Col207 – **Sufficient or Not – Colossians 2:16-23**

In **last week's** msg – we **said** – the **Problem is SIN**

& **all** the **Religious** ***Rules*** & ***Regulations*** and ***Efforts*** in the **world**
CANNOT Satisfactorily Deal with the **Problem of SIN**

& **So** – **God Himself Made a WAY –** to **Deal** with **our Sin**
So we could **spend eternity** in His **presence**

& **that Way** – ***that ONLY Way*** – **is thru** our
IDENTIFICATION with **Jesus Christ** - ***thru our FAITH Alone***

By our Faith in **Jesus** Christ – the **Record of our Sin**
was **CANCELLED**, and **we** were **made COMPLETE – IN HIM**

But – **Some people** in the **Church in Colossae** –
Just like some **people today**

Wouldn't ALLOW the **New Christians** there
to **BE COMPLETE** - in **Christ Alone**

These **poor New Believer's** had **TWO Different groups**
putting **ADDITIONAL man-made demands** on them

They **had** the **Judiazers** – who were **saying** they **had** to
ADD the **Jewish Laws** - to their "***Faith in Jesus Christ***"

& they **had** the **Gnostics** saying that **they had** to be **initiated**
into a **Higher Spiritual Knowledge**
to **ADD** to their "***Faith in Jesus Christ***"

& Today – God's Word says – *NO, NO NO !!*

We are **made ONE** with **Christ** – ***thru Faith Alone***

& we are ***Completely COMPLETE***
thru our **Becoming One** with **Christ** – Thru Faith

Because Jesus Christ is ***SUPREMELY SUFFICIENT***

& **BY Our FAITH** in Him – Our Union with Him
Makes ***Completely COMPLETE*** – ***IN HIM***

So - Colossians 2:16 says (NLT)

16 So don't let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths.

Guys - **Man-Made religions** always **place people**
under some **sort** of ***Ordinances***, ***Rules***, or ***Regulations***

it's **Man's WAY** to try to **REACH God**

It's **often said** – **RELIGION** is **man's attempt** to **Reach God**
Jesus Christ is **God's Way** to **Reach Man**

But **man can't help it** - **man** will **always ADD**
religious ***rules*** and ***regulations*** & ***requirements***

to the **Simple Gospel** of **Genuine FAITH** in **Jesus** Christ
& a **Real, Growing**, **Transforming Relationship** with him

Because . . . How can we **PROVE** that we are **HOLY**
If we **don't** have to ***Work***, or ***Earn***, our **place with God**

& man **ADDING Requirements**
To **Faith** in **Christ** – And a **Real Relationship** with **Him**

is **just** as **big** a **problem** today – as **it was** for
the **New Believers** in the **1st Century**

& So - **Vs.16** says ***"Don't let anyone condemn you over these man-made rules and regulations***

& then Colossians 2:17 says (NLT)
17 For these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality.

This **seems** to be **referring specifically** the **Law of Moses**

The **Law of Moses** was **only** a **shadow** of **things** to come
& Christ **IS THE REALITY** of those **things**

Because **Jesus** Christ ***FULFILLED*** every **requirement** of the **Law**

So, **now** that **Jesus Christ** has **come**

WHY should we **continue** to **Live** in the **SHADOW**
when we **can Live** in the **REAL THING**

It's like if your **spouse** has **been gone** for a **LONG TIME**
& **you've** been **staring** at their **picture** every single **day**

& **then** they **come home** - & **when** they **walk** in the **door** you say
don't bother me, I'm **looking** at ***your picture***

Guys – **Jesus Christ** is the **REAL Thing**
He is the ***Supremely Sufficient Source***

& **if** you are **LIVING IN** the **REAL THING**
Then **HOW** can the **Shadow** Things - be ***ADDED*** to the **Real Thing**

& **then – V.18** moves **on** to the **pre-gnostic teachers**
that the **Colossians** were **having** to deal with

The **Gnostics** were **saying** - the **Believers** had to **ADD**
"***A Higher Spiritual Knowledge***" to their **Faith** in **Jesus Christ**

BUT - Colossians 2:18(a) says (re: the gnostics) **(NLT)**
18 Don't let anyone condemn you by insisting on pious self-denial or the worship of angels, saying they have had visions about these things . . .

these were the **TYPE** of things the **Gnostics** were **trying** to
get the **New Believers** - to **ADD to their Faith** in Christ

& **don't** we **see** this **same thing** in **religion** today?

