

Scripture:

Colossians 2:20-23

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— “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

Notes:

Colossians 2:16-19 — Dependence on Christ

Colossians 2:20-23 — Independence in Christ

John 14:6–9, “...If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him...Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”

Following the rules is not the same as following Jesus

- IF with Christ you died...
- ... WHY...?
- Submit — to conform, to obey; dogma

Romans 6:1–2, What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

Galatians 4:9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?

Elevating the rules risks elevating the ego

- Do not handle, taste, or touch
- Man-made and man-centered
- Appearances aren't what they seem
- Self-made over sanctified
- Asceticism and Severity

Analyzing the rules reveals the true value of the rules

- No value — no merit, no worth...what's the point?
- Stopping the indulgence
- Flesh — denotes the nature of humanity
- No amount of rules can change the heart.

Questions to Consider

- Does it stress man-made rules or God's grace?
- Does it feed a critical spirit toward others or cultivate building up others?
- Does it encourage public piety or discreet and loving spiritual disciplines?
- Does it teach formulas, secret knowledge, or special visions more than the actual Word of God?
- Does it honor those who keep the rules or emphasize the name and work of Christ?
- Does it imply an elite group or reflect the Kingdom of God?

Live like you have independence in Christ... because you do.