

Title: Colossians: Union with Christ and His Church, Pt 4: “Christ + Nothing = Everything” – Colossians 2:16-23

Big Idea: Christ + Nothing = Everything!

Read Colossians 2:16-23.

What in the message stood out to you?

What questions do you have?

1. Don't be judged by legalists – Colossians 2:16-17

Read Colossians 2:16-17. What do you think Paul means when he calls dietary laws, religious festivals, and special days of the Old Testament a “shadow of the things to come?” What is the purpose of a shadow?

Judging someone based on whether or not they keep certain traditions or laws is known as “legalism.” In what ways does “legalism” detract or distract from the person and work of Jesus?

What are some modern-day forms of “legalism” that may cause us to depend on what we DO rather than on what Christ has DONE?

2. Don't be disqualified by mystics – Colossians 2:18

Read Colossians 2:18. Some people claim to be more “spiritual” than others. In Colossae, it had to do with special experiences with angels and visions. What are some ways that people might claim to be more “spiritual” than others today?

Paul writes that these kinds of experiences can cause people to be “puffed up” and to ironically have “unspiritual minds.” Why do you think this is?

In Colossae, those who had experiences like this were attempting to “disqualify” those who didn't. Should the lack of spiritual experiences cause a person to lose confidence in their salvation? Why or why not?

3. Don't lose connection to the Head (Christ) – Colossians 2:19

Both legalism and mysticism can cause us to “lose connection to the head” by causing us to rely on someone or something other than Christ. Which of these two traps do you think you are more in danger of being attracted to?

What does it look like to “hold fast” to Jesus instead of looking to legalism or mysticism?

How does holding fast to Jesus lead us to being “nourished” and growing “with a growth that is from God?”

4. Don’t be a slave to anyone or anything – Colossians 2:20-23

Read Colossians 2:20-23. Convincing us to live as slaves to rules and regulations is a demonic scheme to keep us from the fullness, forgiveness, and freedom of Christ. What is so attractive about rule-keeping? Why do you think it is so ingrained in us?

Why are rules and regulations of “no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh?”

How is the fullness, forgiveness, and freedom of Christ more effective in changing us than rules and regulations?

“Next Steps” Takeaways – Discuss and pray through the following:

- With God:
 - Accept His invitation for a life-giving relationship with Him through His Word
- With Others:
 - Establish/Continue in settings where authentic conversations about the Father, Son, and Spirit are normative.
- On Mission:
 - Daily experience the extravagant love of the Father and give it away to the next person you meet.