
RELATED SCRIPTURES

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 10.16.22

Mark 7:17-23 | Romans 9:31-33 | Mathew 5:17-22

SUMMARY

In the verses leading up to 16 to 23, Paul tells the Christian everything they are in Christ and that Christ is all they need. In this passage, Paul tells the Christian everything they *aren't*. Specifically, Paul explains to the church that they are not subject to the requirements with which the false teachers in their midst were trying to burden them. The church would have been predominantly Gentile, meaning they likely had little-to-no knowledge of the ceremonial laws of the Jews. Yet Paul negatively alludes to numerous practices that would have been a part of the Jewish practices before Christ had fulfilled them (festivals, Sabbath, dietary laws) as well as traditions foreign to the Jew. He classifies *all* these practices under the same burdensome umbrella, not because the practices are bad in and of themselves (though some certainly are, such as the worship of angels), but because to practice *any* religious ritual as a means of finding God's favor, then they are *all* no different than any other "self-made" ritual. This pattern, it seems, is what the false teachers were suggesting; to find God's favor or reach a higher level of holiness or enlightenment, it's necessary to continue practicing certain elements of the law. But Paul's emphasis remains solely rooted in the work of Christ. The former aspects of the law were shadows of Jesus Christ; he fulfilled what those laws pointed to—there's no additional work required. Those in Christ have died with him and are resurrected with him—we are, as Paul says, "knit together" with him.

GROUP QUESTIONS

From the sermon or your direct reading of Colossians 2:16-23, share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you.

Paul makes mention of two traps for the Christian in verses 18 and 19. The first trap is being disqualified by others who are "puffed up" (verse 18), and the second trap is not holding fast to Christ (verse 19). Which of the two are you more prone to falling for? How can you avoid falling for it?

We might feel a little removed from the Colossian context, but in what ways do we still find ourselves trying to submit to the old ways of the law? Are there any requirements we try and add to our completed work of salvation?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.