

Colossians Chapter 2

1. **Col 2:1** For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh,

A. **For I want you to know what a great conflict I have**

1. Many ministers and Christians are not honest about the struggles they have in their life. Paul said he wanted the saints to know about his conflict and that it was great. We all need the prayer and support of other Christians in the midst of our great conflicts. This means we need to have honesty, humility, and openness.

2. There is a balance to everything. Many Christians get out of balance in this area. Either they will never tell anyone if they are struggling with something, or they will tell everyone about everything wrong in their life and try to get everyone to always pray for them. We need to have balance!

3. We are to handle our own responsibilities and trials in our life. We are called to manage our own life and not burden other people if possible. However, there are times when a burden in our life is more than we can handle, and in times as this, we need to turn to others to help us bear them. Paul talked about this in the book of Galatians. He said we all need to bear our own burdens [Gr. **phortion**- *light load of personal responsibility*- [Gal. 6:5](#)] but we are to bear one another's burdens [Gr. **baros**- *heavy crushing weight*-[Gal. 6:2](#)].

4. To stay in balance, we need to first take everything we are facing to God in prayer ourselves and seek Him. If we are still struggling after a season of seeking God, then it is good to ask other Christians for help in handling the burden.

5. Paul had a great **conflict**- Gr. **agon**- *we get the word agony from this word*.

B. **for you and those in Laodicea, and for many as have not seen my face in the flesh**

1. Paul was in a huge fight from satanic powers and religious people in establishing the churches and preaching Christ. Paul was in prison in Rome because of the gospel. He was in an intense spiritual battle with the enemy and the outcome of his defense

before Nero would have implications for all Christians in the Roman Empire.

2. Paul waged his warfare in prayer. His weapons were not fleshly. He did not picket, or demonstrate, or fight legal battles with those against him. He prayed!

3. Many Christians today are in a great conflict in their lives, but they are trying to fight merely in the physical realm. Our enemy is not flesh and blood, so our warfare is not to be fought in the natural. We are to use our spiritual weapons given to us by Christ. [Eph. 6:10-18, 2 Cor. 10:3-5]

2. **Col 2:2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, unto all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ,**

A. **that their hearts may be encouraged**

1. Paul wanted others to know he was fighting in prayer for them.

This brings great comfort when you realize someone is fighting for you in prayer! Are you fighting for someone in prayer right now in your life?

B. **being knit together in love**

1. **knit together**- Gr. **sumbibazo**- *being brought together tightly*

2. **in love**- One of the highest forms of love is willing to go to battle for another person. We love others when we fight for them in prayer. A church that prays for one another is a tight knit church.

C. **unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery**

1. God wants us to experience His riches. When we think of riches we think of money, land, and possessions. God wants us to first have spiritual riches which bring forth natural riches.

2. A rich Christian is one who has full assurance in their life that comes from understanding who they are in Christ, what they have in Christ, and what they can do because they are in Christ. We become fully assured in understanding when we continue in the Word of God and prayer daily in our life.

3. A rich Christian is one who has knowledge of God's mystery. The mystery is the dispensation of the grace and the church. The more knowledge you have of God's grace which is all that God has provided in Christ the more you will be stabilized in your life.

D. which is Christ

1. Christ is the mystery of God. This mystery is the mystery of godliness. This mystery is that Christ is in union with us in our spirit. We produce godliness by drawing upon Christ within us. We draw upon Christ by faith. To believe we must first have understanding and knowledge of grace and the finished work of Christ. Paul had this understanding and knowledge given to Him from Christ Himself. Paul summarized this mystery in [Gal. 2:20]- I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me, and the life I live I live by faith in the Son of God, who is loving me and giving Himself to me.

3. Col 2:3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

A. In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge

1. If someone who does not accept Christ, they do not truly possess any wisdom or knowledge. The beginning of wisdom is in the fear of the Lord. [Prov. 9:10]
2. wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ- We must search out His wisdom and knowledge. It is in the Word of God. If we neglect the Word of God, we neglect wisdom and knowledge. We must find these firsthand for our faith to appropriate them as we should. There is just so much wisdom and knowledge we can walk in by receiving from other people. We must meditate on the Word and pray ourselves to grow in wisdom and knowledge.

