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WHERE NEW LIFE BEGINS

Decoding Colossians Part 2: Judged For Food, Sabbaths and New Moons?

by Jim Staley

<https://youtu.be/Mk6k3LV-VzQ>



Paul said in **Colossians 2**, *"Don't let anyone judge you based on food and drink, festivals, new moons, Sabbaths."* I promise you, what we're about to do is rock your world with what this really means. Going back to the original Hebrew Jewish mindset that it was written in changes everything. So, strap in, my friends, because this is going to be a wild ride. One of my favorite broadcasts right here—Colossians chapter 2. Don't miss it. You're going to learn So, much. You're going to

feel like you just came out of seminary right after this.

Hello everyone, Jim Staley, Passion for Truth Ministries. Welcome to this week's broadcast where we are going verse by verse through the book of Colossians, one of the most important books of the New Testament that Paul penned with his own hand. And this is not going to be a disappointment as we move into chapter two. It's probably one of the most misunderstood chapters of everything Paul has ever written in any church that he's ever written to. Yes, that's right, this is a very controversial chapter, absolutely to be sure, but we're going to unpack it from the original Hebraic perspective. Once you go back to the original Jewish mindset that Paul is writing from, it just all makes sense. Once we know the backdrop, once we know the expressions that are being used, the idioms that are being used, the people groups, the debates, what the debate topics are over, what the groups are that are coming and debating Paul, what they believed—it just all makes sense. And that's what this ministry is all about: getting past Protestantism, current church theology that is pulled from Roman Catholicism originally, and then going past even the church fathers in the third and fourth centuries and getting right back to the first century. That's where we learn to do Bible things in Bible ways, because quite frankly, they had it right. The problem is not that the Bible is difficult to understand. The problem is that we've changed the definitions of many things over the years in church history, and that's caused great problems.

So, if this is the type of content you're looking for and you're not subscribed to this channel, would you do us a favor? Hit **subscribe**. You don't want to miss anything that's coming out. We've already done verse-by-verse studies on [Acts](#), on [Romans](#), on [Hebrews](#), going through every single scripture and unpacking them for both your practical life and theological doctrine, letting the Bible redefine itself, which Sometimes comes in conflict with our traditional Christian doctrine. But that's okay, because we're not after making ourselves feel good. We're after the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. So, help us God. All right. And that's exactly what we need to do—So, help us God, because all of us need help, including me. I'm not the bearer of ultimate truth. He is. I'm just stumbling around in the dark, trying to find it myself, and then I bring it to you. And that's what our team here at Passion for Truth does. And we're So, privileged to be able to work for you and to serve you in that way.

All right, So, let's move on into chapter two. And if you haven't watched the introduction and chapter one, it really does set the stage, because knowing all the people groups—which you likely may not know—So, if you've never heard of the **School of Hillel** or the **School of Shammai**, you might want to watch the [introduction](#) because it makes a big difference as we move through here. But let's move to chapter two and see what we can find.

All right, number one. Verse 1: *"For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."* Now, there is more to unpack here than you can probably imagine. This is going to be difficult for me to contain myself in this chapter because every verse is loaded with So, much incredible things. First of all, Laodicea—we see this as one of the seven churches in the book of Revelation. It is nearby to Colossae as well as Ephesus, which is about a hundred miles away. Almost 100,000 people got saved in Ephesus. That's how significant, over time, the Gospel impacted there. Colossae was another big deal, but it had an earthquake right after Paul wrote these letters that completely almost destroyed the city, and it never was rebuilt after that. So, there is a lot to unpack here.

What's going on? There are groups that are amalgamating all of these mystery religions in all of these cities because everyone is spiritual. Unlike today, you pretty much have Christianity, a few other choice religions, and then agnosticism or atheism in, let's say, the United States or even the United Kingdom or around the world. It just seems to be that way. But in the first century, almost everyone is spiritual. There's very, very, very few agnostic or atheists that are living in the first century. Why? Because everything is spiritual, and they are either serving one god, or they're serving another god, or they're serving multiple gods. And what would happen is people would come into town with a new god or a new form of worship for a particular god, and Someone would like that and they would adopt that as their own. It wasn't very clean cut and dried of what people believed because people were borrowing from all these different religions and concepts. We see that here in Colossians. How do we know that? Because one of the biggest things that was out there was Greek philosophy. Greek philosophers would take spiritual concepts and infuse them into the philoSo,phy and became very powerful amongst influence of the people because the culture was Greek. If you weren't Jewish, the culture was Greek. And if you weren't Jewish, you're living in a Greek culture. So, that's why, like I said before in a previous broadcast, most Jews

