

COLOSSIANS: GET RID OF CONFORMITY AND CLING TO CHRIST

07.26.15 Grace Col. 2:16-23 P5 Faith in Jesus is my lifeline to fullness. 35 Min

INTRODUCTION: (Attn) [take honey and a spoon on stage] Jonathan Edwards said, 'You can know honey is sweet with out tasting it; you can taste it and also know it is sweet.'

There is a fine line between knowing God is good and truly tasting His goodness. (Them) my fear is that many of you know God is good, but you have not tasted it truly. (Relv) There are those who are lost in sin and those who are lost in religion. You?

- Jesus plus anything equals nothing. Is your life full of unessential spirituality.
- (Fallen condition focus) the col. ppl wanted more, we too search for more.

(Struct) Look at the psg and then give you 1 main idea supported by five lessons for life:

PLEASE TURN WITH ME TO COLOSSIANS 2:16-23 ON PAGE 984. If need a bible, take it.

- Jesus is All (repeat) is the theme of the bk & chap.: creator, redeemer, hope, foundation.
- "All the fullness" is in JC. We are "full in the full one." Con't in today's psg
- Read psg entirely, this is the second part of a two part warning (P1=2:8)

LEGALISM (VV. 16-17) — TIMES I'VE SEEN IT: MY HOMESCHOOL DAYS & ISRAEL MIN.

16. "Therefore"—In light of what JC has done for you (vv. 13-15) and your freedom "Let no one pass judgment on you"—don't define this too quickly, let's unpack:

- o P is saying, be firm in JC and do not be intimidated by others. Nerv. w/ James.
- o There is no way to avoid letting people pass judgment on us, but we can control our reaction when someone does. Don't submit to their opinions, submit to JC.
- Don't take this too far — we like the idea of saying, "Don't judge me!" like a teen
 - o Sometimes you need to be judged: someone needs to speak truth to you in love
 - o Other times (as P is getting at) we take the opinions of other as more important or solely important over the opinion of God. I'm approval junkie.
 - The false teachers in Colossae were saying "you need more to be godly."
 - Jesus plus rules is wrong. He came to set us free, not give us more to do.

Francis Schafer Quote in True Spirituality, "We do not come to true spirituality or the true Christian life merely by keeping a list, but neither do we come to it merely by rejecting the list and then shrugging our shoulders and living a looser life." (Ch. 1)

- Living by a list of rules undervalues the grace of God by assuming He needs your righteousness. Ref to in my book "Honest to God" as the scandal of Grace.
- Ignoring the call of consecration to Christ lessens the grace of God to a bail bond paid without a "Thank you." We must "walk in a manner worth" (1:10)
- Religion is "I open and therefore am accepted" (fear) but Christianity is "I am accepted by God because of the payment of Christ, therefore I obey." (joy)
- More wicked than I ever dare believe & more accepted than I ever could hope.

- They were being sold a bill of goods: do this to have salv. & sanctification.
- They were being judged as one commentator says regarding DIET and DAYS
 - o Diet: "questions of food or drink". This was divisive in the early church.
 - o Days: "New Moon... or Sabbath". These were Jewish traditions of the old law:
 - New moon: from Numbers 28:11-25. The dedication of a new month.
 - Sabbath: A day to rest but also do all sorts of oral laws for God.
 - o JC fulfilled all: Passover=lamb, Pentecost=light, New moon=new beginning.

A LIFE OF LEGALISM LIVES IN THE SHADOWS AND REJECTS REALITY.

in Ref. to God's Holiness

Legalism is trying to measure up on a man-made ruler

(Preach to both)

GET THIS

1st week

More anticipation is not to follow the Reality

- 17- "Shadow of things to come..." The OT law is merely a shadow of the great reality of covenant and promise we have in God. Lit. trans: a "copy" of real thing.
 - o The copy is never as good as the original. When my dad got hm from work
 - o Shadow of something is far less important than the reality of the thing it represents; no one prefers shadow to the actual substance. Anticipatory only.
- "Substance in Christ."- Body (KJV), Reality (NIV). JC is reality of God's promises.

