

**“Let No One Act As Your Judge”
Guard Your Freedom**

COL 2:16 Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day--

1. “Therefore let no one act as your judge [pass or act as your judge] in regard to food or drink”

a. Paul seems to have in mind some Jewish Christians and perhaps some Christians who had been influenced by the Gnostics or the Essenes who sought to restrict Christian freedom.

1) Some were attempting to impose Jewish food laws or other man made laws on Gentile believers.

2) Some were attempting to condemn the eating of meat sacrificed to pagan gods even though Paul taught that these false pagan deities had no effect on the meat offered to them. (1 Cor. 8:1-6).

1CO 8:1 Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.

1CO 8:2 If anyone supposes that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know;

1CO 8:3 but if anyone loves God, he is known by Him.

1CO 8:4 Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one.

1CO 8:5 For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords,

1CO 8:6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

3) See also 1 Cor. 10:19-30.

4) Jesus had taught that “all foods are clean.” (Mk. 7:19).

MAR 7:19 because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated? "(Thus He declared all foods clean.)

MAR 7:20 And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man.

MAR 7:21 "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries,

5) This is a reference to things meant by God as wholesome food - not things that are unhealthy and dangerous and destructive. This passage does not mean that everything is wholesome for food.

b. They [the false teachers] had man made rules in regard to food and drink.

c. Paul taught that Christians have freedom in regard to meat offered to idols.

1) In Romans 14:3 Paul stated.

ROM 14:3 Let not him who eats regard with contempt him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats, for God has accepted him.

- 2) One was not to eat if he had doubt about the meat and believed by eating it he was worshipping the idol.
(Rom. 14:5,6; 14:23).

ROM 14:5 One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind.

ROM 14:6 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.

ROM 14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

- d. They must not let others take away their freedom, but they could give it up if it caused others to stumble. (1 Cor. 8:7-13; Rom. 14:13-21).

1CO 8:7 However not all men have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

1CO 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.

1CO 8:9 But take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.

1CO 8:10 For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, dining in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols?

1CO 8:11 For through your knowledge he who is weak is ruined, the brother for whose sake Christ died.

1CO 8:12 And thus, by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.

1CO 8:13 Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, that I might not cause my brother to stumble.

ROM 14:13 Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this-- not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.

ROM 14:14 I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

ROM 14:15 For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died.

ROM 14:16 Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil;

ROM 14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

ROM 14:18 For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.

ROM 14:19 So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

ROM 14:20 Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense.

ROM 14:21 It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.

- e. Christians are not to submit to the ordinances of the law of Moses as a matter of salvation. (Gal. 4:9-11).

GAL 4:9 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?

GAL 4:10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

GAL 4:11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

- 1) "A festival or a new moon" - See Num. 10:10; 28:11-15.

NUM 10:10 "Also in the day of your gladness and in your appointed feasts, and on the first days of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be as a

reminder of you before your God. I am the Lord your God."

NUM 28:11 ' Then at the beginning of each of your months you shall present a burnt offering to the Lord; two bulls and one ram, seven male lambs one year old without defect,

NUM 28:12 and three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, for each bull; and two-tenths of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram;

NUM 28:13 and a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil for a grain offering for each lamb, for a burnt offering of a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the Lord.

NUM 28:14 'And their libations shall be half a hin of wine for a bull and a third of a hin for the ram and a fourth of a hin for a lamb; this is the burnt offering of each month throughout the months of the year.

NUM 28:15 'And one male goat for a sin offering to the Lord; it shall be offered with its libation in addition to the continual burnt offering.

- 2) New moon was celebrated by blowing trumpets, special sacrifices, feasting and religious instruction.
 - 3) Some were teaching that a Christian had an obligation to observe these things as a matter of salvation.
 - 4) It was sinful to observe them as a matter of salvation and in any way that contradicted the teachings of Christ.
2. "or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day [sabbaths]" - Observance of festivals and new moons and the Sabbath day were not required of Christians.
- a. Lit. "sabbaths" - "sabbaton" [sahb **bah** tohn]. This would include a "Sabbath Day" or any "sabbaths" [special times of rest and the activities involved].
 - b. Plural use of "Sabbath" often used for weekly Sabbath. (Matt. 28:1; Lk. 4:16).
 - c. These things were a part of the Mosaical law, but not the law of Christ.
 - d. Christians are never commanded to observe these things.

COL 2:17 things which are a mere shadow [type, resemblance, foreshadowing] of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

1. "things which are a mere shadow of what is to come" - "shadow" is from "skia" [**skee** ah] meaning "shade" or "shadow."
 - a. A "shadow" is transitory, temporary.
 - b. They were a foreshadowing of the coming of Christ and the proclamation of the gospel.
 - c. The "festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day" were the shadow, but "the substance belongs to Christ."
2. "but the substance belongs to Christ" - "substance" is from "soma" [**soh** mah] meaning "body."
 - a. Lit. "but the body [is] of Christ" - "the substance is in the Christ" - TCNT - "the reality is found in Christ." Gspd.
 - b. We learn in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 the Passover in Egypt foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ - the reality.

