

# COLOSSIANS

DAY 2

Colossians 2

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TRUTH OVER TRADITION

## Colossians 2: 20, 22 (NLT)

“You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world...such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them.”

## Colossians 2: 20, 22 (CEV)

“You died with Christ. Now the forces of the universe don’t have any power over you. Why do you live as if you had to obey such rules...after these things are used, they are no longer good for anything. So why be bothered with the rules that humans have made up?”

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I love fitness, and one of my favourite fitness jokes is, “if you’re a vegan who does Crossfit, what do you tell people about first?” We all know someone who is so passionate about a certain discipline they’ve established in their life that they are utterly convinced everyone else should adopt it, too. While this can be annoying at times, it would be an entirely different situation if that person was judging your character due to your lack of interest in their hobby. That is essentially what was happening in the church of Colossae. Some well-intentioned members had adopted traditions from a wide range of influences and were passionately trying to impose those traditions on the church as a whole. Having grown up in the church, I can say from experience that this tendency has yet to die out, despite Paul’s attempts to discourage it. I don’t know how many times a very well-meaning person has spoken into my life from a place of tradition instead of truth, which rarely (if ever) resulted in my drawing closer to Christ. Paul acknowledges that these suggestions might even appear wise because they “require strong devotion” but were “mere shadows...the substance is Christ.”

This doesn’t mean that we don’t speak into each other’s lives. 1 Cor. 10:24 says “Our foremost efforts should be to help others live well.” The difference boils down to two aspects – pride and trust. First, we need to recognize and rid ourselves of the pride that would cause us to say, “my way or the highway.” Next, we need to replace that prideful attitude with trust; trust that God will use us to help others live well, whether we realize it or not, and trust that our brothers and sisters are listening to the Holy Spirit for guidance in the choices they make and the way they live their lives.

When I look at the times that Jesus got angry or gave a rebuke, it was always directed towards a believer who had assigned themselves the role of gatekeeper of Jesus, or created stumbling blocks between unbelievers and Jesus. We see this with the Pharisees, the merchants at the temple, and with the disciples on more than one occasion. I don’t want us to be a church full of well-meaning gatekeepers who create obstacles between Christ and His church in the name of tradition. I want us to be a church that so deeply loves the Lord and His people that every word, every exhortation, even every gentle rebuke builds bridges and opens doors to a deeper relationship with Him.

What are some beliefs you hold onto that are rooted in tradition instead of truth? When have you allowed others to stipulate your relationship with the Lord, rather than relying on the Holy Spirit to do that work?

What is God speaking to me about in today’s reading?

**MY PRAYER FOR TODAY:**