

Colossians 2:16-23

Colossians chapter two. Last week we were in this particular chapter where it's dealing with the importance of speaking the Mystery, knowing the Mystery and that Christ is the head of that one Body.

Colossians 2:4:

And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

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.

Because there were those individuals associating with the fellowship that were trying to convince them that there were other heads to the Body or things that were contrary to the doctrine that they had heard. And now in verse 16, where we left off last week, it goes into more detail about those who are trying to get them away from the Mystery, the one Body and Christ as the head; trying to get them to worship other heads.

Colossians 2:16-19:

Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*:

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

Here you have, in these four verses, the great significance of two particular groups, or you could say two sides of the coin, that were influencing the believers at Colosse, trying to get them away from the Word, trying to get them to serve other things, to worship other heads in the Body. Basically those two groups could be classified as the Judaizers, those who were trying to put the people under law, like you had especially in the Galatia area. Remember that? When we were dealing with Galatians, you had a lot of people trying to put others back under the law, from which they had been delivered. They would be the Judaizers, as they're called, and then the Paganizers, I guess you might call them; those in the Pagan religion that were steeped in a variety of things. Because remember syncretism, where you had the combination of beliefs or the combination of gods from different cultures...was prevalent here in Asia. And Colosse is being a part of Asia. But Gnosticism played a big part in that. Gnosticism was influencing their culture. But so were other ideologies, other philosophies. Other deceiving ideas were having a great impact upon the people of the whole world at that time. But especially here at Colosse, because that's what we're dealing with. But the Gnosticism was one of those forms. And I've told you before about the *aion*. It comes from that Greek word *aion* which means age, like the ages. They believed that there was the great god, the one that created everything else, somewhere out in the universe that has never been in contact with anybody. But he is the one that made...oh, I don't know...thirty or so different aions. And these aions were like gods or those that were responsible for different parts of the universe. Now one of those aions was Sophia, which means wisdom in Greek. Sophia, in all of her wisdom, made a Demiurge which is not God himself but he is some lesser being. And that Demiurge was the god of the Old Testament and he in turn made a world that was imperfect. He made a world that was screwed up. He made a world that was not complete, it was imperfect and consequently you've got all the problems in the world today. So they sent another aion named Christ. Now there's different forms of Gnosticism but these are some of the basic ideas. Christ was one of the aions so he would be above that Demiurge of the Old Testament and he came to

straighten the world up. Now some of them believed that this aion named Christ did not have a physical body, that either he was a phantom that appeared, or he borrowed somebody else's body. And so you have this aion, God in man, down here upon earth. And, of course, that led in the later centuries to the trinity and made it easy for that to get into Christianity and so many other things.

This idea of worshipping different aions had its parallel in many other pagan ideas where you worship different gods you have the Greco-Roman Pantheon where you worship all these different gods. One is the head of the heavens, one is the head of the underworld, one is the head of the sea and then you have other heads...one is responsible for war, one is responsible for messages, one is responsible for something else. All of these different gods and goddesses that are responsible for different things. So there is a parallel there. Worshipping of angels is also found in Judaism. There was a brand of Judaism where they worshipped angels. And, of course, it founded its way into Christianity. Apparently here at Colosse it was influencing people's lives. As a matter of fact, in one of the Church councils later on, as I told you in the opening of Colossians, they had to make a decree that it was not legal, Christian-wise, to worship angels. So all these things played a part. But the big thing you've got to see is that it's the syncretism of ideas, of philosophies, of gods and goddesses. So there are a lot of things, just like you have today in the United States, or any place else you go. There are so many ideas running loose in the United States today that you can worship just about anything you want to. If you want to worship a tree out in your backyard it's all right. Anything else...gods, goddesses, angels, devil spirits, you name it, it's there... pieces of wood, stone, ivory carved things on your dash board whatever. You can worship anything. And those ideas were prevalent at Colosse, along with the idea of the Judaizers trying to put everybody back under law.

