

“Cling To Christ”
Colossians 2:16-19

Introduction:

1. Let's Turn Back In Our Bibles This Morning:
 - To Colossians 2:
 - Where The Apostle Paul:
 - Has Been Reminding The Colossian Church:
 - As Well As All Of Us:
 - Of The Great Treasury We Have In Jesus Christ!
 - And How:
 - Through The Fulness Of Christ:
 - He Offers Us:
 - A Complete Filling & A Complete Forgiveness:
 - Through Our Faith In Him!
2. Well - In The Verses:
 - We Come To This Morning:
 - We Find Another Rich Blessing:
 - Given By The Lord To His People!
 - And That Is:
 - Complete Freedom!
 - Freedom:
 - From All Those Chains:
 - That - At One Time - Kept You:
 - From Being Able To Love The Lord & Live For The Lord:
 - The Way He Originally Intended!
3. And So - In 2:16-19:
 - The Apostle Paul Addresses:
 - Two Major Errors:
 - That Were Being Used To Loosen:
 - The Grip Of Those Christians:
 - From Their Faith & Confidence In Christ!
 - 2:16-19 - “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: / Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. / Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, / And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God!”

* The First Major Issue Was:

1. ***The Chains Of Jewish Religiosity!***
 - In 2:16-17 - Which Consisted Of:
 - Many Different Kinds Of:
 - Rules That:
 - The False Teachers Were Demanding The Christians To Keep!
 - And Those Regulations:
 - Were Not Just Being Used:
 - As A Measurement:
 - Of Their Relationship With God!
 - They Were Even Considered To Be:
 - The Means:
 - Of Their Relationship With God!
 - And So - Beginning In 2:16:
 - Paul Describes Some Of:
 - The Examples Of These Chains!
 - He Gives 5 Examples:
 - Including - “Meat” & “Drink” & “HolyDays” & “The New Moon” & “The Sabbath!”
 - These Were All Jewish Institutions Originally:
 - And Were Given By The Lord:

- To His People!
 - And - As Far As They Went - They Were “Holy & Just & Good!” (Romans 7:12)
- The “Meat” & “Drink” Here:
 - Refers To The Jewish Dietary Laws:
 - That Restricted The People Of Israel:
 - From Eating & Drinking In A Way That Was Considered “Unclean” By The Lord!
- The “HolyDays” Here:
 - Refer To The Jewish Feasts & Festivals:
 - Where All Of God’s People Would Gather Together:
 - To Remember & To Celebrate God & All Of His Works Of Grace Toward Them!
 - There Were 7 Main Jewish Feasts:
 - All Recorded For Us:
 - In Leviticus 23!
- The “New Moon” Here:
 - Refers To The Monthly Celebration:
 - When They Would Come Before The Lord In Anticipation Of The Month To Come!
- And The “Sabbath” Here:
 - Refers To The Weekly Day Of Rest & Worship:
 - Reserved For God’s People!
- Again - All Of These Jewish Institutions:
 - Were Originally Given By The Lord:
 - To His People!
 - And - As Far As They Went - They Were “Holy & Just & Good!” (Romans 7:12)
- But At The Time Paul Was Writing These Words:
 - The False Teachers Were Trying To:
 - Refit These Jewish Chains:
 - Onto Their Christian Faith!
 - But They Couldn’t!
 - Because Of:
- The Emancipation From These Chains!
 - Paul Wanted To Remind Them – And Us:
 - That Jesus Christ Came:
 - To Free Us From These Chains!
 - This Is Why He Begins:
 - 2:16 - In This Way - “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days!”
 - This Means - Do Not Let Anyone:
 - Convince You That There Is More To Be Done:
 - For Your Salvation - Other Than Faith In Christ Alone!
 - None Of These External, Religious Observances:
 - Were Ever Even Designed:
 - To Be The Measurement Or The Means:
 - Of Your Relationship With God!
 - And So - They Ended Up:
 - Becoming Chains:
 - To Those Who Thought They Were Right With God!
 - But Then - Jesus Came!
 - And His Cross:
 - Became Our Own:
 - “Emancipation Proclamation!”
 - And He Made Us Free & Gave Us A Right Understanding Of:
- The Essence Of These Chains!
 - 2:17 - “Which are a shadow of things to come!”
 - This Is What All Of Those Old Testament Rituals & Regulations Were All About!