would have a Hebrew name at birth, but they also had a Roman name. And that's where Saul of Tarsus—his Hebrew name was Shaul, just like King Saul—but his Roman name was Paulos. And they operated in both realms simultaneously. And inside of Greek philosophy, knowledge, or in the Greek, gnosis, was super important. And this crept into different religions, cults, and even inside of Judaism, which then penetrated the early ecclesia, the early Assembly of God. And this knowledge always came with two sides of that coin. It was always what you could see—knowledge—and then it was always the mystery knowledge, the knowledge that wasn't quite there, that you can find if you look hard enough. And this mystery cult religion knowledge called Gnosticism was very prevalent, and it was creeping into the local assemblies, the Gentile assemblies, in the first century, and Paul is wanting to deal with this.

This is why right up front, okay, he says, *"Even though you've not seen many of me in the flesh, I want you to understand that the knowledge and the mystery of God"*—this is not phraseology that he's just throwing out there, ladies and gentlemen. He is throwing this out there because he is playing off of what's going on in the Church of Colossae, which is mystery religions and occult mystery knowledge. And he's saying, *"Nope, all the mysteries are in God. That's where you're going to find the mystery knowledge."* And that's why he says, **"both of the Father and of Christ,"** in verse 3, *"in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."* And So, he's already setting the foundation as a fantastic debater and a fantastic teacher and philosopher himself, is to say, *"If you are looking for wisdom and knowledge, this is where you're going to find it. All the treasures of everything you could ever want, they're found in Christ."* Think about that for a moment. Today, I believe he would say, *"Ladies and gentlemen, stop going after sports and this and that, trying to find something that's going to fulfill you. Everything that you could ever want is found in Christ. Seek the wisdom of Christ. The wisdom of God is found through Christ."* So, if you want to seek the wisdom of God, you've got to go through Christ. He's the gatekeeper. He is the eastern gate into the temple. He is the temple. He's the menorah in the temple. He's the Ark of the Covenant in the temple. He is the table of showbread, the unleavened beautiful bread that's never had leaven in it, never had sin in it. He is all of it. He's the brazen laver that is filled with water that represented the water of the Word that the priest would wash their hands with. He's the altar that He laid on and gave Himself up as a full burnt sacrifice for us. He is every part. He is even the fence that goes around the tabernacle of meeting that protects us from that which is on the outside. He's the silver. He's the gold. He's all of it. Ladies and gentlemen, Yeshua is what Paul is pointing at in the book of Colossians, because everything that was coming at these folks, at his converts, was Yeshua plus. It was Jesus plus. So, they're saying Jesus is here, and these people from Jerusalem and around the areas were coming into his local congregations and they were putting Yeshua here. They were putting the traditions and doctrines of men here. And they were saying Yeshua is not connected to the Father in some unique way that we would consider deity. He's just this guy here. He's just the Messiah that we've been promised—leaving out all of the scriptures that prophesied that God Himself was going to come and cloak Himself in humanity, and that every knee would bow only to Yahweh, according to the prophets. But then it says in the New Testament that every knee will only bow to Yeshua. Well, which is it? Unless they're both connected in some really, really high-ranking, unique way. Paul is not diminishing Yeshua. The false teachers are diminishing Yeshua. And if you know anybody that is diminishing Yeshua right now, they are mistaken at best, and they are false teacher at worst. Because God cannot have His Son diminished. Because that's why Yeshua says, *"If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father. I am*

the direct image of His being." He was cloaked in our humanity. You can't cloak something that is not from something else that's greater.

Alright, we better get back to the text here or this is going to be longer than it needs to be. Alright, So, his point is Yeshua is high and lifted up, all the mysteries and knowledge and wisdom are going to be found in Him.

