

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, July 8, 2026 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



COLOSSIANS: ROOTED IN CHRIST – PART 9

“Religion Versus Christ”

Colossians 2:8-12

“¹For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, ²that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. ⁵For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. ⁶As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” -Colossians 2:1-7 (NKJV)

“⁸ Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. ¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”
-Colossians 2:8-12 (NKJV) Beautiful!!!

BIBLICAL BACKGROUND FOR COLOSSIANS

The following is some of the general background information for the book of Colossians. Let's quickly review what we have previously said about the book of Colossians just to give us a bit of context...

Some General Background Information on Colossians:

- (1) **The author of Colossians = The Apostle Paul** - The Apostle Paul identifies himself as the author (1:1; 4:18)
- (2) **An important character in Colossians = Epaphras** - Epaphras likely planted the church by bringing the gospel he heard under Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:10) back to his home city of Colossae (1:7; 4:12)
- (3) **Date, place and type of writing = A.D. 60-62, A prison epistle/letter written from Rome** - Paul writes this letter from a Roman prison around 60-62 AD (4:16)
- (4) **Important information about Colossae = Small but diverse city** - Colossae was a small but diverse city in Rome's Asia province, modern day Turkey
- (5) **2 key words to understand Colossae = Pluralism and syncretism** - They were immersed in an environment of pluralism and syncretism where most people simply borrowed from the religious and philosophical ideas of the day
- (6) **Identified false teaching/doctrine in Colossians = "The Colossian Heresy"** - Throughout the book Paul hints at a "Colossian heresy." However, he focuses on Christ-centered, correct teaching rather than the contents of the false teaching
- (7) **What we know about this false teaching/doctrine = It is "not according to Christ"** - Whatever this false teaching is, it is "not according to Christ" (2:8) and it undermines the sole supremacy and sufficiency of Jesus
- (8) **John Calvin's summary of Colossians = "This Epistle...to express it in one word, distinguishes the true Christ from a fictitious one."**
- (9) **Layout of the book = Half doctrinal, half practical** - Like other Pauline letters, the first half builds a rich theology that the second half exhorts us to then live out

(10) Relation to other N.T. books = Ephesians and Colossians are companion books –
 These two books/letters were written around the same time, and they overlap greatly and can help explain one another

Our theme verse for this study is **Colossians 2:6-7**. This passage not only serves as a premise for this particular study, it also identifies a primary purpose for Paul's letter...

"⁶ As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving." -Colossians 2:6-7 (NKJV)

Application Questions

- 1. Why does religion apart from Christ have such broad appeal? Are all spiritual rules wrong? Are they dangerous?**
- 2. How do Christians often fall into religion rather than Christ? How can we guard against it?**
- 3. How important is baptism? What are the practical implications of baptizing infants versus baptizing believers?**
- 4. Are we just playing mental games when we consider ourselves dead to sin (Rom. 6:11) when we strongly feel the lure of sin? How does "considering yourself dead to sin" work practically?**

When a counterfeiter wants to pass off fake money, he doesn't use Monopoly money. Rather, he tries to make the bills look as genuine as possible. But reality sets in when the victim takes that counterfeit bill to the bank. The teller holds it up to the light, doesn't see the authenticating mark, and says, "Your \$100 bill is worthless!" You've been deceived by a counterfeiter!

Even more serious is when someone is deceived by a counterfeit Christ.

The victim doesn't just lose a hundred dollars—he loses eternal life! Satan is the master spiritual counterfeiter! He doesn't try to pawn off religious Monopoly money. He makes his schemes look as much like the original as possible. He speaks about Jesus Christ. He uses the Bible and Christian terminology. Satan's supposedly "Christian" religions promote good works and family values. They advocate "Christian" morality. But invariably, they present a human way of salvation that denies the deity and substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. The undiscerning think that this religion will get them into heaven, but it leads them to hell. These are some very real dangers of false religion that have grave consequences literally.

5 Dangers of False Religion:

- 1. No hope of heaven and eternal life**
- 2. Falls under the sway of Satan and demons**
- 3. Believes a lie**
- 4. No hope of salvation**
- 5. Leads to hell**

That is some of the dangers of false religions (Islam, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witness, Hinduism, Buddhism, New Age, Judaism, Scientology, Christian Science, Atheism, and false "Christian" religions like progressivism, social gospel, legalism, etc). But actually in the church today there are many false doctrine and teachers that pose a danger...

The Danger of Believing False Teachers:

According to the Bible, believing false doctrine can have several serious spiritual consequences...

