

Colossians 2:16-23

Week 6 - Trading Legalism For Leadership

? Have you ever used a virtual reality headset? If so, what was your experience like? If not, are you interested in trying one out? Why or why not?

Colossians 2:16-19 (NIV)

¹⁶ Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. ¹⁸ Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind. ¹⁹ They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

In verse 16, Paul provides a few examples of practices that believers should not be judged upon: *Religious festivals* refer to Jewish feasts, *New Moon* refers to monthly celebrations, and *Sabbath day* refers to the observance of the seventh day of the week. These were practices false teachers were insisting new believers should follow in order to be Christians. Verse 18 refers to another practice: the worship of angels. One interpretation is that these teachers were calling on angels to ward off evil spirits instead of calling on Jesus (and that they did this to an extent that it resembled worship). Angel worship could also be based upon the visions they claimed to have seen (verse 18), or it could stem from their false humility, which may have included the claim that humans are not spiritual enough to approach God directly. *Bible.org. Colossians Series, Lesson 13.*

? Why does Paul state that the Colossians should not be judged based on what they eat, drink, etc.? (Hint: Reread Col. 2:13-15)

? Paul's audience includes both Jews and former pagans. How do these false teachers present a roadblock for both groups?

? What alternative does Paul offer to both the Jews and the former pagans?

? What does it mean that Christ is "the head" of the body?

? What happens when Christ is replaced as the head?

? Why are we tempted to replace Christ's leadership in our lives with a set of rules?

? Although modern believers may not struggle with putting the observance of Jewish traditions in place of trusting Christ, what do we attempt to replace Christ with instead?

Colossians 2:20-23 (NIV)

²⁰ Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: ²¹ "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? ²² These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. ²³ Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

? What value is there in following rules and regulations in everyday life?

? Why aren't the regulations described in this passage helpful in our fight against sin?

? How can we live free from these useless rules?

? How can we identify our cravings for the approval of others and trust Christ's leadership in our lives instead?

Questions For Discussion And Accountability

? What is one area where you can focus on trusting Christ's leadership this week?

? How can your small group encourage you and provide accountability as you seek to open up this area to Christ?