

COLOSSIANS: DISCERNING TRUE DOCTRINES
"Part IV: Using Christ's Person And Work To Detect Significant Errors"
(Colossians 2:1-23)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Wonder if even **WE** hold to the truth!

Herself holds firmly to our stand against sign gifts being for today, the question was raised in class as to **IF the Pastor's stand on tongues is RIGHT!**

(2) I was handed a mailing from a believer last Sunday that he wanted me to review. In it is a doctrinal statement from a group, which, among other things, states: "We believe that as a chosen race, elected by God, we are not to be partakers of the wickedness of this world system, but are called to come out and be a separated people. This includes **segregation from all non-white races**, who are prohibited in God's natural order from ruling over Israel . . . "

The group's definition of "Israel" is given as follows: "We believe the White, Anglo-Saxon, Germanic and kindred people to be God's true, literal Children of Israel."

Well, **how do we BIBLICALLY discern** if we are to **segregate** from non-white racial groups today or **not**?!

(3) The leader of the Basic Youth Conflicts, writes on pages 124 of his Basic Seminar Textbook (1993 ed.) that ". . . fasting increases spiritual awareness . . . if we neither eat nor exercise, a greater amount of blood is available for mental and spiritual concentration." He then goes on to detail how to fast in order to improve one's walk with God in several areas of life, p. 124-128. Well, **should** we promote **fasting** for spiritual vitality or not practice it like we don't do at Nepaug Church -- how can we **tell**?

(4) Seventh-Day Adventists, in their work, Seventh-day Adventists Believe, p. 244 (1989 ed.) teach that Christ's death ended the **ceremonial** part of the Mosaic Law for the believer, but that it **established the Ten Commandments** so that we really should observe **Saturday**, the original "Sabbath" instead of **Sunday** as a Church! Well, **how can we tell we are meeting on the right day?**

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section . . .)

Need: *"A variety of beliefs float about that people SAY are God's truths but which DIFFER from what WE teach at NEPAUG! Is there some CLEAR way to DISCERN the truth from error so we can know who to believe and HOW to LIVE so as to please God?!"*

- I. **When Paul wrote to the Colossians, they faced an ASSORTMENT of theological errors that flowed from errant human imaginations:**
 - A. Early **Gnosticism** tempted the Colossians, teaching error as follows:
 1. The gnostics felt **matter** was in and of itself **evil**.
 2. Thus, they concluded that God must have no connection with it.
 3. Therefore, gnostic teachers taught Christ did not have a real body, and/or was not fully God, denying His incarnation as the God-man.
 4. Also, they taught Christians could indulge in bodily lusts as the body was sinful, and would eventually be discarded anyway, Bib. Know. Com., N.T., p. 677; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, p. 1770!
 - B. The Colossians were pushed toward false **Judaism**, being pressed to adopt the Mosaic Law and its rituals in the Old Testament, *Ibid.*
 - C. **Oriental mysticism** appealed to some, leading them to a false humility and angel worship, *Ibid.*, p. 678-679.
 - D. Some even turned toward **asceticism** as had Eve in Genesis 3, a type of false spirituality that prided itself in the extravagant "don'ts" of man-made regulations, *Ibid.*, p. 679, cf. Genesis 3:3 with 2:16-17.
- II. **To COUNTER these SIGNIFICANT errors, Paul FOCUSED on the POSITION believers have in the ALL-SUFFICIENT CHRIST:**
 - A. Paul expressed how concerned he was for these Colossians to know the truth, especially since he had not met many of them, Col. 2:1.
 - B. He wanted them to conquer the troublesome errors that faced them:
 1. He wanted their hearts to be comforted from the trouble such errors brought upon their minds and lives, Colossians 2:2a.
 2. He wanted them to be united in God's true love as well, Col. 2:2b.
 - C. This would occur if they realized that it is in **CHRIST** that come **ALL** of the treasures of practical knowledge and theoretical theology ("wisdom and knowledge") God has for Christians, Col. 2:2c-5!
 - D. Thus, he urged them to focus on **Christ's all-sufficiency**, for all the errors they faced incorrectly departed from that **all-sufficiency**, 2:6-7.
- III. **Having stated the THEOLOGY of Christ's ALL-SUFFICIENCY, Paul APPLIED it to the FALSE beliefs afflicting these Colossians:**

