



July 17, 2022

MAIN SCRIPTURE: Colossians 2:16-23 (NLT)

¹⁶So 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. ¹⁷For these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality. ¹⁸Don't let anyone condemn you by insisting on pious self-denial or the worship of angels,^[e] saying they have had visions about these things. Their sinful minds have made them proud, ¹⁹and 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.

²⁰You 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!"? ²²Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them. ²³These 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.

WARM-UP

- What thoughts, ideas, concepts, questions, or other inspiration stood out to you from the message?
- When you were a child, who did you like to spend the bulk of your time with? Why? What was the best part about this relationship?

(Below you will find the main points of this week's sermon along with discussion questions. Feel free to use, reword, or omit questions depending on the needs of your group and the time needed for prayer, care, and fellowship. Thank you for your leadership.)

Thought #1 – Don't settle for a substitute of the real thing!

Verses: Colossians 2:16-23

- What is something that you typically substitute for the real thing?
- When you were in school, how did the kids in your class behave when there was a substitute teacher? What changed when the real teacher was present?
- What things or practices help point you to Jesus? What things or practices most often discourage a close relationship with Jesus?

Thought #2 – Be humble – not proud!

Verses: Colossians 2:16-23

- Tell your story. Can you think of a time in your life when you were doing the right things, but for the wrong motive? What helped you understand this? What did you do to change your motivation? Thanks for being brave enough to tell your story. 😊
- What do you think Jesus would like for our motivation to be when we make decisions? Why do you say this?

Thought #3 – The goal is not to be religious, but to have an intimate relationship with Jesus!

Verses: Colossians 2:16-23

- Rather than having a relationship with Jesus that is mechanical and stagnant, we need to have a relationship that is authentic and personal. Which would you rather have, relationships that are mechanical and stagnant, or relationships that are authentic and personal? Why do you say this?
- What do you think happens in the heart and mind of a person who moves from having merely a "religious" experience with Jesus to having an intimate and authentic relationship with Him?

Challenge:

- Discuss with your group: what might change in your decision-making, habits, and