- 1. Deception and straying from the truth** - The Bible warns that false teachings can lead people astray from the true gospel and sound doctrine (Galatians 1:6-9, 2 Timothy 4:3-4)
- 2. Spiritual harm** - False doctrines are described as potentially damaging to one's faith and spiritual well-being (1 Timothy 4:1-2, 2 Peter 2:1-3)
- 3. Eternal consequences**- In some passages, adhering to false teachings is associated with the risk of losing salvation or facing divine judgment (2 Peter 2:1, Revelation 2:14-16)
- 4. Division in the church** - False doctrines can cause divisions and disputes among believers (Romans 16:17-18, Titus 3:10-11)
- 5. Hindrance to spiritual growth** - Believing incorrect teachings can prevent believers from maturing in their faith (Ephesians 4:14-15)
- 6. Dishonoring God** - False doctrines may misrepresent God's character and will, potentially leading to improper worship or service (Colossians 2:20-23)
- 7. Spreading error** - Those who believe false doctrines may inadvertently spread these errors to others, compounding the problem (2 Timothy 2:17-18)

The Bible emphasizes the importance of adhering to sound doctrine, testing teachings against Scripture, and being discerning to avoid these dangers (Acts 17:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22, 1 John 4:1).

That's the sort of thing Paul was combatting in Colossae...

- If the Colossian heresy had been totally non-Christian, it would not have been so difficult to detect and resist.
- But it was a blend of Christian terms with Judaic and Greek thought.
- Since the early church did not yet have the completed New Testament, it was very susceptible to these Christian-sounding ideas.
- In our text, Paul warns against being taken captive by these destructive heresies.

“⁸ Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”
-Colossians 2:8-12 (NKJV)

Paul’s instruction here is needed just as badly today as it was when he wrote because the enemy is still in the counterfeit religion business. Paul is drawing a contrast between religion that claims to be “Christian” and the living Christ. He’s saying,

KEY THOUGHT: Union with the living Christ is far superior to empty religion

I need to warn you that there are some difficult interpretive matters in these verses. But keep in mind that Paul wrote these things to formerly pagan people who had come to Christ no more than five years before. If the Holy Spirit who inspired Paul thought that these people were capable of understanding these truths and needed this to stand firm in Christ, then we also can grasp it as we depend on Him.

2 Key Truths in the Debate Between Religion and Christ:

- 1. Religion apart from the living Christ is empty and dangerous (Colossians 2:8)**
- 2. Union with the living Christ is all we need (Colossians 2:9-12)**

RELIGION APART FROM THE LIVING CHRIST IS EMPTY AND DANGEROUS (Colossians 2:8)

“⁸ Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.” -Colossians 2:8 (NKJV)

➡ New Testament scholar J. B. Lightfoot paraphrases verse 8 this way, “Be on your guard; do not suffer yourselves to fall a prey to certain persons who would lead you captive by a hollow and deceitful system, which they call philosophy. They substitute the traditions of men for the truth of God. They enforce an elementary discipline of mundane ordinances fit only for children. Theirs is not the Gospel of Christ.”

Verse 8 is the only occurrence of the word “philosophy” in the New Testament...

- Paul was probably taking the false teachers’ term for their teaching and saying, “It sounds impressive and it promises a lot; but it’s a deceptive empty shell. If you’re not careful, they’ll carry you away as captives to it.”

- I took philosophy in college (SWT), mainly because it was required, but I wanted to see if secular philosophers had any answers to the hard questions that we all have to wrestle with.
- I appreciated the logic courses, which helped me to think through arguments and to spot fallacious reasoning.
- But I learned that while philosophers could ask a lot of difficult questions, they didn't have any viable answers.
- But in spite of not having any helpful answers, most of my professors had a smug arrogance about their own intellect.
- They delighted in shooting down the arguments for the existence of God and in pointing out what they thought were contradictions in the Bible.
- The arrogant professor in the movie, "God's Not Dead," accurately portrayed many of my college professors.

A prime example of this sort of philosophical religious arrogance is "The Jesus Seminar." It was founded in 1985 "to review each of the sayings and deeds attributed to Jesus in the gospels and determine which of them could be considered authentic" (www.westarinstitute.org/projects/the-jesus-seminar). A group of "biblical scholars" get together and vote on which sayings and deeds reported in the gospels are truly "the historical Jesus," and which were made up. They report (*ibid.*): "Among the findings is that, in the judgment of the Jesus Seminar Fellows, about 18 percent of the sayings and 16 percent of the deeds attributed to Jesus in the gospels are authentic."

