



Week 5: Freedom from shadows

Sunday, February 12th 2023

† A huge *therefore*...

You have been made complete in Christ, set free of your flesh, raised with Christ, made alive with Christ, you are fully forgiven, and all our spiritual enemies have been humiliated by the cross...

THEREFORE, don't be judged or defrauded by obsolete religious shadows that are not the real thing!

† The unlikely temptation... why we love rules.
Romans 7:6

† Don't judge me bro!
Colossians 2:16

† Shadow and substance
Colossians 2:17

† When ‘super spiritual’ is actually unspiritual
Colossians 2:18

† Connectivity problems
Colossians 2:19a

† Two realities of genuine spiritual growth
Colossians 2:19b

Questions for reflection and discussion

- Do you agree with Pastor Ethan’s assertion that even if we say differently, we love rules? Why or why not? Why do we like rules? What are examples of ‘religious rules’ highly held by many in the church that may not have a real basis in scripture? What can be the danger of ‘living by rules’, even if these ‘rules’ *do* have a Biblical basis?
- V16 points toward ‘external’ religious rules. How can some people/traditions use such rules to condemn others? If we experience this what impact can this have on us? What are examples of where external practices and traditions may be in fact very good and healthy?
- Discuss/explain the contrast Paul draws between ‘religious shadows’ and the reality of life in Christ? If the ‘new has come’, what happens when we still try to live according to what is old? *Read Romans 7:4-6.*
- V18: What is Paul getting at when he describes people who “delight in false humility and the worship of angels?” Have you experienced people or religious activities that focus on sensational experiences and ‘super-spirituality?’ What is Paul’s warning against this type of pseudo-spirituality?
- Paul warns that pride-full spirituality results from losing connection with the ‘head’, that is, Christ. Describe what Christ’s place as our spiritual ‘head’ looks like in daily life- both as individuals and the church. What does it look like when we lose connection with Christ as our head?
- V19 is one of multiple New Testament passages describing the ‘essentialness’ of being active within the body of Christ? What does this look like? Based on this scripture, is it possible to experience true spiritual growth *apart* from being actively part of Christ’s body?

Next Sunday: Week 4- From Death to Life. Colossians 2:13-15
