



INTRODUCTION:

2:4 And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.

- The church needs mature believers who will resist seduction and deception.

Now this is the point I need you to comprehend: "...lest any man should beguile you with enticing words." The word "**beguile**" (paralogizetai) means to mislead, delude deceive, cheat, seduce, and lead someone astray. The arguments can be against any of the major teachings of Scripture. If they are persuasive enough, some persons are led astray.

- Believers can be seduced by the persuasive and eloquent words of false teaching.
 - The creation of the world by God.
 - The virgin birth or the incarnation of God in human flesh.
 - The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
 - Salvation by grace through faith etc.

Arguments

They begin to question the truth, wonder, and doubt. This is the very reason Paul has proclaimed that all wisdom and knowledge exist in Christ, and is to protect believers against false teaching. Believers are to know that all truth is in Christ, and they are to seek Christ who is Truth.

- Believers can be seduced by the enticing and appealing words of those who live after the lusts of the flesh. Human nature is easily influenced by...
 - appearance ▪ attractiveness ▪ charisma ▪ thoughts
 - insinuations ▪ suggestions ▪ imaginations ▪ desires

Therefore when some idea is made in an appealing way, people are enticed and led astray from Christ. Again, the truth and the wise course of behavior for the believer is found in Christ. The course of wisdom is to turn away from the seduction of enticing words and suggestions.

2:5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. Although Paul is not with them in the flesh, he is with them in his spirit with joy.

- The church needs mature believers who will maintain discipline—order and steadfastness.

The word "**order**" (*taxin*) means to maintain military discipline, array, and arrangement; to hold a solid front. The word "**steadfastness**" (*stereoma*) means to stand fast and persevere; to be immovable, steady, and unyielding; to never crack, give in, or back up. This too, is a military word. **AND THE BELIEVERS WERE RESPONDING LIKE A VICTORIOUS ARMY.** They were maintaining their discipline and holding their order and standing fast, even as Paul was writing this letter. Even while withstanding, a minister's encouragement is still needed. Paul says that he was with them in spirit, joyous, and watching them gain the victory over the false teachers.

LESSON:

I. COLOSSIANS 2:6-8

2:6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

- The church needs mature believers who will walk in the Lord.

This means at least **two things** for believers:

1. First, believers received Christ Jesus as Lord.

That is, when believers received Him, they accepted Him as the true Messiah and Lord from heaven.



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We accepted Him as the Lord of our life. Therefore, we are to see Him as Lord, and continue walking and serving Him as the Lord of our lives.

2. Second, believers walk justly as they have received Christ—by faith.

There is a continued walk with Christ by faith. When we received Christ, we trusted His righteousness, His death to cover our sins and to make us acceptable to God. Therefore, our lifestyle continues to trust His righteousness and death to cover our sins and make them acceptable to God. We have nothing within ourselves to earn, merit, deserve, or make God accept us. We can do nothing and we can possess nothing that will secure the approval of God. The believer is only acceptable before God in Christ—trusting His righteousness and death by faith.

2:7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

There are three particular things the believer is to do in verse 7:

1. The believer's walk is to be rooted and built-up in Christ.

There are two pictures in this statement. The picture of being rooted is like that of a tree. The other is the picture of being built or constructed—that of a building. **The point is this:** the emphasis is upon a strong attachment, and a flow of nourishment and life from Christ to the believer. That means, the believer is so nourished because of strong roots in the soil of his Word; so built up upon the foundation of Jesus Christ, that his walk is continuously strong and unbroken. His life and mind are focused upon Christ without interruptions, drawing all nourishment and strength from Him. This is critical, for there is no other permanent nourishment or strength—(not that lasts forever and imparts eternal life) to the human soul.

2. The believer's walk is established in the faith just as he has been taught.

The word "**established**" means to be firm, stable, holding fast, and not letting go. This shows the utter necessity for strong teachers in the church. When believers have strong teachers, they are to learn all they can about the faith and hold fast to it. They are not to let it go!

3. The believer's walk is overflowing with thanksgiving.

Christ Jesus has done so much for the believer—so much that flows on and on, never ceasing, not even for one moment of any day. Therefore, the believer learns to walk in an unbroken spirit of thanksgiving. It is thanksgiving that overflows in praise to the Lord moment by moment throughout the day.

