

COLOSSIANS 2:8-13

Introduction:

1. Paul is now ready to deal directly with the particular errors that had been threatening the believers at Colosse and neighboring Laodicea.
2. Paul has been warning about the false teachers who try to take us away from the truth (Jesus Christ).
3. The goal of the enemy is to cause the believer to doubt the completeness we have in Christ. They try to persuade us that He is not enough - that we need something more in life.

Colossians 2:8 - 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.

1. This verse here is the key verse in Colossians Chapter 2. Does man follow Christ and His principles or follow worldly counsel by men of the world?
2. The first word Paul uses here is "Beware" or Look out! When we see the word "Beware", we are supposed to pay attention - it is a warning. It has the meaning to be careful about turning of one's thoughts or be on guard.
3. "Spoil" literally means to be led away, to be taken captive, or be carried off as goods - particularly as the spoil of war with Satan.
4. Paul now mentions four satanic alternatives to be aware of that can make you spoiled.

❶ "through philosophy" - Philosophy is the love of human wisdom. It is not true science, but the promotion of man's opinions that supersede what God has said.

- a. You would find that some theologians, even today, have a high view of the inspiration of the Word of God. They are looking for answers to the problems of life, but looking in the wrong places. Only God (Christ) is the answer to all wisdom and truth.
- b. Philosophy is not evil in itself, but it becomes evil when men seek wisdom apart from what God's Word tells us. Man's attempt to find out, by his own intellect and research, those things which can only be known by divine revelation always fails.

I Corinthians 2:14 - But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

- c. The result of man's mind and thoughts has created liberalism, apostasy, and even legalism. This causes forms of false thinking, or substitutes, of God's truth.

Jeremiah 17:9 - The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

❷ "and vain deceit" - This means to be on alert for these false teachers who promote "empty lies".

*One of Satan's biggest lies is that man can work his way to his salvation. So many people today have been deceived into thinking they can affect their own salvation by their works.

❸ "after the tradition of men" - This means man's opinions as to what he thinks should be obeyed religiously.

- a. The definition of the word "tradition" is a fixation of a custom which began as a convenience, or which suited some particular circumstance. Man is very good at this.
- b. The Lord Jesus condemned the religious rulers of His day because they taught the traditions of men rather than the Word of God.

Mark 7:7-9 - Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. Mark 7:8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. Mark 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

- c. Preachers today will often side with their tradition, even when shown scripture disagreeing with them.

④ "after the rudiments of the world" - This simply means to follow the world system. Some people try to build their faith on some worldly system, where men's ideas are better than the divine truth of Christ.

II Corinthians 4:4 - In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

5. Paul ends this verse 8 by commanding that these four things mentioned will lead us away from our walk with Christ - "and not after Christ". Paul is saying that philosophy, vain deceit, traditions of men, and the rudiments of the world are all contrary to the Word of God!

*Paul now brings up Christ's deity, starting in verse 9. Paul has been warning us about false teachers who try to take us away from the truth.

<u>Colossians 2:9</u> - For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
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1. The goal of the enemy is to cause the believer to doubt the fullness and completeness that we have already received in Jesus Christ. They try to persuade us that Christ is not enough, that we need something more than what we already have in Him.
2. This verse clearly states the "deity of Christ" and He is the only member of the Godhead Who has a perfect human body. There is not one single attribute of Deity-Godness that is absent from the person of Christ.
3. This verse is teaching the total Deity that inhabits the body of Christ. The Godhead - Father, Son and Holy Spirit- in a manner that is hard to comprehend or understand- all residing in the Body of Christ.
4. This is the answer to the various religions like Gnosticism, Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Unitarianism, and others. They view Jesus Christ as a great teacher or prophet of human descent, rather than being the literal Son of God incarnate.

<u>Colossians 2:10</u> - And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

1. Apostle Paul now says you "are complete in him". After we are saved and accepted in Him, we do not need to do anything else.
2. What this verse teaches is that the believer has in Christ all that is needed for life and godliness. That word "complete" means we lack nothing, having complete sufficiency in Christ.