MYSTICISM (VV. 18-19)

- 18 - The warning is to not let anyone disqualify you means to umpire or award the prize.
 - o Get that word pic-"Umpire you" telling you "You're out!" discouraging you.
 - o They can't take you out but can say you're unworthy of JC or doing it wrong.
 - o Conveys that what they were teaching would lead to a loss of the joy and spiritual benefits of the relationship to Christ who is the head.
- THE SECOND SOMEONE CONVINCES YOU THIS ISN'T WORTH IT, SATAN HAS WON. He wants you to believe that a persevering pursuit of Christ is a waste of time & energy.
- V 19—a "Watch out" statement, for three main things:
 - (1) Asceticism: more in a minute —abstaining for the appearance of righteousness.
 - (2) Angel worship: Worship "to" or "with" — either way it was a lack of focus on God and an elevated view of angelic beings. Mentioned in v. 8 as 'elemental spirits'
 - o The affection of our worship is God; this is true also for the angels.
 - o However, we will be higher than the angels b/c they are made to serve man and we serve God directly and adopted as sons and daughters in JC (Jn 1:12).
 - (3) Going on in detail about visions: The key phrase here is "going on in detail".
 - o There were some who claimed to see what others could not and this was being exalted in an unhealthy way. Those who saw were "puffed up."
 - o Others began seeking their "vision" more than God's truth. When we start getting more excited and prayerful about visions than JC or His word, we are jumping on a spiritual treadmill that will never stop. Visions have to keep coming in order to stay or feel connected to God-sensuous mind. Dangerous!

(trans) STRIVING TO APPEAR SPIRITUAL DISTRACTS PEOPLE FROM GOD GLORY

- He is a jealous God, protective over his own glory. This is okay b/c he is God!
- He is the head — all nourishment and growth come from Him. How many of you think the Head is important to the body? Me too I didn't even finish med-school ☺

ASCETICISM (VV. 20-23)

- Def: "A voluntary abstention from the satisfaction of bodily and social needs, including food, drink, sexual activity, sleep, clothes, wealth, and social interaction."
 - o I like to this of this as a "False humility to cover in prideful legalism."
- Asceticism has taken different forms in the Bible: (1) Wearing thick shirts made of animal hair close to the skin so they itch (as if that is more spiritual), (2) Sleeping on hard beds, (3) Self mutilation (4) Prolonged fasting. You know this person: imitate
 - o To insist on practices that are believed to bring a greater favor of God
- "The have the appearance of wisdom...promoting self-made religion." This is what JC was referring to with the Pharisees as "White washed tombs." Death inside.
- "Severity to the body" — lit. cut off from the body of life, with JC as the head.
- Your righteous acts separated from faith in JC are not going to stop the indulgence of the flesh, "satisfying flesh" (KJV), "a person's evil thoughts and desires" (NLT)

(MAIN POINT) FAITH IN JESUS IS MY LIFELINE TO FULLNESS.

- Jesus sufficiency beats human religion every time. "How good is good enough?"

WHAT IS FAITH?

1. **Knowledge:** Intellectual understanding of the truth.
2. **Conviction:** Inward persuasion of its veracity and my need of it.
3. **Commitment:** decisive personal surrender to Jesus Christ.

EXPLAIN THE "I'M WITH JESUS" CARDS. THE GOSPEL CALL TO FAITH. Recall.

HERE ARE FIVE THINGS I LEARN FROM THIS PASSAGE...

(GRAB ONE FOR YOU THIS WEEK)

#1. NEVER LET THE VOICE OF MAN BE LOUDER THAN THE VOICE OF GOD. (16&18)

- I'm a recovering people pleaser with occasional relapse. His pleasure is my goal

#2. SPIRITUAL HIGHS DON'T ALWAYS PROVIDE SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT. (18)

- We love mtn top experiences more than we love the God who created the mtns.

#3. HEALTHY CHURCH GROWTH COMES FROM GOD. (19) APPLY TO GRACE NOW:

- Not flash in the pan – always steady and lasting.
- Not out of order – always sovereignly systematic.
- Not built on man's principles – always built on God's priorities.

#4. FALSE HUMILITY IS EMPTY SPIRITUALITY. (20-23)

#5. WE ARE ONLY FULL IN CHRIST. (23)

- If we think our good behavior is saving us we've mistaken the grace of God.
- Paul said all of our good works and clean track record is "but rubbish" compared to Christ. Re. your good deeds: what was once in the "Assets" column was moved to the "Liabilities" column. Your righteousness is nothing but filthy rags.

CALL FOR THE GOSPEL (Use interrogative approach)

- Are you sick of trying to be in the right on your own?
- Have you been striving for a long time never feeling full free in Christ?
- Could you indeed just be religious but not have a relationship with Jesus?

Jonathan Edwards gives three reasons why human beings, though sinful and inferior in wisdom and strength, will forever exceed angels in glory and honor:

1. Angels were made to serve God by serving man, but man was made to serve God directly.
2. Human grace, holiness, and love are greater virtues than angelic wisdom and strength.
3. Believers are united to Christ in a way angels never will be.

Follow his logic for these points in Miscellanies #103.