

SOLD OUT

LESSON 6 | IT'S NOT ABOUT RULES!

PASTOR JOSH MAROCCO

Colossians 2:16-23

“Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. 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. 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. 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: “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. 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.”

The Big Idea

Here in this passage of Scripture Paul starts off by informing the Church in Colossae that it is no longer about traditions and rules. See in the Old Covenant which was the law the Israelites were instructed to follow certain traditions and rules set forth by God in the law. But now that Christ came to earth and died to fulfill the law, it is not about trying to keep the law in our own strength but rather understanding that it's in Christ and through Christ that one is made righteous. God never gave the Jews the law so that they could keep the law and through the law become righteous, but instead, He gave them the law to prove to them that they could not keep the whole law and that they needed the Messiah to fulfill the law. Now that Jesus has fulfilled the law, it is in Christ that one is made righteous and it is through Christ that one can fulfill the commands of the law. Righteousness is not about keeping rules, because when we make righteousness about keeping rules, Paul says it is self-made religion and doesn't do any good to prevent selfish sensual indulgence. So according to Paul righteousness comes through living in Christ and allowing Christ to live righteously through us.

The Conversation

1. What do you think Paul means when he says that we have died to the elemental spiritual forces of this world?
2. Why do you think Paul says that when we use rules like do not handle, taste or touch, we are living in self-made religion?
3. If we are not to enforce rules upon someone, how does one become righteous?
4. What are other aspects of the text that stand out to you?

The Takeaway

If righteousness comes through being in Christ, what are some practical ways you can stay connected to Christ?

