

Putting Christ First: The Root of Righteousness

Colossians 2:16-23

Wrong Judgments (v. 16-17)

- Because of the spiritual fullness that we have in Christ alone
 - Paul urges us not let anyone impose a means of spiritual growth that does not have Christ at its heart
- This false judgment is based in:
 - What we eat/drink
 - Or refrain from
 - This could be a reference to the dietary law
 - But that does not prohibit the drinking of anything
 - What we celebrate
 - Or refrain from
 - This included the OT holidays
 - Sabbath & new moons
 - “Shadows of things to come”: They were meant to point to Jesus
 - But also, pagan-based celebrations

Wrong Priorities (v. 18-19)

- Paul warns against ‘false humility’
 - Which can mean self-deprecation for the purpose of actually drawing attention to oneself
 - Or extreme asceticism
 - Prolonged fasting, abject poverty, etc.
 - To gain some sense of self-righteousness
- Paul warns against ‘the worship of angels’
 - Which can mean worshipping angels, rather than God Himself
 - Or worshipping with angels
 - Claiming some sort of ‘greater’ worship experience
- Paul warns against those who claim special spiritual experiences
 - Including visions
- All of these things lead to a false sense of spiritual importance
- This line of thinking is the result of not being rooted in Jesus
 - We cannot add to the work of Jesus with anything expect more of Jesus’ work in us

Wrong Logic (v. 20-23)

- Paul points out that this way of thinking is illogical
- Since we are no longer to find understanding from the ‘basic elements of this world’ (see v. 8)

- Then we should also not use those elements to gain righteousness
- These ascetic rules which some would put upon Christians:
 - Are man-made
 - Appear wise
 - But have no spiritual value, because they cannot help us overcome our sinful desires
 - Only Jesus can do that!

So What?

- What guides us?
 - Human rules and regulations
 - Or the Spirit of Jesus
- Are we known for what we avoid?
 - Or the good we do

Meditation Verse: Colossians 2:16