

## Colossians 2:8-15 JESUS OVER LEGALISM

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Colossians / Colossians 2:8-17

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[Colossians 2:8-15](#) “8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. 11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. “15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.”

In our study of Colossians last time we talked about the conflict or agony that Paul had in his heart for those that are lost; and for Lukewarm believers such as in the Church of Laodicea.

We saw how Paul wanted to encourage the believers and how he wanted the Church in Colossae and for us as well to have our hearts knit together with JESUS, and HIS love for us.

We looked at briefly, some of the treasures that we have in JESUS. First and foremost JESUS. We saw that through our relationship with JESUS, that we are joint heirs of GOD. We have open access to GOD’s throne room to obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need. We talked about how GOD cares

about the smallest needs that we have and that HE has promised to meet our needs.

We examined and talked about how the cults will try to deceive through persuasive words; and how we need to define our terms when talking to other people about who JESUS is. Paul warned us of this in [Acts 20:29-30](#) “29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.”

The cults as wolves like to prey upon unsuspecting people to draw them into the false group. Pastor Mike McIntosh who was Senior Pastor at Horizon Christian Fellowship in San Diego, CA described how those in some of the cults would come to his church and sit in the back rows listening. After service they would be proselytizing and trying to steal the “sheep.” He would call them out during a message for what they were doing. (Share about cult at former job.)

Sometimes the wolves will show up during service and want to talk about how to properly study the Bible. The Pastors are the overseers and are to watch and warn the flock. Watch out for those who seek to sow discord among the Brethren.

We looked at being rooted and grounded in JESUS. How do this? [Psalm 1](#) Talked about the man or woman, who: “2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.”

This past weekend as I was driving through my town I noticed several trees that were uprooted from recent storms. These trees did not split due to rot, but were pulled out by their roots. The roots of these trees were wide but they weren't deep. They could not withstand the recent storms. As believers we are not promised to not have trials; but the deeper our roots go into the Bible and to JESUS, the better will be able to withstand the trials.

We concluded by looking at several empty philosophies that are permeating our society today. We will only look at one in a little detail again. They are :

- a. Solipsism
- b. Idealism
- c. Phenomenalism
- d. Presentism
- e. Enternalism
- f. Nihilism is focused on the assertion that life has no intrinsic purpose.
- g. Hedonism
- h. Skepticism - But philosophical skepticism, unlike methodical skepticism, does not focus on questioning individual statements to validate or invalidate; rather, it questions if there is a possibility for a certainty in any knowledge.

The point in any of these philosophies which exclude the LORD; is that life without the LORD is meaningless.

Tonight in this section of Colossians we are going to explore the subject of legalism.

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines legalism as the following: *strict, literal or excessive conformity to the law or to a religious or moral code.*

In Christian terms; this would mean how people try to perform good works to earn GOD's favor.

[Colossians 2:8-10](#) “8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”

In verse 9 we read that in HIM (JESUS) dwells all the fullness of the GODHEAD bodily.

The word fullness means and refers to the filling of a ship with freight, merchandise, sailors, oarsmen and soldiers. It also means completeness. The cults will attack the Deity of JESUS Christ. As we read last time; the Mormon's believe JESUS is God, but the spirit brother of Lucifer. The JW believe that JESUS is Michael the Archangel. Both of these groups do NOT believe in the Trinity. They will also challenge you that JESUS, never claimed to be GOD.

Turn to [John 1:1](#) "1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

We know that the word WORD refers to JESUS and this verse shows that JESUS was with GOD the FATHER in the beginning. The Greek literally reads; "In the beginning was the WORD and the WORD was with GOD and GOD was the WORD.

In the JW's perversion Bible, called the New World Translation they change this verse by adding the definite article "a" before God in the last half of [John 1:1](#) the Word was a God.

Let's look at a few more verses and look at JESUS' claims.

[John 5:18](#) "18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God."

The word equal means equal in quantity or quality.

[John 8:24](#) "24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.""

The word "he" in verse 24 is in italics in your Bible, showing that it was added by the translators to help clarify the passage. (read again without he)

[John 8:58-59](#) "58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." 59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him."

[Exodus 3:14](#) “14 And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ ””

JESUS in [John 8:24](#) and 8:58 is claiming to be the voice of the Burning Bush.

As you read your Bibles, I want you to be sensitive to how the Holy Spirit inspired the writers. What was the method of execution in the old testament? Stoning for blasphemy. As you are reading through the Gospels, be sensitive to the Jews (referring to the JEWISH religious leadership;) picking up stones when confronting JESUS. The Holy Spirit is pointing out another reference where JESUS is referring to HIMSELF as GOD. Who is the “I AM?”

[John 10:30-33](#) “30 I and My Father are one.” 31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. 32 Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?” 33 The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.”