2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit,— As we have learned, the Gnostics were trying to pull the Colossians away from the simple teachings of Christ and back into the slavery of a human system of rules that could not help them. The importance of this passage is clearly seen in the meaning of scripture. The word "**beware**" (*blepete*) means to take heed, look out, guard yourself. Why? Lest any man spoil you through philosophy. The word "**spoil**" (*sulagogeo*) means to lead into captivity or slavery. Being continually watchful for false teaching does not come naturally. Paul is not encouraging a "**critical spirit**" but a "**discerning spirit.**" We will know Christ and His truth well. Anything false is revealed immediately by the light of Christ's Spirit. When we are filled up with Christ and His blessings, there is no emptiness in us looking for something else to fill it. See that no one takes you captive through philosophy.

2:8b ...after the tradition of men,— ¹Philosophy (*philosophia* from *phílos* = friend/lover + *sophía* = wisdom) is literally a love of wisdom, and came to mean "**tenets**" (*doctrine*) of heathen Gentile philosophers. The Gnostics were fond of "**philosophia.**"

The love of human wisdom is a product of human mind and that produces human tradition which is followed down through the ages. It is not God's revelation; rather it was speculative (speculations), mythical and misleading. This was hollow and deceitful philosophy. That means it sounded good but there was nothing inside. Men should instead, love Christ, who has made true wisdom unto us and in

¹ http://www.preceptaustin.org/colossians_28-15.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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whom are stored all the treasures of true wisdom and true knowledge. Only Christ's truth carries a real reward.

2:8C ...after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.²The word "*rudiments*" (*stoichieon*) refers to parts of a systematized, regulated arrangement. What is represented in itself something that is only "*elemental*" and thus less than complete. Paul contrasts these limited elements with the fullness which is put on display in the Person of Christ. That is the theme of this chapter -- the contrast between limited, elemental things, and the completeness that is found only in Jesus Christ. We end up concentrating on all the little bits and pieces and forget the big picture.

- It doesn't matter if the systematized approach to faith is built up from worldly philosophy, science, religious doctrines and rituals, etc.
- It doesn't matter what rituals you perform, food you eat, festivals you keep, or the day you worship on, since all of those things are elemental types and shadows that reach their fulfillment in Christ. The purpose in all these is to lead to spiritual understanding, and it is not in themselves righteousness.

To assign them a place of importance equal to faith in Jesus is to then take away from and diminish the completeness of Jesus.

To concentrate on the "*rudiments*" can result in capture of the person. The person can become more concerned with these limited elements than with the fullness of unity with Christ. And thereby, can never reach unity in Christ because they are always trying to add something to Him, that is, of their own will-power; to build up knowledge bit by bit or act by act. Anyone who seeks to add on to or replace Jesus with anything else is using vain philosophy and deceitful speech for the purpose of capturing the heart, mind and soul of others. I could go on and on; however, the point has been covered.

II. COLOSSIANS 2:9-15

2:9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. The word "*dwells*" (*katoikei*) means to be at home, to be permanently settled and present. The word "*fullness*" (*pleroma*) means that not a single part of God's nature is lacking in the nature of Christ. This tells us that the fullness of God has always dwelt in Christ, even before He came to earth; that the fullness of God was not just a temporary gift to Jesus. What does all this mean to us in a day to day living? It means two wonderful things:

1. **First**, God is not far off in outer space someplace. God is not unconcerned with the world. As His fullness dwells in Christ, it dwells in us who have accepted Him.
2. **Second**, God is love, not evil. Only a God of evil would leave man in the dark where he would have to grope and grasp and stumble. His fullness directs us as Christ is in us.

The Gnostics believed Christ was not the supreme God but only one of the lesser emanations from Him; one of the angels. They claimed to know the secret and the only way to God, but actually it was and is the Christians who know the way. The answers to the world and life are not found in a philosophy, nor in human ideas, but found in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Think for a moment: if the "**Person**" (God) really created the world, then the answer to life and creation (truth and reality) are bound to be wrapped up in Him. Christ is not just a partial representation of God, like an angel sent as God's representative. In Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead. And those who worship Christ are worshiping God, since Christ has the fullness of Deity. For in Him "*dwelleth*" (*inhabiteh; continually abideth*) all the fullness of the Godhead. In Jesus of Nazareth, God was uniquely and bodily among us (Emmanuel). The incarnation was real. Here, our Lord Jesus Christ was one Person with two natures: the God-man.

2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.—The word "*complete*" (*pepleromenoi*) means to be made full. We seek no other source of grace and truth; we show no allegiance to anyone

² <http://www.pheugo.com/faithmatters/index.php?page=FaithMatters.Avoidcapture>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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else; and we submit to no other authority. Christ is the head; He is the source of life; and He is sovereign over life. God did this in connection with Jesus Christ. And believers have complete (full life) in Christ. There is no rule, authority, or power standing between Christ and man, for He is the Head; head of all principality and power. Since the power of God rested in Jesus Christ, and Christ alone, He overcame all other powers; therefore, His authority ruled as head of all principalities and powers.