So what you have here is...and there is some overlap between these ideas...but in verses 16 and 17, the meat and drink, holyday, new moon and sabbath days which are a shadow of things to come, sort of reflect the ideas of Judaism of the Old Testament. Because they did have special sabbath, holydays, new moon. Remember, every month started with the new moon and that was a special day at the beginning of each month; they'd blow the trumpets or whatever. So this meat, drink, holyday, new moon, sabbath, all pertain to the Judean customs in particular, although the Pagan religions, including forms of Gnosticism, also had their special holydays, sabbath and so on. Holydays may refer to those six feasts or festival days commanded by the law. And each one was celebrated with special sacrifices and a ceasing from labor. Likewise the new moon was similarly celebrated. This day marked the beginning of each new month. The weekly sabbath was celebrated also with special sacrifices and a ceasing from labor. Under the law, the penalty for profaning these days was to be put out of the congregation or in some cases death. However, as I said, the Gentiles also had their special days. But the Judaizer especially, used the observance of these days and customs to judge the Colossians. The result of this judgment was division in the Body of Christ. And of course you've got the great verse in Romans.

Romans 14:5:

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

That's the guideline for this administration. Days don't matter, but yet the Judaizers were strong on trying to put people back under the law. In Colosse, I'm sure they were just as strong in their beliefs and wanting to do it, although they did not have the effect that they did in Galatia. Because in Galatia, remember, they were sort of swallowed up by those customs.

Now the worship of angels, as I said, was an idea in Gnosticism, and in certain other pagan religions. And the result of this deceit, whatever type it was, was a denial of Christ's lordship. And it meant division in the Body, because you've got different heads in the Body then. Understand? That's why the angel worship sort of covered everything. It covered...whether it's Gnosticism, worship of aions, whether it's the pagan religions, where they worship devil spirits of various sorts, called gods or goddesses, or if it's the worship of angels in Judaism. The truth again is still given in the Word and especially in Ephesians.

Ephesians 4:15:

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ.

So we've got the doctrine in Ephesians, that there is one head, and that head is Christ. And now Colossians corrects the error where they were trying to establish other heads. The tactics and devices used by the Judaizers and the proponents of Gnostic ideas or pagan ideas, both attacked the Mystery, because it split up the Body. It split up the Body and it split up the head. The devices may change through time and between cultures, but the tactics remain the same. Their aim is to divide the Body and that is to kill the Mystery. That's why this epistle is so important. Judging always causes division in the Body. We've seen it in the book of Corinthians, we have seen it to a greater extent in Galatians and now here in Colossians. Judging, deceit, concerning the one God and the lordship of his son Jesus Christ... And that's what they used, is deceit, to get people to worship angels or things other than the one true God and have Christ as the head of the Body. Those things always cause division in the Body with relationship to the head, because no one can serve two masters. And he will end up serving some other master, but not the one true head. So you can't serve two heads. There is one head and that is what Colossians is all about. This section, the rest of chapter two that we're covering here tonight, is perhaps the most difficult section that the team has had to work on this year. Some of these verses are more difficult to put together from the Greek because you have some awkward Greek. And the reason is because there is an Aramaic original behind it. It's not good Greek. It would be good Aramaic, if we had the Aramaic original. But we don't even have an Aramaic original, we have the Peshitta version which is an Eastern Aramaic version of the Bible. We don't have Galilean Aramaic, it's unknown in our times. At any rate, verse 16, let no man judge you. Now the Aramaic word that's used here means to trouble or to disturb. And the only difference between that word and the word that means "judge" is some vowel marking. So in the manuscripts that did not have vowel markings, it could be either. These customs that are mentioned in these verses, as I said, are Judean primarily, although there were also the pagan ideas too that were introduced. The word "meat" in this verse 17 represents food. It is an idiom for food. In verse 17 it says all these things, which were Old Testament ideas are a shadow of things to come. You know the difference between a shadow and the actual thing. There's a big difference. You know the difference between a shadow and an image of a thing? If John Kish or Meg drew a painting for me of an automobile, there'd be a big difference between that and the shadow of that automobile, wouldn't there? If I took a look and all I could see was a shadow of that automobile. What could I tell you? Well, I could tell it's probably an automobile, but I couldn't tell you what color it is. I couldn't tell you a lot of things about it. What kind of upholstery... If they painted it for me it would give me a much better idea. Then, I'd have an image. Understand? Look at Hebrews.

