

Colossians 2:16-23

2:16 – “Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.

3361 [e]	3767 [e]	5100 [e]	4771 [e]	2919 [e]	1722 [e]	1035 [e]	2532 [e]	1722 [e]
Mē	oun	tis	hymas	krinetō	en	brōsei	kai	en
16	Μὴ	οὐδὲ	τις	ὑμᾶς	κρινέτω	ἐν	βρώσει	, καὶ ἐν
	Not	therefore	anyone	you	let judge	in regard to	food	or in regard to
	Adv	Conj	IPro-NMS	PPro-A2P	V-PMA-3S	Prep	N-DFS	Conj Prep

4213 [e]	2228 [e]	1722 [e]	3313 [e]	1859 [e]	2228 [e]	3561 [e]	2228 [e]	4521 [e]
posei	ē	en	merēi	heortēs	ē	neomēnias	ē	sabbatōn
πόσει	, ἢ	ἐν	μέρει	ἐορτῆς	, ἢ	νεομηνίας	, ἢ	σαββάτων
drink	or	in	regard	to a feast	or	a New Moon	or	Sabbaths
N-DFS	Conj	Prep	N-DNS	N-GFS	Conj	N-GFS	Conj	N-GNP

- False teachers at Colosse had instituted strict regulations to obtain and maintain “spirituality” of some sort concerning:
 - eating
 - drinking
 - religious calendar dates and events
- “Therefore” clearly indicates that the previous sufficiency of Christ and his total victory made these false practices:
 - Unnecessary
 - Distracting
 - False, demonic doctrines and practices:
 - 1 Timothy 4:1-3 –
“Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.”
 - Galatians 4:3, 8-9 –
“In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world...Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?”

3. Notice the similarity of the opening line of 2:16 with 2:8. Chapter 2 verse 8 presents the overall warning, but chapter 2:16 gives some details of how the captivity of believers takes place:
 - a. Even consider Colossians 2:4 –
*“I say this in order that no one may **delude** you with plausible arguments.”*
 - b. Colossians 2:8 –
“See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit...”
 - c. Colossians 2:16 –
“Therefore let no one pass judgment on you...”
 - d. Coming up below, Colossians 2:18 –
*“Let no one **disqualify** you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels.”*

Colossians				
2:4	I say this	no one	delude	you
2:8	See to it	no one	take captive	you
2:16	Therefore	no one	pass judgment	you
2:18	Let	no one	disqualify	you

- e. Tools of deception:
 - i. **Delude you** - 2:4 – plausible or fine-sounding arguments
 - ii. **Take you captive** - 2:8 – philosophy, empty deceit, human traditions, fallen spirits
 - iii. **Pass judgment** - 2:16 – legalism, dietary laws, religious festivals, holidays and Sabbaths
 - iv. **Disqualify** - 2:18 – asceticism, worship of angels, visions
4. This verse may indicate the “written document” of 2:14-15 is clearly any religious regulations including the Law of Moses.
5. The Colossians believers were not to allow anyone to judge their standing before God based on their religious observations.
 - a. Galatians 5:1 –
“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.”
6. We do know from Romans and 1 Corinthians to be sensitive to the “weak” believer (those who do not fully understand, yet) and not put a stumbling block in their way concerning these things:
 - a. Romans 14
 - b. 1 Corinthians 8
7. These dietary regulations may have been:
 - a. Taken from the Mosaic Law
 - b. Ascetic practices from Pagan religions – asceticism is practiced by those trying to obtain access to spirituality, mystic experiences or interaction with angelic beings
 - c. Likely, the Colosse heresy involved pagans in the church looking to the Jewish Law to justify their similar pagan acetic practices.
8. Religious days and seasons:
 - a. Religious festival – (yearly, annual) -
 - b. New Moon celebration – (monthly) -
 - c. Sabbath day – (weekly) –clearly a Jewish reference since Sabbath is unique to Judaism.

9. Two true concerns:

- a. Every day is holy to the Christian. Every day is a day of worship and celebration in Christ.
- b. In our modern Western world the Sabbath is no longer a real issue.
 - i. This is NOT because we as a Western culture have become more convinced of the sufficiency of Christ. We have not become more mature in Christ.
 - ii. This is because we have become more secular living as secular humanist who are not drawn to worship the Lord on any day. We have become more secular with a drift towards paganism.