Now let's move over to verse 4: *"Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words."* What does this tell us? That these philosophers, these people that are coming in, wherever they are coming from, they are bringing in very persuasive words. They're going to take the gospel, whatever this truth is that they're going to bring, it's going to come through a philosophical lens and it's going to sound really, really good. But it's not going to stand the test of time. And I tell you, there's so many people that bring stuff to me. *"Hey, look at this teaching. Watch this Instagram reel. What do you think about this?"* And it sounds so good. Some of these conspiracy theories are not even religious. They sound so good. But the moment you begin to investigate the claims, you discover that it's not really founded on a whole lot of facts. There's a lot of emotion. There's a lot of general statements. And even things that are proposed to be true, but twisted truth that maybe even happened years ago, and they take this truth and this truth and put it together and make it Sound like it just happened yesterday. We're in very scary times, ladies and gentlemen, with AI and with manipulation of video and audio. The truth needs to be very simple and very in our face, and it needs to be very substantiated by evidence, actual facts and evidence. And that's what's going on.

Verse 5: *"For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ."* Verse 6: *"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus our Lord, So, walk in Him."* Let's stop right there. I'm really feeling like this is from the Lord here, and it is. It's written on ink here, on vellum. *"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus our Lord,"* I want every one of you that are listening to me right now, I want you to remember when you received Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. Just think about that for a minute. Where were you? What were you wearing? What were you thinking? Who was speaking? Were you by yourself? Were you at a church service? Were you at a youth camp? Where were you? And what was your disposition when you heard the gospel? Did you fall to your knees? Did you put your hands in the air? Did you quietly say a prayer at your bedside? Were you on the side of the road? What was it? Where were you? What did you say? That is Paul's answer to how we're supposed to live our life.

Let me read this again: *"As you've received Christ, So, walk in Him."* So, we received Him in that humble moment where we recognize that He is King. And then after that, something happens. We start changing on the inside. And sometimes it's for the better, and honestly, sometimes it's just not. Sometimes we get caught up in an egotistical, prideful position of our being, and all we want to do is gain information, or we just ignore the scriptures and kind of do what we want to do. And I learned in Sunday school that I need to love my neighbors as myself, and that's really all I need to learn how to do. And no, God says, *"How you came to Me, wide open arms, recognizing that you need Me, I want you to have that disposition every single day."* And So, we need to grade ourselves right now. Are we in that same position of humility that we were on the day that we got saved? Because if we're not, we're not walking in the truth. We're not walking with Christ.

Let's keep moving. Verse 7: *"Rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving."* Now here is a very key verse. Verse 8 says this: *"Beware..." That should make us stop. Pull the parking brake. "...beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit."* What does "cheat" mean? It means that they're going to steal something from you. I've given you something, Paul says, from the Lord. If you let this happen, they're going to cheat you of a blessing. And it says, "cheat you through what? Philosophy and empty deceit." So, this group, which is going to be very, very, very important by the time we get down to verse 14 through 16, we've got to know the motivation and what's happening with this group. They are bringing philosophy, empty deceit, deception, according to what? The tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world and not according to Christ.

Let me back up, and I should have said this up front, but most pastors, most theologians even—actually theologians today are really walking away from the traditional rendering of Colossians chapter 2. So, it really hasn't moved its way down into the pulpit, and the laymen for sure are continuing to interpret chapter 2 the way that the theologians taught them hundreds of years ago, which is that chapter 2 is about Paul being against the law of God and that these Jews are coming down from Jerusalem and they're trying to get the Gentiles to keep the law. Paul says no. Virtually all theologians have walked this completely back because they now understand having more information. That is not at all what Paul is talking about. This is a group from likely Jerusalem, the circumcision party from Galatians likely, that has one particular rule: keep theirs. That's their rule. Not keep God's commandments, keep their traditions. And this is the big deal because Paul's not saying, *"Hey, by the way, watch out for these people that are coming to you and trying to get you to keep the Torah or keep the law of God or keep the commandments of God."* He says, *"No, watch out for these people bringing philosophy. Watch out for these people that are bringing traditions and doctrines of men according to the principles of the world, not the principles of the Word of God."* The principles of the world. And there's a huge difference. And once you know that, the rest of the chapter becomes a walk in the park.