2:11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands,— Some in the Colossian church were stressing the ritual of circumcision. They said that a man had to be circumcised to be saved, that God would not accept him unless he was circumcised. Giving his heart to Jesus Christ was not enough. Circumcision was the ritual of faith to the Jews. It symbolized two things:

1. First, circumcision was a sign or testimony of his faith in God, declaring to the world that he and his family were going to follow God.
2. Second, circumcision symbolized the cutting away of the body of sins that were in the flesh.

When the foreskin was cut off and removed it was a picture of sin.

This was the true picture of circumcision, what God had intended until Christ came. Let me say that again, "*Until Christ came!*" But what happen was that man corrupted God's purpose for circumcision. Man began to say that a person became acceptable to God, not because he trusted God, but because he was circumcised. False teachings and religion have always tended to add to God's laws. That's why God had to send Christ. The true religion stresses Christ and Christ alone. Real religion is spiritual and not physical; and it's wrought in Christ not by hands of men. It's the inward circumcision, not outward. What the law could not do, Jesus Christ accomplished for us. The extent of this circumcision is the whole body ~~not~~ just one organ.

- | | Believers |
|----------------------------|---|
| • external surgery | • internal—the heart |
| • only a part of the body | • the whole body of sins |
| • done by hands | • done without hands |
| • no spiritual help in sin | • enables them to overcome conquering sin |

2:11b ...In putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:— It is letting Christ cut away the sin out of our flesh. How? - By death. When He died, He died for our sins. He cut away both sin and guilt and throws it away. The flesh is removed from the throne and the Christian is set free from his sinful nature. The sinful nature is not eradicated, for we can still sin (1Jh.1:8), but its power is broken, as we yield to Christ and walk in the power of His Spirit. The old nature (the body of sins of the flesh) was put off, and rendered inoperative—so that we need no longer be enslaved to its desires. Our physical members are to be instruments not of unrighteousness unto sin, but of righteousness unto God (Rom.6:11-14). This allows us to stand before God without sin.

2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. This means we are jointly entombed with Christ; sharing in His experience. The literal meaning is "*to dip, to immerse.*" The figurative meaning is "*to be identified with.*" The Jewish nation was "*baptized unto Moses*" when they went through the Red Sea. There was no water involved in this baptism because they went over on dry land. In this experience, the nation was identified with Moses. Paul used the word "*baptism*" in a figurative sense in this section of his letter—for no amount of material water could bury a person with Christ or make him alive in Christ.

When a person is saved, he is immediately baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ and identified with the Head, Jesus Christ. This identification means that whatever happened to Christ also happened to us. When He was buried, we were buried; when He died, we died, and when He arose, we arose with Him—and we left the graveclothes of the old life behind. All of this was through the faith of the operation of God. Baptism symbolizes our experience of death of the old life and resurrection to the new life (Rom.6:3-5).

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It is the power of God that changed us, not the power of water. We are therefore raised from the dead because of Christ's resurrection. Although Water Baptism, is an outward expression of an inward experience. Without saving faith, Water Baptism is an empty, meaningless ceremony. It is through faith, we receive Christ (Jh.1:12-13), and faith that He was raised from the dead.

2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the unclrcumclslon of your flesh, hath he qulickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;— "**Dead**" means lifeless or useless. Man's idea of death involves either the denial of a life hereafter or else the giving of another chance to work oneself into the favor of God. Man's view of death varies according to a person's background and beliefs; environment, training, and heritage. The verse is saying that man is already dead; man was condemned to eternal death before receiving life in Jesus Christ, turning to the deadness of the law was not the answer? "**The unclrcumclslon of your flesh**" means the body of the sins of the flesh (Col 2:11) —the sinful desires; the old fleshly nature were not yet put off. The penalty for sin is death. The word "**qulicken**" (*sunezoopoiesen*) means to make alive; to bring to life. The believer is brought to life from the dead with Christ by God, for when he has truly trusted in Christ, knowing Christ died for his sins, God identifies us with what Christ has done, therefore we never have to die for our sins. The penalty for our sins has been already paid. Christ paid the price. He bore the guilt, the judgment, the condemnation, and the punishment for our sins. Consequently, we are forgiven all ourtrespasses. How wondrous is that?