[Colossians 2:9](#) “9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;”

The word for Godhead is the Greek word theotes (theh-ot-ace). Means GOD or Godhead. Those in the cults or Islam may challenge you that the word “Trinity” is not in the Bible. That is true. The Bible is not in the Bible, but we believe in it. While the word Trinity is not in the Bible, the concept is clearly taught.

Several years ago the JW’s published a pamphlet titled;”Should you believe in the Trinity?” I was very young in the Faith when this came out and I read it. It like all of their publications are craftily and deceptively written. (Explain: verse fragments... & Why you should believe in the Trinity.)

After crying out to GOD, believing that HE is true and that the JW’s have had false prophecies. I asked HIM to reveal the truth to me. The LORD began to show me verses where the concept of the Trinity was in The Bible. We will only look at a few.

[Deuteronomy 6:4-5](#) “4 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

Both times the word LORD is used. It is the Hebrew YHWH (which is the tetragrammaton) and is the name Yehovah. The word for GOD is the Hebrew word elohim and is a plural for GOD. The word one is the Hebrew word ehad and refers to a compound unity. It is different from the HEBREW word yacheed which means an absolute unity. Another example of ehad (compound unity) was when Joshua and Caleb brought out one cluster of grapes. I believe the reference of verse 5 of loving GOD with all of our heart, soul mind and strength

Another verse that he showed me about the Trinity is [2 Corinthians 13:14](#) “14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.”

If you have doubts in your mind about who GOD is or HIS nature; HE already knows. GOD can handle sincere questions. HE is looking to reveal HIMSELF to you in a greater fashion.

[Colossians 2:9-10](#) “9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”

Verse 10

We have been created with an emptiness or hole in our heart. Some people try to fill this void with the pursuit of wealth. John D. Rockefeller; who founded Standard Oil. At his peak, owned Ninety percent of all of the oil and gas industry. At the peak of his wealth, Rockefeller’s Net worth was the equivalent of one percent of the economy of the United States. Bill Gates, Warren Buffet and Jeff Bezos would be considered “poor” compared to the wealth of Rockefeller.

Even with all this wealth, Rockefeller was asked how much more wealth he needed to be satisfied, his answer,” Just a little more.”

Some people pursue sports. Tom Landry the Coach of the Dallas Cowboys during the 1970’s. After the Cowboys won their first Super Bowl, the feeling in the locker room was one emptiness and shallow. They had climbed the mountain and won the world championship, but then the pursuit came to win another. Landry said,” ...even after you’ve just won the Super Bowl-especially after you’ve just won the Super Bowl-there’s always next yer. If winning isn’t

everything; it's the only thing, then the only thing is nothing — emptiness, the nightmare of life without ultimate meaning.”

Many desire the fame and status of the Hollywood elites or musicians. How many actors; actresses or musicians end their lives by suicide; expecting the fame and notoriety to fill the emptiness in their souls; only to find that it doesn't.

King Solomon; the richest and wisest man in the world, sought many different pursuits and wealth. Described a life without purpose when he said, [“Ecclesiastes 12:8”](#) “Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher, “All is vanity.”

at the end of his life; he wrote what life is really about.

[Ecclesiastes 12:13](#) “13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.”

Continuing in verse 10: “who s the head of principality and power.”

The phrase the head of, refers to a position of authority.

[1 Corinthians 11:3](#) “3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”

The phrase of principality and power refers to JESUS being the cause or the beginning of all things and the ability to fulfill this. Principalities and powers typically refers to ranks in the spiritual realm. JESUS is greater than an created fallen angel or demon, including Lucifer.

[Colossians 2:11-12](#) “11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

Circumcision was part of the Abrahamic Covenant; that was passed down Isaac and then to Jacob; whose name was changed to Israel. Circumcision was a sign that the Jewish people were to be separate from the world. The Jews began to put their faith in the fact that they were circumcised and thought that they were

accepted by God because of circumcision and the law. They were looking at an outward act to cover the sins in their heart. Paul described the position of those trying to appease GOD by outward actions, rather than inward motives.

[Romans 2:25-29](#) “25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. 26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? 27 And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? 28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.”

In [Colossians 2:11](#) by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, would refer to us turning from our sins and receiving by faith the payment that JESUS provided for us through HIS death of the Cross. The circumcision of Christ would refer to our being separate from the World and living our lives through HIS righteousness.

[Colossians 2:12](#) “12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”

Just as there are those who are trusting in the outward sign of circumcision; there are those who trust in the outward sign of Baptism to have access and standing with God.