Hebrews 8:3-5:

For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man [Jesus Christ] have somewhat also to offer.

For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

Who serve unto the example [pattern] and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.

God showed him the heavenly things. But what Moses made, that tabernacle in the wilderness, was it an image of what he saw? Was it an image of what he saw? No, it was only a shadow. Only a shadow. A pattern and a shadow. Now you know what a pattern is. A pattern doesn't look like the real thing either.

Hebrews 10:1:

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

The law was merely a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the thing. It wasn't even the very image of the thing, it was only a shadow. The law could never make anybody perfect. It could only substitute. It was a shadow and it helped for the time until that which is perfect is come, that perfect sacrifice that could make anything perfect. Because that's the real heavenly thing.

Now back to Colossians. So these new moons, the sabbath, the respect of holydays, the meat, the drink, all those things under the law were only a shadow. They weren't even a good image. They were only a shadow of things to come. But the Body is of Christ. The Body is of whom? Christ. It has nothing to do with being a shadow. It's not a part of the law. It was the Mystery. Everything under the law was a shadow of things to come. Now things to come in the future, when Christ came the first time...when he comes again, that's for Israel, it has nothing to do with the Body of Christ. The Body today is not a part of it in any respect. We are the Body of Christ, and Christ is the head of that Body. That's the great Mystery. That's what's pulled Judean and Gentile together. Without that Mystery, you still have one group. It was a Sunday night, Joe Guarini read that verse from some place...Deuteronomy or Exodus or Leviticus some place in there about God had respect to Israel. Today there is no respect of persons. Peter perceived that in Cornelius's place. He says I perceive that with God, there is no respect of persons. Yet in the Old Testament it said God had respect to Israel. When the rest of the nations cried, did he have respect to them and say, "I'll forgive you?" No. But when Israel repented, they cried, "Lord we've been messed up." God forgave them, didn't he? He had respect. Today there is no respect of persons. It's one Body. Called out of both Judean and Gentile. And if you get rid of that one Body, then you don't have that unity anymore. Verse 18, "let no man beguile you of your reward..." That whole phrase is one Greek word *katabrabeuō*. That is an athletic term. It's used of an umpire making a decision against you, when he says YOU. That's this word. He deprives you of your reward. That's one way to translate it. To deprive of your reward, deprive you of your home run, deprive you of a touch down, deprive you of yard gain. He makes a decision against you. "In a voluntary". See that phrase? That is a phrase in Greek *thelōn*. And then the second word *en*. Now *thelō* means to will or desire intensely. So literally this would mean, let no man who is willing intensely or desiring intensely in humility...which just doesn't make a whole lot of sense...and who desires intensely in the worshipping of angels. And it's a phrase that pretty much has the commentaries disagreeing with each other, arguing over what it means. But it's a Hebraism or Semitic expression. It's not a Greek expression. But it's worded just like you would have it in Hebrew or some other Semitic language. And what it means is, to take pleasure in. To take pleasure in. Let no man deprive you of a prize, or reward, who takes pleasure in humility and worshipping of angels. And that humility cannot be in the good sense of humility, because we know that use. But it's used in the negative sense, a false sense of humility or self-abasement. And I see those therapy Christians that always put on that facade of humility. They act so religious, so humble. But that's not humility. Humility is being meek to receive the Word. It's being meek to listen to what God says instead of dictating the program to God. Most people want to tell God what religion is all about. It's man made. That's not humility. Humility is being willing to receive from God, let him give the orders. But it's a self-abasement or making yourself a doormat for Jesus. The Aramaic then adds in front of worshipping, "enslaved". Enslaved, those who desire, or take pleasure in self-abasement and being slaves to the worshipping of angels. The word "worshipping" is the Greek word *thrēskeia*, a very important word. One you ought to add to your list alongside of *lambanō*. Bullinger defines it very nicely. It's the word that's opposed to *eusebeia*, which means godliness, a true vital spiritual relationship. This is *thrēskeia*, which means religion. It's man-made. It's the outward show, man-made. Opposite of a true vital spiritual relationship, which is true godliness. It doesn't say that we are to be religious. It says that we are to be godly. A true vital spiritual relationship. This is *thrēskeia*, that outward man-made junk, worshipping of angels. Angel worship, I told you about, and how it relates to the different ideologies prevalent and especially things relating to the mystery religions. They had their mystery religions where only the initiated ones could know the great secrets going on. And even they didn't understand. At least ours is made known. It's the great Mystery. The only reason ours is called the Mystery is because it was a secret until God revealed it. But now anybody can know it. Anybody that wants to. Worshipping of angels. Then it says, "intruding into those things which he hath not seen". "Intruding into" is a Greek word that was used of the gods frequenting or haunting a favorite spot. As a matter of fact, inscriptions were found in Asia Minor, which would be in the Colosse area, from the second century, within 100 years after this was written, that used this word. One of those uses it of the mystery religions, where it was used to investigate or to look into or enter into detail about the mystery religions. That's what they're doing. They worship angels and they investigate or speculate or get involved with what? Those things which he hath not seen.

