

TITLE: Colossians (Lesson 10)

TEXT: Col. 2:18-23

INTRO: So far the Apostle Paul has warned the church at Colosse and God has warned us against the dangers of intellectualism, ritualism and legalism. He concludes this chapter by including the dangers of mysticism and asceticism.

I. (vs. 18-19) Mysticism

A. What's at stake?

1. A rewarding experience as opposed to a false experience!

B. The false teachers were undermining the truth with false mysticism.

NOTE: "The belief that a person can have an immediate experience with the spiritual world, completely apart from the Word of God or the Holy Spirit." *Warren Wiersbe*

C. Extra biblical experiences and practices can be dangerous!

1. We might deceive ourselves with false humility.

2. For some it led to the worship of angels.

3. We may open ourselves up to demonic activity.

NOTE: 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Gal. 1:6-9

4. Ultimately it expresses itself with pride.

D. True spiritual nourishment and growth comes from Christ and His church.

NOTE: Eph. 4:14-16

II. (vs. 20-23) Asceticism

A. (vs. 20-22) A life of self-denial.

NOTE: "Asceticism is the idea that self-denial is a way to earn favor from God.

Asceticism is an entirely negative approach to life. It is characterized by the word *no* and *don't*." *David Jeremiah*

1. Subjected to a list of do's and don'ts.

2. Subjected to "commandments and doctrines of men".

NOTE: "The gross error in this teaching is the looking for holiness in outward things rather than in the inward things of the heart. Such error is common in the church today."

*Oliver B. Greene*

B. (vs. 23) A life of show but of no substance or value.

NOTE: "Neglect of the body will never cure the soul." *William Hendriksen*

C. A believer's true identity is with Christ.

1. We have a new nature.

NOTE: 2 Peter 1:4-8; Rom. 13:14; I Tim. 4:8

2. We are indwelt by the Spirit of God.

3. We live according to the Word of God.

4. We fellowship and draw strength from the body of Christ.

CONCLUSION: "The answer to legalism is the spiritual reality we have in Christ. The answer to mysticism is the spiritual union with Christ, the Head of the church. The answer to asceticism is our position in Christ in death, burial, and resurrection."

*Warren Wiersbe*