So, let's walk through it. *"For in Him,"* verse 9, before we continue on, it says, *"not according to Christ. For in Him"—who? Christ—"dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."* All of it, the entire deity of God is dwelling inside of Christ in the flesh. Ladies and gentlemen, that's unprecedented—unprecedented in all of 6,000 years, all of 4,000 years up to that point in mankind history, it's never happened. God has never infused His entire personhood, if there is such a word to be used and labeled towards the Creator, into one man. But He does this, and that's what makes Yeshua So, unique. He's 100% man, but the uniqueness is that God chose to dwell 100% of His entire image and fullness inside of that man. And that man—it wasn't just the Holy Spirit coming on a man—the Scriptures say that this person, this man, before he became a man, was the Word of God. The Dvar of God, John 1:1, was with God before it became flesh in verse 14. Very interesting.

"And you are complete in Him who is the head of all principality and power." Guys, the reason why this is So, important is because the church in Colossae was falling victim and falling prey to what? They were falling victim and prey to these outside religions and these country club memberships coming down from Jerusalem, these Messianic Jews that were believing in Yeshua but bringing all of the baggage of the tradition and doctrine of Judaism. Not that all Judaism was bad. Most all of it was coming straight out of the word of God, the Torah itself and the prophets. But they'd added

thousands of extra traditions, thousands of extra laws that were literally choking out the people of God. So, they were making themselves principalities and powers and authorities over his converts. And he said, *"No, follow Christ. Follow Christ. He is the principality and power over everything. There's no need to add anything to Christ. Christ has it all."*

And that's why it says in verse 11: *"In Him you were also, circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also, raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."* Now, we're going to unpack this for a little bit because this whole thing about circumcision in Paul's writings—it's almost in every letter. Because why? This circumcision party, again, high-ranking Jews, likely rabbis and religious folk, were coming into faith in Christ, but they were bringing the dogma of what modern first-century Judaism was teaching at the time, which was riddled with just So, much tradition. And look, there's nothing wrong with tradition, as long as—I mean, we light candles every Friday night as we begin the Sabbath, and the candles represent us, they represent God the Father, and we show how we come to God, Yeshua, and He lights our candle, and we become the image—and I've been doing this for 20 years. Tradition is amazing. But the moment the tradition trumps the commandment of God, and you put aside the commandment of God, like Yeshua says and Jesus says in Mark chapter 7, for the sake of tradition, you put aside the commandments, then you've crossed the line. The tradition is anti-God. And that's what's going on here.

And so, when we get to this thing called circumcision, the group from Jerusalem is teaching that they're not even saved unless they become circumcised. And this is a giant problem in the first century, because circumcision was like baptism is today. All right, today there are groups within Christianity that will say you're not even saved if you're not baptized, because it's a commandment. Well, that's exactly the way it was in the first century. They would say if you're not circumcised, because it's a commandment, you're not saved. And Paul saying, "Oy vey, this is not how it works, guys. Salvation first happens in the heart when Someone surrenders their mind, will, and emotions, long before they even know about circumcision. They might not even have heard of circumcision or baptism. The moment they surrender their mind, will, and emotions, and totally recognize that God is God, He sent His Son Yeshua to pay for their sins, and we can put our sins on Him, and get rid of them for life, and be forgiven, and start over brand new fresh—that's the moment where you're saved. That's the moment where you cross over. In Hebrew, that word is Hebrew. The word Ivrit, or Hebrew, literally means "crossed over one." That's when the moment you crossed across the river. Circumcision is just Something that you do afterwards in the first century. It shows a physical commitment: "I'm going to cut myself and the flesh in the physical realm, representationally I'm going to cut my spiritual flesh. I'm going to get rid of the flesh of life, my carnality."

Baptism is the same way. You think the water saves you? No. Baptism is an outward symbol that I'm going to die to myself. They work hand in hand. Today we look down on circumcision as Something that's archaic. But the atheists would look at baptism and go, "Are you guys crazy? Going into water means nothing." It's the same thing. We're just used to baptism. But if you were in the first century, baptism and circumcision go hand in glove. There's nothing archaic about it. The problem is that Paul didn't want this group from Jerusalem coming down and baptizing, or circumcising, and convincing his converts to do it. Because in first-century Judaism, whoever

circumcises you becomes your rabbi. And you become what's called "yoked" to them. That's why Yeshua says, *"Take My yoke upon Me, because My yoke is light. Their yoke is heavy."*

