

Lesson 18
Colossians 2:18-19

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*** Start Recorder ***



Announcements:

A. **Building the Ministry:** Each of us is here because we were invited.

- Make a *habit* of inviting men to join us.
- Invite your church buddies and other men of the church.
- Invite your dad, adult sons, uncles, cousins, friends, neighbors, and co-workers.
- Invite any adult male believers without a church home.

B. **Need a Communications Manager:**

- Manage small groups rosters.
- Reminder texts, special communications, etc.
- One-page, bi-weekly newsletter (items posted to website).
- Member of the church in good standing.
- Mature, faithful, and trustworthy individual.
- Time availability: 1-2 hours a week.

C. **Small Groups Forming Now:**

- Several Small Group Leaders have answered the call.
- You may be invited to join a group soon, but you can choose your own group.
- Encourage you to bring your Bibles and perhaps a notebook or a prayer journal.

Colossians 2:18-19 (07-Oct-2023)

Introduction

Read Colossians 2:18-19

Colossians 2:18 (NOTES)

- “defrauding you” - Literally, “let no one act as umpire against you.” That is, believe no one who claims that you are "disqualified" (ESV) as a member of God’s family, or deny that your Christian faith is insufficient for your membership in God’s family, or talk you out of the assurance of your salvation by convincing you to reject Scripture and Christ and instead, trust in their rituals, keep their man-made rules, and pursue their special knowledge.
- “reward” - Some translations as “prize” = assurance of salvation. Not that they could take your salvation away, but could convince some that the Gospel they trusted is insufficient, and that they need to do more, and learn more, and experience more before their salvation can be secured and complete.
- “delighting in self-abasement” - False humility; mock humility. They were pretending that God is so high and great that He must be approached through created beings – Intermediaries, such as angels. Remember, the Gnostics claimed matter (You, me, the earth, the universe) is evil, and God cannot interact with evil, lest He become tainted and defiled or made unclean. We see this in Roman Catholicism today, which argues that God should be approached by lower beings who can act as mediators, such as Mary and the so-called "saints."

Discussion: How does this kind of belief hurt us as Christians? Why does it matter that, in false humility, one deems oneself unworthy to appeal directly to God and instead choose to rely on intermediaries like saints, or Mary, or angels, or other spiritual beings (aeons)?

- False humility is a wrong view of oneself. We should not pretend that we are lowly, unacceptable to God, or worthless. This makes Him a liar. This can only draw us away from God to false mediators; not toward Him.

- “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” 1Ti 2:5
- Using intermediaries denies Scripture and the sufficiency of Christ to make us acceptable to God through His shed blood, which covers our sin.
 - "For if we go on sinning willfully [rejecting Christ] after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?" He 10:26-29
- It destroys our prayer life, because we are no longer praying to God as Jesus instructed us to do in the model prayer. If we are not praying to God, we are praying to a false God or to a false mediator. Since Christ died to open the way to God, we can go directly to Him in Prayer through Jesus, who is our Mediator.
 - “Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, through His flesh, ... 22 let’s approach God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” He 10:19-22
- It leads to the "worship of angels" and also of "saints" (dead Christians) because we pray to them instead of God, we appeal to them, elevate them, and trust in them.
- “delighting in ... the worship of the angels” - The heretics were asserting that their worship of angels (using the lower beings as intermediaries) rather than God Himself was an expression of humility on their part. False humility is actually an expression of pride. In the case of false humility, one is lifted up in pride in his self-deprecated ingenuity to engage a mediator. "See, look how lowly and humble I am that I won't even approach God on my own."

- The Catholic practice of praying to Mary or other so-called “saints” as intermediaries rather than appealing directly to God the Father is an affront to God and a direct contradiction to the clear teaching of Scripture.
- Humility is not passivity or false modesty. It is having a correct view of oneself, one’s relationship to others, and one’s relationship to God. A correct self-view is neither too lowly, nor too lofty, but rather realistic.
 - "For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith." Ro 12:3
- Humility is the absence of self-awareness. Not the loss of self or the loss of consciousness of self, but of the preoccupation with self. True humility is best expressed through gratitude, submission, obedience, and a teachable spirit.
- “taking his stand on visions he has seen” - Imagined or alleged. Such ones harp on their “visions,” claiming more than what they can prove. We have all seen people in the Church, some maybe false believers, who have claimed the most fantastic things - they met Jesus, they went to heaven, they had a vision.
- “fleshly mind” - (Gr. - tes sarkos, lit. - of the flesh). These heretics do not have the mind of Christ because they are not regenerate and indwelt by His Spirit. They are controlled by their own fleshly thoughts, driven by desires and lusts of the flesh, and even deluded by them.

Colossians 2:19 (NOTES)

- "and not holding fast to the head” - Paul explained earlier in the letter (1:18) that Christ is the Head of the Church.
 - "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body." Ep 5:22-23
- He says, “and” not holding fast to Christ. Paul is not accusing the believers at Colossae of not holding fast to Christ. Rather, he is adding *not holding fast to Christ* to the list of legitimate accusations from the prior verse that he is making against the Gnostic false teachers:

- vs. 18 - “delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels”
- vs. 18 - "taking his stand on [visions] he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind”
- vs. 19 - “and not holding fast to the head”
- Paul is warning the church not to allow itself to be defrauded, and not to accept the claims of the Gnostic false teachers.
- Since Christ is the Head of the Church, by rejecting Jesus, the Gnostics have denied their only possibility of eternity with God.
 - "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.” Ac 4:12

Discussion: The Head of the Church is Christ “from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.” What are the two things in this verse Paul reveals are from our source, the Head of the Church? And to what do they refer?

“but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all [aspects] into Him who is the head, [even] Christ, 16 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.” Ep 4:15-16

- “being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments” - What are these joints and ligaments that supply and hold the Church together? The leaders and members living out their individual callings, spiritual giftedness, and love in the Body. Each person has something to contribute for the common good of the Church - holding it together and building it up.
- Church Leadership: “And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.” Ep 4:11-12

- Church Laity: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. ... 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ... 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. 12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. ... 25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another." 1Co 12:5-25
- "grows with a growth which is from God" - How does the Body grow with a growth from God? Two ways: first by quantity and second by quality. As more people are converted through Christ, the Church grows numerically. As the Body ministers to itself in love, giftedness, and calling, by the power and guidance of the Spirit of Christ living in us, it grows spiritually to maturity into the image of Christ.
 - Ep 4:12-14 "for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of people, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;"
- "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." - To sum up this verse, Paul is saying that the Church needs to reject Gnosticism, cling to Christ, and stay close to Him, because in doing so, the Church is woven together like a strong sturdy fabric, it grows numerically in new believers and spiritually in maturity, and it ultimately protected from the constant attacks of false teaching, which works to destroy it.

Application: Were there any new concepts you picked up today? Is there anything you're having trouble accepting in these doctrines? Did anything stand out that may prompt you to do further study? Do you feel confident that you can explain the doctrines of deity and trinity to your family, other believers, nonbelievers?

Closing Prayer

Small Groups