We have **some Religions** that have a **LONG LIST** of things
you ***CANNOT Do*** – in the **name** of ***Pious Self-Denial***

JUST LIKE the **Jews** took **God's 10 Commandments** –
& **ADDED 613** of their **OWN** - to the **Original 10**

& **Regarding** the **Worship of ANGELS**

The **largest Religion** in the world – has **people Worshipping** –
(***at least Praying***) - to **People** - ***OTHER THAN*** Jesus

& **what** about **people saying** they've had **VISIONS**
about these **things** that they're **trying** to **get** you to **ADD to Jesus**?

The Mormons have the **appearance** (Vision)
of the **Angel Moroni** to young **Joey Smith**

& the **Catholics** have **centuries** of **appearances** (**visions**)
of **Mary** - to **support** her **elevated position** in their **Religion**

But - **what** is **interesting** is about **these appearances** (visions)

Is – they always point people to **THEIR OWN religion**
& **NOT necessarily** to **Jesus**

Because – as the end of Colossians 2:18 says (NLT)
18 . . . Their sinful minds have made them proud,

Their **Sinful Minds** – Their **FLESHLY Minds**

have **made them proud**
of their **own rules**, & **regulations**, & **ordinances**

& listen - **I know** it **sounds** like **I'm being hard**

on these **Religions** and **Philosophies** that ***ADD***
their ***OWN Requirements*** to **Faith** in **Jesus Christ**

But I'm **not** being **NEAR as hard** on **them** – ***as GOD is***

Because God says - Colossians 2:19(a) (NLT)
19 and they are not connected to Christ, the head of the body. For he holds the whole body together with its joints and ligaments, and it grows as God nourishes it.

Saying these **man-made religious approaches are**
not connected to Christ – **THAT** is being **HARD** on them

What **v.19 means** is - They are ***NOT DRAWING***
their **SUPREME SUFFICIENCY** From **Jesus Christ**

& **so** – they **have** to **ADD** – ***What THEY SAY***
(their own **Rules** & **Regs**) - **To Faith** in **Jesus** Christ

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I know plenty of **people** who **live** by ***rules*** and ***requirements***
that have **been ADDED** to their ***FAITH in Christ***

& **if I were** to **tell them** that **they may not** be ***Connected to Christ***
that could **make** me **some serious enemies** really **fast**

BUT – the **Bible says** - You are ***Complete in Christ***
Jesus Christ is ***SUPREMELY SUFFICIENT*** for **all** you **need**

NOW – ***BECAUSE OF*** your **FAITH** in **Jesus Christ**

There are **Things** you will **CHOOSE NOT TO DO**
because it will **DAMAGE** your **relationship** with **Jesus**

& ***BECAUSE OF*** your **FAITH** in **Jesus Christ**

There are **Things** you will **CHOOSE TO DO**

because it will **STRENGTHEN** your **relationship** with **Jesus**

SO - Please Listen very **carefully**
to **what** I'm **about to say**

Because it may **clear up** some **questions** in your **mind**

These Verses are ***NOT ABOUT***
CHOOSING OR NOT CHOOSING - ***Sinful Actions***

These Verses are ***NOT ABOUT***
you **being able** to **CHOOSE SIN**

These verses are **about** – **whether** you **should TAKE**
Man-Made - ***Ideas***, ***Rules***, ***Regulations***, & ***Philosophies***

and **ADD them** to the ***All-Sufficiency*** of **Jesus Christ?**

& the answer is – A THOUSAND TIMES NO!

