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**Much Love!**

Pastor Ed

**Title:** Break the Rules

**Text:** Colossians 2:16-3:4

**Target:** A spirituality that is produced in human effort finds the rewards in the hands of men, not the heart of God.

I. **The Deception of Legalism:** *“Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.”* (Vs. 2:16)

A. **Definition of Legalism:** Religion of Human Achievement.

B. **Doctrine of Legalism:** Earning of God’s Acceptance.

1. **Dietary Laws:** (Clean, Unclean)
2. **Festival Events:** (Present/Absent)
3. **New Moon:** (Give/Keep)
4. **Sabbath Days:** (Rest/Work)

C. **Discernment towards Legalism:** *“These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.”* (Vs. 2:17)

II. **The Danger in Mysticism:** *“Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind,”* (Vs. 2:18)

A. **Definition of Mysticism:** Pursuit of divine experiences subjective to human interpretation.

B. **Doctrine of Mysticism:** Only available to the spiritually advanced.

1. **Worship of Angels:** (Superior than our Savior)
2. **Visions and Dreams:** (Superior to Scripture)

C. **Discernment towards Mysticism:** *“and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.”* (Vs. 2:19)

III. **The Delusion of Asceticism:** *“If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations—”* (Vs. 2:20)

A. **Definition of Asceticism:** Extreme self-denial to attain different levels of spirituality.

B. **Doctrine of Asceticism:** Spiritual devotion is measured by physical discipline.

1. **Abstinence:** *“Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”* (Vs. 2:21)
2. **Acceptance:** *“(referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings?”* (Vs. 2:22)
3. **Appearance:** *“These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body,”* (Vs. 2:23a)

- C. **Discernment towards Asceticism** *“but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.”* (Vs. 2:23b)
- IV. **The Distinction of Spiritualism:** *“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.”* (Vs. 3:1)
- A. **Definition of Spiritualism:** The transformation of a life is found in Christ alone by the Holy Spirit.
  - B. **Doctrine of Spiritualism:** Revelation from God is always anchored in Scripture.
  - C. **Discernment in Spiritualism:** Christ is ENOUGH!
    1. **Kingdom Minded:** *“Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.”* (Vs. 3:2)
    2. **Kingdom Grounded:** *“For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”* (Vs. 3:3)
    3. **Kingdom Centered:** *“When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory”* (Vs.3:4)

**Takeaway:** Are we HIDDEN in Christ or are we HIDING Christ?