1CO 5:7 Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our

Passover also has been sacrificed.

1CO 5:8 Let us therefore celebrate the feast [of unleavened bread], not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

- c. We also learn that the festival of unleavened bread foreshadowed the Christian life.
- d. It was the sacrifice of Christ that made this life possible and of value now and in eternity.
- e. They must cling to the substance [Christ and His teachings] and let the shadow go as a matter of salvation.

Warning Against Being Defrauded

COL 2:18 Let no one keep defrauding [rob] 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,

- 1. “Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels”
 - a. “keep defrauding you of your prize” - This is a warning against being cheated out of freedom in Christ and eternal life.
 - b. “by delighting in self-abasement” - This is a reference to false humility or perhaps self-affliction.
 - 1) “voluntary humility” - ASV - Greek “tapeinophrosune” [tah pay nah frah **soo** nay] - “lowliness or humility of mind.” Lit. “wishing [to do so] in humility.”
 - 2) Some had a pretended humility and paraded their piety in an attempt to lead others astray.
 - 3) Humility is stressed in the scriptures. (Matt. 5:3; 23:12; Phil. 2:3-6; Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5).
 - 4) The truly humble are not conscious of their humility and certainly never parade it.
 - c. “and the worship of the angels”- Worship of angels or of men or of any object is idolatry.
 - 1) Exactly what they were doing is not specified other than they were worshiping angels.
 - 2) Somehow, in their theology, they were worshiping the creature rather than the Creator. See Rom. 1:25.
 - 3) They may have pretended to have such great reverence for God that they would only approach Him indirectly through angels.
- 2. “taking his stand on [false] visions he has seen” - They claimed visions and special revelation.
 - a. These “visions” made them superior in their own sinful minds.
 - b. These “vision” were followed even when they were in clear contradiction of God’s word.
- 3. “inflated without cause by his fleshly mind” - They were “inflated” [arrogant] because of their worldly, sinful mind.

COL 2:19 and not holding fast to the head [Christ], from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

1. “and not holding fast to the head” - “The head” is Christ. (Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23). The body must be under control of the Head.
2. “from whom the entire body being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments”
 - a. The spiritual body is dependant on its Head [Christ] just as the physical body is dependant on its head.
 - b. Those who cease to follow the Head cease to be a true part of the body and harm rather than help the body.
3. “grows with a growth which is from God” - Those who hold fast to the Head grow spiritually by the blessing and power of God.
 - a. “grows with a God-given increase” - McCord
 - b. “grows with a growth that God produces”

“Died With Christ”

Warning Against Submitting To The Decrees Of Men

COL 2:20 If [since] 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,

1. “If [since] you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world” - See Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3
 - a. They once followed “the elementary [first] principles of the world.”
 - b. They had submitted to the rules and regulations of men.
 - c. This was to cease in Christ.
2. “why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as”
 - a. It was foolish to lose their freedom and blessings by submitting to the rules of men.
 - b. They were either submitting or in danger of submitting again to human decrees.

Human Rules

Harsh Treatment Of The Body

COL 2:21 "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!"

1. This is a reference to human rules in regard to food and drink, etc.
 2. Some may have extended this to marriage - either forbidding it or sexual relations within marriage. (1 Tim. 4:3, 4).
- 1TI 4:3 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.
- 1TI 4:4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with gratitude;

COL 2:22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with the using)-- in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?

1. “(which all refer to things destined to perish with the using)”
 - a. Food is vital, but its duration perishes once consumed.
 - b. Food does not serve the purpose of making us pleasing or displeasing to God. (1 Cor. 8:8).
2. “in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?” - Their restrictions were “the commandments and teachings of men.”

COL 2:23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion [worship] and self-abasement and severe [harsh] treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

1. “These are matters which have, to be sure the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement”
 - a. Their rules had the reputation or appearance of wisdom.
 - b. These things looked like wisdom, but were far from it!
2. “ and severe [harsh] treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence”
 - a. Some may teach their rules were required of God and brought one closer to God.
 - b. The truth is they had no value spiritually, and did not prevent indulgence of the flesh when it seeks gratification.
 - c. Their rules promoted false pride, and made one feel superior to those who did not adhere to their rules.
 - d. This blinded them to their sins thinking that their human rules made them acceptable to God.
 - e. It led them to condemn those who did not yield to their human rules and to look upon them as inferior
 - f. Their human rules did not help in the fight “against fleshly indulgence.”

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