

Don't Be Spoiled Colossians 2:8-10

INTRO: Back in verse 4, Paul cautioned the Colossians: “And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.” Paul warned the saints at Colossae about sweet talking preachers that would victimize them. In verse 8, Paul says: “Beware lest any man spoil you. . . .” “Beware” means to look out! We need to be on the look out for that which appears to be wise but is worldly.

The danger of being led astray was real in Paul’s day, and it is real today. Because the danger is real, we need to “Beware”!

I. VS 8, EMPTY PHILOSOPHY

A. “Beware” is the Greek word *blepo*. We have already said that it means to look out. It also means, “to see, to discern, to see with the mind’s eye.”

1. We need to be on our guard. Too many Christians are swallowing everything that has a Jesus sticker on it.
2. Those who heed the warning of Paul in our day are regarded as extremists, as unkind, unloving, uncaring, and cold-hearted. The admonition of scripture is still so: “Let God be true and every man a liar” (Rm 3:4).
3. The local church is under constant danger of being invaded by false teachers. Some churches are actually inviting the enemies of truth to their pulpits.
4. Jesus says: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Mt 7:15).
 - a. In Acts 20:24-31, Paul cautioned the Ephesian elders that: “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch [be on the alert].”
 - b. To the Philippians, Paul wrote: “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of concision....” (Phil 3:2).

B. “Lest any man spoil you....” The Greek word for “spoil” is *sulagogeo*. This is a word used only here in the New Testament.

1. *Sulagogeo* is a compound word made up of *sule*, “booty,”

- and ago, “to carry off.”
2. Literally, it means “to kidnap,” or “to carry off as booty, or spoils of war.” This is the idea found in II Timothy 3:6 where the scriptures says: “For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive [captive] silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lust [various impulses].”
 3. False teachers do not go out and reach the lost. They “kidnap” converts from churches.
- C. “Through philosophy and vain deceit.”
1. “Philosophy”– Greek *philosophia* means “to love wisdom.” It is OK to have a true Christian philosophy of life, a Christian world view. The problem with the false teachers that were attacking the church at Colossae was that they were not satisfied with the truth of the Word of God. They added to it works, idols, pagan practice.
 - a. The false teachers wanted to teach men an additional philosophy. The simple truth preached by Jesus and preserved in the Gospel was not enough. It had to be filled in by an elaborate plan, system, of philosophical thought which was far too difficult for the simple to understand, leaving only the intellectuals in the “in” crowd. We are to stick with the Gospel as defined in I Cor. 15:1-4. We are not to pervert the truth (Gal 1:6-9, 4).
 - b. This very thing is happening today, even in Baptist churches. The simplicity of the Gospel has been exchanged for a system of salvation, always thinking about some new thing to add. C. H. Spurgeon says of our lack of strength and weakness to follow some elaborate system: “To begin with, one man will say: ‘Sir, I do not seem to have the strength to collect my thoughts and keep them fixed on those solemn topics which concern my salvation. A short prayer is almost too much for me. It is partly so, perhaps, through natural weakness, partly because I have injured myself through excessive drinking, and partly because I worry myself with worldly cares so that I am no capable of those high thoughts which are necessary before a soul can be saved....You need

not, therefore, despair. That which is necessary to salvation is not continuous thought, but a simple reliance upon Jesus. Hold onto this one fact: 'In due time Christ died for the ungodly.' This truth will not require you to do any deep research or profound reasoning or convincing argument. There it stands: 'In due time Christ died for the ungodly'" (70-71).

- c. How can those who have been rescued from darkness (Col 1:13) avoid being carried off and enslaved by false teaching?
 - 1- Know the doctrines of the faith!
 - 2- Do not add to the pure and plain teaching of salvation by grace (Eph 2:8-9).
2. "Vain deceit." The false teachers taunted their philosophy and the epitome of wisdom, actually it was just empty deception.
 - a. "Deceit" is the Greek word *apartes* meaning "deceitfulness, fraud, or trick."
 - b. The philosophy of the Colossian false teachers was not at all what it appeared to be. It sounded good, real religious; but it was empty!
- D. "The tradition of men," Greek *paradosis*, "that which is given from one to another." Remember this, just because people have believed and handed something down for years does not make it true. Tradition often perpetuates an error.
 1. The first century Jews had traditions that kept them from the truth (Mk 7:5, 8-9).
 2. Gentiles also had their traditions; traditions do not save; but the blood does (I Pet 1:18).
- E. "After the rudiments of the world." The Greek word translated "rudiments" basically means, "one of a row or series."
 1. In ancient Greece, this word meant, among other things, "the elemental spirits of the universe, the angels that influenced the heavenly bodies."
 2. The false teachers wanted men to accept a system of astrology.
 - a. The Gnostic believed that angels and heavenly bodies influenced people's lives.
 - b. This teaching is "not after Christ," so we need to stay away from horoscopes and spiritism.

II. VSS 9-10, THE ALL SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST

- A. Vs 9, Jesus Christ is the fullness of God, and that fullness dwells in Him bodily, continually, and permanently.
1. This has been true throughout all of eternity. He was, is, and forever will be in every way, God in fullness.
 2. The Athanasian Creed says: "The Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: The Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal."
 3. Christ can tackle all of our problems, and He understands all of our fears, heartaches, and trials.
- B. Vs 10, Every believer shares in the fullness of Christ. He is the all sufficient Savior! We are complete in Him: we need no other. We are filled to the full as far as salvation is concerned.
1. We cannot add anything to salvation. "Salvation is of the Lord."
 2. The word complete in the Greek pictures a ship fully rigged, supplies, and equipped for the voyage.
 - a. In Him– is the Captain in charge. We are "In Him." This is emphasized twice in these three verses we are studying.
 - b. The Chart– the Word is to be consulted daily.
 - c. Galley– the milk and meat of the Word.
 - d. Crew– fellow Christians.
 3. Our growth comes not by adding to our salvation, but by nutrition: growing in grace.

CONCLUSION: BEWARE!

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August 9, 2009