2:17 – “**These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.**”

3739 [e]	1510 [e]	4639 [e]	3588 [e]	3195 [e]	3588 [e]	1161 [e]	4983 [e]	3588 [e]	5547 [e]	
ha	estin	skia	tōn	mellontōn	to	de	sōma	tou	Christou	
17 ἅ	ἐστίν	σκιά	τῶν	μελλόντων	;	τὸ	δὲ	σῶμα	τοῦ	Χριστοῦ .
which	are	a shadow	the things	coming	;	the	however	body [is]	-	of Christ
RelPro-NNP	V-PIA-3S	N-NFS	Art-GNP	V-PPA-GNP		Art-NNS	Conj	N-NNS	Art-GMS	N-GMS

1. “**Shadow**” is caused by the light shining of the actual object. The shadow is not the real object. It is often times not even a clear representation and often casts an image that is disproportioned.
2. Holding to a shadow or studying a shadow for reality can be misleading. Especially when the real object is clearly available for use, study and worship.
3. Hebrews 8:5-7 –
*“They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, ‘See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.’ But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as **the covenant he mediates is better**, since it is **enacted on better promises.**”*
4. Hebrews 10:1-2, 10 –
*“For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come **instead of the true form of these realities**, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?... And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”*
5. “**Reality**” or “**substance**” or “**body**” is the translation of **soma** which basically means “a body”.
 - a. Interestingly, and maybe importantly, this *soma* is the same word used by Paul in 1:18 and 2:19 to refer to the “body (*soma*) of Christ”:
 - i. Colossians 1:18 –
*“And he is the head of the **body**, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.”*
 - ii. Colossians 2:19 –
*“and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole **body**, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.”*

2:18 – “Let no one **disqualify** you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind,”

3367 [e]	4771 [e]	2803 [e]	2309 [e]	1722 [e]	5012 [e]	2532 [e]	2356 [e]	3588 [e]	32 [e]
mēdeis	hymas	katabraβeuetō	thelōn	en	tapeinophrosynē	kai	thrēskeia	tōn	angelōn
18 μηδεῖς	ὑμᾶς	καταβραβευέτω	, θέλων	ἐν	ταπεινοφροσύνη	καὶ	θρησκεία	τῶν	ἀγγέλων ,
No one	you	let disqualify	delighting	in	humility	and	[the] worship	of the	angels
Adj-NMS	PPro-A2P	V-PMA-3S	V-PPA-NMS	Prep	N-DFS	Conj	N-DFS	Art-GMP	N-GMP

3739 [e]	3708 [e]	1687 [e]	1500 [e]	5448 [e]	5259 [e]	3588 [e]	3563 [e]	3588 [e]	4561 [e]	846 [e]
ha	heoraken	embateuōn	eikē	physioumenos	hypo	tou	noos	tēs	sarkos	autou
ἃ	έώρακεν	ἐμβατεύων	, εἰκῆ	φυσιούμενος	ὑπὸ	τοῦ	νοῦς	τῆς	σαρκὸς	αὐτοῦ ,
which	he has seen	detailing	vainly	being puffed up	by	the	mind	of the	flesh	of him
RelPro-ANP	V-RIA-3S	V-PPA-NMS	Adv	V-PPMP-NMS	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Art-GFS	N-GFS	PPro-GM3S

