

## Going About It the Wrong Way Colossians 2:20-23

We have often heard people say: “We are all trying to get to the same place,” or “We’re all working to get to heaven aren’t we?” The ideas that folks have about getting to heaven are numerous. But all religious roads do not lead to heaven; for Jesus said that there is only one way to heaven. In John 14:6, Jesus said: “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

Colossians chapter two is filled with warnings about folks who try to lead people astray, to lead them down the paths of destruction spiritually. Let’s review some of the warnings:

1. Col 2:4- warning against smooth talk, enticing words, persuasive arguments used by the deceivers.
2. Col. 2:8- warning against the philosophy and vain deceit of men’s traditions.

In Colossians 2;14, Paul reminds the Colossian saints that rules, as a means of salvation, were blotted out and nailed to the cross of Christ.

Salvation and spirituality are not based on man-made rules, nor ascetic rules of self-denial.

### I. VSS 20-21, JESUS PAID IT ALL

A. Vs 20, The Christian died with Christ, was buried with Him, and is raised with Him (vss 12-13; Rm 6:1-6).

1. By trusting in the finished work of Christ, we have made a complete break from works salvation and have victory over sin!
  - a. In Galatians 2:18-21, Paul tells us that the law does not and cannot save. This is also brought out in Rom 3:20, 28). If we can be justified by the Law, then Christ died for no purpose.
  - b. Trusting in the law of human works is contrary to the principles of salvation by grace (Eph 2:8-9 “For by grace are ye saved. . .”
  - c. Salvation is solely on the basis of Christ’s redemptive merit (Rm 5:6-11).
  - d. Eternal life is the gift of God, “not of works lest any man should boast.” In John 17;2, Jesus says: “As thou hast given him [Jesus] power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast

given him.” (Vs 6, 9).

1- Eternal life is not a reward or a loan.

2- Eternal life is a gift of God’s free grace given to men who neither earned or deserved it (Rm 6:23). Grace is God taking the initiative, uncoerced, and unobliged, to meet the needs of people who cannot help or sustain themselves. Grace is God blessing a people who deserve the very opposite.

e. Let me emphasize that salvation is a free gifts, a gift of grace (Rm 5:15-19). “Much more” in verse 15 means that Christ did much more through grace than Adam undid by sin.

2. “Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances.”

a. By relying on the Law and man made rules for salvation, the Colossians would be acting like they were still lost, in the world, separated from salvation by grace, and separated from Christ.

b. Christians are in the world physically speaking, but we are not of the world spiritually (Jn 17:15-16).

c. Colossians 1:13 tells us that we have been translated, transferred into the kingdom of God’s dear Son.

1- Our lives are to be governed by the precepts of God’s Word, not the rules of men (Isa 28:10).

2- Let us not glory in the works of the flesh; let us glory in the finished work of the Lord (Gal 6:14).

d. We are set free from the bondage of works salvation. To return to works for salvation is to turn to that which will draw us away from Christ (Gal 4:9-13).

B. Vs 21, Don’t don’t don’t! A long list of negatives does not make a positive spiritually when the negatives are man made. We are not saved by not eating certain things, etc.

1. The false teachers at Colossae added to and perverted the words of scripture just as Eve perverted the Word of God in Genesis three when she said concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: “God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it” (Gen 3:3). God did not say not to touch, just not to eat it (Gen 2:16-17).

2. From the beginning, man has been perverting the Word of

God and that perversion goes on today.

3. I Timothy 6:17 tells us that God, "Giveth us richly all things to enjoy." Of course, as Christians, we do need to be disciplined in what we eat and drink. We need to keep our bodies under control (I Cor 9:27). Remember: "Whether therefore ye eat or drink of whatsoever ye do do all to the glory of God" (I Cor 10:31).

## II. VS 22, DOOMED TO DESTRUCTION

- A. On how foolish it is to base our salvation or our spiritual victory on food which in the process of nature is doomed to destruction.
  1. God gave us food to eat and enjoy. Food goes into the belly not the heart (Mk 7:18-23).
  2. Food or the avoidance of it does not make us spiritual. In reality, such practices draw men away from Christ (Isa 29:13).
- B. Jesus denounced those of His day [ministry on earth] who made null and void the Word of God for the sake of their man-made traditions (Mt 15:6 "...thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition...")

## III. VS 23, SELF-DENIAL DOES NOT SAVE

- A. Neglect of the body will never save the soul.
- B. Self-denial might look spiritual, but it really breeds pride. It is a vain attempt to appear to be more spiritual than others. Folks who follow the false teachers make a real show of their religion. This Jesus spoke against in Matthew 6:16-18.
- C. Some find fleshly satisfaction in religious ritual. They feel a tingle, a twinge, or a fuzzy feeling. Salvation is a fact not a feeling (II Tim. 1:12). The practitioners of ascetic religion, in fact, many times worship themselves.

**CONCLUSION:** Neglecting body does not nourish the spirit. The child of God does not need crutches for spirituality; he has a divine nature that determines his appetite (II Pet 1:4).

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