

Not Legalism, But Christ!

August 29, 2010

INTRODUCTION: Its been interesting watching the spread of Islam in America today. Why?

Colossians 2:11-23

(Discipline/Lots of rules – no freedom)

Vs. 11 ~ circumcised with the circumcision made without hands

a) OT Circumcision vs. NT Circumcision (Here a circumcision of the heart)

Romans 2:28-29 ~ “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.”

b) Circumcision of the heart occurs at the moment of conversion. (God does it!)

Vs. 12 ~ buried with Him in baptism

a) Water Baptism is “identification” with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But what is being referred to here in verse 12?

b) Not water baptism here, but spiritual baptism. (Moment of regeneration)

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 ~ “The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we WERE all baptized by one Spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”

R.C. Sproul ~ “Regeneration refers to the Holy Spirit giving new life to the believer – making alive one who was dead in sin. The baptism of the Holy Spirit refers to God empowering His people for ministry.”

Vs. 13 ~ He has made us alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses (Eph. 2:1-9)

a) One of the great truths of the Bible (It’s not what we’ve done, but what God has done that saves us)

Vs. 14 ~ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us (The Law of Moses)

a) Gk – A handwritten certificate of debt

b) A written acknowledgement of an unpayable debt. (Rom. 3:23; Jam. 2:10)

He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross

a) The crimes of a crucified criminal were nailed to the cross with them. (Placard or sign)

We don’t have to look any further than the crucifixion of Jesus:

John 19:19 ~ “JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.” (Imagine your sins nailed to Jesus’ cross)

b) Why the slight differences in the Gospel accounts? (Jn. 19:20) Written in Hebrew, Greek & Latin

Warren Wiersbe ~ “When He shed His blood for sinners, Jesus Christ canceled the huge debt that was against sinners because of their disobedience to God’s holy Law. In Bible days, financial records were often kept on parchment, and the writing could be washed off. This is the picture Paul painted... How could the holy God be just in canceling a debt? In this way His Son paid the full debt when He died on the cross.”

Vs. 15 ~ Having disarmed principalities and powers

Hebrews 2:14-15 ~ “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, *that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil*, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

- a) **What Satan & his forces thought was their greatest victory**, turned into **their greatest defeat**.

He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it

- a) **The imagery here is that of a Roman general returning home after victory.**

We see a picture of this in Ephesians 4:8:

Ephesians 4:8 ~ “When He ascended on high, *He led captivity captive*, and gave gifts to men.”

John Sartelle ~ “In ancient cultures, the victorious general returned home from battles to great parades with the spoils of victory in his train. The triumphant Roman general entered Rome in a great chariot, wearing his *toga picta* lined with silver and gold. Behind him trailed the conquered kings, generals, and their armies. Paul was using the Roman parade of triumph as a metaphor picturing the glorification of Christ in heaven. He went home to glory and in His train were the conquered: sin and death. In His train was a fallen world redeemed.”

- a) **In Jesus Christ we are in a win/win situation** (no matter what we are facing) **Jesus has conquered**.

Vs. 16 ~ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths

- a) **The Colossian heresy added Jewish dietary laws, festivals and holy days.**

Jesus made it clear that food in itself is neutral (it is what goes into a man that makes him pure, it's what comes out!)

Matthew 15:8-9 ~ Jesus said, “These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. *And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.*”

Matthew 15:10-11 ~ “When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, ‘Hear and understand: *Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth*, this defiles a man.’”

Warren Wiersbe ~ “Gnostic legalism said that the Jewish Law would help the believers become more spiritual. If they were circumcised, and if they watched their diets and observed the holy days, then they would become part of the “spiritual elite” in the church.” **(Religion = Do’s / relationship to Christ)**

Is there a time when we should limit our own freedom with food and drink?

Romans 14:20-21 ~ “Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense. It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything *by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.*”

- a) **To judge a Christian in their freedom is really to judge Jesus.** (His work not sufficient)

Vs. 17 ~ which are a shadow of things to come (Dietary laws; festivals; Jewish holy days)

- a) **Army picture of Cheryl** (Can still see it today!) **I don't look at the picture anymore – real thing!**

Vs. 18 ~ Let no one cheat you from your reward

- a) **What happens in sports when a player breaks the rules?** (Disqualified - John 14:6)

taking delight in false humility and worship of angels

- a) **This was the beginning of a heresy that was to plague the region around Colosse for several centuries and beyond – the heresy taught God was so distant, that He could only be approached through angels, which led to angel worship and a false claim of humility.**
- b) **One Mediator between God and men,** *the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all!*

intruding into those things which he has not seen

- a) **Like all cults,** the Colossian false teachers **based their teachings on visions & false revelations.**

Vs. 19 ~ and not holding fast to the Head (NIV ~ He has lost connection with the Head)

- a) **Chicken with its head cut off** (The Colossian error – a defective view of Christ)

Christ the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments

John 15:5 ~ “*I am the vine; you are the branches.* If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.”

Vs. 20 ~ if you died with Christ...why do you subject yourself to regulations?

- a) **To die means to break your connection with the ways of the world.** (The world system)

Vs. 21 ~ Do not touch! Do not taste! Do not handle!

- a) **As a means or salvation or greater spirituality?** (What happened to grace?)

Vs. 22 ~ according to the commandments

- a) **The Law brings death and points us to our need for Christ.**

And according to the doctrines of men?

- a) **Why choose the rules of men over the grace of God?**

Vs. 23 ~ self imposed religion

The classic example self imposed religion in scripture is Nadab and Abihu:

Leviticus 10:1-2 ~ “Then Nadab and Abihu the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.”

a) **Worship and the Word of God go hand in hand.**

Leviticus 10:3 ~ “And Moses said to Aaron, ‘This is what the LORD spoke, saying: ‘By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified.’”

a) **How is your spirit of worship today?** (Do you come into church prepared to meet the living God?)

Neglect of the body

a) **Asceticism** ~ Is the belief that through self-denial or self-torture, man can achieve a higher state of holiness and righteousness before God. (Works lead to pride!) Eph. 2:8-9

Asceticism is not the kind of worship the Father is looking for

John 4:23-24 ~ Jesus said, “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

a) **It’s not religion that saves you (the do’s), but a personal relationship with Jesus Christ!**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Communication Cards
- Offering Box
- New picture directory: How many of you would be willing to donate \$6.50 for a new color picture directory? (Black and white will be free)
- Thanks to everyone who showed up for the work party yesterday.
- Coffee and fellowship.