

**"The Application"**

**Part 2**

**Colossians 2:16-23**

**Introduction:** Last week in our study of Colossians we began to look at the application which Paul made concerning the finished work of Jesus Christ.

**Notice Colossians 2:16-17**

Here in these two verses Paul addressed the subject of legalism. The heretics who had come into the church were pushing to get these believers under the Law. Legalism came about because of the fear which the Jews had about going into captivity. In Deuteronomy 28 God warned the nation of Israel what would happen if they turned away from Him.

**Deuteronomy 28:15, 47-50**

*<sup>15</sup> But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:*

*<sup>47</sup> Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;*

*<sup>48</sup> Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.*

*<sup>49</sup> The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;*

*<sup>50</sup> A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:*

God warned them if they turned away that He would deliver them into the hand of a foreign nation who would bring upon them severe discipline. This happened when the Jews were carried off to Babylon for 70 years. The first century Jews knew all about the Babylonian captivity and they never wanted to experience what those Jews had went through. The spiritual leaders therefore began to make up their own rules and regulations and they imposed them upon the people so as to keep them reigned in as close as they could. This was legalism and the intent was to keep the Jews from sin and to prevent another captivity. Over time the product of this became pride and those who kept the

man-made rules looked down upon the people who did not. But the tragedy of it all was that legalism came to the place where it was preached as a way of salvation through works. Not only were the man-made rules involved in this false gospel but so was the Mosaic Law which was never given as a means of salvation. This teaching has been accepted by many over the centuries because the flesh feels like it needs to do something for salvation so that it will receive the glory. This teaching had reached the church at Colossae and Paul was addressing it in these verses.

**Notice Colossians 2:16 again.**

When we read this verse, we see that these Gnostics were placing emphasis upon two things here. They were pushing a certain DIET and certain DAYS. They were preaching that these believers need to go back to a diet as spelled out in the Old Testament. But let us notice what Jesus said.

**Matthew 15:10-12, 17-20**

*<sup>10</sup> And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:*

*<sup>11</sup> Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.*

*<sup>12</sup> Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?*

*<sup>17</sup> Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?*

*<sup>18</sup> But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.*

*<sup>19</sup> For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:*

*<sup>20</sup> These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.*

The point here is that diet cannot make a person holy. The days that Paul mentions here included the Feasts and the Sabbath and we looked at the 7 feasts last week and how they were shadows of what was to come. The Sabbath was a picture of the rest that we have in Jesus Christ., The early church did not worship on the Sabbath they worshipped on the first day of the week which was the Lord's Day because He was resurrected on the first

day of the week. All legalism appeals to the flesh and Paul knew all about it. He was all caught up in legalism and was saved out of it.

**Philippians 3:4-10**

<sup>4</sup> *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:*

<sup>5</sup> *Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;*

<sup>6</sup> *Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*

<sup>7</sup> *But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.*

<sup>8</sup> *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*

<sup>9</sup> *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*

<sup>10</sup> *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

The point is legalism has no place in the life of a believer. Notice the words of Chuck Swindoll.

*"Let legalism have enough rope and there will be a lynching of all new ideas, fresh thinking and innovative programs."*

**Notice Colossians 2:18**

Here in this verse Paul addresses mysticism. What is mysticism? Legalism is all about the external and mysticism is all about the internal and by that, I mean it is all about the emotions. Mysticism deals with the emotions. It is about how you feel. It is based upon moods and feelings which are subjective because they are ever changing. To someone who is a mystic feelings are far more important than Bible study. One of the dangers in mysticism is that it is not about what is True but it is about how you feel. They allow feelings to have priority over the Truth.

This happens in many churches today where the people get all ramped up on emotions and claim to speak in tongues. They completely ignore what the Bible teaches concerning tongues. They ignore that tongues were a sign to unbelieving Jews and they were actual languages. They ignore that when they were practiced there had to be an interpreter and they ignore that the Bible teaches that tongues would and have ceased.

**Acts 2:4-8**

<sup>4</sup> *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

<sup>5</sup> *And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.*

<sup>6</sup> *Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.*

<sup>7</sup> *And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?*

<sup>8</sup> *And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?*

**1 Corinthians 14:21-22**

<sup>21</sup> *In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord.*

<sup>22</sup> *Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not:* but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

**1 Corinthians 14:27-28**

<sup>27</sup> *If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret.*

<sup>28</sup> *But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church;* and let him speak to himself, and to God.

**1 Corinthians 13:8**

<sup>8</sup> *Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

When people operate on emotions these verses are ignored or they are twisted to say what they want them to say. We see this mysticism not only in churches today but also in our society. We see it as people identify as the opposite sex or as an animal. It is based upon how they feel. They ignore biology and base everything on feelings. One day they feel like a man and the next they feel like a cat or a woman. This is mysticism and this shows us the danger of it.

**Notice Colossians 2:18 again.**

Notice that Paul speaks of voluntary humility and the worshipping of angels. Let me explain what he is speaking about here. So, these Gnostics would teach that they had no right to enter into the presence of God so, what they would do was to teach that you had to go to God through angels and spirits. This sounds much like the Catholic religion that believes they can go to God through Mary.

None of this is taught in the Scriptures. The Bible teaches that as believers we can enter the presence of God at any time.

**Hebrews 4:15-16**

<sup>15</sup> *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

<sup>16</sup> *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

**Hebrews 10:16-22**

<sup>16</sup> *This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;*

<sup>17</sup> *And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

<sup>18</sup> *Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*

<sup>19</sup> *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,*

<sup>20</sup> *By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;*

<sup>21</sup> *And having an high priest over the house of God;*

<sup>22</sup> *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

Jesus Christ has made a way for us, the common people, to enter into the presence of God. What the Gnostics taught decapitated the Christian life.

### **Notice Colossians 2:19**

Here Paul is making it clear to the Colossian believers that if they accept what the Gnostics teach, they are letting go of the Head which is Jesus Christ and then there would be no spiritual growth because all spiritual growth comes through Him.

### **John 15:4-5**

<sup>4</sup> *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*

<sup>5</sup> *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

### **Conclusion:**

Every so often there is a new movement that sweeps through Christianity. Years ago, I remember the Prayer of Jabaz, The Purpose Driven Life, then there was the Blood Moons. We are soon to see something else come along and when it does just remember Jesus Christ is everything. All we need is in Him and we need to draw closer to Him and not jump on some new movement that sweeps through making all kinds of promises.