹ God, is doing in Christ (vs. 8b) “in bodily form (σωματικῶς)” with the meaning, “pertaining to being real (in the sense of material) in contrast with being symbolic... ‘in him exists the complete content of deity in a real form.’”⁴² When we think of “Deity” here we should think of “the ESSENCE and NATURE of the Godhead, not merely the *divine perfections* and attributes of Divinity (*Greek, ‘theiotes’*)”⁴³; “The Greek word translated deity (*theotetos*) refers to the unique essence of God (cf. John 1:1). Divinity (*theiotes*, [‘Rom. 1:20’⁴⁴]). He, as man, was not merely God-like, but in the fullest sense, God.”⁴⁵ Better, He *is* (not only *was*) “not merely God-like, but in the fullest sense, God.”⁴⁶ “As those in Christ we, too, partake of His

fullness. We have no need that He does not supply.”⁴⁷ As noted variously before, we believers should never make, “The *theological* error of substituting inferior and created beings, angelic mediators, for the divine Head Himself (vv. 9, 10); and...The *practical* error of insisting upon ritual and ascetic observances as the foundation of their moral teaching (vv. 11–14). Their theological speculations and their ethical code alike were at fault.”⁴⁸ So here we have, “His deity (θεότητος),”⁴⁹ “the amplitude (πλήρωμα) of deity,”⁵⁰ and “the absolute (πᾶν) completeness of deity.”⁵¹

2. (vs. 10) This is a second reason for heeding the warning of vs. 8, to take care not to be taken captive by the lies of the “proto-Gnostics.” It is because “in Him,” in Christ, “you have been made complete (πεπληρωμένοι *perfect, passive, participle*),” meaning that the Colossians stand in a state of having been made complete in Christ, or in a state of having been made full. The expression, “made complete (πεπληρωμένοι, lemma, ‘πληρόω’)” here is a cognate of “fullness (πλήρωμα)” in vs. 9. Staggeringly we have been made “partakers of *the* divine nature,” Peter says in 2Pt. 1:4b. Lightfoot says, “Your fulness comes from His fulness; His πλήρωμα is transfused into you by virtue of your incorporation in Him.”⁵² No we are not “little gods” as a result of this, but we do have, “in Christ all that is needed for life and godliness.”⁵³ John said, “For of His fulness we have all received, and grace upon grace” (Jn. 1:16). Paul said similar things in Eph. 1:23; 3:19; 4:13, which see.

He, Christ, is described as the “head (κεφαλή),” a common enough title (Col. 1:18, 2:19, Eph. 1:22, 4:15, 5:23), meaning, “a being of high status...*the head of all might and power*,”⁵⁴ that is, “over all rule (ἀρχῆς ‘an authority figure

³⁷Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

³⁸Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 179.

³⁹Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains*. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:730.

⁴⁰Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains*. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:596.

⁴¹Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 452.

⁴²Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains*. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:666.

⁴³Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, A. R. Fausset, David Brown and David Brown. *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Col 2:9.

⁴⁴Tom Constable. *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*. Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003. Col 2:9.

⁴⁵Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, A. R. Fausset, David Brown and David Brown. *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Col 2:9.

⁴⁶Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, A. R. Fausset, David Brown and David Brown. *A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Col 2:9.

⁴⁷Tom Constable. *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*. Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003. Col 2:9.

⁴⁸Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 179.

⁴⁹William MacDonald; edited with introductions by Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible commentary: Old and New Testaments [computer file]*, electronic ed., Logos Library System, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1995 by William MacDonald.

⁵⁰William MacDonald; edited with introductions by Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible commentary: Old and New Testaments [computer file]*, electronic ed., Logos Library System, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1995 by William MacDonald.

⁵¹William MacDonald; edited with introductions by Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible commentary: Old and New Testaments [computer file]*, electronic ed., Logos Library System, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1995 by William MacDonald.

⁵²Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. *Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 180.

⁵³William MacDonald; edited with introductions by Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible commentary: Old and New Testaments [computer file]*, electronic ed., Logos Library System, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1995 by William MacDonald.

⁵⁴William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). 542.

who initiates activity or process, *ruler, authority*...Also of angelic or transcendent powers, since they were thought of as having a political organization⁵⁵) and authority (ἐξουσίας ‘bearer of ruling authority...of transcendent rulers and functionaries: powers of the spirit world’⁵⁶),” “and therefore of those angelic beings whom the false teachers adopted as mediators, thus transferring to the inferior members the allegiance due to the Head.”⁵⁷ Angel worship is senseless in light of this statement. Worship Him who *made* the angels! Worship Him who made us complete.

C. Everything has been done to equip believers for victorious Christian living (2:11-12).

1. (vs. 11) “The previous verses have dealt with the theological tenets of the false teachers. The Apostle now turns to their practical error,”⁵⁸ “from ‘Gnosticism’ to legalism.”⁵⁹ That is essentially correct. Action flows naturally from what is believed, from doctrine. If one’s doctrine is wrong, one’s conduct cannot be correct. Correct doctrine does not *guarantee* excellent behavior, but heresy makes correct conduct impossible. The legalistic notions of the pre-Gnostics flowed directly from their view that Christ was less than the God-man whose ostensible death on the cross therefore was inadequate to pay for men’s sins. Consequently man would have to take action to pave the way for his entrance into heaven. Inevitably that meant legalism with its many common characteristics of the time, circumcision, food laws, observance of days, etc. (vv. 11, 16). The previous verses militate against that notion since all the fulness dwells in Christ and in Him we have been made complete or full. There is no “and” to begin this verse, which is closely connected to the previous. Instead we have a relative pronoun prepositional phrase that directly connects this verse as descriptive of an aspect of the work of Christ in that we were fulfilled “in Him” (ἐν ᾧ). Perhaps the following translation captures the sense: “by Whom,” instead of “in

