

Centered in Christ: In Christ Alone

Colossians 2:8

A Warning (v. 8a)

- As Paul mentioned in v. 4, Paul warns the church against false teachers
 - Whose words sound good
 - But would capture and make plunder of the hearers
 - *Συλλαγωγέω* (sulagogew): to gain control of by carrying off as booty

Philosophies (v. 8b)

- These false teachers do this through hollow and deceptive philosophy
- Paul is not speaking of all philosophies here
 - The belief systems of Judaism were called philosophies by Josephus
- But rather, he is warning the church against the empty and deceitful beliefs of the false teachers

Human Traditions (v. 8c)

- These teachings were based on human traditions
 - Teachings based in human-centered speculation
- The same language Jesus uses to describe the Pharisees and teachers of the Law (Mark 7:1–23)

Elements of the World (v. 8d)

- These teachings were based on basic 'elements' of the 'world'
- Could have 3 different meanings:
 1. The fundamental components of the world (2 Pet. 3:10, 12)
 - Earth, air, fire, water*
 - Based on a natural view of the world alone
 - Limiting spiritual truth to physical behaviors like circumcision, diet, and holy days (see v. 16, 20-23)
 - Or basing our understanding of the world only on 'science'
 2. The elementary principles of this world (see Heb. 5:12)
 - Tied to their understanding of the Law in life of Christians
 - Thus, to them righteousness would be tied to keeping the Law rather than faith in Christ (see v. 16. 20-23)
 3. Spiritual forces
 - Giving too much attention to angels, demons, and other spiritual beings (see v. 10, 15, 18; 1:16, 20)
 - And thus taking away the central place of Christ

In Christ Alone (v. 8e)

- Paul returns to what our lives and faith must be centered in
 - CHRIST: Jesus as Lord!
- Nothing else and no one else helps us understand the world and our place in it

So What?

- What are we building our lives upon?
- Is Jesus the lens through which we see the world and ourselves?

Meditation Verse: Colossians 2:8