The Problem in the **N.T. church**
was the **SAME problem** we **have today**

& **that is** – **people saying** – or **implying** –
Oh Yeah - Jesus is the Savior and all

but **you NEED to** follow **OUR Rules** & **Requirements**
if **you want** to be **Really RIGHT**

& **the way** you can **ALWAYS tell**
is **WHAT** that **person** - ***talks about most***

Are they talking **MORE** about the **Sufficiency** of **Jesus Christ?**

OR are they **talking MORE** about their **Rules** & **Regulations** –
or their **DOCTRINE** & **Interpretation** of the **Bible**

This **kills me** **especially** with our ***Reformed & Calvinist friends***

Man oh **Man** – they **talk A LOT** about their **DOCTRINE**
& their **LOGIC** & about a ***CERTAIN FLOWER***

& they **talk a LOT** about ***their Guy J.C.***
They **talk A LOT** about ***their Guy J.C.***

Years ago – I was at **Pastor's Conference** at a **huge**
Reformed church – **Pastored** by one of the
BIGGEST CELEBRITY Bible Teachers in the **COUNTRY**

& this **Mega-Pastor** is actually a "***Reformed Baptist***" *(Calvinist)*

But the **President of the S.B.C.** was **speaking**

& **as** he **began** his **Keynote message** – he **told a story** of being in **Russia** with this **hugely famous** ***Calvinist Pastor***

& **he described** a **time** they **spent** with **1500 PASTORS**,
as **these Pastors listened** to this **Famous Bible teacher**

& the **President of the S.B.C.** said

By the **end** of this **famous Bible teacher's time**
ALL 1500 of these **pastors** had **RECEIVED J.C.**

& then he **took a breath**, for **Dramatic Pause** - & **he said**

When I say these men received J.C.
I mean they received JOHN CALVIN

& this **super mega church** - **Packed wall-to-wall** with **Pastors**
Erupted in APPLAUSE

& for **some reason** – I **suddenly started** feeling a **little sick** to my **stomach** - & I **had** to leave the **conference**

& ***THAT*** is what **I'm talking about**

if **you** are **dealing** with **someone** who is **Talking MORE**
about ***their Religion*** & ***their Doctrine*** & ***their Rules***

than **they are** about the **SUPREME SUFFICIENCY** of **Jesus** Christ

Then **my encouragement** is – ***ASK Yourself WHY***

Because **HERE** is **how God's Word Addresses** that **situation**

First Colossians 2:19(b) says (NLT)

19 . . . [Jesus] Christ, [is] the head of the body. For he holds the whole body together with its joints and ligaments, and it grows as God nourishes it.

Notice the **focus** on the ***Supreme Sufficiency of Christ***

& Then - Colossians 2:20-21 say (NLT)

20 (and) ***You have died with Christ,*** (speaking of your identification with Christ thru faith in him) ***and he has set you free from the spiritual*** (or elemental) ***powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, 21 "Don't handle! Don't taste! Don't touch!"?***

The **CONTEXT here** – is **ADDING** the **Requirements**
of ***Man-Made Religion*** – to **FAITH** in **Jesus Christ**

The JUDAIZERS were **demanding**
that the **people** follow their ***Rules & Regulations***

& the **Gnostics** **trying** to **get the people**
to **follow** their **supposed** ***Higher Spiritual knowledge***

But **God's Word** says – ***you have been set free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world . . .***

AGAIN - **This Context** is ***NOT talking about*** –
whether you **should** **AVOID SINFUL choices** or **action**

The **Context** is **NOT ABOUT** - you **having** the **RIGHT to SIN**

These vs's are **Speaking about**
Man-Made ***Religious Rules*** & the ***Spiritual Philosophies***

That people try to ADD to the **SUFFICIENCY of Christ**

& Colossians 2:22 says (NLT)

22 Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them.

We **have GOT** to **LEARN** to **DISCERN**
between a "***Human Teaching***" and the "***Word of God***"

& we've **GOT** to **have the COURAGE**
to **CHOOSE** the ***Word of God*** – **OVER** - ***Human Teaching***!

Because man-made rules of **religion** are - ***mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them***

In **other words** - They are ***NOT from GOD***
& **they** are ***GOING to FADE AWAY***

But – **some** of these **human teachings** ***SEEM right*** – ***Don't they?***

Especially when **those teaching** them
use **SCRIPTURE** to **REINFORCE them**

And . . . ***God AGREES*** – they certainly ***SEEM RIGHT*** –
& **that's exactly** what **V. 23 says**

Colossians 2:23 (NLT)

23 These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person's evil (fleshly) ***desires.***

I Love **Eugene Peterson's**
"***Contemporary Language Take***" on this vs.

