

INTRODUCTION

I. Let no man judge you. "separate you." The word means to select, choose; to determine so as to pass judgment. "meat, drink, holyday, new moon, sabbath days." Christ did not die in order to approve certain ceremonies, or settle sectarian arguments.

"body" Christ is the living body, of which the Old Testament ceremonies and laws were but shadows.

--He is the last Adam; to which the first is a shadow

--He is the Husband of the Church; Adam was a shadow

--He is the Head of the race: Adam was a shadow

--He is the Father of the faithful; Abraham is a shadow

--He is the High Priest: Aaron was a shadow

--He is the true lawgiver: Moses was a shadow

--He is the Lamb of God: all sacrifices were but shadows

--He is the ark of safety; etc.

II. Don't be "beguiled of your reward." "Disqualified." as an umpire would disqualify a racer. You will be cheated of your reward;

"Vainly puffed up by the fleshly mind." The flesh is opposed to the spiritual wisdom: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed...." The wisdom and glory of the world.

III. Not holding the head. The sum is this. We must cling to Christ. He is the end of our study. He is the end of our morality and our virtues. He is the end of every figure and every illustration in the Bible.

There is no fullness apart from Him; but we are but dead branches, fit only to be gathered up and burned. There is no "more perfect" Christianity: those who have gone beyond Christ. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will find their meat and their drink in Christ alone.

This Theme is further developed in the passage before us this morning.

Let us look at our subject, our text before us:

I. The errors: picky and petty restrictions on outward things: touch, taste, handle. The key is man-made restrictions. Stuff you make up. These things emphasize vain SHOW "APPEARANCE" Meats and Drinks perish with the using: What enters into the body does not defile the man. Not what enters in, but what comes out.

A. Show of wisdom in will worship: "An appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion." It appears to be wise and prudent.

B. False Humility

C. Neglect of the Body. The body is not our enemy; except as it becomes the instrument of sin. It's desires MAY prove our undoing, if we yield to sin; just as Jesus was tempted to turn stones to bread, because of the hunger of his body. But neglect of the body does not overcome or conquer sin.

II. The truth: 3:1-3

- A. A Christian belongs to Christ. The question is not so much what you do or do not do, but to whom you belong. If you belong to yourself, then you are dead to good and alive to sin. Rom. 6:20-23. If you belong to yourself, then you are enslaved to sin.
 - B. If you belong to Christ, then you have been raised with Christ and your conversation is in Heaven. You are dead to the world, and live to things above. Go with that; do not deny it, but affirm and live in that new life; reject and put off the old man.
 - C. To seek things above is to seek Christ. HE IS OUR LIFE. vs. 4.
- III. The ethics of Christ vs. the ethics of the world. The end of chapter 2 speaks of the ethics of the world, which are involved in show and made-up things. Dead men, worshipping dead gods, with dead works. In order for you to get to heaven, but you must please God. Look at these passages:
- A. You must seek Him by faith: He is in heaven. You will not find him upon the earth. Heb. 11:6: "Without faith it is impossible to please him, for he who come to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Are you going to find him on the earth; among images and man-made religion; and your own desires and ambitions. NO NO NO NO. You must seek Him by faith: from your heart and in His promises.
 - B. You must seek Him in Christ: 2Pet. 1:17 "For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God is well pleased with Jesus Christ. He is His beloved Son from eternity. All of his love and favor are wrapped up in Jesus Christ. You must come to him in His Cross; You must come to Him in His resurrection. Death to your old life and your old man in His cross; and newness of life and righteousness in His resurrection: This is what you will find in Jesus Christ.
 - C. You have then a different standard of right and wrong; different than you ever had before. It will be real and not just vain show--not pretense and vanity. These are passages that you should consider:
 - 1. I Thess. 2:4 "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts." We do not pretend that we seek to please God. This is very common. We pretend that we are seeking God's will, when really we are seeking to please men; or we are seeking to please ourselves. God tries the heart.
 - 2. Heb. 13:15, 16: "By him therefore let us offer to sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."
 - a) Thankfulness: a life lived not in anger and rage, envy and strife, but in thanksgiving.
 - b) Doing good: We are to do good to people; not evil; seek their good; more of this in a moment.
 - c) communicate: share (NKJ): HC. 55. The sin of non-communication: Are there people you refuse to speak to; to do good for; to shun? Look at Matthew 5:46,47. Greet only your brethren. We are to be friendly to all men.
 - 3. Col. 1:10: "That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." to please Him, not yourself. Fruitful in every good work [Here we go again] increasing in the knowledge of God.

4. Romans 15:3. "For Even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written...."
If Christ is in you, there is something in you that draws you to God, and away from yourself.
5. Micah 6:6-8 "Wherefore shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgressions, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Do justly: "Thy law is the truth."

Love mercy: No one keeps the law

Walk humbly: God resists the proud; the know-it-all; big in the head, and small in the heart.

6. 1John 3:22 "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him."

SEE HC 89, 90

SEE HC 114, 115

The difference between the ethics of the world and those of heaven is right here: The first finds the goal and the approval in this world; the other seeks it in Heaven in Jesus Christ. The first does not find what it seeks, and lives in deceit, pretense, anger, malice and wrath, and ends in hell and damnation; the other finds all things in Jesus Christ, and absolute perfection in the world to come.