1. Here **mystery religions are introduced**. They would involve visions by those members who had:
 - a. been initiated by performing certain rites
 - b. having entered physically into the inner parts of the sanctuary
 - c. communicated with angels
 - d. entered the throne room of heavens
2. “worship of angels” is not biblical
 - a. This would involve worshiping through a hierarchy of spiritual beings in order to attain the next level which would result in ultimately seeing the throne of God for some faithful worshippers.
 - b. Angels in the Bible are servants of the Lord sent to fulfill the Lord’s will and serve the heirs of salvation:
 - c. These angels are likely the already conquered rulers, authorities principalities and powers of the fallen, rebel angels.
 - i. Thus, these are those that create confusion with:
 1. False doctrine
 2. False religious practices
 - ii. These fallen angels are the ones that take captive Christians and steal their productivity and growth
3. These false worshippers appear to be **spiritual, advanced, deep, committed or mature**, but in their “puffed up mind of flesh” they think they are spiritual, but they are merely misled into empty mysticism. Or, demonism.
4. Note the direct connection with:
 - a. “the flesh” (*sarkos*, often translated “sin nature”)
 - b. “the mind” (*noos*)
 - c. “humility” (*tapeinophrosyne*)
 - d. “worship” (*threskeia*)
 - e. Visions, revelation or insight (“detailing what he has seen”)
5. The concept of “false humility” is a mere appearance since it is actually self-promotion or self-glorification. True promotion or glorification occurs in Christ and by Christ.
6. There is no growth, maturity, fruit or productivity in this scenario.
 - a. There is a lot of noise, activity, rules, rituals, sacrifice, etc.
 - b. It seems very, very religious.
 - c. But it is off this age.
 - d. A zero

2:19 – “and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.”

2532 [e]	3756 [e]	2902 [e]	3588 [e]	2776 [e]	1537 [e]	3739 [e]	3956 [e]	3588 [e]	4983 [e]	1223 [e]	3588 [e]	860 [e]	2532 [e]			
kai	ou	kratōn	tēn	Kephalēn	ex	hou	pan	to	sōma	dia	tōn	haphōn	kai			
19	καὶ	οὐ	κρατῶν	τὴν	Κεφαλὴν	,	ἐξ	οὗ	πᾶν	τὸ	σῶμα	,	διὰ	τῶν	ἀφῶν	καὶ
	and	not	holding fast	to the	head		from	whom	all	the	body		by	the	joints	and
	Conj	Adv	V-PPA-NMS	Art-AFS	N-AFS		Prep	RelPro-GMS	Adj-NNS	Art-NNS	N-NNS		Prep	Art-GFP	N-GFP	Conj

"Grows the growth of God"

4886 [e]	2023 [e]	2532 [e]	4822 [e]	837 [e]	3588 [e]	838 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]
syndesmōn	epichorēgoumenon	kai	symbibazomenon	auxei	tēn	auxésin	tou	Theou
συνδέσμων	ἐπιχορηγούμενον	καὶ	συμβιβαζόμενον	αὐξεῖ	τὴν	αὐξήσιν	τοῦ	Θεοῦ
ligaments	being supplied	and	being knit together	increases	with the	increase	-	of God
N-GMP	V-PPM/P-NNS	Conj	V-PPM/P-NNS	V-PIA-3S	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Art-GMS	N-GMS

1. These false teachers and their followers in the church have been separated from Christ:
 - a. Galatians 5:4-5 –

“You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.”
 - b. Romans 8:23 –

“Not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”
 - c. 1 Corinthians 1:7 –

“Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly await the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
2. “**supported**” or “**being supplied**” – *epichoregoumenon* – is present participle meaning the process of support and nourishment is continuing today.
3. Likewise, “being knit together” is an ongoing experience of the True Church.
4. The last phrase of 2:19 is literally, “**it grows the growth of God**”
 - a. This seems to mean “the church grows into the growth of God”
 - b. Meaning the church is growing into the image of God, or we are being individually and corporately transformed into the image of Jesus Christ to fulfill the purpose of God.
5. The false teachers may call themselves “Christian”, but they are not growing the growth of God.
 - a. They are not being transformed into the image of Jesus Christ
 - b. They will not fulfill the purpose of God.

2:20 – If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations—.

1487 [e]	599 [e]	4862 [e]	5547 [e]	575 [e]	3588 [e]	4747 [e]	3588 [e]	2889 [e]	5101 [e]	5613 [e]	2198 [e]	
Ei	apethanete	syn	Christō	apo	tōn	stoicheiōn	tou	kosmou	ti	hōs	zōntes	
20 Εἰ	ἀπεθάνετε	σὺν	Χριστῷ	ἀπὸ	τῶν	στοιχείων	τοῦ	κόσμου	,	τί	ὡς	ζῶντες
If	you have died	with	Christ	away from	the	principles	of the	world	why	as if	living	
Conj	V-AIA-2P	Prep	N-DMS	Prep	Art-GNP	N-GNP	Art-GMS	N-GMS	IPro-ANS	Adv	V-PPA-NMP	