Eugene Peterson – on Colossians 2:23
Such things sound impressive if said in a deep enough voice. They even give the illusion of being pious (devoted) ***and humble and ascetic*** (self-discipled)***. But they are just another way of showing off, making yourselves look important.***

But it's **not just** the **loose paraphrase** of **Eugene Peterson**
That **takes** this **approach** on **V.23**

The **NET Bible** – **Which** is ***super highly regarded***
for its **careful translation** approach – **translates** **V. 23** like this

Colossians 2:23 (NET)

23 Even though they (these religious rules and philosophies) ***have the appearance of wisdom with their self-imposed worship and false humility achieved by an unsparing treatment of the body - a wisdom with no true value - they in reality result in fleshly indulgence.***

These **Man-Made *Religious Rules*** & ***Philosophies***
Are of **NO true value**

They just make you **LOOK IMPORTANT**

They can easily be a **way** of **showing off**
& they, in reality, result in fleshly indulgence

Meaning that **these things** – ***FEED THE FLESH***

These Religious Rules and Man's Philosophies
Don't **STOP** the **FLESH**
They **FEED** the **FLESH**

& **the Part** of the **Flesh** that they **FEED** – ***IS PRIDE***

& **Since PRIDE** is the ***ROOT of ALL SIN***

We **should Definitely NOT** be **feeding it**
with **man-made *Religious Rules***, ***Regulations***, & ***Philosophies***

Pray thru the verses to close

Colossians 2:16 (NLT)

16 So don't let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths.

Heavenly Father, please don't let us get caught up in religious rules or regulations about what we can & can't eat - or certain days, or ceremonies or sabbaths

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Colossians 2:17 (NLT)

17 For these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality.

Lord we know that even the Law of Moses was only a SHADOW of the Reality that YOU Jesus ARE – You are the reality – You are the Fulfilling – of all that the Law of Moses pointed to

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Colossians 2:18 (NLT)

18 Don't let anyone condemn you by insisting on pious self-denial or the worship of angels, saying they have had visions about these things. Their sinful minds have made them proud,

& so Lord, please give us DISCERNMENT & Wisdom – if anyone tries to insist that we have to Add ANYTHING to Who you ARE in our Lives, even if it involves angels and visions – Lord, please don't let us get trapped in that – Don't let us get trapped into the worship of anything besides you - & ONLY you Jesus

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Colossians 2:19 (NLT)

19 and they are not connected to Christ, the head of the body. For he holds the whole body together with its joints and ligaments, and it grows as God nourishes it.

Lord Jesus, we want to be connected to YOU, & You alone – You Jesus are the Head of the Body - & we are YOUR Body - & YOU hold us together – You have placed us in the body - & Lord God we grow as you Nourish us

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Colossians 2:20-21 (NLT)

20 You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, 21 "Don't handle! Don't taste! Don't touch!"?

Lord Jesus, thru our Faith in YOU ALONE we are SO Identified with you – that when you DIED to the things of this world – WE died with you – you set us FREE from the spiritual powers of this world - & so Lord, please set us free from man-made religious rules and regulations - & make us completely Sufficient - in our Relationship and our Being MADE ONE with YOU

Colossians 2:22 (NLT)

22 Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them.

Because Lord, these rules and regulations and spiritual philosophies – they are all mere human teachings - & they are fading away, as all temporal things are – But you Lord are eternal, and our relationship with you, is eternal – Please don't let us trade that – for mere, temporal, man-made teachings

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Colossians 2:23 (NLT)

23 These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person's evil desires.

Lord, all these man-made rules and ideas & philosophies, may seem wise to us – because Lord, in our flesh, we want to work, we want to

EARN, we want to DESERVE our position with you – But Lord, All of our Self-Effort, and all of our Own WORKS – only feed our tendency to RELIGIOUS PRIDE - & we know Lord, that PRIDE is the root of all sin

& so Lord Jesus – May we KNOW that we are COMPLETELY COMPLETE – in You – May we know that you are Supremely Sufficient for ALL that we need

May we know - that In our Union with YOU – & in our Relationship with you – we are COMPLETE – We are COMPLETE in YOU Jesus

May we desire to KNOW you Better
May we walk more CLOSELY with you - &
May we be Transformed more & more – into your image

For Your Glory - & in your name – which is above every other name - JESUS, Amen!s