Now the word "not" is omitted in some manuscripts and critical Greek text. If you leave it in, then it would mean they were speculating or investigating things they had never seen and consequently knew nothing about...which would be kind of neat. But if you take it out, where they're intruding in the things which they have seen, it would mean they're speculating about things they had seen and experienced. In

other words, their visions that they saw in their mystery religions. And I think that fits the context real good. It makes much sense here in this context because you've got that word that means to look into, or investigate, speculate...as in the mystery religions...things that they have seen visions of. Got the picture? Sound familiar? There are some groups today that just hang so much on their experiences and especially the visions that they've seen. "God showed me this". Not that they can go to the Word to put the Word together. But boy they've sure seen a vision. "God showed me". You go to the Word. In First John it talks about confessing your sin. When you put the word together, that's talking about confessing what kind of sin? Broken fellowship. Context. See? You can read, you can understand. But here is this guy, he says, "I read that and God showed me a vision. He showed me this big Ferris wheel in the sky. And every time a seat came past there was one of my previous sins, and I'd confess that. And then the Ferris wheel would continue, and I'd see another seat and I'd confess that sin. And I was up all night and I confessed every one of my sins." Vision, experience, does it fit with the Word? You don't confess your sins to get saved. You confess the savior from sin, the Lord Jesus Christ. You confess sins to get back in fellowship. Visions...they had their visionary experiences. And the mystery religions naturally built a lot on visions because they had no Word to build anything on. So I think leaving the "not" out fits very beautifully there.

And it says they're vainly puffed up...that's inflated, big blow...by their fleshly mind, or carnal ego would be a good translation of that particular word. Then in verse 19, it says they're not holding the head. Now you see back in 18 you've got three participles in Greek and the fourth one is here in 19. In 18 it's in voluntary humility. I told you that was *thelōn*. That's the first one. It means let no man who is willing, to take pleasure in, humility and worshipping of angels. The second one is intruding, those who speculate about their visionary experiences. The third one is puffed up, they're vainly inflated in their carnal egos. And then in 19, they don't hold the head. Those people that are trying to get you away from the Word with their philosophies, vain deceit of verse 8...the tradition of men, the rudiments of the world, not after Christ. They're not holding the head from which all the Body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. The word "holding", they're not holding the head is the Greek word *krateō*. Sound familiar? *Kratos*. What does *kratos* mean? Exerted power, or power with an impact. And this word means to have power, or to be master of or to take hold of. Now that means exerted power. To take hold of something you have to exert some energy. They were not exerting any power to take hold of the head. They weren't holding the head, instead they're holding unto these aions, these angels or these devils or stone or wood or whatever. "Joints" is the word that means ligaments or tendons. It's that which holds the body together. It supports the body. It gives it stability and mobility. That word is also used of a wrestler's grip, where it grips, holds on and it's used in Ephesians 4:16 of the gift ministries. They are the joints, the ligaments, the tendons that hold the Body together, supply it with the things that it needs. The word "band" simply means that which binds together. Then you have nourishment ministered. It means to completely supply or to completely furnish or to completely support. And of course knit together is that word we had up in verse two where your hearts are knit together. They're fused together, *sumbibazō*. Then increase is *auxanō*, which means grow up like a plant or an animal or something grows up, a child growing up, it grows up with the growth of God. Now you have the verb and the noun there, so you've got the same word in different parts of speech. That's a figure of speech called *Polyptoton*. So now, we've put all this together, and look how we translated these verses.