II Corinthians 9:8 - And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work:

3. Jesus Christ is "the head of all principality and power", which means there is no authority that is not under His rule - even over all the angelic beings.

Ephesians 1:21-23 - Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: Eph. 1:22 And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Eph. 1:23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

4. Jesus Christ is the top ruler of all in the heavens and in the earth. We need to understand how great His authority is - even over Satan. That power He has is the power over death.
5. Jesus Christ went into death, but death could not hold Him. Because He had no sin, He conquered death. Christ took away from Satan the power and authority that he uses to hold people in death. Christ is the victor over death, over hell, and over the grave!

Revelation 1:18 - *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Colossians 2:11 - In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

1. Paul is telling the believers that this is our Spirit circumcision and not the ritual of physical circumcision given to Abraham. Paul is telling them to get rid of that which is outward.

Roman 2:28-29 - For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: Rom. 2:29 But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

2. So here in Colossians, Paul is simply telling believers in Christ that we already have the spiritual "circumcision made without hands". This takes place the moment we believe in Christ and His D.B.R.

Galatians 6:15 - For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

3. We become a new creature when we come to Christ and trust Him as our Savior. We are then identified with Christ.
4. Unfortunately, the Jewish people became occupied with the literal physical ceremony but neglected the spiritual meaning of circumcision. In trying to achieve favor with God through ceremonies and works, they were saying in effect that there was something in human flesh which could please God.
5. When we believe, the Holy Spirit cuts off our sin in the flesh.

Romans 8:4 - That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

*The Holy Spirit spiritually circumcises believers by identifying our bodies of sin with the death of Christ.

6. Simply stated: This means Christ has spiritually separated us from sin's rule and reign over us.

Colossians 2:12 - Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

1. Paul now turns from the subject of circumcision to baptism, that is "spirit baptism". Just as circumcision spoke of death to the flesh, this baptism speaks of the burial of the old man.

Romans 6:3-4 - Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Rom. 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

2. Baptism simply means "identification". The meaning here in Colossians is that through our being placed into Christ by the Spirit - we are identified with Christ's D.B.R.
3. When you put your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit baptizes you into the one Body of Christ.

I Corinthians 12:13 - For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

4. This is a spiritual burial. There is no water involved in baptizing us! The teaching here is that we have not only died with Christ, but we have been buried with Him at the time of our conversion.
5. We have then been raised with Christ to live a new life unto God.

Romans 6:4 - Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

6. Here is the problem with Christendom today. When saved, they often tell us there is yet another step to take if we truly want to be obedient and complete - water baptism!

*The question is: Could water baptism accomplish all or any of what has been said of the Spirit's work? NO! The moment we are saved, we are made complete in Christ.

7. Spirit baptism, that has made us one with and in Christ, has removed us from any obligations to Israel's rules and ordinances.

Colossians 2:14 - Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Colossians 2:13 - And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

1. Paul reminds the Colossians of their previous condition before Paul preached the gospel of grace to them. They were spiritually dead because of their sins and not being in God's favor.
2. When not saved, you are controlled by your old nature. Your spirit is lifeless in your relationship with God.

Ephesians 2:1-3 - And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Eph. 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Eph. 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

3. "The uncircumcision of your flesh" could be referring to the old nature and probably talking about their being Gentiles. But God has made alive their spirit, separating the spirit from the old man and giving them a new spirit with Him.

Ephesians 2:5 - Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

4. "forgiven you all trespasses" means we have been forgiven of all (past, present, and future). Forgiveness of sins is so important to understand dispensationally. There is a big difference between being forgiven under Law or under Grace.

- a. Under Law - it was conditional.

Matthew 6:14-15 - For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:
Matt. 6:15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

- b. Under Grace - it is unconditional.

Ephesians 4:32 - And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

5. The moment we believed in Christ, God sent all of our past, present, and future sin to Calvary's work. All sin was dealt with completely by Christ's sacrifice at the cross. Christ's blood covered all man's sin.

Colossians 1:14 - In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

**Next week, we will be covering the third danger Paul wanted the people to understand: Legalism.