whom” – “you were also circumcised (περιετμήθητε *aorist, passive, indicative*),” passively in this case as an act of God, “with a circumcision (περιτομή) made without hands,” clearly then one not performed by men. It involved not the removal of the skin of the prepuce, which was the only circumcision performed by men, but rather it was “in the removal (ἀπεκδύσει – ‘found nowhere independently of Paul...*stripping off* of clothes’⁶⁰) of the body (σώματος) of the flesh (σαρκός) by the circumcision of Christ (Χριστοῦ subj. gen., ‘circumcision performed by Christ’; though A. T. R. says, ‘Specifying genitive, the kind of circumcision that belongs to Christ, that of the heart.’⁶¹).” Original circumcision affected only one body part, the prepuce. This circumcision on the other hand affected the whole body from an internal perspective, that is, the body as understood to be the seat of sin because it has not yet been redeemed (Rm. 8:23). So the physical body remains intact after this circumcision with nothing literally cut or stripped away. Rather this circumcision, which happens at the moment of faith, breaks the totality of the power of evil impulses, “the flesh,” arising from the unredeemed body. In this sense, the body is not essentially different from the “flesh,” and is understood as almost the source of the flesh. As BDAG points out in Rm. 8:13, “In fact, σῶμα can actually take the place of σάρξ.”⁶² Here we have both words in proximity: “the body of the flesh.” Still the two are as inextricably linked as ever in their mutual connection with sin. The body which is the flesh (appositional gen.), or as Lightfoot says, “*the whole body which consists of the flesh,*” i.e. ‘the body with all its corrupt and carnal affections.’”⁶³ He is understanding “flesh” here in the sense of BDAD, “In Paul’s thought esp., all parts of the body constitute a totality known as σ. or *flesh*, which is dominated by sin to such a degree that wherever flesh is, all forms of sin are likewise present, and no good thing can live in the σάρξ.”⁶⁴

55Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 138.

56Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 353.

57Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 181.

58Lightfoot, J. B. (1886). Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. (8th ed.) (181). London and New York: Macmillan and co.

59Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Scripture Press Publications, Inc.) 1983, 1985.

60Bauer, Walter, Gingrich, F. Wilbur, and Danker, Frederick W., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 1979.

61Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

62Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature. "Based on Walter Bauer’s Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen [sic] Literatur, sixth edition, ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, and Viktor Reichmann and on previous English editions by W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, and F.W. Danker." (3rd ed.) (984). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

63Lightfoot, J. B. (1886). Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. (8th ed.) (182). London and New York: Macmillan and co.

64Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature. "Based on Walter Bauer’s Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des

Perhaps we could define flesh then as that complex of evil impulses arising from the (unredeemed) body.

The sense in which the body of the flesh is removed (ἀπεκδύσει) is like the flesh being crucified (Gal. 5:24), or the old self or man being crucified (Rm. 6:6), and the “body of sin” being “done away” in that same verse. As a result “the body of the flesh” here does not cease to exist, but its power is broken so that the believer no longer has to submit to its evil impulses.

2. (vs. 12) All of the previous verse was literally (and logically – with no real time gap), after “having been buried (συνταφέντες) with Him in baptism (βαπτισμῶ),” that is, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Others see it as water baptism: “For all who in the rite of baptism are plunged under the water, thereby declare that they put faith in the expiatory death of Christ for the pardon of their past sins”⁶⁵ (Robertson quoting Thayer’s Lexicon). Even the new BDAG (in contrast to BAGD) says, “water-rite for purpose of renewing or establishing a relationship w. God.”⁶⁶ Such views are common to all baptismal regenerationists as well. Robertson takes it as water baptism, “baptism as a symbolic burial.”⁶⁷ even though he was not a baptismal regenerationist. However, if circumcision is figurative in vs. 11, a point debated by *no one*, it follows that baptism is figurative here. This baptism of the Holy Spirit is the real baptism, “in which you were also raised up with Him (συνηγέρθητε) through faith in the working (ἐνεργείας ‘objective genitive.’⁶⁸) of God.” It is a baptism “through faith,” and not through water. It is also in the “working of God,” not in the working of the preacher or local clergy or otherwise a man of God. Why should it not be in the working of God, since He is the One “who raised Him,” Jesus, whom the Gnostics denied, “from the dead”? Thus the lesson that is taught here is the same as that in

Rm. 6:4. The result is we have been empowered to live a new life that is pleasing in the sight of God.

III Conc.

The Gnostics had nothing to offer, and believers need to be careful not to be seduced by their deceptions (Col. 2:8) because in Christ we have everything we need and then some (vv. 9 - 10)! Moreover, we have been equipped to actually live a life that is pleasing in the sight of God. Let us do it!

Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen [sic] Literatur, sixth edition, ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, with Viktor Reichmann and on previous English editions by W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, and F.W. Danker." (3rd ed.) (915). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁶⁵Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

⁶⁶Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature. "Based on Walter Bauer's Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen [sic] Literatur, sixth edition, ed. Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, with Viktor Reichmann and on previous English editions by W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, and F.W. Danker." (3rd ed.) (165). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁶⁷Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

⁶⁸Lightfoot, J. B. (1886). *Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. (8th ed.) (183). London and New York: Macmillan and co.