4. Col 2:4 Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words.

A. Now this I say

1. Paul is bringing out that all wisdom and knowledge are in Christ because false teachers were teaching that Christ was just one of many spiritual beings that evolved from God. They taught that a long line of evolved beings each had a level of knowledge that must be unlocked by secret rites. Paul debunked this teaching by saying that all wisdom and knowledge is found in Christ and outside of Him there in none.
2. All false teaching has this in common: It removes the focus off of Jesus Christ's all sufficient work at Calvary and from grace.
3. Even today many teachers in the body of Christ are offering wisdom and secrets to unlock the blessings of God. Instead of

teaching that they are available because of what Jesus has done at the cross and are appropriated by faith, they teach that you must do certain things to obtain them and by gaining knowledge of the secrets they possess in their latest book or CD.

B. lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words

1. Christianity is becoming more and more unpopular as the years go by.
2. Andrew Wommack made a statement when he was here last. He said he could see himself being put in prison in a time to come because of his bold stand for Christ and truth.
3. As it becomes more unpopular to be a Christian, people will try to persuade Christians from the faith with persuasive words.

5. Col 2:5 For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your *good* order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

A. For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit

1. As the founder and apostle of this church, God allowed Paul to spiritually view this church. Paul was so in tune to God in prayer that he could see and know how this church was doing. Jesus can see and know how each person and how each church is doing. Jesus shared this knowledge with the Apostle Paul by letting him see what He saw.

B. rejoicing to see your order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ

1. rejoicing to see **your order**- Gr. **taxis**- *orderly arrangement of a battalion*- We are in a war. We must all be in our place of assignment to properly wage effective warfare. We can effectively wage warfare in our personal life when we are in position under God and submissive to His leading and instructions and are walking in faith. One must be in order for faith to work! If the local church would do the same, it could wage effective warfare in its city. If the body of Christ in the U.S. would do this it would be successful in America. If the universal church would do this it would be effective in winning the world!
2. **steadfastness**- Gr. **stereoma**- **a solid front of a battalion**- We are in a battle and we must stand solid by our corporate faith. This is why being faithful to a church in attendance and by prayer is so important. It causes the body of Christ to see victory in its sphere of influence.

6. **Col 2:6** As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

A. **As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord**

1. It is important to keep in mind how you received the Lord at the very beginning because this same principle is how you are to live the Christian life. Too many Christians get saved by one principle but try to live the Christian life by an altogether different principle. We are to dance with the one who “brung” us!
2. We all received Christ by grace through faith. No Christian can get saved by any other principle. We are not saved by rule keeping or by works. We are saved by grace through faith. [**Romans 4:16**- It is of faith that it may be of grace.]
3. We were saved by the finished work of Christ. We simply received what was already provided for us. We acted upon our faith by our words [confession] and action [walking an isle; baptism] We received what Christ had already provided and received new life.
4. Once we are saved many Christians change principles and try to live the Christian life by the Law. They try to receive from God by keeping rules and by trying to earn what they are asking God for. This verse plainly teaches that as we first received Christ is the same way we are to walk in the Christian life. We are to walk in faith in God's grace (what God has already provided freely by the finished work of Christ.)
 - a. All spiritual blessings have already been given in Christ by His grace- [**Eph. 1:3, 2 Peter 1:3**]
 - b. Jesus was given to us freely by grace, so is everything else with Him! - [**Romans 8:32**]
 - c. We do not have to earn or deserve any of God's blessings. We cannot achieve them; we have to receive them. We receive by faith.
5. It is important to get this down: God operates towards us in grace and only grace, we are to operate towards God in faith and only faith. If we try to operate towards God in any other way but faith in his grace, then we will fail to receive from God no matter how sincere and hardworking we are.

B. **so walk in Him**

1. We were born again by faith in God's grace.
2. Now that we are born again as a baby, we must learn to walk! We got born again by faith, and God intends for us to walk by faith. [**Romans 1:17**]- God's righteousness is revealed from faith to faith.

We were born again by faith and righteousness was revealed to us, now we are to walk in faith and let others see righteousness revealed in us!