The founder of The Jesus Seminar, Robert Funk, wrote (cited by Mark Roberts, www.patheos.com/blogs/markdroberts/series/unmasking-the-jesus-seminar), "We should give Jesus a demotion. It is no longer credible to think of Jesus as divine. Jesus' divinity goes together with the old theistic way of thinking about God. The plot early Christians invented for a divine redeemer figure is as archaic as the mythology in which it is framed. A Jesus who drops down out of heaven, performs some magical act that frees human beings from the power of sin, rises from the dead, and returns to heaven is simply no longer credible. The notion that he will return at the end of time and sit in cosmic judgment is equally incredible. We must find a new plot for a more credible Jesus." That is the kind of "bunk" we hear today from those posing as theologians and religious figures who are really wolves in sheep's clothing and deceptive false religionists... dangerous!

At least Funk was honest about his agenda! False teachers are usually more careful to hide their true views. But all such false teachers replace the authority of God's revealed truth with proud human reason. That's what Paul means when he calls it, "the tradition of men."

What does “the tradition of men” mean?

1. It **originates** with **man**, not with **God** -
2. It **draws people in** - As Satan deceived Eve, by questioning what God has said and by appealing to the proud thought that we’re smart enough to determine what is spiritually true or false!
3. It says, **“We can sit in judgment on God’s Word. It does not sit in judgment over us.”** – But in fact, it does!

Paul also describes this false, human, religious philosophy as being *“according to the elementary principles of the world.”* ***This is a highly debated phrase!*** Paul uses the same word in verse 20, *“²⁰Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—”* (Colossians 2:20); and in Galatians 4:3 & 9, *“³Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world... ⁹But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?”*

The NASB translates it literally, *“the elementary principles of the world.”*

Views on the Possible Meaning of the phrase “the elementary principles of the world”:

1. **The Literal Greek Meaning = The Greek word meant “to put things in a row and was used of the A-B-C’s”**
 2. **Common View = Paul is referring to the false teacher’s worship of angels** - Most commentators, think that in light of Paul’s mention of the false teachers’ worship of angels (Col. 2:18), and his references to Christ’s dominance over all heavenly rule and authority (Col. 1:16, 20; 2:10, 15; Gal. 4:8-9 also refers to false gods), Paul is referring to elemental spirits (as the ESV, RSV, and TNIV interpret, not translate it)
 3. **Best View = Paul is using sarcasm to put down the false teachers** - Based on the context (both here and in Galatians 4) I believe that by “elementary principles” Paul is referring to an approach to God by keeping certain rules. By referring to it as the A-B-C’s, Paul is using sarcasm to put down the false teachers, who were puffed up with their knowledge or philosophy. As Lightfoot said, it is “an elementary discipline of mundane ordinances fit only for children.” Paul is saying that their so-called “philosophy” is like going back to spiritual kindergarten. I grant that demonic powers are often behind such human-based philosophies. But rather than primarily referring to evil spirits, I think Paul is referring to religion that seeks to approach God through keeping rules.
- In Galatia, the false teachers emphasized the ritual of circumcision, along with other Jewish ceremonial laws, such as observing days, months, seasons, and years (Gal. 4:10), as necessary for salvation.

- In Colossae, the false teachers also may have emphasized circumcision (Col. 2:11; some scholars doubt this). They also emphasized certain food and drink, along with keeping religious festivals and Sabbath days (Col. 2:16, 21).
- But it all detracted from the person and work of Christ and it provided a basis for people who kept these manmade rules to glory in the flesh.
- As Paul goes on to say (Col. 2:23), such rules-based approaches may appear to be the right way to live, but they fail because they cannot deal with sin in the human heart.
- Only Christ and the new birth can change the heart.
- In our day the rules may have changed but the enemy still uses this legalistic, flesh-exalting, approach to lure people away from the gospel.
- It usually elevates minor points of doctrine into major issues, or it emphasizes manmade rules as more important than the two great commandments, loving God and loving one another.
- In every case, it appeals to human pride by saying that by believing certain non-essential things or by keeping certain manmade commandments you can be acceptable to God.
- Such religious approaches to God are counterfeits.

How then can we know true Christianity? Paul sums it up with the phrase (Col. 2:8), “according to Christ.” Jesus Christ is at the center of true Christianity. Paul goes on to show that ...

UNION WITH THE LIVING CHRIST IS ALL WE NEED (Colossians 2:9-12)

“⁹For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power. ¹¹In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”
-Colossians 2:9-12 (NKJV)

Paul makes three assertions about the sufficiency of Jesus Christ, setting off each with the phrase, “in Him.”