So, when we come to verse 11, it's **really important** that you understand the Old Testament, what I call the front of the book, teaching on this, because this is where Paul is getting it from. This whole circumcision from the heart—I want you to see this. This is not made up by Paul. This doesn't show up in the New Testament from Jesus. This comes right out of God Himself, Yahweh, in the Torah and the prophets. Take a look at this. I want you to see this in Deuteronomy 10. The heart of God from the very beginning is to be circumcised in the heart. He says, *"Therefore, in verse 16, circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer. The Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality, nor takes a bribe."* And then move over to chapter 30, verse 6, it says, *"And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants to love the Lord God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength."*

Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot tell you how many Christians that I meet that literally believe that Jesus was the one that made that up—that we're to love the Lord God with all our heart, mind, Soul, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself. *That's coming right out of the Torah.* So, if we're going to say, "Oh, the law of God is done away with," well, wait a minute. That is where He's getting this from. So, you can't do away with something and bring some of it back—no, it's either all bad or it's all good. It's all relevant or it's not relevant. You can't just pick and choose. Jesus is not picking and choosing from His own word that He wrote—that He is, that He became flesh from. He wrote it. He didn't make any mistakes along the way. He's clarifying along the way. And then we move over to Jeremiah chapter 4. It says, *"Circumcise yourselves to the Lord and take away the foreskins of your hearts."* The flesh—listen, look at the imagery, ladies and gentlemen. The flesh is covering the heart. It's the heart that God's after. He's not after obedience blindly. Sometimes we've got to do that, but if it's based on faith, it matters, it works. But He's not looking for you to just check things off the box. He's looking to engage in a heart relationship. Some of you need to hear this, because when was the last time you deeply had a heart-to-heart relationship with God? Not just going through the motions. So, me of you got skin over your heart So, thick you can't even see the heart. The frequency of God, you can't even feel the vibration because of the thickness of the carnality and the flesh in your life. Which means that a layer might be friends that you need to get rid of. A layer might be a vice or an addiction that you need to get rid of. A layer might be something that you're doing on the side that your spouse doesn't know of—you need to get rid of. You need to repent and return, says the Lord, because every time you do, you're thinning the foreskin until it's gone. And Yeshua can take the knife, that flint, and cut it right off in one fell swoop if you fall on your knees and repent before God. And the moment you do that, the foreskin is gone, and that is the curtain to the Holy of Holies. It's ripped. You see that allusion, ladies and gentlemen? On the day that Yeshua died, the Holy of Holies curtain was ripped So, we could see directly into the heart of God. That's what He's trying to do. Rip the foreskin off, get rid of it, So, you can have a real relationship.

All right, let's get back to chapter 2 and get into the most difficult, controversial scriptures there ever was in Paul's writings. Here we go. Misunderstood for centuries. Verse 13—*drumroll please*—*"And you being dead in your trespasses, and the uncircumcision of your flesh"*—So, you were Gentiles, you're dead—"He is made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

And here we go, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us, and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot begin to tell you how many pastors and how many Christians I've talked to that believe that this scripture is talking about the commandments of God, just because it says "handwriting of requirements that was against us." No, God's Word is not against you. The commandments of God are not against you. As a matter of fact, Yahweh stood on Mount Sinai metaphorically and said, *"I set before you blessings and curses. Blessings if you keep My commandments, curses if you don't."*

So, the word of God is not against you. It's for you when you keep it. When you honor your parents, it's for you—brings you long life. When you believe and serve only one true God, it's for you—there's blessings. When you break it is when it's against you. That's when there is a ticket written. As a matter of fact, this has been so misunderstood. But in some ways, I don't even know why, because in almost every other translation, it makes it extraordinarily clear. And I'm not a big translation guy. I like reading from the original text and really seeing what it means in that language and expressions, and so on and so forth. But even in the other modern translations, it gets it right. The theologians know this. And that's why they interpret it the way that they did. Take a look at just some of these other traditional ones. And the **NIV** says, "having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us." It's not the Word of God. It's not the handwriting of the Word of God. There is a legal document that is created in the heavenlies. When you are indicted and you sin, that goes on your record. And it stands against you on Judgment Day, according to the Word of God. This is the Book of Life, where you're going to get your rewards from, and what is going to stand the test of time—all of your works, and all of the debts that you owe. And so this is standing against every single person in heaven, whether they like it or not, or whether they know it or not. Take a look at some of these other ones. The New American Standard Bible says, "having cancelled the certificate of debt, consisting of decrees against us." In other words, it's a certificate of debt. So, imagine a title at the top that says "Certificate of Debt." Underneath that, all of the decrees of why you broke it. It's quoting the chapter in the verse. Satan himself is going to use this to accuse you. Even the **Amplified Bible**—not a big fan of the Amplified Bible—but it says, "having cancelled out the certificate of debt consisting of legal demands which were in force against us and which were hostile to us. This certificate He set aside and nailed it to the cross." It's the certificate and bond of your debt. This is what is standing against us. So, it's really important that we interpret Scripture the way that we need to interpret it. Otherwise, we're going to find ourselves 100% on the other side of the aisle against the Word of God and giving the opposite interpretation, and nobody wants to do that.