Colossians 2:16-18: (Literal)

Therefore, do not let anyone point a finger at you about food or drink or regarding festivals, new moons, or sabbaths,

which are a shadow of things to come. The Body is of Christ.

Do not allow yourself to be disqualified from the competition and cheated of your reward by those who take pleasure in self-abasement and the bondage of the religious worship of angels, speculating about their own visionary experiences, with vainly inflated, carnal egos.

And that's what they do. They do it today and you know it. That's right. And people in the church many times, have the most inflated egos there is. They're not meek to receive the Word, but they want to elevate their tradition, their commandments, the things that they learn, the philosophical ideas rather than what the Word says. Being humble means willing to change if you find something better in the Word. That's right.

Colossians 2:19: (Literal)

They do not hold fast to the head [Christ], from whom the whole Body, which is completely supported and fused together by its joints and ligaments, grows up with growth from God.

That's how important the head is and why we've got to maintain that head. Well, there's more coming. Verse 20. Oh, there is something else here I wanted to show you. Back in verse 18, this angel idea, in Hebrews chapter one, I want to show you this.

Hebrews 1:3, 4:

Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person [Christ is the what? He is not a shadow, he is the express image of God], and upholding all things by the word of his power [It doesn't say he is God though, he is the image], when he had himself purged our sins, sat down [where?] on the right hand of [himself, no] the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the [what?] angels, [that's why he is the head] as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Hebrews 1:13, 14:

But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?
Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.

Are they heads? No. So you don't worship angels. Look at Revelation.

Revelation 22:8, 9:

And I John saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.
Then saith he unto me, See *thou do it* not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

O.K. So anyway I thought those would bless you, those extras on that angel business. Back to chapter two of Colossians.

Colossians 2:20:

Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances.

"Wherefore" is omitted in some of the manuscripts, and I scratched it out. The word "if", is conditional, but it's a general supposition and in the context here of the church of the Body, those that are born again, it's in the essence of "since". Since you are dead. If you're born again, then are ye dead with Christ? Sure. But if you're not born again, then you're not. Then it would be "if". If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world. The word "rudiments" is that word *stoicheion*, and it means those elements or fundamental principles. Back in verse 8 that word was used, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments (fundamental principles) of the world, and not after Christ." And then we saw it in Galatians last week when we looked at those sections. And of course before, when we looked at Galatians; how it's used of those fundamental things of the world, the laws, the rules, the regulations, the things that pertain to the five senses rather than spiritual things. You look at Ephesians chapter four. These fundamental principles, going on the five senses, the natural realm, things of the senses is the basis for the deceit, because it looks real good five senses wise. But it's deceitful because it does not fit with what you know spiritually.

Ephesians 4:14:

That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight [deceiving secrecy] of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

Their doctrines are big blows. It's their deceit and men born of the wrong seed are the ones behind it, as Rev. Martindale told us a couple weeks ago. They're the ones that are the underlying cause and they introduced it into the world. And then it hits Colosse and before you know it the Colossian believers are being bombarded with these ideas, these pagan ideas that set up different heads. They want to put people back under the elements of the world, back under legalism. See it? That's the basis of it. Back to Colossians.

We're dead to those things, we're dead. We died with Christ. That's our identification and they're of the world. Then why, as though living in the world, are you subject to ordinances. The words "subject to ordinances". The Greek word is *dogmatizō*. Now you recognize the word there that we had last week, *dogma*, which meant an ordinance or a decree. It was not the law itself or the commandment, but the ordinance or indictment, the specific legal decree against you. Like indictment, and it means to decree. Lay down a decree. And yet in verse 14, those are the things, the handwriting of decrees that Christ blotted out. And yet you want to submit yourself to decrees. Or even lay down decrees. Or it can mean to submit yourself to a decree and I think that's the essence of it. The Aramaic simply reads: Why are you judged? Judged, which fits, kind of, with verse 16. And 16 introduced that idea of somebody judging you or pointing a finger at you or disturbing you about things. The difference between this and Galatians 4:

Galatians 4:9:

But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements [*stoicheia*], whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

You what? You desire to be in bondage. You observe days and months and times and years... They desired to be in bondage. That was the Galatian trip. The Colossian trip was...they were simply submitting to those ordinances. They were being judged and allowing themselves to be judged by others. And so they were just giving in. They were putting up with it, instead of taking a stand on the Mystery. The one Body. Christ has freed us from all those ordinances. They were giving in, submitting to those ordinances. See it? They weren't wanting to. They hadn't gone to the point the Galatians had, but they just weren't standing up for the head. Because others weren't holding the head, they were talking about all their aions, they were talking about their laws and decrees...do this, don't do that. They were submitting.

Colossians 2:21, 22:

(Touch not; taste not; handle not;

Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

Now verse 21 and the first part of verse 22 is a parenthesis. But it's a short one just thrown in, incomplete in itself, so we call it an *epitrechon*. It's a short parenthesis, incomplete in itself, thrown in. And it further explains, the ordinances that they're submitting to. Don't touch, don't taste, don't handle, which all are to perish with the using. The word "to perish" is literally "for corruption". Which are all "for corruption" with the using. "After the commandments and doctrines of men" then refers to those ordinances that they're submitting to. There again, commandments and doctrines of men. But the touch not, taste not, handle not, which all are for corruption, explains a little more detail, just thrown in there...the types of ordinances, that they're submitting to. Why do you want to? Hold on to the head. The Mystery. The one Body. Look at Matthew chapter fifteen. Don't touch, don't taste, don't handle. All these things are for corruption in the using...

Matthew 15:1-3:

Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

That's where you put the tradition and commandments of men.

Matthew 15:4-9:

For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.

But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

Isn't that what Colossians was talking about? The doctrines, commandments, that's what the ordinances were talking about...the touch not, the taste not, the handle not. The doctrines, commandments of men.

Matthew 15:10, 11:

And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

That's what corrupts him. Weren't these things for corruption in the using? It's the things that come out of a man's mouth.

Matthew 15:12-14:

Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

And isn't that true? Make all these commandments...it's the blind leading the blind.

Matthew 15:15-18:

Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile [corrupt] the man.

That's what corrupts the man.

Matthew 15:19, 20:

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

These are *the things* which defile [corrupt] a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

So, those commandments and doctrines of men, what do they lead to? Evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. That's what corrupts the man. They are destined for what? Corruption.

Colossians 2:20-22: (Literal)

Since you are dead with Christ to worldly principles, why do you submit to ordinances which indict you, as those living in the world do?

(Do not touch! Do not taste! Do not handle!

All these things are abused and lead to corruption.) They are according to the commandments and doctrines of men.

And Matthew 15, certainly tells you what the commandments and doctrines of men are and how they do corrupt a man. They lead to corruption.

Colossians 2:23:

Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

These doctrines and commandments of men. These ordinances that you submit to. This touch not, taste not, handle not. This business of these things that all lead to corruption, have indeed a shew of wisdom. The word "shew" is *logos*, word. These things have indeed a word of wisdom. The Aramaic adds the word "they appear or seem" to have a word of wisdom. They don't really. I wondered if this Greek word, *men*, indeed, was in that sense where it's almost like irony, ironical. At any rate, I like the Aramaic. They appear to have a word of wisdom. They have their visionary experiences. Right? God showed me this one...the old Ferris wheel. Then, it adds the word "to be". And it's the form that means "are". Which things appearing to have a word of wisdom are...and it's "are" in the sense of: "Here is what they are really".

