

Rejecting Asceticism and Clinging to Christ

Colossians 2:18,19

03/22/15
by Bob DeWaay

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Gospel of Grace Fellowship

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False Teachers Pronounce Judgment

Colossians 2:18a (HCSB)

Let no one disqualify you . . .

- “no one . . . disqualify” is imperative in the Greek
- The false teachers “disqualified” ordinary Christians who lacked certain higher order experiences
- The term “disqualify” means “judge against”
- This is parallel to Colossians 2:16

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2

Claiming to Have “Entered” a Higher Order Spiritual Experience

Colossians 2:18b (HCSB)

Let no one disqualify you, insisting on ascetic practices and the worship of angels, claiming access to a visionary realm . . .

- “insisting on” can also mean “delighting in”
- “ascetic practices” translates terms that mean “humility and worship”
- “worship of angels” can mean “the type of worship angels have” or “angels as the objects of worship”
- The passage says “entering things seen”

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3



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"Puffed Up" by the "Mind of the Flesh"

Colossians 2:18c (HCSB)

and inflated without cause by his unspiritual mind

- The word translated "inflated" is also found in 1Corinthians 8:1 concerning spiritual knowledge
- Spiritual piety can in reality be "fleshly"
- This false humility is rather an expression of pride
- F. F. Bruce = "a parade of exceptional piety"
- The gospel humbles us, secret knowledge puffs us up

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4

Disconnected From Christ

Colossians 2:19 (NASB)

and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

- The false teachers have a "Christian" religion not connected to Christ, the Head of the church.
- They have powerful, spiritual experiences, but NOT Christ!
- Colossians 1 taught the sufficiency of Christ

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5

Implications and Applications

- There are no valid secrets beyond Scripture
- We are free from the hostile powers because of the gospel, not secrets from the spirit realm
- Every Christian is attached to Christ
- The gospel humbles us and reminds us of our constant need for Christ

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6



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There Are No Valid Secrets Beyond Scripture

Deuteronomy 29:29 (NASB)

The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.

- False prophets claim to reveal secrets that are not validly found in Scripture (Jere. 14:14; Jere. 23:16)
- Divination is forbidden in the Bible
- False teachers in Colossae claimed visionary experiences

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7

Freedom From Demons Is Found in Christ

Ephesians 1:20 - 22 (NASB)

which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

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8

Every Christian Is Attached to Christ

Ephesians 4:15, 16 (NASB)

but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

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9



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The Gospel Humbles Us

Romans 8:3, 6 (NASB)

For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, . . . For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

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10

The Gospel Humbles Us

Romans 8:7, 8 (NASB)

because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, (1Peter 5:6)

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11

