

**Message #11****Colossians 2:16-19**

Heretics will become more and more visible and vocal as we near the end. The doctrines of demons will be presented in selective ways and will entice many. It will seek to rob us of our confidence, of our value and of our joy. False Christ's and false doctrines will come at believers from every angle in an attempt to sway them from their focus on Christ.

**IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT YOU ARE COMPLETE IN JESUS CHRIST, DO NOT ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE JUDGED BY THE LEGALIST OR ROBBED BY THE MYSTIC .**

The conjunction "therefore" is both inferential and continual. Being inferential, it bases the challenge on the previous verses, meaning in view of the fact that you are complete in Christ and all He has positionally done for you. Being continual, it continues the thought, meaning everything Christ is and has done for us should cause us to continue on and not allow the legalist or mystic to sway us by their seductive and enticing words.

There will always be those who will try to get you to go back under the O.T. Law. They will try to convince you Christ is not enough. There will always be those who will tell you that you are missing some mystical experience and they will also tell you Christ is not enough. Paul's point is don't let either one faze you one bit.

**COMMAND #1** – Do not let yourself be judged by the legalist. **2:16-17**

A legalist, in this context, is one who tries to tell you that you must keep the O.T. Law in order to be right with God. To the legalist, Jesus Christ is not enough to make you right with God, but you must also keep the O.T. Law of God.

The present tense imperative verb "judge," with the negative prohibition "let no" indicates that this action was already in progress and needed to be stopped (Dana & Mantey, p. 301).

In other words, Jewish legalists had already sneaked into the church and were judging, determining and decreeing one's spirituality by one's adherence to the O.T. Law. Many of these Colossians were being pronounced as unspiritual and as lacking in their lives because they were not conforming to the O.T. Law.

**Sphere #1** - Believers were being judged in reference to food . **2:16a**

Some were using the O.T. Mosaic dietary food laws as a basis for determining who was really spiritual. There is no question that under the O.T. Law for Israel there were strict dietary codes (i.e. Leviticus 11). However, it is also equally clear that those codes were completely abolished by Jesus Christ. This truth was specifically stated by Jesus Christ (Mark 7:19), was specifically revealed to the Apostle Peter (Acts 10:13-15) and was specifically written by the Apostle Paul (Rom. 14:17; I Tim. 4:3-5).

Dietary codes are gone. Any person who tries to get you to think that they are more spiritual than you because of what they eat or don't eat is a legalist.

**Sphere #2** - Believers were being judged in reference to drink. **2:16b**

There were certain laws of drink which the O.T. required. For example, a Nazarite, who was one completely set apart unto God in the O.T., was not to drink any wine, strong drink, vinegar or grape juice. In fact, he wasn't even allowed to eat grapes during the days of his separation (Num. 6:2-5). Apparently these drinking codes carried over into the N. T. age, for there were some who still maintained that real spirituality was determined by what a person did or did not drink (Rom. 14:21).

Our spirituality is linked to Jesus Christ—period! It has nothing to do with what we eat or drink; it has everything to do with our relationship with Him. Don't ever allow anyone to judge your spirituality by what you eat or drink.

**Sphere #3** - Believers were being judged in reference to days. **2:16c**

The words “in regard” indicate that people were being judged as to how they shared or participated in the O.T. legal days. The early church met together on the first day of the week, which is Sunday. John Eadie says many believers met both on Saturday, the Sabbath, and on Sunday, the Lord's Day until A.D. 364, when meeting on the Sabbath was condemned by the council of Laodicea. Since Laodicea is named in Colossians (2:1; 4:15, 16), it is clear that this day legalism was attacking the church (John Eadie, p. 177).

The three days named here are all from the O.T. and refer to years, months and days.

**(Determination #1)** - Some were being judged by their participation at the yearly festivals.

In Leviticus 23 there were the annual feasts of the Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Wave Loaves, Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles.

Some of the Colossians were being judged on the basis of whether or not they participated in these yearly festivals.

