

The Wrong Kind of Religious Effort

Colossians 2:16-23

September 21, 2014

Sermon Outline

Notes:

I. Introduction

A. Children's Sermon: Perfect & Being Made Perfect

Hebrews 10:14

...by a single offering [Jesus] *has perfected for all time* those who are *being sanctified*.

B. Paul's Warning: God's Life in Jesus or Man's Effort

Colossians 2:6-8

⁶ Therefore, *as you received* Christ Jesus the Lord, *so walk in him*, ⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. ⁸ **See to it that no one takes you captive** by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits [principles, rudiments – KJV] of the world, and **not according to Christ**.

C. In Jesus We are Not Guilty!

Colossians 2:13-15

¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God *made you alive together* with him, *having forgiven* us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ *by canceling (wiping out) the certificate of debt* consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has **taken it from** among us, *having nailed* it to the cross, ¹⁵ **disarming** the rulers and authorities, **he put them to open shame**, by triumphing over them in him.

Key Idea

Jesus legally took our place so we could be pardoned and are free to approach the Father. Beware of self-made religious strategies apart from Jesus.

II. Do not Let Anyone Steal Your Freedom

A. Jewish Shadows (Jesus Our Circumcision/Baptism)

Colossians 2:16–17

¹⁶ Therefore **let** no one **pass judgment** on you in *eating and in drink*, or in regard to *a festival* or *a new moon* or *a Sabbath*. ¹⁷ **These are a shadow** of *the things to come*, but **the body [substance, reality] belongs to Christ**.

Galatians 3:2-3

...**Did you receive the Spirit** by works of the law or by **hearing with faith**? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

B. False Piety

Colossians 2:18

¹⁸ Let no one **disqualify** (*rob of a prize*) you, *insisting on asceticism* and *worship of angels*, who *go on in detail about* the things he has [not - MT] seen, being **puffed up** without reason by his fleshly mind...
²¹ “**Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch**” ²² (referring to things that all perish as they **are** used)—according to *human precepts and teachings*?

Merriam-Webster: *asceticism* - practicing strict self-denial as a measure of personal and especially spiritual discipline

C. Discipline is Not Our Savior

Colossians 2:19–20, 23

...puffed up without reason by his fleshly mind ¹⁹ and **not holding fast to the Head**, from whom the whole body, *nourished* and *knit together* through its joints and ligaments, **are caused to grow** with *a growth that is from God*.

²⁰ If with Christ **you died** to *the elemental [principles or rudiments] of the world*, why, as if you were still alive

in the world, **are you being obligated** to regulations—
(Do not...)

²³ These *have* 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*.

III. Application

A. Be Discerning... Watch out for self-made religion

1. Notice pride & discouragement
2. Notice a judgmental attitude toward others
3. Notice when your religious activities are not obsessed with Jesus & His work

B. Jesus is the Only Way to the Father

Hebrews 9:24, 26–28

²⁴ For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. ... he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages *to put away sin* by the sacrifice of himself.

²⁷ And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, ²⁸ so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but *to save those* who are eagerly waiting for him.

C. Jesus Our Justification & Sanctification

Hebrews 10:12–18

¹⁴ ...by a single offering he *has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified*.

¹⁵ And *the Holy Spirit also bears witness* to us; for after saying, ¹⁶ “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: *I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their*

minds,”¹⁷ then he adds, “I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

Key Idea

Jesus legally took our place so we could be pardoned and are free to approach the Father. Beware of self-made religious strategies apart from Jesus.