- They Were But “Shadows!”
- Now - A Shadow:
 - Is Not An Object Itself!
 - It Is Just A Dim Outline & A Faint Resemblance Of An Object:
 - That Is Standing In Front Of A Light!
- But - As The Light Changes:
 - So Does The Shadow!
 - Hawaii Is The Only State In The US Where It Is Possible For You To Not Have A Shadow!
 - Twice A Year - When The Sun Reaches High Noon - Known In Hawaii As “Lahaina Noon!”
 - All Shadows Disappear! They’re Gone!
- And This Is What All Of Those:
 - Old Testament Ceremonial Laws & Observances:
 - Were All About!
 - They Were Just Fleeting Shadows Of A More Enduring Object!
 - Or - Rather - The Most Enduring Object! The Lord Jesus Christ!
- This Is Why Paul Adds:
 - In 2:17 - “But The Body Is Of Christ!”
- This Means That:
 - The Meat Regulations:
 - Were But Shadows Of:
 - The Words Of Christ:
 - Which Is The Real Meat Of His People!
 - Matthew 4:4 - “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God!”
 - The Drink Regulations:
 - Were But Shadows Of:
 - The Fellowship Of Christ:
 - Which Alone Will Quench The Thirst Of His People!
 - John 6:55-56 - “For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. / He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him!”
 - The Holy Days:
 - Were But Shadows Of:
 - The Joy Of The Lord:
 - Which Is A “Joy No Man Taketh From You!” (John 16:22)
 - The New Moons:
 - Were But Shadows Of:
 - The Change Of The Lord:
 - Which He Alone Could Make In Your Heart!
 - A “Circumcision Made Without Hands!” (2:11)
 - The Sabbaths:
 - Were All But Shadows Of:
 - The Rest Of The Lord:
 - That He Offers To Anyone Who Will Come To Him In Faith!
 - Matthew 11:28-29 - “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. / Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls!”
- You See - In Christ:
 - You Are Now Free To Enjoy:
 - All Of These - Without The Use Of:
 - Those Old Shadows!
 - And Since The High Noon Of The Coming Of Christ - Those Shadows Have All But Disappeared!
 - So Now - In Christ:
 - Every Meat Is Clean:
 - And Every Day Is Holy!
 - And You Are Free:

- To Love Christ & To Live For Christ With All Your Heart!

- So - Cling To Christ!

- Don't Be Rebound By These Old Chains:

- Of Religiosity!

- Because - Even Today - This Danger Still Exists!

* But Then - Paul Addresses The Second Major Issue - Which Was:

2. *The Chains Of Worldly Philosophy!*

- Which He Already Confronted Back In 2:8 - "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ!"

- But In 2:18-19 - He Adds - "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, / And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God!"

- So - This Worldly Philosophy:

- Consisted Of Even More Restrictions & New Revelations They Claimed To Be From God!

- And So Once Again Paul Describes Some Of:

- The Examples Of These Chains!

- This Worldly Philosophy Consists First Of:

- A Pose!

- That Is - The False Teachers Possessed A "Voluntary Humility!"

- This Means That They Pretended To Walk Humbly Before God:

- But, Instead, It Was All A Show!

- Because - In Truth - They Ignored:

- The Will Of Christ:

- To Serve In True Humility - Even As Christ Himself Came To Serve!

- This Worldly Philosophy Also Consisted Of:

- A Practice!

- The Practice Was A - "Worshipping Of Angels!"

- It Seems As If The False Teachers, In Their False Humility, Thought That They Could Never Approach Jesus Directly - They Needed The Aid & Help Of Different Kinds Of Angels!

- Now, To Us - This Seems Like Quite A Far-Fetched Idea! But - Isn't This What The Roman Church Believes They Must Do Through Jesus' Mother, Mary, And Other Saints?

- But - In Truth - They Ignore:

- The Work Of Christ:

- As The Sole Mediator!

