**Let No One**

**Introduction:**

The Christians in Colosse were being told by some that they needed to adopt certain principles and practices from various religions in order to be saved. These were necessary, they were told, to supplement the gospel of Christ. In our text, Paul very forcefully informs Christians that the gospel is sufficient and all other religions are from man, not God.

**Text:** Colossians 2:16-23

**Body:**

1. **The Law of Moses** Colossians 2:16-17 “So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.” NKJV “So” – therefore These conclusions are based on evidence just given. Since Christ and His gospel were all that they needed, no one should condemn them for not participating in those elements of the Law of Moses. That system was nailed to the cross by Christ and was no longer in force. Teachings of the Law of Moses are not necessary for one to be saved.
   * “Food and drink” were daily offerings and services.
   * “Festival” was a yearly observation.
   * “New moon” was a monthly service.
   * “Sabbath” was observed weekly.

These are all described in I Chronicles 23:30-31. “to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at evening; and at every presentation of a burnt offering to the Lord on the Sabbaths and on the New Moons and on the set feasts, by number according to the ordinances governing them, regularly before the Lord;” NKJV

Some were trying to bind the keeping of these festivals and ceremonies on Christians but that system [Law of Moses] was only a shadow which led up to Christ. His church, of which He was the head, could not be justified by it. (Galatians 5:4) “You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.” NKJV

**Application:** The Gospel of Jesus Christ is all we need. We do not need to start observing various religious festivals from the Law of Moses or any other religion. Many criticize us for not observing Christmas and Easter as religious days. Listen to Paul in Galatians 4:8-11. “But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. But 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? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.” NKJV

1. **The Worship of the Inferior** Colossians 2:18-19 “Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.” NKJV “Cheat you of your reward” refers to a judge or referee’s decision against a runner who was not competing fairly or according to the rules. The Colossian Christians needed to be on the alert so that no one would deprive them of their due rewards. That would happen if they yielded to some other religion or philosophy because they would not be running the Christian race according to the rules, the Law of Jesus Christ, the one with all authority. Some were teaching that you had to approach God through angels, not through Christ. These claims were possibly based on alleged visions, hallucinations, and self-deceptions. They were inflated by conceit like a pair of bellows. They were really only concerned with fleshly things, not spiritual ones. These teachings showed that they had no grasp or contact with Christ. Only if we are attached to Christ, the Head of the body, can we grow as God desires. (Ephesians 4:15-16) “but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” NKJV This is extremely important, especially as to how it relates to competing according to the rules. One could be the fastest man in the world, but if he doesn’t enter the race [fill out paperwork, etc.], he can’t win the prize. People with high moral standards who are not in Christ will not receive the reward because they never lawfully entered the race.

**Application:** Angels are a hot topic today. The worship of angels is forbidden in the New Testament. (Revelation 22:8-9) “Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, ‘See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.’ ” NKJV Worship of idols is forbidden in the New Testament. (Romans 1:22-25) “Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man – and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” NKJV We all need to be like those in I Thessalonians 1:9-10. “For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.” NKJV

1. **Self Imposed Religion** Colossians 2:20-23 “Therefore, 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 – Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle, which all concern things which perish with the using – according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.” NKJV Verses 20-22: They had died with Christ in baptism. (Colossians 2:11-13) “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, 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. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh. He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,” NKJV

“Basic principles” include the Law of Moses and philosophies and religions of men. The Law of Moses contained regulations about not eating certain foods: pork, certain kinds of fish and birds. (Leviticus 11) Some man-made religions of the 1st Century also had these types of regulations: No meat of any kind . . . These were all taken away in Christ. (I Timothy 4:3-5) “forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” NKJV **Point:** Since you have died with Christ, you are no longer of this world. Don’t be entangled again; don’t have your liberty be taken away by submitting to these religious regulations. Many religions today incorporate these same kinds of regulations that bind where God has not bound. An apt description of them is given in Romans 10:2-3. “For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.” NKJV Many were saying that these regulations would separate one from his physical passions and make him more spiritual. But Paul says they are of no help at all. (I Corinthians 8:8) “But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.” NKJV The origin of these regulations was from men, not God. They appear to be wise, but come from a self-imposed religion [Will-worship]. Any religion which teaches neglect of our body is a false one. “Will worship” is when men put into the Bible what they want instead of what God intended. They have an attitude: “If the Bible doesn’t expressly forbid it, I can do it.” Many who do this, also display a false humility. They claim their attitude toward Scripture makes them more loving and spiritual. This is not so! (John 14:15) “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” NKJV Cain was a will worshipper. (Hebrews 11:4) “By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.” NKJV Cain did not worship as God had told him. Nadab and Abihu offered profane fire which God had not commanded. (Leviticus 10:1-2) “Then Nadab and Abihu the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.” NKJV Will-worshippers are still among us. Taking the Lord’s Supper on days other that Sunday may appear more spiritual, but it’s not because the Holy Spirit told us to partake of it only on Sunday. Solos and choirs in worship assembly are offering profane worship because God has not authorized such. We are not free to worship according to our will and our desires. Worship and life of the church must be directed by Christ, the Head.

**Closing:**

Christ and His gospel do not need help from any other religion. They are sufficient to save us. Will you not enter the Christian race by believing, repenting, confessing, and being baptized? Then run according to the rules so that one day you can receive the reward.

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