

Colossians Study Week 6

Colossians 2:16-23

We have a tendency to focus on the “outward” things rather than the “inward” things. Paul starts this section off with telling them not to let others criticize them for what they eat, drink, their religious ceremonies and even the sabbath. What he was saying to them is still relevant to us today... don't focus on things on the outside, focus on Jesus alone. While our traditions and the way we worship bring us closer to God, does not mean there is a “right” way to live this thing out. Stop being so critical of the way others chose to “worship” God. We have different styles, traditions and cultures which make up the body Christ. More important than “how” we worship, is “who” we worship!

*****Read Colossians 2:16-23*****

FOCUS

More important than how we worship is WHO we worship! In verse 16, Paul is most likely talking about food and drink associated with Jewish dietary laws. Moreover, the holy days he refers to are the weekly (sabbath), monthly (new moons) and annual (holy days) celebrated by the Jewish people. These days and rituals differentiated themselves from their non-Jewish neighbors. It would have been easy to notice the people who did not observe these, thus easily looked down upon and judged. Do not live by the opinions of others, Jesus has set you free!

- **Do the opinions of others run your life? Have you ever felt not apart because of the way you lived or acted? Do you feel like you have to follow all the rules for God to love you?**
 - Read the following verses and discuss how they are related
 - Romans 14:1-8
 - Mark 7:19
 - Hebrews 9:10
 - The people had to keep the Old Testament dietary laws and ceremonial cleansing laws until Jesus came and made a better way!
 - Mark 2:27

- Hebrews 10:1
 - The old testament laws and ceremonies were called a shadow because they all pointed to one thing.... Jesus! When Jesus died and rose again He dispelled the shadow. In Jesus, we have all we need.

READ COLOSSIANS 2:18-19

Again Paul is speaking to them and us about the false teachers who have permeated the church. The false teachers had a false humility (self-abasement) that was taking the attention from God and placing it on themselves.

- **What is true humility?**
 - Read the following verses and discuss how they relate.
 - 1 Corinthians 9:24
 - Philippians 3:14
 - Proverbs 22:4
 - Matthew 10:24
 - 1 Peter 5:6
 - Proverbs 3:34
 - Matthew 11:29
 - Proverbs 3:5

READ COLOSSIANS 2:20-23

If you call yourself a Christian, people should see a difference in the way you live. Although we are not made perfectly mature the instant we give our lives to Jesus, there should be a marked difference in us. Growth is a lifelong process and we must continually be reading the Bible, spending time with Godly people and listening to what God is speaking to us. Be patient! Change and growth does not happen overnight, but continue to trust God is working in and through you!

- Since you become a believer, have you changed or grown? Think about the last year, how have your thoughts and attitudes changed?
 - **Read the following verses and discuss how they relate.**
 - Romans 6:2
 - Colossians 2:8

- Galatians 4:9
- Colossians 2:14-16
 - So how do we die with Jesus and how are we raised with Him? When you give your life to Jesus you become a new recreation, and given a new life through the power of the Holy Spirit!
- 1 Timothy 4:3
- Romans 3:14
- 1 Timothy 4:8
 - How can we guard ourselves from man made religious rules that do more damage than good? We can ask ourselves these questions: 1. Does it stress man made rules rather than God's grace? 2. Does it stress formulas, secret knowledge, or other revelations more than the Bible? Does it elevate self righteousness, rule following and honoring those that follow the rules really well, over Jesus? Does it claim to be an elite group of believers?
 - We cannot reach God by following rules, observing rituals or by being "religious". Paul is not saying rules are all bad, but he is saying that following them will not earn your salvation. Do not focus on human effort, focus on what Jesus did on the cross. Our salvation does not depend on how good we are or the rules we follow, but depends on the power of Jesus' death and resurrection.
- John 3:16