Alright, So, now that we know that you were dead in your sin, which makes a whole lot more sense, right? You're dead in your sin and all of your sins are creating a debt that you can't pay. Christ nailed the debt to the cross. Doesn't that just make a whole lot more sense? He's paying for our sins. He's not dying to get rid of His requirements. He's dying to get rid of the sins that we broke against the requirements. And that's why in verse 15 it says, "He disarmed the principalities and powers. He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it." How in the world does He triumph over these principalities and powers? How did He disarm them? He took their ability to accuse you out of the way. The moment He paid for your sin, He took the bond that was against you and He paid for it. And now you're out of jail. He took the power out of that jail officer's hands So, you could walk free.

With that in mind, Paul sets it up in saying, you had sin. Christ died for your sin. So, now, you don't want to go back into bondage through traditions and doctrines of men. And this is where it gets a little sticky. Verse 16 says this: *"Let no one judge you in food or in drink or regarding a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath, which are shadows of things to come, but the substance is of Christ."* Now, again, So, many people misunderstand this verse when I talk to my fellow Christian friends about God's commandments and the law of God and how important it is to believe 1 John 5 when he says that here's the only way to love God is to keep His commandments and His commandments are not burdensome. When I support God in His Word for the law, this is one of the verses they bring up, which is, "Hey, it says right here in Colossians 2:16, don't let anyone judge you." But the assumption is that these are Jewish people coming down and they are wanting this Gentile congregation to keep the law of God. And the reason where they're getting that from is because their limited knowledge of the Torah—they know that there's festivals and new moons and Sabbaths. Those all sound Jewish. So, if Paul is saying, "Don't let anybody judge you for these things," then their assumption is that's exactly what these guys from Jerusalem are trying to get them to do, is to keep the Sabbath. And Paul says, "No, don't let them do that." It absolutely could be interpreted the other way, which is don't let them judge you for the way that you're already keeping the Sabbath. Because he already told the congregations to keep the Sabbath. He already told the congregations to keep the feast days. He told them to keep Passover in 1 Corinthians 5, verse 8—it was a direct command. He tells them to be subject to the law of God in Romans 8, verse 6 through 8. He tells them that he upholds the law in Romans 3, verse 31. He is not telling his congregations in Rome that he wants to keep the law of God, but he finds another law inside of him, and then telling them not to do it—tell the church in Colossae not to keep the law. No. These were a group of Jews that were coming down with philosophy and traditions of men, and they were adding it to the gospel. They were adding it to the Christian life. They were adding it to the commandments of God, like they had always done, and he was rejecting that.

How do we know that? "Pastor Jim, you're making that up. No?" Let's read the next verse. He says this: "Let no one cheat you..." That's interesting. Remember that same word in verse 8? He said, "let no one cheat you." Cheat you of what? "Through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition and doctrines of men." So, we already know that's what they're teaching. It's tradition. "These are shadows. Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels." Does this sound biblical? Does this sound like it's from the Torah? Does this sound like it's from God? No. "...intruding into things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head"—which is Christ, "whom the whole body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God."

And we finish the chapter and he tells us exactly who these people are. "Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why?" Why? You already were stuck in your pagan background. You already had all of your debt was there before you. It was indicting you. You're condemned by the very law that you didn't even know existed. Why in the world would you subject yourself to these guys that are trying to enslave you? They're not trying to grow you like I am. They're not trying to encourage you. They're not trying to get you to walk in the humble submission to God's word and His commandments and spirit and truth together. They're trying to enslave you to a dogma by giving you regulations of "do not touch, do not taste, do not handle" that are not found in the Word of God. He says, "How do I know that these 'do not touch, do not taste, do not handle' are not the commandments of God?" Because He defines them, "which are all concerning

the things which perish." God's Word never perishes. It's eternal. "According to the commandments and doctrines of men." You see that, my friends? This is not difficult. But we've made it difficult because we have had a lens on us for almost 1,700 years since the Roman Church got in charge of doctrine and interpretation that Paul is against the commandments of God. But the text itself reveals the truth. We're reading into the Scripture. And I did the same thing for decades. So, I'm not poking fun. I'm just saying that now is the time that we need to read with clarity.

