

The Danger of Religion Without Relationship

Sermon Notes

November 10, 2024

Colossians 2:16-23, Tom Daly

Introduction

Sermon Focus:

Exploring the risk of reducing Christianity to mere behavior rather than a relationship with God through Jesus.

Key Points:

1. Religious Traps

- Paul warns against the deception of "fine-sounding" but empty religious practices.
- **Trap 1:** Seeing religious acts as the goal rather than a means to connect with God.
 - *Verse 16:* "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day."
- **Trap 2:** Overemphasizing religious experiences, leading to a focus on self rather than worshipping God.
 - *Verse 18:* "Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such a person also goes into great detail about what they have seen; they are puffed up with idle notions by their unspiritual mind."
- **Trap 3:** Dependence on rules as a substitute for a relationship with God.
 - *Verses 20-22:* "Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: 'Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!' These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings."

2. Pride in Disguise

- The false humility of the Colossian false teachers masked their pride, drawing attention to themselves rather than to God.
- *Verse 19:* "They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow."
- Paul's guidance: True humility points others to Christ, not to personal acts or accomplishments.

3. Growth in God

- Living as children of God is about relationship, not rules.
- True Christian life grows from abiding in Christ and being transformed by God's presence.
- *Verse 19*: "From whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow."

Gospel Message:

Invitation to trust Jesus for salvation, highlighting Christ's humility and sacrifice for our sins.

- *Philippians 2:6-8*: "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

Closing:

Prayer and encouragement to live in relationship with God, finding true life and freedom in Christ.