

# Colossians 7 – Head Connection, Look above

Hello Redemption Church. Thank you to everyone who has gathered with us this Sunday afternoon. And thank you to everyone who gathers with us online. Praise the Lord!

My name is Chris Fluitt and I am so ready to bring you the Word of God today.

We are in our 7<sup>th</sup> week studying the book of Colossians. Please turn with me in your Bibles and Bible Apps to Colossians 2.

## Colossians

While you are turning to the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Colossians I want to promote our next sermon series. Watch this.

## I want to believe... but

We will be taking a short break from Colossians to talk about this important topic. Sometimes we struggle to believe because our beliefs are wrong. Please make plans to be back with us next week and bring as many friends as you can with you.

## Colossians

But for today we are back in Colossians 2.

Can anyone remind me what the theme of the book of Colossians is?

## Christ is Supreme

Let's begin with verse 18 of Colossians 2.

Colossians 2:18 (NIV2011) Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind.

Colossians 2:19 (NIV2011) They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

Colossians 2:20 (NIV2011) Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules:

Colossians 2:21 (NIV2011) “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”?

Colossians 2:22 (NIV2011) These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings.

Colossians 2:23 (NIV2011) Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Colossians 3:1 (NIV2011) Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Let's clap our hands for the word of God.

## Outline

Hints to problems in Colossae V 16-23

Gnostic Angel Worship V18

Connection Problems V19-22

Look above V23-3:1

I want to remind you of problems in the city of Colossae.

#1 Persecution had imprisoned Epaphras (who we think is the Colossian Church founder)(We covered that in week 1)

#2 Christianity is the minority in this area.

#3 A culture of Gnostic religion was prevalent.

#4 There was judgment & division over religious traditions like dietary restrictions & Sabbath. (Col 2:16)

Now Paul addresses a serious problem in verse 18.

Colossians 2:18 (NIV2011) Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind.

**Do not let anyone JUDGE YOU or DISQUALIFY YOU.**

2 verses earlier Paul instructs us – DO NOT LET ANYONE JUDGE YOU... Now Paul instructs – DO NOT ANYONE DISQUALIFY YOU...

Disqualify you. This Greek word also is translated as defrauded – to illegally obtain through deception. It also suggests the idea of an umpire depriving you of a prize by declaring you unworthy. That is interesting. It would be like after the Superbowl victory, the referee takes away the championship from the winning team and gives it to the team with fewer points... and steals this championship based on a strange technicality... like the winning quarterback's shoelaces were not standard white.

Now I have to point out here that there are Christians who don't believe you can be disqualified from the prize. But Paul is very clear here that it can happen, so don't let it happen.

Do not let anyone judge you... Do not let anyone disqualify you. In both situations there are those who would place themselves as your authority. They set themselves up as your authority when they judge you. They set themselves up as your authority when they stand as your umpire and declare you unworthy of the prize.

Redemption Church, who is our authority? Who is the head of power & authority? Who is the firstborn of all creation and created all things and holds them all together?

**Trouble starts when we allow a different authority to judge & qualify.**

Only Jesus should be your judge – He is the righteous judge. Only Jesus should qualify you – He declares your worth by dying for us on the cross. Christ is supreme!

Colossians 2:18 (NIV2011) Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind.

False humility & the worship of angels. Without naming Gnosticism, Paul seems to be describing it as the problem.

Gnostics were filled with false humility, because they held the secret knowledge of the universe and used this as a leverage point to gain honor, notoriety, & wealth. Gnostics also worshipped angels and the reason why is interesting.

Gnostics believed that God was too high to worship. They thought that God could never be touched by humanity and that our worship would mean so little to him that He would never receive it. So they turned instead to worship lower spiritual beings – angels.

Your worship reaches God. Scripture declares your worship is like a sweet smelling fragrance that reaches God. Throughout scripture we see God showing up as people worship Him.

God is the highest of all, but your worship reaches Him!

A fallen angel named Lucifer would love for you to worship him, but we only worship the Lord of Glory!

Let's apply this idea of angels to a modern problem. Angels are messengers. Far too many of God's messengers are being worshipped. Far too many pastors and prophets are being worshipped. Only God is worthy of praise.

The worship of a man or woman could disqualify you. Only worship God!

The scripture goes on to say.. "Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen..." Don't get caught up in these "vision of heaven stories". There are many books and even films based on these stories.

I have nothing bad to say about the people with these visions, but Paul clearly warns us these stories about what people have seen.