3 Assertions About the Sufficiency of Christ:

- 1. Colossians 2:9 = Speaks of the sufficiency of Christ Himself -** “⁹For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily”
- 2. Colossians 2:10 = Talks of our sufficiency or completeness because of Him –** “¹⁰and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”
- 3. Colossians 2:11 = Speaks of the sufficiency we enjoy because of Christ’s work in us –** “¹¹In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ.”

Keep in mind that Paul was taking a swipe at the false teachers. We're only hearing one end of the conversation and must piece together by inference what these men were teaching. But much of Paul's vocabulary was aimed directly at the words used by these subtle enemies of the gospel.

3 Reasons Christ is Sufficient:

1. **Christ is sufficient because He is eternal God in human flesh (Col. 2:9) - “⁹For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily”** (Col. 2:9) is one of the most direct and clear statements of the deity of Jesus Christ in all Scripture. It's hard to conceive how it could be stated any more plainly.

The false teachers emphasized a concept of fullness. They also may have viewed the flesh as evil, thus denying the true humanity of Jesus. Against those errors, Paul asserts both the full deity and complete humanity of Jesus Christ.

The word “**Godhead**” or “**Deity**” in some translations is used only here in the New Testament. A different word (which, in Greek, varies by only one letter) is used in Romans 1:20, where Paul states that God's “**divine nature**” is clearly seen in His creation. There Paul is saying that if you look at God's creation, you can learn something of what He is like. Rays of His divine attributes shine forth from what He has made. But that in no way implies that the things He made are deity. But the word used in Colossians 2:9 means that Jesus Christ “**was, and is, absolute and perfect God**”.

Not just part of the divine nature or “divine quality” (as the Jehovah's Witness *New World Translation* mistranslates it), but the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Jesus Christ. “**Fullness**” refers to “**the totality of the Divine powers and attributes**” (Lightfoot, p. 159). The present tense (“dwells”) shows that Jesus is and always has been God.

As He claimed (John 8:58), “**Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.**” But also Paul asserts that Jesus is truly human, God's fullness dwells in Jesus **bodily**. This refers to His incarnation, when the eternal Word took on human flesh through the virgin birth. Jesus possessed a sinless human body.

As I mentioned recently, **Bishop Handley Moule** once said (preface to Robert Anderson, *The Lord from Heaven*), “**A Savior not quite God is a bridge broken at the farther end.**” But we also could say, “**A Savior not quite man is a bridge broken at this end.**”

- If Jesus is not fully human, then He could not bear human sins.
- He could not sympathize with our human weaknesses, to be our faithful high priest (Heb. 2:17; 4:15).

- So Paul's point is that if Jesus Christ is the eternal God in human flesh, what more could we need?
- A philosophy of manmade rules cannot compare to the perfect Savior we have in Christ.
- He alone can atone for our sins. He alone lives to make intercession for us.
- Religion is empty, but a relationship with the eternal God in human flesh is all we need.

2. Christ is sufficient because in union with Him we are made complete (Col. 2:10) -

¹⁰*and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.*” The Greek text reads literally, “And you are in Him having been fulfilled, who is the head of all rule and authority.”

“*Complete*” is related to the Greek word used for the “fullness” of Deity in Christ (Col. 2:9). Paul is saying, “Christ has the fullness of Deity dwelling in Him; you are in Him; thus, you have been made full in His fullness. You don’t need anything else.” *The Living Bible* paraphrases, “So you have everything when you have Christ, and you are filled with God through your union with Christ.”

When you’re born into this world, you’re born complete. You don’t grow arms and legs later, like a tadpole. You’ve got everything you’ll ever need. You can’t use it all until you grow in age and strength, but you’ve got the whole package right from the start.

It’s the same spiritually. You get everything in Christ the instant you’re born again. You’re joined to Him in such an intimate way that Paul often refers to it as being “in Him.”

As Peter puts it (2 Pet. 1:3), “*His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness.*” We may not understand it all or be able to use it all until we grow in the Lord. But we have it all!

Paul adds (Col. 2:10) that Christ “*is the head over all rule and authority.*” The false teachers were promoting worship of the angels (Col. 2:18). Paul is saying that not only did Christ create all angelic beings (Col. 1:16); also, He rules them. Why worship the creature rather than the Almighty Creator? Perhaps you’re thinking, “Okay, but how does all this help me practically? I live in a real world where I struggle against sin and I often lose. How does all this stuff about being complete in Christ relate to where I live?”

3. Christ is sufficient because union with Him in His death and resurrection gives us power over sin (Col. 2:11-12) - Colossians 2:11-12, “¹¹*In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²buried with Him in baptism, in which*

you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.” The theme of “*in Him*” or “*with Him*” runs through *verse 13*, which repeats the idea of us being raised up with Christ when He was raised from the dead.