2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nalling it to his cross;— "**Blotting out**" means erased, wiped away, obliterated, cancelled the note. This explains the forgiveness. "**Handwriting of ordinances**" were the crimes of the criminal which was written and placed at the location of execution; a legal note or debt. Three expressions describe the law:

1. It is written in ordinances, expressed in decrees and commandments.
2. It was against us, and had a valid claim on us.
3. It was contrary to us, because we couldn't meet the claim.

³So here the law became our enemy because it openly showed us that we were guilty of breaking God's law. But when Christ went to the cross, He had fulfilled the demands of God's righteous law and because we were in Christ, being baptized unto His death, we were found not guilty of the violation of God's law. As this verse states it, Christ completely obliterated the charges against us. Note three things:

- Christ "**blotted out the handwriting of the ordinances.**"
- Christ "**took the law out of the way**" for man. He lived a sinless life thereby becoming the higher standard or the higher law for man, keeping it and fulfilling the law perfectly.
- Christ "**nailed the law to the cross**", that is, Christ bore the judgment and punishment passed down by the law upon man.

To receive what Christ has done, man has to come to himself to the list of charges against him (sin). And he should sense the wrong he has done in his life, for it is his violation of God's laws that condemns him to eternal death. Only as he senses or comes to himself and acknowledges his transgressions will he ever turn to God to be saved. This has to happen, for you can't be contrary to God and have sins blotted out. This was a once and for all removal. In the East, a bond is cancelled by nailing it to the post. So we see our bond of guilt was nailed to His cross. Hallelujah!

2:15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

⁴Usually principalities and powers are speaking of the power of darkness. "**Spoiled**" meaning striped away, disarmed or renounced. It was Satan, who Jesus destroyed on the cross. Satan was defeated. He even

³ http://www.scionofzion.com/colossians_2_11_15.htm

⁴ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/colossians/03.html>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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lost the keys to hell. Jesus took them away from him and went into hell, and brought out many captives with Him. ⁵Satan had no power to stop any of God's Elect from becoming saved. Just as the victories of the ancient conquerors resulted in a great homecoming parade, normally the conquered people were paraded before the cheering crowds of the victorious ones. The way Christ shows us openly is the fact that we have become saved and we begin to start working in the Kingdom of God to bring others into the Kingdom, that is, to evangelize the lost and train the saved.

III. COLOSSIANS 2:16-19

2:16 Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days:— This passage pits Christ against two false teachings that have hounded men down through the ages—false teachings that are constantly infiltrating the church as well as attacking the man out on the street.

1. Christ vs. rules and ritual (2:16-17).

Rules and rituals were a problem that had seeped into the Colossians church. Some believers were reverting back to rules and rituals and judging others by them. Some false teachers were diverting the attention of some believers away from Christ. They were saying:

- That rules and rituals were to be the focus of man's attention and life.
- That man became acceptable to God by keeping certain rules and rituals.
- That man pleased God by eating and drinking the right foods, and by keeping certain religious rituals and holy days.

They were being judged in their meat (diet), in drink, in respect of a holyday, of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days. All of these were outward observances. They should have focused upon Christ alone in worship! We no longer have just rules and rituals to lead us to God; we have a human life—the very body of Christ Himself—a body that lived life just like God wanted life to be lived, therefore, we are no longer to approach God through rules and rituals, but through Christ. Paul is encouraging the Colossians believers to not be enslaved by legalism, ritualism, rites, or ceremonies. The bible defines that we only worship God in spirit and in truth!

2:17 Which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ. Rules and rituals were only shadows in approaching God. Christ is the real One that enables us (the body) to approach God and to please Him. A shadow is not the real thing. There is a difference between shadow and substance. Once Christ came, He dispelled the shadow! Why look at the shadow, when we can look to Christ, the Author and Finisher of our Faith.

2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. As I said in verse 4, "Beguile" means to mislead, delude deceive, cheat, seduce, and lead someone astray. Believers can be cheated out of their reward by false teachers. How?; By following those who teach that there is another approach to God other than Christ. Christ is God's appointed way to approach Him, and there is no other way.

2. Christ vs. spiritism (2:18-19)

The false approach to God now being discussed is "*spiritism*", the worship of God through angels or spirits and visions. Again, the Colossian church had been heavily influenced by the Gnostic teaching of intermediaries or mediators between God and man; meaning people had to worship angels in order to eventually reach God. Don't let anyone persuade you to make yourself humble and fall down to worship angles. Now the Colossians began to focus upon the visions and angels whom they claimed were appearing to them; they focused upon the spirits instead of Christ. And since they do not

⁵ http://www.scionofzion.com/colossians_2_11_15.htm
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understand these spiritual truths, they become puffed up in their fleshly minds. If they truly understood these spiritual truths, they would be humbled in their minds instead of being puffed up with pride. There is false humility in this approach to God. A person who approaches God through visions and spirits is claiming that he is unworthy to approach God himself. He needs others to appear before God for him. There was a voluntary (self-imposed) air of humility about them that really came across as being more spiritual than other believers. Paul says that they were deceived, and that they were in danger of losing their reward. They were "puffed up" by a fleshly mind (1Corth.4:6). The point is this: spiritism focuses attention upon the spiritual experience—the angels, spirits, and visions—not on God's appointed way to approach Him which is Christ. No spirit, no angel, or vision can do what Christ can do. Christ alone has access into God's presence in behalf of man. Why?; Because the body has only one head, not two.

