

THE PROBLEM WITH RELIGION

Colossians 2:16-23

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¹⁶ Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—¹⁷ things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. ¹⁸ Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on *visions* he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, ²¹ “Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!” ²² (which all *refer to* things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? ²³ These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, *but are* of no value against fleshly indulgence.

1. Religion requires _____ v16-17

James 4:11-12 Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge *of it*. ¹² There is *only* one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?

Leviticus 11:2,4 Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, “These are the creatures which you may eat from all the animals that are on the earth...Nevertheless, you are not to eat of these...it is unclean to you.”

Leviticus 10:9 Do not drink wine or strong drink, neither you nor your sons with you, when you come into the tent of meeting, so that you will not die—it is a perpetual statute throughout your generations (priests).

Psalms 81:3-4 Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our feast day. ⁴ For it is a statute for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob.

Hosea 2:11 I will also put an end to all her gaiety, her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths and all her festal assemblies.

Romans 14:2,6 One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables *only*...He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.

1 Corinthians 8:8 But food will not commend us to God; we are neither the worse if we do not eat, nor the better if we do eat.

1 Timothy 4:3-5 *men* who forbid marriage *and advocate* abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴ For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; ⁵ for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.

Galatians 4:9-11 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? ¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years. ¹¹ I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

Hebrews 10:1 For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

John 1:17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

2. Religion highlights personal _____ v18-19

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity *of devotion* to Christ.

Philippians 3:14 the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 9:24 *only* one receives the prize...They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. **2**

Timothy 4:8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness.

James 1:12 he will receive the crown of life.

1 Peter 5:4 you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Romans 1:25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Revelation 22:8-9 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. ⁹ But he said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God."

1 Corinthians 3:6,7 I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. ⁷ So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

Ephesians 4:15-16 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.

3. Religion makes false _____ v20-23

Romans 6:6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin.

1 Peter 4:3 For the time already past is sufficient *for you* to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.

James 4:4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Mark 7:18-19 And He said to them, "Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him, ¹⁹ because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (*Thus He declared all foods clean.*)

1 Corinthians 6:13 Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body.

Matthew 23:27-28 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸ "So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts.