

"BEWARE – TRUTH OR DARE!"

Colossians Chapter 2

I) TRUTH! (Christ Incarnate is the Mystery of God) (v1-10)

(v1-2a) Paul writes about a "great conflict" that he's in for the sake of the believers in Colosse, Laodicea and us. The term "conflict" speaks of one competing in an athletic event or one involved in an intense military action. One commentator writes, "The struggle centers around the main doctrines, the INCARNATION and the ATONEMENT. These are crucial, for on them hinges the fate of man's REDEMPTION and SALVATION." Paul wants to **ENCOURAGE** us, unite us in **LOVE**, and **ASSURE** us of God's great plan of salvation. A "mystery" in Scripture is a previously hidden truth now divinely revealed.

(v2b-3) What's hid in God the Father and of Christ? *All the treasures of WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE.* C.I. Scofield writes, "The "mystery of God" is **CHRIST**, as incarnating the fullness of the Godhead, and all the divine wisdom and knowledge for the redemption and reconciliation of man. **WISDOM** - is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding. The first principle of biblical **WISDOM** and **KNOWLEDGE** is that man should humble himself before God in reverence and worship, obedient to His commands.

(v4-5) **DON'T BE DECEIVED!** Keep things in *good order*; be *steadfast in your faith in Christ*.

(v6-7) **WALK in Christ**, be ROOTED (Psalm 1) and BUILT UP in Him (Matt. 7:24-29), *established (literally, "constantly being established") in the faith (Rom. 10:17)*! Notice the church in Colosse was "TAUGHT." Let's always "*abound in thanksgiving!*"

(v8) "BEWARE" means to *keep a watchful eye over*. John MacArthur writes, "The word (*philosophy*) referred to more than merely the academic discipline, but described any theory about God, the world, or the meaning of life." Also the *tradition of men* and the *basic principles of the world* (**Beware - Romans 1:18-32 - Suppression of the truth! 2Peter 3:1-9 - Willingly forgetful!**)

(v9-10) In Christ "*dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*" (Col 2:9) in contrast to the "tradition of men" (Col 2:8). In the Son of God who took on human form, the essential quality and character of God are wholly present.

II) BEWARE OF RELIGIOUS SLAVERY (v11-17)

> **The Chain Gang (four links broken):** (1) (v11-13) *circumcision*; (2) (v14) *the Law (Insight: having nailed it to the cross* - The list of the crimes of a crucified criminal were nailed to the cross with that criminal to declare the violations he was being punished for (as in the case of Jesus, as noted in Matt. 27:37). Believers' sins were all put to Christ's account, nailed to His cross as He paid the penalty in their place for them all, thus satisfying the just wrath of God against crimes requiring punishment in full.); (3) (v15) *triumphing over the powers of darkness (1Peter 3:18-20 - For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.)* (cf. Gen. 3:15; John 12:31; 16:11; Heb. 2:14); (4) (v16-17) **Religious works** (Acts ch. 15 - **Freedom from the Law! Romans ch. 14- Freedom not to judge!**)

III) BEWARE OF FALSE WORSHIP (v18-23)

(v18-19) **Beware of MYSTICISM** - the belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality can be attained through subjective experience (as intuition or insight)

(v20-23) **Beware of ASCETICISM** - practicing strict self-denial as a measure of personal and especially spiritual discipline.

Jesus said in John 8:31-32 - "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."