**(Determination #2)** – Some were being judged by their participation at the monthly new moons. Num. 28:11-15; I Chron. 23:31; II Chron. 2:4, 31:3

Every month there were special Sabbath observances based on the position of the moon. It was important that Jews celebrate their festivals on precisely the day that God prescribed, and since they did not carry calendars, the moon was used to determine when a new month began and ended.

**(Determination #3)** – Some were being judged by their participation at the weekly Sabbath days.

Christians met every Sunday, the first day of the week. Many of them were being deemed as unspiritual and not right with God because they didn't go to all the Saturday Sabbath meetings at their local synagogues.

Christians are not under the O.T. Law. This does not mean we are not subject to any law, for we are under the law of Christ (I Cor. 9:21).

There are many N.T. biblical principles for the Grace Age that govern food, drink and days, all that fall under the umbrella of the "law of Christ":

- 1) I am wrong if I judge another's spirituality on the basis of what he eats or doesn't eat.  
Rom. 14:2-4
- 2) I am wrong if I judge another's spirituality on the basis of his special day observances.  
Rom. 14:5-6
- 3) I sin if I use my liberty concerning what I eat, drink or do to cause a weaker brother to stumble. Rom. 14:13, 21; I Cor. 8:10-13
- 4) I am right if I realize not every believer will be at the same level and see things the same way.  
Rom. 14:14, 20
- 5) I am right to keep my own personal liberties between myself and God. Rom. 14:22
- 6) I sin if I do something my conscience says is wrong. Rom. 14:23; I Cor. 8:7
- 7) I am in disobedience and sin if I do not attend church on a regular habitual basis. Heb. 10:25

Now **verse 17** gives us insight as to why we should not allow our spirituality to be determined by the O.T. Law—namely because all of those food regulations, drink regulations and day regulations were nothing more than a shadow of the real thing.

A shadow is nothing more than a dark reflection of the real substance. The real substance that makes one right with God is found totally and completely in Jesus Christ. All O.T. things pictured in dark shadow form the full and finished work of Jesus Christ.

**COMMAND #2** – Do not let yourself be robbed by the mystic. **2:18-19**

Lost people are religious people.

**Way #1** - A mystic will try to defraud you by false humility. **2:18a**

Make no mistake about it; a heretic from hell will be humble. He will come on you and at you in some seemingly humble and lowly spirit. But mark this and mark it well; behind the false face of humility is a mind and heart that is so proud it will not bend to the authority of the Word of God and to the truth concerning Jesus Christ!

**Way #2** - A mystic will try to defraud you by false doctrine. **2:18b**

A mystic is out to rob you of your relationship with God by getting the focus off of Jesus Christ and onto something else like angels.

**Way #3** - A mystic will try to defraud you by his false visions. **2:18c**

All heretics claim to have some special revelatory information beyond that of the Bible. They will claim they have seen things or experienced things that prove they are true.

Mystics will try to pull you away from the written Word of God into their experiences and visions. From Mormons, to Charismatics, from Moonies to Catholics, the message will be the same, the Bible isn't enough; "listen to my experience; we have more revelation from God." It is all a lie!

**Way #4** - A mystic will try to defraud you by his false reasoning. **2:18d**

A mystic is going to try to outsmart you. Make no mistake about it; his mind is inflated and fleshly.

**Way #5** - A mystic will try and defraud you from the true head. **2:19**

Everything about the family of God is contingent upon its head, who is Jesus Christ (1:18). Jesus Christ is the One who holds the body together and gives it its life. All growth and potential growth in one's relationship with God comes from one's relationship with Jesus Christ.

Don't let a legalist judge you and don't let a mystic rob you. Everything you need to finish a prize-winner is found in Jesus Christ. When you have Him in your life and you are committed to growing deep into the Word of God, and you are fellowshiping with His body in the church of God, you will grow to completion. Don't let anyone tell you any different!