3. We walk in Christ when we walk in faith in what God has already provided for us [grace].

7. **Col 2:7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.**

A. rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith

1. **God has done His part-** He has already provided everything we need in grace. It was accomplished by the finished work of Christ. Christ is seated. He is finished!
2. Now we must add our part. Our part is faith. We must enter into faith and stay in faith to receive the grace of God. This verse teaches us how this is to be done. This verse shows us how we can be **established in faith**.
3. **rooted-** This is an **agricultural** term. Before we can be established in faith, we must have roots. Jesus taught the master parable of the sower and the seed. The seed is the Word of God. To be rooted in Christ we must receive the seeds of the New Covenant scriptures. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the message of Christ. **[Rom. 10:17]** We cannot just hear once, but we need to keep on hearing and meditate upon what we have heard for faith to take root. As we meditate on the New Covenant scriptures that reveal who we are, what we have, and what we can do because we are in Christ then we will draw from life and power of Christ to live the Christian life.
4. **built up-** This is an **architectural** term. This is the second vital part to being established in faith and walking in faith. We need to be built up and the scriptures tell us how this is to be done.
 - a. **1 Cor. 14:4-** We are built up when we pray in the Spirit
 - b. **Jude 1:20-** We are to build up ourselves in our faith by praying in the Spirit
 - c. Praying in the Spirit will cause our spirits to be strong and be able to grab hold of and keep a hold of what we have received from the Lord. Many are able to grab hold of healing but are not strong enough to keep hold of it when the enemy tries to wrestle it out of our hands.

B. as you have been taught

1. Paul taught his converts these principles. Unfortunately, many converts in our churches are not being taught this. They are being taught rules to keep and all the things they must do to get God to move for them and answer their prayers.

C. abounding in it in thanksgiving

1. This is a master key for remaining in faith. We can have our faith hindered or negated by negativity. When we remain thankful in every situation then the Spirit can move on the basis of our faith. When we grumble and complain and are negative it hinders the Spirit and our faith.

D. Releasing faith

1. It is vital to know that faith must be released by words and actions. If it is not, then it will be dead faith. [James 2:20, 26] Our actions are crucial in the releasing of our faith. If we believe that God has healed us, then we need to speak and act in line with this. If we believe that Jesus became poor so that we would be rich, then we need to be givers. When we act in line with what we believe, it releases the grace of God into our natural lives.
2. We do not receive from God based upon our performance of rules and commands. We receive based upon the merits of Christ and by grace. However, sin in our lives will harden our hearts and will cripple our conscience. When this happens, our faith will be hindered and crippled. We must maintain a clear conscience before God to have a solid faith. [1 John 3:21]

8. Col 2:8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

A. Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit

1. **cheat-** Gr. **sulagogeo-** *to take away as a captive of war-* Satan is warring against us and he desires to take prisoners. Those who do not remain in faith in God's grace will end up as prisoners and slaves.
2. We can be taken as prisoners by giving heed to philosophy. The world is full of educated philosophers who wax eloquent, but their teaching is against the Bible.
3. No matter how good something sounds, if it is against the Word of God then it is empty deceit.
4. The philosophy that Paul had in mind here was Gnosticism.

B. according to the tradition of men

1. The traditions of men become more important than the truth of the Word of God in many cases.
2. The traditions of men rob the power out of the Word of God.
[Mark 7:13]
3. We need to look at everything we believe and do and ask our self if we have biblical support for it. If we do not, we need to be willing to change to line up with the Word.

C. according to the basic principles of the world

1. **Basic principles-** Gr. **stoicheion-** *elemental principles- ABC's*
 - a. This referred to the observance of rituals, rules, and feasts that involved the sun, moon, planets, and stars.
 - b. It also referred to the worship of spirits that ruled over these.
 - c. Gnosticism was a blend of Judaism, Greek philosophy, and new teaching.
 - d. There is nothing new. Today we have the New Age that basically is teaching the same thing. Many Christians are fooled by the new age and their desire to make contact with God and angels [spirit guides] in new ways. This is extremely dangerous. Stick with the Bible and do not dabble in New Age books that are empty deceit.

D. and not according to Christ

1. We do not need to contact spirits or angels for guidance. We have the Word of God and the Spirit of Christ.
2. We do not have to observe rules and rituals to somehow get God to answer our prayers. We just need to come to God in Jesus name and ask in faith and receive.

9. Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

A. **dwells-** Gr. **katoikeo-** *to be at home permanently-* Jesus was, is, and will forever be fully Divine.

B. **fullness-** Gr. **pleroma-** The Gnostics used this word to describe the ladder of spiritual beings that spanned from the original God to the evil one who created the world [this was their teaching]. They called this ladder of spirits **the pleroma-** the fullness of the Godhead. Paul here is debunking this false teaching once again. Paul is saying that the fullness of the Godhead is resident in one person- the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. **bodily**- The Gnostics taught that physical matter was evil so God could not have taken on a body. They taught that Christ's body merely appeared to be real but was not. Paul is saying that God took on flesh permanently in Jesus Christ.