"These things, indeed, have an appearance of wisdom." Does this say an appearance of wisdom from God? No. "From self-imposed religion"—man-made stuff—"false humility, the neglect of the body." Gnosticism was famous for this. Cutting themselves, not eating, not even marrying. The Essenes were actually a big part of this. And some scholars believe this might be Jews that are from the Essene community or have Essene background theology. They don't even believe that you should really be married because indulging in the flesh is sinful and it's carnal. But there's no value against the indulgences of the flesh. In other words, you can't cut the flesh to help the flesh. That's why he starts off with circumcision. The only flesh that really needs to be cut is the foreskin—the **heart**. And even if someone is convinced, which is fine, that they need to be circumcised today, and circumcision is still valid for today—I don't see any reason why God doesn't take it away—but his purpose and point and intent from the very beginning has never been to cut off a physical part of your body, only it's the heart. So, if someone's convinced today and they become circumcised, but they're not circumcised in the heart, the circumcision is nothing. This is why Paul says, I believe it's in the book of Romans as well, he says, "Circumcision means nothing, uncircumcision means nothing; what matters is keeping the commandments of God." What does that tell you? That he's dealing with the traditions. He's saying what matters most is keeping the commandments of God. The irony is circumcision is a commandment of God, So, what is he talking about? There is an argument, a debate, and a fight within the early church that circumcision needed to happen, but they were doing it for the wrong reasons. They were doing it for club membership. They were doing it out of tradition. They were doing it out of "check the box." They weren't doing it as a beautiful symbolism like baptism—"I want to be circumcised in my heart, and Father, I'm going to circumcise my flesh as a direct symbol of what I promise to do for the rest of my life." Think of the beauty of saying that to God: "I'm willing to cut and bleed for you as a symbol and memorial, a mark in the sand, a stone pillar, if you will, that I can look back and go, 'That's the day I fully surrendered and was willing to take pain for a few days to recognize the rest of my life is for You.'" Don't we do that in so many different ways with fasting, deep prayer? What's the difference? I'll tell you what the difference is. It's 1,700 years of church history that have put blinders on us and a lens on us that doesn't allow us to read the Word of God in clarity, in spirit, and in truth. So, how much of our Christian life can we really say is operating 100% for God if we don't understand 100% of it? And if we misunderstand some of the most important parts, like Colossians chapter 2, we're going to do what we believe. And unfortunately, that means that we will find ourselves against the very apostle that we quote the most.

So, ladies and gentlemen, let us be circumcised in the heart. Let us move forward in humility and love for our fellow brethren. Let Christ be the center and head of all things, as Paul says, for He created all things and all things were created by Him and for Him. And that means He's got you. Whatever situation that you're in, may you be found on your knees, trusting Him, circumcised in

heart, with real humility. Not the neglect of your physical body, but the neglect of the flesh. May the flesh grow dim and may the spirit grow bright.

My friends, thank you So, much for spending time with us as we walk through this book of Colossians. Thank you for taking the time to pray for this ministry. We are at the spearhead right now in So, many areas in our ministry. We need your help. Thank you for supporting us. Thank you for sharing this. Thank you for commenting. Let us know what you think. I read almost all of the comments below. Also, thank you for those that are financially supporting us and sending a few shekels our way to help us. If the Holy Spirit moves upon your heart to join us in this mission to get this word out, you're a part of it. We thank you for that. You can go to passionfortruth.com and click on the top right-hand corner. In the meantime, we can't wait to get to Colossians chapter three. Like I say every week, I'm Jim Staley with Passion for Truth Ministries. I'll see you in the next video.

Passion For Truth Ministries

P.O. Box 365 ♦ 5323 Highway N

Cottleville, MO 63338-9998

Email: info@passionfortruth.com

♦ www.passionfortruth.com ♦