- 1 Timothy 2:5 - "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus!"

- This Worldly Philosophy Also Believed In:

- A Perception!

- They Were Constantly - 2:18 - "Intruding Into Those Things Which He Hath Not Seen!"

- They Were Dwelling On What They Claimed To Be New Visions & Revelations From God!

- And Yet - They Ignored:

- The Word Of Christ:

- As The Foundation Of Their Faith! But Even More:

- This Worldly Philosophy Possessed:

- A Pride!

- A Pride That Was Empty Of Truth!

- Because It Was "Vainly Puffed Up By His Fleshly Mind!"

- They Ignored:

- The True Wisdom Of Christ!

- And So Paul Reminds Us Again Of:

- The Emancipation From These Chains!

- You See - Jesus Christ Came:

- To Free Us From These Chains As Well!

- And So - Paul Says:
 - In 2:18 - "Let no man beguile you of your reward!"
 - That Is - Don't Let Anyone:
 - Deprive You Or Defraud You:
 - Of Your Reward As A Christian!
- What Reward Is That?
 - It Can't Be:
 - Your Filling From Christ!
 - Because - 2:10 - "Ye Are Complete In Him!"
 - It Can't Be:
 - Your Forgiveness From Christ!
 - Because - 2:13 - He Has "Forgiven You All Trespasses!"
 - So - The Reward Seems To Be:
 - Your Freedom In Christ!
 - You Are Free To Be Faithful To Him!
 - Albert Barns - "You Are Not Responsible To Man For Your Conduct, But To Christ! And No Man Has A Right To Impose That On You As A Burden From Which He Has Made You Free!"
 - And This Leads Us To:
- The Essence Of These Chains!
 - In 2:19 - The Reason Worldly Philosophy Is Empty & Useless Is Because:
 - It Is - "Not Holding The Head!"
 - That Is - Those Who Are Promoting Worldly Philosophy In The Church:
 - Are Dethroning Christ - Who Alone Is "The Head Of The Body, The Church!"
 - And - Tragically - Many Christians Follow Their Lead:
 - And "Let Go" Of Christ!
 - Though Christ Does Not Let Them Go:
 - They "Let Go" Of Him!
 - Now - Why Would Any Church:
 - And Why Would Any Christian:
 - Do Such A Thing?
 - Yet - How Many Still Do?
 - When Jesus Reached Out And Grasped The Hand Of Peter:
 - To Keep Him From Sinking In The Sea Of Galilee:
 - Imagine If Peter Had Tried:
 - To "Let Go" Of Jesus' Hand!
 - Foolish!
 - Still Is!
 - Yet - How Much Of The World's Philosophy:
 - Has Weakened Your Own Grip:
 - On Christ?
- Yet - In Christ:
 - You Are Now Free:
 - To Know & Pursue After:
 - His Will!
 - His Work!
 - His Word!
 - And His Wisdom!
 - Because They Are So Much Better:
 - Than This World Has To Offer!

Conclusion:

1. So - You Need To Cling To Christ!
 - You Have Been Freed By Him:
 - From All These Chains:
 - That Once Held You Back!
 - Cling To Christ Instead!
2. Afer All:
 - Christ Alone:

- Is Your Strength - And The Strength Of The Church!
 - 2:19 - "From which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered!"
 - Jesus Is The Only One Who Can Nourish Us - By Forming In Us His Own Character & Love!
- Christ Alone:
 - Is Your Support - And The Support Of The Church!
 - 2:19 - "And Knit Together!"
 - But Even More:
- Christ Alone:
 - Is The Source - Of Your Growth:
 - And The Growth Of The Church!
 - 2:19 - "Increaseth With The Increase Of God!"
- 3. This Is Why:
 - We All Need Him!
 - This Is Why:
 - You Need Him!
 - So - Cling To Him!
 - Cling To Christ!
 - What Other Chains Are Holding You Back:
 - From Gripping Onto Christ:
 - With All Your Might & All Your Strength?
 - Remember - You Have Been Freed:
 - From All Of Those Chains!
 - So That You Can Now - Cling To Christ!

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