10. **Col 2:10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.**

A. **and you are complete in Him**

1. **complete**- Gr. **pleroo**- the verb of pleroma. In Christ we are *full, complete, and not lacking in any degree.*
2. If we would but believe this, we would stop trying to make ourselves complete or fill up what is lacking.
3. If we believed we are complete in Christ, our lives would change. Satan can only tempt us when he first makes us feel incomplete or lacking like he did Eve.
4. Singles need to get a revelation that they are complete in Christ. A mate therefore does not complete them but complements them!

B. **who is the head of all principality and power**

1. Jesus is not just one in a long line of spirits. Jesus Christ made all spirits and is the ruler over all of them.
2. We are in Christ, so in Him we are in a higher position than angels and fallen spirits.

11. **Col 2:11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,**

A. **In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands**

1. Circumcision was given by God as a sign of His covenant with His people Israel under the Old Testament Law. The Law was but a shadow of things to come in which Christ would bring forth the substance and fulfillment of the Law.
2. In the OT, circumcision was done by humans. In the New Covenant no man does this, but God does.
3. In the OT, circumcision was in the flesh, but in the new it is done in the spirit
4. In the OT, circumcision was only for men. In the new it is for all who believe - men and women
5. In the OT, circumcision was done by a knife. In the new it is done by the sword of the Word of God used by the Holy Spirit

5. In the OT, circumcision was for natural protection from infection and contaminates. In the new it is for spiritual protection against pollution and infection.

B. by putting off the body of [*the sins of*- not in earliest manuscripts] the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ

1. This spiritual circumcision was done not to the body but to the human spirit. [**Romans 2:29**]
2. Spiritual circumcision was done at the time of the new birth. The reborn spirit was regenerated and filled with God Himself.
3. To protect the sanctity of the reborn spirit, it was cut off and away from the body of flesh that would contaminate it. At the new birth, the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God cut a separation between your spirit and soul/body. [**Hebrews 4:12**] The soul can be contaminated by the flesh, but the spirit cannot!
4. Once your reborn spirit was cut away or divided from the soul and body that could contaminate it, then it was sealed by the Holy Spirit. This was to prevent any sin or contaminates from touching your spirit and defiling it. [**2 Cor. 1:22, Eph. 1:13, Eph. 4:30**]
5. Your spirit contains the seed of God and it cannot sin and is not defiled with sin. [**1 John 3:9**]
6. Satan cannot touch your spirit to defile it [**1 John 5:18**] He can touch our body and soul, however. A Christian cannot be demon possessed. They can be oppressed in their soul and body but not possessed in their spirit.
7. Jesus died in His human spirit. In His human spirit He was made alive in hell and because He was our covenant representative then it happened to us. It was the circumcision of Christ that we experience.

12. buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

A. buried with Him in baptism

1. In the previous verse Paul used the symbol of circumcision. Here he uses the symbol of baptism. Both circumcision and baptism are outward acts that point to inward spiritual realities. Natural circumcision corresponds to spiritual circumcision.
2. In baptism, a person is immersed under water, and then they are raised up again [hopefully!]. This outward ceremony represents dying and rising from the dead. When someone dies, they are

buried. Baptism represents the death of Jesus and then Him rising from the dead. Jesus was our covenant representative. What happened to Him, happened to you. When He died, you died. When He was raised, you were raised with Him. When we placed our faith in Christ the death and resurrection of Christ was applied to our spirit.

B. in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead

1. As our covenant representative when He was raised from the dead, so were we in Him. What happened to Him happened to us because we were in our covenant representative. He was seated in heaven, so we were also. This happened when we placed our faith in the risen Lord Jesus. [**Romans 10:9-10**]
2. A Christian is not the same person who they were before they got saved. The old sinner died, and a new righteous person was born. This new identity is in our reborn spirit. You cannot see or feel your spirit. You must take this by faith. By faith we appropriate all the spiritual realities that are in our spirit and they will impact our natural lives. We will experience freedom and the fruit of the Spirit.

13. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

A. And you, who were dead in your trespasses

1. As a sinner we were dead in our trespasses. [**Eph. 2:1**] We received spiritual death because we are in Adam. [**Romans 5:12**] A sinner is dead spiritually and no matter how much they try to do good things they never leave the sphere of trespasses. Even their good is seen as trespasses because the root and motive for their deeds are wrong.
2. A sinner has two problems. First is that they are spiritually dead. They are a sinner by nature. Next, they have many trespasses and sins they have committed. Both problems were dealt with by the finished work of Jesus Christ.