Baptism is a symbolic outward act, that is giving proof of an inward change in the person's heart. (explain baptism with JESUS' s death and resurrection. How do we do Baptize here at CCEGV

In verse 12 God is described as the one who raised JESUS from the dead. Interestingly all the three members of the GODHEAD were involved in raising JESUS from the dead. Here is just one example of a verse referring to each member of the GODHEAD as involved in the Resurrection of JESUS.

GOD THE FATHER: [Romans 6:4](#) “4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

JESUS, GOD THE SON: [John 2:19-22](#) “19 Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” 20 Then the Jews said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” 21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body. 22 Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.”

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT: [Romans 8:11](#) “11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”

Just as GOD raised JESUS from the dead; as joint heirs with Christ, we shall be raised from the dead to forever be with the LORD.

[Colossians 2:13-14](#) “13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

Before we come to JESUS, we are dead in our sinfulness and the “uncircumcision or lack of separation from this sinful world. Sinning against GOD earns us our wages.

[Romans 6:23](#) “23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Before we surrendered to JESUS, we were merely storing up GOD’s wrath for ourselves. This is true of the unbelievers today.

[Romans 2:5](#) “5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.”

in verse 13 we are made alive together with HIM; (JESUS), having forgiven all of our trespasses, (Verse 14) “14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

The word all in verse 13 means each, every, any and all. The word contrary means opposed to. In verse 14 the word handwriting is an accounting term; that means money that was given to be held for deposit or lent.

Before we came to Christ, each and every one of our sins was recorded; for example as being written on a chalkboard. When we came to JESUS; GOD erased the chalkboard and remembers our sins no more.

Some may say, but it is only a small sin; surely GOD doesn't care about a white lie. GOD is HOLY and cannot have any sin in HIS presence.

Charles Spurgeon wrote:

“How many are mine iniquities and sins?”

—[Job 13:23](#)

Have you ever really weighed and considered how great the sin of God's people is? Think how heinous is your own transgression, and you will find that not only does a sin here and there tower up like an alp, but that your iniquities are heaped upon each other, as in the old fable of the giants who piled Pelian upon Ossa, mountain upon mountain.

What an aggregate of sin there is in the life of one of the most sanctified of God's children! Attempt to multiply this, the sin of one only, by the multitude of the redeemed, “a number which no man can number,” and you will have some conception of the great mass of the guilt of the people for whom Jesus shed his blood.

But we arrive at a more adequate idea of the magnitude of sin by the greatness of the remedy provided. It is the blood of Jesus Christ, God's only and well-

beloved Son. God's Son! Angels cast their crowns before him! All the choral symphonies of heaven surround his glorious throne.

“God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.” And yet he takes upon himself the form of a servant, and is scourged and pierced, bruised and torn, and at last slain; since nothing but the blood of the incarnate Son of God could make atonement for our offences.

No human mind can adequately estimate the infinite value of the divine sacrifice, for great as is the sin of God's people, the atonement which takes it away is immeasurably greater. Therefore, the believer, even when sin rolls like a black flood, and the remembrance of the past is bitter, can yet stand before the blazing throne of the great and holy God, and cry, “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather, that hath risen again.”

While the recollection of his sin fills him with shame and sorrow, he at the same time makes it a foil to show the brightness of mercy—guilt is the dark night in which the fair star of divine love shines with serene splendour.

C. H. Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings* (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1896).

Praise GOD!! If you are here as believer in JESUS this evening and have backslidden or a wrestling with sin, and are being condemned by the enemy; with thoughts of “What kind of Christian are you?” And you are questioning why you are not living for HIM?

I would like to ask you; “How many of your sins were yet future when JESUS died on the Cross?” ALL OF THEM.

[1 John 1:9](#) “9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

When JESUS died on the Cross; he paid the penalty for ALL of our Sins. A criminal would have their crimes written on a parchment. When the sentence was over; the word totelestai was written on the charges and meant paid in full.

When criminals were crucified in Biblical times; the criminals would be marched through the city and their crimes would be written and nailed above them on the cross. What was written over JESUS head? There was no crimes listed; because JESUS was sinless and was guilty of no crimes. Instead what was written was; “JESUS OF NAZARETH: THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

JESUS took the charges that were against us and nailed it to HIS Cross. GOD offers us a Great Exchange; when we surrender our lives to JESUS, HE imputes or places our sin upon JESUS and applies JESUS’S righteousness to our lives.

[Colossians 2:15](#) “15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.”

When JESUS died on the cross; Satan the angels that joined him in their rebellion were defeated. JESUS final words from the Cross was Totelestai. Which was a cry of Victory! The debt for our sins had been paid in full. We will NEVER EARN heaven. It is a Free Gift. IF history ended here, there would have been no victory, but three days later JESUS made a public spectacle of them and triumphed over them when HE ROSE again from the dead and proved that HE was who HE claimed to be.

We will continue on next time in Colossians.