

Rooted in Christ – A Study of Colossians - Lesson 11

Women of Grace | GraceLife Church

19 and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God. 20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees: 21 “Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch”? 22 Which deal with everything destined to perish with use, which are in accordance with the commands and teachings of men; 23 which are matters having, to be sure, a word of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence. --Colossians 2:19-23

Day 1—Verse 19

*and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.
—Colossians 2:19*

1. How does not holding fast to the head defraud us of our prize?

2. How does the head (Christ) supply the entire body?

3. Read Philippians 4:19. What does it mean that God will supply all our needs?

Heart check:

- Has legalism, mysticism, or anything else kept you from holding fast to Christ? If so, what needs to change in your life?

Day 2—Verse 20

If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees: --Colossians 2:20

1. What does Paul mean by “if you have died with Christ”?

2. In the book of Colossians, what realities do verses 2:12, 2:20, and 3:1 point to?

3. What do the following verses teach about the believer’s union with Christ?
 - a. Colossians 3:3

 - b. Colossians 3:4

 - c. Galatians 2:20

 - d. Romans 6:8

- e. Romans 6:3-4

 - f. Ephesians 2:5-6
-
4. What are some of the benefits we enjoy because of our union with Christ? See Romans 5:16-21 and 6:4-6.

 5. What are the elementary principles of the world?

 6. How have we died to the elementary principles of the world?

 7. Why do we submit ourselves to the elementary principles of the world? Or the traditions of men? Or philosophy?

Day 3—Verse 21

“Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch” --Colossians 2:21

1. From verses 16-23, Paul is dealing with 3 “isms”. In verses 16-19 we deal with legalism and mysticism. In verses 20-23 Paul deals with asceticism. Define the word asceticism.

2. What rules might we have today about not handling, tasting, touching?

3. How do legalism, mysticism, and asceticism all intersect?

4. What would be the antithesis to asceticism?

5. How does Matthew 6:16-18 broaden your understanding of asceticism?
 - a. Is there a difference between asceticism and self-denial/discipline?

- b. Is there a place for self-denial/discipline in the life of the believer?
-
- 6. What does Paul tell us about outward acts in 1 Timothy 4:8?
-
- 7. From Romans 14:17, what should we be focusing on pursuing?

Day 4—Verses 22-23

Which deal with everything destined to perish with use, which are in accordance with the commands and teachings of men; which are matters having, to be sure, a word of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence. --Colossians 2:22-23

- 1. What things are destined to perish?
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
- 2. What things are destined to last for eternity? Use Scripture to support your answer.

3. A temptation for many is to equate the way that you fulfill the commands of Scripture (application) with Scripture itself (doctrine): to give it the same weight as Scripture. Why is this so dangerous?

4. How do such things have the appearance of wisdom?

5. Why do self-made religion, self-abasement, and severe treatment of the body have no value against fleshly indulgence?

6. Do you agree with Martin Luther who said, “It is certain that man must utterly despair of his own ability before he is prepared to receive the grace of Christ”? Why do you agree or disagree?

7. Read Genesis 3:1. How does that verse tie in with what Paul is talking about in Colossians 2:16-23?

Heart Check:

- Are there any man-made commandments and teachings that you are attempting to use to either gain favour with God or to sanctify yourself?

Day 5—Verse 23

which are matters having, to be sure, a word of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence. --Colossians 2:23

1. What are examples of:
 - a. A word of wisdom in self-made religion

 - b. Self-abasement

 - c. Severe treatment of the body

2. Why are these things so appealing to our flesh?

3. What things might we be doing today to make us outwardly appear to be righteous?

4. Read Matthew 6:16-18. What does this passage teach us about the value of outward righteousness?

5. Read 1 Samuel 16:7. What does God look at when he judges a person?

6. From these passages what are some of the things which are pleasing to God?
 - a. 1 Samuel 15:22

 - b. Psalm 19:14

 - c. Psalm 51:16-17

 - d. Psalm 147:11

 - e. Matthew 22:37-40

 - f. Romans 12:1-2

g. Hebrew 11:6

h. Hebrews 13:16

7. How should we see our bodies? See 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

8. What value do these man-made teachings have against sin and indulgence?

a. How does one put off sin?

b. From Galatians 5:16-25, how are we to live?

9. How does trying to follow legalism, mysticism, and asceticism disgracing our Head (Christ) and taking away from His work and the work of the Spirit?

Heart check:

- Are you relying on self-made religion, self-abasement, and/or severe treatment of the body?
- What does following these type of rules ultimately show about our hearts?
- Are you doing things to make yourself appear righteous on the outside, but have no effect on your heart?
- Where do you see legalism in your own heart? Take steps to root out the root of that sin, confess it, and put on obedience to Christ and love of others in its place.

Dig Deeper:

Listen to Pastor James on this topic:

<https://gracelife.ca/sermons/evangelical-asceticism/>