B. and the uncircumcision of your flesh

1. A sinner's spirit is polluted by the nature of sin in their flesh

C. God made us alive with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses

1. Jesus paid for all our sins and trespasses by His shed blood. The shedding of blood is for the remission of sins. [**Matt. 26:28**] Jesus

paid for what we did, but if that is all He did we still would not be able to go to heaven, because we were sinners by nature. We needed a nature change! Fallen humanity could not inherit heaven. [**1 Cor. 15:50**]

2. Jesus died on the cross as our representative so we could die to the old sinner we were, so we could be born again and receive the resurrection life of Jesus. [**Gal. 2:20, Col. 3:1-3, 2 Cor. 5:17, Titus 3:5**]

14. having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

A. having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us.

1. This refers to the written commandments of the Law. The Law was against mankind. Jesus wiped out the handwriting of the requirements that was against us. He did this by fulfilling all the commands of the Law by His life and fulfilling all the sacrifices in His death. Jesus came and fulfilled the Law and then took it out of the way. It was fulfilled, annulled, and abolished. [**Matt. 5:17, Eph. 2:15, Romans 7:4, 2 Cor. 3:13, Hebrews 7:18**]

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

1. Each broken command was a debt owed to God. [**Matt. 6:12**]
When a bill of debt was paid in the ancient world it was often nailed to a wooden door post and paid in full was written on it. When Jesus shed His righteous blood for us, He paid all our debts in full. The Law was therefore nailed to the cross and Jesus cried out it is finished. [**John 19:30**] The Greek word **tetelestai** actually means permanently paid in full!

15. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

A. Jesus disarmed principalities and powers

1. What was the enemy armed with that Jesus disarmed Him of? It was the Law. Jesus fulfilled the Law for us and then removed it out of the way and thus He disarmed the devil. The devil's only weapon against us was the broken laws of God that we had broken. Once these sins were paid for and the Law was fulfilled for us then the devil has no more weapons to use against us!

B. He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it
Jesus defeated the devil on his own turf! Jesus undid what Adam had done and Jesus took back the authority over all things. Satan has no more authority anymore. He must deceive people into giving him some of theirs!

1. You can walk in victory over satan and his works by accepting the gift of forgiveness and the gift of righteousness. You will stop sinning by awaking to righteousness in Christ. [**1 Cor. 15:34**]
2. We re-arm the enemy when we accept the accusations of the enemy. When we do this, he will condemn us, and then ultimately, he wants to separate us from our fellowship and closeness with God. [**Romans 8:33-35**] If we will not accept the accusations and condemnation of the enemy, he will not be able to separate us from God's love in Christ.

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

A. Let no one judge you

1. **Let no one** - No one has the right or authority to judge us other than God. It is up to us not to allow others to judge us. When we allow others to judge us, we allow them to play the role of God in our lives.
2. **Judge** - Gr. *krino*- *to make a judgment upon*

B. in food or drink

1. Some will tell you that God does not want you to eat certain foods and drinks certain drinks. Do not let any judge you in these matters.

C. or regarding a festival or new moon or sabbaths

1. Some will tell you that you should not observe Christmas or Halloween or some other day. They will say it is wrong and God does not want you to do it. Do not allow anyone to judge you in these matters.
2. Some will judge you in what day you are to worship. Some say you must worship on Saturday and if you do not you are not pleasing God. Some teach you should observe the Sabbath and not work on the day of worship. Do not allow people to judge you on these matters.

17. which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

- A. The laws of food and drink, and the observance of festivals and special days were but a shadow of things to come in the New Testament. They were to teach of New Testament truths.
- B. The Law was a shadow. To have a shadow you must have an object that casts the shadow. What was the cause of the shadow of the Old Testament? It was Christ Himself! Each law and ritual was to teach of Christ and represented Him!
- C. **the substance is of Christ**- lit. Greek- "*but the body of Christ*"- The body [person] of Christ was casting the shadow!
 - 1. The Sabbath is but a shadow of the person of Christ. Christ is the Sabbath of God! [**Heb. 4:9-10**]
- D. Do not let anyone try to convince you that you must observe Old Testament commandments or observe certain days in order to be more pleasing to God.

18. Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false* humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

A. Let no one cheat you of your reward

- 1. **cheat you** - Gr. **Katabrabeuo** - kata- against; brabeus- an umpire or judge in the games- *to disqualify or give a judgment against in the games*
- 2. When we let others judge us and bring us into legalism and false teaching, we are robbed of our prize that Jesus has won for us by grace. We obtain the prize of redemption and all it stands for by faith.