1722 [e]	2889 [e]	1379 [e]
en	kosmō	dogmatizesthe
ἐν	κόσμῳ	, δογματίζεσθε :
in	[the] world	do you submit to decrees
Prep	N-DMS	V-PIM/P-2P

1. Those who follow the false teaching are not living in the victory and freedom of being in Christ.
2. The elemental spirits (fallen angels and demons) can only put people into the bondage of this age:
 - a. self-help
 - b. self-service
 - c. human effort
 - d. will power of mankind
 - e. contemporary fads, phases, methods
3. There is no power, no freedom and no growth in Christ in false teaching. Only religious slavery to the fallen nature of man.

2:21 – “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”

3361 [e]	680 [e]	3366 [e]	1089 [e]	3366 [e]	2345 [e]
Mē	hapsē	mēde	geusē	mēde	thigēs
21 Μὴ	ἅψη !	μηδὲ	γεύση !	μηδὲ	θίγης !
Not	you should handle	Not	you should taste	Not	you should touch
Adv	V-ASM-2S	Conj	V-ASM-2S	Conj	V-ASA-2S

2:22 – (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings?

3739 [e]	1510 [e]	3956 [e]	1519 [e]	5356 [e]	3588 [e]	671 [e]	2596 [e]	3588 [e]	1778 [e]	2532 [e]	
ha	estin	panta	eis	phthoran	tē	apochrēsei	kata	ta	entalmata	kai	
22 ἅ	ἐστίν	πάντα	εἰς	φθορὰν	τῇ	ἀποχρήσει	,	κατὰ	τὰ	ἐντάλματα	καὶ
which	are	all	unto	decay	with the	use	according to	the	commandments	and	
RelPro-NNP	V-PIA-3S	Adj-NNP	Prep	N-AFS	Art-DFS	N-DFS	Prep	Art-ANP	N-ANP	Conj	

1319 [e]	3588 [e]	444 [e]
didaskalias	tōn	anthrōpōn
διδασκαλίας	τῶν	ἀνθρώπων
teachings	-	of men
N-AFP	Art-GMP	N-GMP

2:23 – These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

3748 [e]	1510 [e]	3056 [e]	3303 [e]	2192 [e]	4678 [e]	1722 [e]	1479 [e]	2532 [e]	5012 [e]
hatina	estin	<u>logon</u>	men	echonta	sophias	en	ethelothreskia	kai	tapeinophrosyne
23 ἅτινά	ἐστίν	λόγον	μὲν	ἔχοντα	σοφίας	, ἐν	ἐθελοθρησκία	καὶ	ταπεινοφροσύνη
which	are	an appearance	indeed	having	of wisdom	in	self-imposed worship	and	humility
RelPro-NNP	V-PIA-3S	N-AMS	Prtcl	V-PPA-NNP	N-GFS	Prep	N-DFS	Conj	N-DFS

"word", "idea", "statement", "analogy"

"a valuing", "a price", "respect", "honor"

2532 [e]	857 [e]	4983 [e]	3756 [e]	1722 [e]	5092 [e]	5100 [e]	4314 [e]	4140 [e]	3588 [e]	4561 [e]
kai	apheidia	sōmatos	ouk	en	<u>timē</u>	tini	pros	plēsmonēn	tēs	sarkos
καὶ	ἀφειδία	σώματος	, οὐκ	ἐν	τιμῇ	τινι	, πρὸς	πλησμονήν	τῆς	σαρκός .
and	harsh treatment	of [the] body	not	of	honor	a certain	against	[the] indulgence	of the	flesh
Conj	N-DFS	N-GNS	Adv	Prep	N-DFS	IPro-DFS	Prep	N-AFS	Art-GFS	N-GFS

1. Appearance:

- a. "Wisdom"
- b. "Religion" (self-made religion)
- c. "Asceticism" from *tapeinophrosune* /tap-i-nof-ros-oo-nay/ = "lowliness of mind", "humility"
- d. "Harsh Treatment" from *Apheidia* /af-i-dee-ah/ = "unsparing treatment", "severity", "severe treatment"

2. Reality:

- a. No value against indulgence of the flesh
- b. No life to overpower, overcome death in the sin nature