- A. **Opposite** the errant **gnostic** disrespect for the material world and its belittling of Christ's deity or negating of His full humanity, Paul taught **all** the **fullness** of the **Godhead** dwelt in Christ in His **body**, Col. 1:8-9.
- B. [**ALSO**, applied to **today**, Paul would claim since we are spiritually **complete** in Christ in Colossians 2:10, we believers need no alleged "Second Blessing" accompanied by "sign gifts" (tongues speaking, prophecy, healing gifts, etc.) for fulfillment, see also Ephesians 1:3!]
- C. **Opposite** errant **Judaism** that sought to captivate **Gentiles** to **Mosaic Law stipulations**, Paul taught Christ's death **ended** the Law's **rule**, thus **liberating ALL** Gentile and Jewish believers from its jurisdiction:
 1. Paul claimed even the **NON-Jewish** believers enjoyed **spiritual circumcision** via Christ's death, 2:11-13. (B.K.C., N.T., p. 677)
 2. Accordingly, as Christ died, He also died to the Mosaic Law's **jurisdiction AND condemnation** so that no one can legally charge **any** believer of **sin** for failing to keep the Mosaic Law, Col. 2:14.
 3. In fact, the main **Critic** of men -- **Satan** with his demonic forces (cf. Rev. 12:9, 10b) -- had his case of charges of sin against the believer **positionally demolished** by Christ's death, Col. 2:15.
 4. Thus, no regulation of the Mosaic Law, be it "ceremonial" issues on diet or the keeping of Sabbaths in the "Ten Commandments" can be held up as a **valid** rule for the believer by **anyone**, Col. 2:16-17!
- D. **Opposite** errant **Oriental mysticism** pressures that sought to promote a false humility for spirituality and worship of angels, Paul taught the believer is to worship Christ **alone** Who **solely** builds up every believer in the spiritual realm independent of human efforts, Col. 2:18-19.
- E. **Opposite** errant **ascetic** pressures that sought to elevate "don't" regulations to foster "spirituality," Paul taught the believer was **dead** to **ALL** man-authored rules along with being dead to the Mosaic Law's jurisdiction. Thus, they were to live above such non-biblical "don't" regulations as a means of spiritual development, Col. 2:20-23!

Application: To **DISCERN** truth from error taught anywhere, (1) believe on Christ to become a child of God and become indwelt by the Holy Spirit, the Teacher, Jn. 3:16; Rom. 8:9b; Jn. 14:16-17, 26. (2) As a believer, fellowship with God via (a) confessing sins done after salvation (1 Jn. 1:9) and (b) depend upon the Spirit for power for living (Gal. 5:16-23). (3) In this position, hold to the doctrine of Christ's All-sufficiency in His Person and Work of the Cross to discern with the Spirit's enabling God's truths from error!

Lesson: Focusing on the believer's spiritual position IN his All-sufficient Savior, the God-man, Jesus Christ equips him to steer away from a multitude of errant beliefs to his blessing and liberation from bondage!

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . .)

We now answer the questions we raised in our introduction:

Mosaic Covenant to the **nation Israel** to reveal Her need to repent and accept Christ or be judged; since we are not under the Law today, and God is not dealing with Israel as a **nation**, tongues is **not** Biblically justifiable for **today**!

Especially Galatians 3:27-28. (b) Also, even though Israel was separated as a nation unto God, when **foreigners** were in Her **land**, She was to love them as Herself, remembering that Israel Herself was once oppressed in Egypt, Lev. 19:33-34! The idea of rejecting others who are racially different from us is **very** unbiblical!

(3) Regarding fasting promoted by the Basic Youth Conflicts Seminar leader for increasing one's spiritual vitality, Paul claimed in Colossians 1:20-22 that we are not to be subject to the "taste not" ordinances of **men**. God never commands fasting for Christians, and Jesus and His disciples were **known** for **NOT fasting**, Mtt. 11:18-19. If **not fasting** was fine for the **sinless Jesus**, we need **not** do it **today**!

(4) On keeping the Sabbath, or Saturday promoted by the Seventh-day Adventists, as we noted in our sermon notes from Colossians 2:11-17, we were released not only from the "ceremonial" part of the Mosaic Law (such as dietary restrictions), but also from the "Ten Commandments" section (such as keeping the Sabbaths), 1:16. Since we are to "Let **no** man therefore judge you in meat . . . or in respect of . . . the Sabbath days . . .", we should refuse to feel guilty for meeting on Sunday and not keeping Saturday as a holy day!

When we focus on the all-sufficiency of CHRIST and His WORK on the CROSS and His GOD-MAN Personhood, we can sift through ideas and come to the liberating truth in Christ!