

BELIEVER, BEWARE!

Colossians 2:8-23

(All Scriptures NASV 1995 unless otherwise noted)

Philosophies And Traditions Of Men Colossians 2:8-10

"See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority ..."

(Colossians 2:8-10)

Philosophies And Traditions Of Men Colossians 2:8-10

*"**See to it** that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ." (Colossians 2:8)*

*"And Jesus answered and said to them, '**See to it** that no one misleads you.'" (Matthew 24:4)*

*"And Jesus began to say to them, '**See to it** that no one misleads you.'" (Mark 13:5)*

*"And He said, '**See to it** that you are not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not go after them.'" (Luke 21:8)*

Philosophies And Traditions Of Men Colossians 2:8-10

The Danger

- "Takes you captive" (NASV, ESV, NIV); they "cheat you" (NKJV); they "spoil you" (KJV)
- They can even cheat you of your salvation!
- They render our worship and service to God "vain." (Matthew 15:1-9)
- They do this through "empty deceit."
- It is not evident (otherwise, none would accept it).

"Do not be deceived ..." (1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:33; Galatians 6:7; James 1:16)

Philosophies And Traditions Of Men Colossians 2:8-10

Nothing New

- The "philosophies" of:
 - Atheism.
 - Evolution.
 - Humanism.
- The "traditions of men," found rampant in:
 - Protestant denominations.
 - Catholicism (both "Roman" and "Orthodox").
 - Various cults.
- NOT After Jesus Christ! (John 14:6)

Philosophies And Traditions Of Men Colossians 2:8-10

Remember:

- In "Jesus Christ" are found **ALL** the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

"... that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Colossians 2:2-3)

Philosophies And Traditions Of Men Colossians 2:8-10

Remember:

- In “Jesus Christ” is found the **FULLNESS** of Deity in bodily form.
“For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form ...” (**Colossians 2:9**)
- In “Jesus Christ” we are **COMPLETE**.
“... and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority ...” (**Colossians 2:10**)
(cf. 2 Peter 1:2-3)

Problem With Judaism Colossians 2:11-17

Circumcision. See Acts 15:1-5; 6-27

- Addressed in Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, & Colossians.
- Through baptism into Christ, we experience the “true circumcision.”
“... and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions ...” (**Colossians 2:11-13**)

Problem With Judaism Colossians 2:11-17

- Jesus has taken the Old Law out of the way.
“... having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.” (**Colossians 2:14-15**)
- Therefore, let no one judge (condemn) us in matters of the Old Law.
“Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day – things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.” (**Colossians 2:16-17**)

Today, Many Still Try To Bind The Old Law Upon Christians.

- Sabbath keeping and food regulations. **Exodus 20:8**
- Separate priesthood. **Leviticus 21**
- Instrumental music. **Psalms 150**
- Tithing.
 - Abraham: **Hebrews 7:2** with **Genesis 14:18-20**
 - Jacob: **Genesis 28:22**
 - The law that commanded giving one-tenth of their annual increase to support the central place of worship. **Deuteronomy 12:2-7; 14:22; Leviticus 27:30**
 - In addition to the tenth (tithe) they could give “vowed offerings and freewill offerings” (**Deuteronomy 12:2-7**).
- Incense. **Leviticus 10:1-2**

Today, Many Still Try To Bind The Old Law Upon Christians.

As Those In Christ:

- Have died to the Law and Jewish ceremonialism.
“But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.” (**Romans 7:6**)
- Have been set free, and need to beware of becoming enslaved again.
“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.” (**Galatians 5:1**)

Today, Many Still Try To Bind The Old Law Upon Christians.

- If we seek justification by our observance of things found in the Old Law, we are “fallen from grace”!
“Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.” (**Galatians 5:2-4**)
- “Believer, Beware!” when people try to impose things upon you which are based upon the Law of Moses. Remember, “**you are complete in HIM.**”

The Worship Of Angels. Colossians 2:18-19

"Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God."
(Colossians 2:18-19)

The Worship Of Angels. Colossians 2:18-19

Why Would People Worship Angels?

- Perhaps because they feel angels are needed as "intercessors."
"... but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently. Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."
(Hebrews 7:24-25)
- Perhaps with "a sense of humility," they feel they can NOT go to God directly. See **Matthew 6:5-15 & Ephesians 5:20**

The Worship Of Angels. Colossians 2:18-19

- Result of "self-abasement" ("false humility" NKJV; "asceticism" ESV) and based upon "visions he has seen" ("things which he has not seen" NKJV). A deception of their own minds. **Jeremiah 14:14**
- It actually diverts one away from Christ, the rightful "Head of the body." **Hebrews 4:14-16**
- Angels refused worship. **Revelation 22:8-9**
- The apostle Peter refused worship. **Acts 10:25-26**

Today, Some Religions Have Developed A Counterpart To The Worship Of Angels.

- Catholicism with its veneration of Mary and the "saints."
- The reasoning is similar: "humility" ("We need them to intercede for us")
 The result is still the same: "not holding fast to the Head," venerating other beings rather than Christ!
"... and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God."
(Colossians 2:19)
*"For there is one God, and **one mediator** also between God and men, the man **Christ Jesus**, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time."*
(1 Timothy 2:5-6)

Asceticism. Colossians 2:20-23

*"If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, 'Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!' (which all refer to things destined to perish with use) – in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in **self-made religion** and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence."* **(Colossians 2:20-23)**

Asceticism. Colossians 2:20-23

- Definition: "the practice of strict self-denial as a measure of personal and especially spiritual discipline: the condition, practice, or mode of life of an ascetic: rigorous abstention from self-indulgence." (Webster)
- **Asceticism Has Often Been Offered As A Key To "Self-control."**
- Examples:
 - Fasting and other forms of abstinence.
 - Beating one's self with whips.

Asceticism:

"... no value against fleshly indulgence." (Colossians 2:23)

- Transformation comes through *"renewing the MIND,"* not afflicting the BODY.

"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:1-2)

(cf. Romans 8:5, 12-13)

- The *"fruit of the Spirit"* includes self-control.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." (Galatians 5:22-23)

(cf. 2 Peter 1:5-11)

Asceticism.**Beware Of The False Claims Of Asceticism!**

- Fasting may have a place in the lives of Christians. It is practiced by some in the New Testament. **cf. Acts 13:2-3; 14:23;**
(1 Corinthians 7:5 & 2 Corinthians 11:27 NKJV)
- But not for the purpose of developing self-control! Fasting is neither commanded or forbidden in the New Testament, however it is regulated by Christ. **Matthew 6:16-18**
- Ezra proclaimed a fast to "humble ourselves" that God might hear their prayer. **Ezra 8:21**

Conclusion:**We must reject any "gospel" distorted by man!**

"I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ." (Galatians 1:6-10)

Conclusion:

As we grow in Christ, attempting to mature spiritually, beware of any doctrine or teaching that suggests we need more than Jesus Christ!

"Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds." (2 John 9-11)

Conclusion:

- Christ is "THE" way (not "A" way).

John 14:6

- By holding fast to Him we find the ability to **"crucify the flesh with its passions and desires."**

Galatians 5:24

- We are COMPLETE in Him!

Galatians 2:20

- Are you IN Him? **Galatians 3:27-28**

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION**HEAR THE WORD**

James 1:21-22; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN JESUS

Romans 1:16; Hebrews 11:6

REPENT OF SINS

Acts 17:30-31; Luke 13:3

CONFESS HIS NAME

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

BE BAPTIZED FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16

REMAIN OBEDIENT

Hebrews 5:9; 1 Corinthians 15:58