As I said, some scholars doubt that the Colossian heretics were emphasizing circumcision, but I think it may have been a component of their teaching. As you know, God ordained the removal of the male foreskin as the sign of His covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17:9-14). The Jews held tenaciously and proudly to circumcision as putting them a notch above the uncircumcised Gentiles. The issue of whether the Gentiles needed to be circumcised to be saved was resolved at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), but the Judaizers who promoted that view continued to spread that pernicious teaching. One of the main symbolic meanings of circumcision was the removal of the flesh so that a man would be pure before God.

The Old Testament talks about being circumcised in heart (Deut. 10:16; 30:6), which points to the inward reality behind the outward ritual. That’s what Paul means by “*a circumcision made without hands.*” When we were joined to Christ, He cut off our sinful nature so that we can live in holiness before Him. Some understand “*the circumcision of Christ*” to refer to His death, but I think it means the spiritual circumcision that Christ performs on believers, which is now pictured by baptism, not by circumcision (Col. 2:12).

When a believer is immersed in the water (even those who believe in other modes of baptism admit that immersion is pictured here), it symbolizes his burial with Christ, being identified completely with His death. When we come out of the water, it pictures being raised up with Christ, whom God raised bodily through His power. All of this takes place at the moment a person puts his “faith in the working of God,” but it is subsequently symbolized in baptism, which the apostles associated closely with the new birth (Rom. 6:3-7).

This raises two practical (and controversial!) questions:

1. ***Has baptism now replaced circumcision as the sign of the covenant and thus should it be administered to infants, as circumcision was?*** - I ask my friends who hold to infant baptism to consider the following. While there are obviously some spiritual parallels between circumcision and baptism, there are also many differences. Jesus made it clear that the sign of the New Covenant is the Lord’s Supper, not baptism (1 Cor. 11:25). While there is a specific command to circumcise the male physical descendants of Abraham, there is no command or example in the New Testament to baptize the physical descendants of Christians. Even if you grant that baptism is the fulfillment of circumcision, then just as circumcision was administered to the *physical* descendants of Abraham in the age of type, so baptism ought to be administered to the *spiritual*

descendants of Abraham in the age of fulfillment, namely, to believers (Gal. 3:7). Baptism pictures conversion, which infants have not experienced. Paul specifically links baptism here (Col. 2:13) with faith, as does every reference to baptism in the Book of Acts (see my sermon [6/28/09], “Why Baptism Matters”). Infants can’t yet believe!

2. ***If my sinful nature has been cut off by Christ, why does it seem to be alive and well? -*** Good question! Let’s try to answer it by letting Paul speak for himself. In Colossians 3:3 Paul says, “*For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*” Yet two verses later he says (literally), “*Therefore put to death the members of your earthly body with regard to immorality,*” etc. If I’m dead, why do I need to put my flesh to death? Paul wouldn’t contradict himself within the span of two verses. Rather, the tension is between our position in Christ and our practice of that position as we walk in this sinful world. We need to understand and act upon our new identity in Christ. What is true of Christ is true of us. When He died, we died with Him. When He was raised from the dead, we were raised in Him. Now, as He is seated at God’s right hand, we are seated there in Him (Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1). All these things are true of us by virtue of our union with Him, through faith in Him. As we set our minds on these truths (Col. 3:2), they will govern our behavior (Col. 3:5-10).

Thus when Paul says that Christ has removed the body of our flesh (our sinful nature) through spiritual circumcision, he does not mean that the old nature has been eradicated. Any honest Christian can tell you that it’s alive and kicking! Rather, we are to adopt a new attitude toward that old nature which used to dominate our lives. Its power has been broken so that we no longer need to be slaves to sin (Rom. 6:6). We are to view ourselves as completely identified with Jesus Christ in His victory over sin so that we can then act that way by putting to death the deeds of the flesh in our ongoing struggle against sin.

CONCLUSION

So what is Paul saying. In closing let’s look at five key takeaways from Paul’s words in Colossians 2:8-12...

5 Key Takeaways from Colossians 2:8-12:

1. **Because God has raised Christ from the dead, victorious over the devil, we can have victory over sin and the devil because we’re in Christ through faith.**
2. **We don’t depend on manmade rules or outward rituals, such as baptism or communion, but rather on the spiritual reality behind those rituals.**
3. **Christ is all we need because union with Him in His death and resurrection gives us power over sin.**
4. **Religion with its rules and rituals is a spiritual counterfeit.**
5. **Being united with the living Christ links us to His power over sin when we are tempted.**

So make sure that you aren’t into religion, but rather that you are in union with Jesus Christ.