One such man saw visions and wrote "another testament of Jesus Christ" and now is the founder of a denomination with 14.8 million followers.

The scripture continues "...they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind."

These people are puffed up – prideful. They have idle notions – ideas that lack purpose and power. These notions come from an unspiritual mind. Remember that Paul, in this very chapter, told us that we need a spiritual circumcision that cuts away our fleshly carnality that desires sin. We need a transformed mind! (Romans 12:12)

No Angel can do this! No man with secret knowledge can do this! Only Jesus Christ can transform your mind.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ! Philippians 2:5

Colossians 2:19 (NIV2011) They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

These people who disqualify you with false humility and angel worship... They have lost connection with the head.

## **Head & Body Connection**

Who is the head? Paul said a few verses earlier that Jesus is the HEAD of all power and authority.

A head needs to be connected to a body. What is the body? The Church is the body of Christ.

You need to be connected to the head and you need to be growing in the body. It is possible to be connected to a church body but not be connected to Jesus the head. It is also possible to be connected to Jesus as your head but to reject being within a Church body. We need to be connected to both.

Are you connected to Jesus? Is He your head?

Are you really connected to this church body?

We need a head & body connection.

Colossians 2:20 (NIV2011) Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules:

Paul is tying back to earlier in the chapter where he spoke about a death & burial with Christ in baptism. The phrase “elemental spiritual forces” is the same phrase used in Colossians 2:8.

Not only are we no longer ruled by these forces, we are dead to them. They are not dead to us... these forces are very much alive and we could come back under them if we turn away from Jesus... but rather we are dead to them.

## **“You can’t hurt a dead man”**

You can’t tempt a dead man. You can’t hurt their feelings. It doesn’t matter what rules you come up with.. they can’t effect a dead man.

I remember my dad was discipling someone who often had hurt by others in the church... When you have hurt feelings it is almost like there is a law that you are supposed to hurt them back... (Exodus 21:24). On one occasion this

person brought to my dad something someone said or that they gave them a strange look and now they were completely offended and hurt. My dad said... “You can’t hurt a dead man. Did you die with Christ.. are you alive in the flesh or the Spirit?”

I don’t want to make light of the hurt people may put you through, BUT if you are constantly being hurt it means that you are not dead with Christ and alive in His Spirit.

“why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules:” If you submit to the rules of this world, it means you belong to this world. Paul is not rooting for anarchy and to revolt against the government here. He gives us an example of these rules in the next verse...

Colossians 2:21 (NIV2011) “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”?

The world we live in tries to solve problems like this...

If there is a gun problem... fewer people should handle a gun.

If you have a weight problem... Don’t eat as much.

If you have a drug or alcoholism problem... Don’t touch that stuff.

Colossians 2:22 (NIV2011) These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings.

Colossians 2:23 (NIV2011) Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Our world thinks this way... Society makes these rules, and if you will follow these rules you will become a good person. But this does not work. These rules do not change you on the inside... these rules may make you think about the consequences but they don’t make you desire better things. These rules have an appearance of wisdom...

Jesus doesn’t want to just give you rules to follow. Jesus wants to change your heart. Jesus changes us through love.

Jesus doesn’t just want you to not murder... Jesus wants to put a heart of love inside you.

Jesus doesn't just want you to not steal... Jesus wants you to love so much that you take the very things you have earned with your hard work, and give them away to those in need.

Jesus doesn't want to create a law that self imposes worship... Jesus wants you to actually fall in love with who He is and that that you would gladly worship Him out of love.

When the religious leaders asked Jesus what was the most important rule, Jesus answered by saying "love God... and love your neighbor..." (Matthew 22:36-40) Jesus boils down all the rules, regulations, and ordinances down to one word – Love.

Rules do not restrain sensual indulgence, but like Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:14... the love of Christ constrains/restrains us.

## Musician

Paul is saying these laws are not enough. The worship of angels is not going to fulfill what you really need. The secret knowledge that other people claim to have is not what you should really seek. Here is where we should look.

Colossians 3:1 (NIV2011) Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

## Look above

Christ is raised to the highest place. Look there.

Don't look around you in a way of getting revenge when someone hurts you... You have been raised above such things. Set your heart above these things.

Anything that causes your love to lessen is not for you.

If you hear a new doctrine or "spiritual teaching" that causes your love for Jesus to lessen... it is not for you. Look above!

If you feel urges and temptations that would cause you to love others less and actually hurt others... it is not for you. Look above!

Come pray, come worship, come repent, come and look above today.