B. taking delight in false humility

- 1. Religion and legalism delights in false humility. It really is based upon pride - What man has done for God to earn what they receive from Him.

C. and worship and angels

- 1. Gnosticism focused on dietary rules and the worship of spirit beings [angels] in the endeavor to reconnect to the original and true God. They tried to access these spans of angels by secret knowledge.

D. intruding into those things he has seen

1. An intruder goes where they are not invited. Many are seeking visions of the spirit realm and seeking contact with angels and those who are dead. They are intruding into areas they are not invited by God to go. Satan is allowing them to see and hear things, but their visions are not from God. They are visions of demons and inspired by demons.
2. They have seen things, but they are deceptions.

E. vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind

1. Those who boast of their many spiritual visions and things they have seen and heard in the "spirit" are not really spiritual. They are fleshly and immature. Spiritual ones have learned to walk by faith and not by sight.

19. and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase *that is* from God.

A. and not holding fast to the Head

1. The head of the body of Christ is Jesus Christ. Those who are super spiritual often will stop going to church because they are more spiritual than the pastor and elders. They claim they have no need of a pastor or spiritual leadership because they have their own connection to God and do not need anyone else. When people claim this and leave the body then they actually lose hold of the head Jesus Christ.

B. from whom all the body

1. Christ is connected to His body. Each believer is part of a body of Christ. We are not to separate from other Christians and the gathering of the local body of believers.

C. nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments

1. The head gives nourishment through His body by joints and ligaments. Jesus is the head and the joints and ligaments are the five-fold ministry gifts set in the body to minister to the body His nourishment. [**Eph. 4:11-16**] We should receive from Christ in our personal life, but there is much nourishment we will only receive from Christ from the pastor he has set us under and from the ministers of the body of Christ.

D. grows with the increase that is from God

1. Those who are puffed up in pride who think they do not need the local church end up being deceived by the enemy and open

themselves up to deception. It is crucial that every believer find the local body of believers and the pastor God has to set them under. This is God's plan for us to be nourished, taught, and to grow in faith and maturity.

20. Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations--

A. Therefore, if you died with Christ

1. Christ was our covenant representative. What happened to Him, happened to us because we were in our representative at the cross. When He died as our representative, we then legally were seen by God as dying also with Him.

B. from the basic principles of the world

1. **basic principles-** rules on food and drink, observances of feasts, new moons, and certain days. These are representations of Christ. When He came and fulfilled what they represented then all these rules and outward observances are to be put away. We now have Christ in their place!

C. why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations

1. Now that Christ has come and fulfilled all those O.T. regulations and observances why allow yourself to be brought into legalistic bondage by people who claim to be spiritual. They are really fleshly and immature. Mature believers live by faith in Christ and have put away the things of the law. Adults should not allow babies to cause them to act like babies!

21. "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,"

- A. Legalism and religion are based in the DO NOT's of life. It focuses on what you cannot do.
- B. Grace is based upon the DO's of life and is based upon what you can do because of Christ.
- C. Eve got into religion when she told Satan that she was not allowed to eat of the tree, and she was not allowed to even touch it. This rule was made up to keep her from getting close to breaking a command of God. This is called fence laws. Religion is filled with self-made fence laws of do not touch, taste, or handle. Those who make such laws think they are helping themselves but actually they bind themselves.

22. which all concern things which perish with the using--according to the commandments and doctrines of men?

- A. All the natural things that people are so concerned with are just natural things that one day will pass away. Christ will never pass away. We can embrace Christ and grace which will never pass away.
- B. the commandments and doctrines of men will all pass away. God doctrines will remain!

23. These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, *false* humility, and neglect of the body, *but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.*

A. These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion

- 1. All the rules of men seem to be wise and are to promote godliness, but they end up promoting sin. The strength of the sin is the Law.
- 2. The rules of most legalists are self-imposed. They pick rules they can keep and avoid things they cannot. They then judge others who cannot or choose not to observe the rules they have set up.

B. *false* humility

- 1. All the observance of all these rules looks like humility. However, it really is based in pride and how well a person can observe the rules and earn credit from God.

C. and neglect of the body

- 1. This involves fastings and even self-punishments to the body. In the dark ages many Christians would whip themselves to get their flesh under control.

D. *but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh*

- 1. All the rules and the abuse of the body is for the purpose of getting the flesh under control. However, all these are based upon self-will, works, and pride which actually feed the flesh! Legalism promises help against the flesh, but actually secretly feeds it!