2:19 And not holding the Head from which all the body by Joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knlt together, increaseth with the Increase of God. ⁶These pastors that are "**beguiling**" Christians out of their reward are not holding fast to the "**Head**", which refers to the Head of the Church or Jesus Christ. The body is the Church and it must remain attached to the head in order to grow and mature in the faith. The fundamental problem with the false teachers was that they were not connected to Christ. If a particular fellowship under its leader does not adhere to the principles, doctrines and practices that are outlined in the Word of God, then that fellowship is not controlled by the head and it cannot be nourished and grow into a maturity in the faith.

For example, an arm that loses its nerve supply is no longer controlled by the Head, so its muscles become withered and it becomes useless to the head and the body. It is still attached to the body and the head at the joints by the ligaments. In like manner, a Christian can lose its supply of nerves and blood to the point that it withers and dies, but it is still firmly attached to the body and the Head via the joints and ligaments.

In simple language, the "**Joints and ligaments**" refer to our spirit salvation, but the tendons, arteries, nerves, muscles and skin refer to those truths that help us to realize the salvation of our soul. We must allow the blood of Christ to cleanse us from our sins and it comes through the arteries. We must allow the nerves to function properly so that the Head can control us. We must put on the whole armor of God, which is the skin that protects the body from invasion from without. If all of these things are functioning properly, the limb remains under the control of the Head, and it remains healthy and useful to the body and the Head.

SUMMARY:

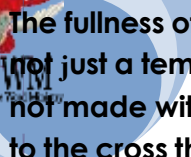
Paul tells them since they have received Christ, now continue to walk (live) by His standards, being permanently rooted and built up in Him, established in the faith. This is what they've been taught to do. This is an ongoing process because they will experience an abundance of thanksgiving. ⁷The word "Beware" in verse eight summarizes the rest of the chapter, in which Paul warns them of the dangers of "*The Colossian Heresy*". These dangers include being cheated through philosophy and vain deceit, and defrauded of their reward by those who appeal to false humility, the worship of angels, false visions, and strict regulations according to the commandments and doctrines of men which really have no value against the indulgence of the flesh (**2:6-8**).

⁶ <http://www.ffruits.org/firstfruits02/bookofcolossians.html>

⁷ http://executableoutlines.com/colo/colo_02.htm

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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The fullness of God has always dwelt in Christ, even before He came to earth; that the fullness of God was not just a temporary gift to Jesus. In Christ they are made complete, having undergone a circumcision not made with hands, in which God made them alive together with Christ. Since Christ has also nailed to the cross the "*handwriting of requirements*" that was against them and taken it out of the way, Satan's power was stripped. Christ triumphed at the cross where the sins were taken away and nailed. He openly put Satan to shame (**2:9-15**).

The Colossians were being judged in their meat (diet), in drink, in respect of a holyday, of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days. All of these were outward observances. They should have focused upon Christ alone in worship! Rules and rituals were only shadows in approaching God. Christ is the real One that enables us (the body) to approach God and to please Him. Believers can be cheated out of their reward by false teachers by following those who teach that there is another approach to God other than Christ. They focused upon the spirits; the worshipping of angels instead of Christ. And since they did not understand these spiritual truths, they become puffed up in their fleshly minds. If they truly understood these spiritual truths, they would be humbled in their minds instead of being puffed up with pride. Focusing their attention upon the spiritual experience—the angels, spirits, and visions was not on God's appointed way to approach Him, which is Christ. No spirit, no angel, or vision can do what Christ can do. We are not holding; maintaining union with the Head by which all the body of Christ is joined together, for He is the only One who holds the body together with all its joints and ligaments to nourish and increase what God wants to produce (**2:16-19**).

APPLICATION:

Everything is in Christ. Continue to follow after Him being established in your faith! Make a distinction in what the Word says and what someone else says. Check it out for yourself. All God has done for man to live in this world was accomplished through Jesus Christ to give us an expectant end.