



**Colossians 2:16-23**

Freedom In Christ From  
the Stoicheia's Authority

January 10, 2010  
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**What heresy was Paul fighting at Colossae?**

1. Jews take along Persian concept of “astral deacons” who rule every 10 degrees of the celestial sphere.
2. These deacons (stoicheia) control people’s fate: (health, wealth, posterity, etc.)
3. The heretics at Colossae believed they had to invoke the help of angels and perform ascetic rituals so they would gain favor with the stoicheia.

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**Follow The Substance Not The Shadow**

Colossians 2:16-17 Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day – **things** which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

What are the things?

1. Old Testament civil and ceremonial law
2. Add stringent rituals to receive favor

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Old Testament “Shadows”

Hebrews 10:1 For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things can never by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

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Trust In Christ Not Religious Experiences

Col 2:18 NASB: Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self abasement and the worship of angels, <u>taking his stand</u> on visions he has seen...	Col 2:18 Arnold's: Let no one condemn you by insisting on ascetic practices and invoking angels because he “ <u>entered</u> the things he had seen...” [i.e. he based his <b>knowledge on visionary experiences</b> ]
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Trust In Christ Not Religious Experiences

Col 2:18-19: Let no one condemn you by insisting on ascetic practices and invoking angels because he entered the things he had seen, conceited without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth from God.

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**Dead With Christ – Dead To Stoicheia**

Colossians 2:20-21 If 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, "Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!"

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**Dead With Christ – Dead To Stoicheia**

Colossians 2:22-23 (Which all refer to things destined to perish with use) – in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

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**Application**

1. We who were saved by grace must believe that we will be sanctified by grace.
2. We must believe that Christ plus anything means having a different gospel and a different Jesus.

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 **1. We Are Sanctified By Grace!**  
Galatians 3:2-3 This is the only thing I want to find out from you; did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

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 **1. We Are Sanctified By Grace!**  
What was said is that the Christian faith has a long tradition of meditative practices. Paul Reasoner commented that Christians can gain insight into themselves by practicing Buddhist approaches to meditation. But at the same time, Reasoner critiqued the “self-authentication of experience” inherent in Buddhist practice. He commented that Christian meditation may involve being overwhelmed **by the presence of God**, leading to worship and awe – not the way a Buddhist might describe the “expanded consciousness” of enlightenment. The experiences are fundamentally different.

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 **2. Jesus + Anything = A Different Jesus**  
Colossians:  
1:15 Image of invisible God  
1:15 Firstborn over all creation  
1:16 Created all things  
1:17 Before all things/ Sustainer of all things  
1:18 Head of the church  
1:18 Firstborn from the dead  
1:20 He reconciled all things (heaven and earth)  
2:9 Fullness of Deity dwells in Him bodily  
2:10 He is the head over all rule and authority

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<http://www.bethel.edu/bethel-news/inter/2009/nov-2009/11-13-09symposium-facts/>

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