Then you have "will worship, and humility and neglecting of the body." The Aramaic reads: They have the countenance or face, the facade of humility and the fear of God and of the neglecting of the body or severe treatment of the body. I'd better just tell you what "will worship" is. It's this Greek word, *ethelothrēskeia*. That's it. Sound familiar? *Thrēskeia*, what does it mean? Religion. That man-made stuff. The outward appearance. The formal rituals and so on. *Thelo*. What's *thelo*? To desire intensely, to will. So what this is, it's a will religion, where it's something you will. Now you know religion in itself is man-made. In other words, a self-prescribed religion. Or a self-made religion. One you willed or thought of, desired. It's a self-prescribed religion. And "humility" again would have to be self-abasement in the negative sense. Although, I like the Aramaic that puts that word facade in front of it, or face. It is a facade of humility. And the neglecting of the body, is severe treatment of the body, masochistic treatment of the body. And that masochistic or severe treatment of the body, harsh treatment of the body, is not in any honour. See that phrase? The word "honour" can mean value. So it's not to any value. Now "to the satisfying of the flesh"...the word "to" is *pros* which can mean against and it does here. It's like without any value against the satisfying of the flesh. Or it's no value, as far as a remedy against the fleshly desires and satisfactions. The word "satisfaction" here, the best translation is I think indulgence. So it's the fleshly or carnal indulgence. Now look at that, these things, this self-prescribed religion, the facade of humility and the severe treatment of the body... like some of the people through the years have inflicted themselves to try to make themselves more religious, whipped themselves, that kind of thing.

Those three things, what are they designed to do? They're designed to suppress carnal indulgences. Don't do this, don't taste that, don't handle this, what is that for? So you don't get carried away with your fleshly lusts, your overdesires for all those sensuous things. Yum, yum. [Laughter] But in affect, it says they are of no value as a remedy against sensual or carnal indulgences. Most of the rules and regulations that they have put down have only supplied people with the ammunition for going out and doing more. That's right. They are of no value. The only way to overcome those carnal indulgences is to get the spirit of God within you and you have a greater desire to walk by the spirit than you do by the flesh. That's how you overcome it. You can't take out darkness. You have to introduce light to take out darkness. Right? You introduce the light, what happens to the darkness? It disappears. You want to get coldness out of a room. What do you do? Reach in and pull some of the coldness out. No, you blow warm air in. Sure. Well, look how we translated it.

Colossians 2:23: (Literal)

These things, which appear to have a word of wisdom, are really self-prescribed religion and a facade of humility and harsh treatment of the body, all of which lack any value as a remedy against carnal indulgence.

There you have it. What good do those rules and regulations do? They're designed to keep you from doing those things, but all they do is add fuel to the fire. If you want to get rid of something you shouldn't be desiring to do (you know what I'm talking about), well, start walking by the spirit with Christ as the head. That's how you overcome those things. There is one head, Christ. Not all the rules and regulations, not the different angels, not the different devil spirits or anything. It's Christ as the head of the Body. And we're one Body. We're free from the law. Because you've got a greater law within you. The law of the spirit of the life that's in Christ Jesus. And that's what you walk by. And that's why this chapter started out with:

Colossians 2:2:

That their hearts might be comforted, being knit [fused] together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement [the full, precise, complete knowledge] of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of [pertaining to] Christ.

Colossians 2:6

As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him.

You've received the head in you, which is part of that Mystery, so what? Walk in him.

Colossians 2:7:

Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

Colossians 2:10:

And ye are [what?] complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.

So, do you need the rules and regulations? No. Do you need all the angels? No. You've got one head. Christ. Walk by that Christ in you. That's what's going to maintain the unity. That's what's going to keep the Body together. That's why the Mystery is so important. And if we lose that Mystery, what happens to the Body? It becomes denominationalized. It splits. It moves out in various directions with several heads. Christ is the head of the Body. And the only way to stay together is walk by the spirit. Walk by what you've received in Christ Jesus. Not the rules, the regulations, not the different angels and so on. That's why chapter three, verse one says: Since you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are where? Above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. That's the head. You seek those things and not the things of the world. That's how you overcome the sensual indulgences, carnal indulgences, all those things.

So Father, we're sure grateful for the spirit that we have within us, that we can walk with Christ as our head, the one head of the Body and the greatness of the Mystery living in our day and time. May it continue, Father, to touch people's lives and hearts around the world. And we thank you for the great chance we have to understand your Word in the name of your son Jesus Christ. Amen. Good night. God bless you!

