

COLOSSIANS

CHRIST IS ALL WE NEED

WEEK OF 10/05/25

HOLD FAST TO THE HEAD!

COLOSSIANS 2:13-23

Silence (1-2 minutes)

Sit silently together as a group for a minute as a way to center your heart and invite the Holy Spirit into this week's small group devotional.

Opening Prayer (2-3 minutes)

Read: Colossians 2:13-23

Discussion Guide (30- 45 minutes)

This week, we're continuing our series in the book of Colossians. Last week, we focused on our all-sufficient Christ, whose death is our death and whose life is our life. We receive Christ by faith, and we walk in union with Him by that same faith. This is a glorious truth that brings liberty and peace. But there is always a temptation of adding to that faith, of feeling like we must do something more to earn our position in Christ. Our passage this week addresses this very temptation. In current-day language, we call it Legalism. Legalism is when the application of a principle is given all the force of the principle itself. It is born of pride and self-reliance and a lack of trust in the Lord, and can become a prison, stunting our growth in Christ and robbing our joy.

1. If you grew up in a church tradition, what are some things that you were warned to stay away from? How did you feel about these "rules"?
2. When you hear the term "legalism", what comes to mind?

Colossians 2:16-19 | The Colossians are facing pressure to conform to certain traditions and rituals to prove their faithfulness. They are being judged and considered "disqualified" if they don't follow a particular set of rules. This is classic legalism. Legalism tells us lies and draws us into the belief that we must "follow the rules" to be pleasing to the Lord. Another way to put it is: Legalism is when we make man-made stipulations a condition for God's acceptance. Legalism constructs a list of merits that you must keep in order to know God. Legalism says: If you keep my list, God will be your friend. Legalism claims that you have to be good enough to be accepted by God. And the legalist defines "good enough." If you want God to be for you and not against you, you must keep my specific rules and regulations—whether they are inside the Bible or not.

3. In the Colossian church, the “rules” being exerted were a blending of different elements – Colossian or pagan elements like angel worship and asceticism, and Hebrew elements like Sabbath keeping. This mixing of different beliefs and practices is known as syncretism, and what it produces is a different belief system altogether. In this context, we can define syncretism as “Jesus and...” What are some modern examples of “Jesus and”?
4. Why do you think legalism and syncretism are so appealing? Do you have specific areas where you are tempted to live a “Jesus and” life?

Colossians 2:20-23 | God has a problem with legalism. He does not want His beloved children to become trapped in rule-following to earn His love. Romans 8:15 says, “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons (and daughters), by whom we cry ‘Abba! Father!’”. Legalism breeds spiritual babies; it produces spiritual pride; and it severs you from Christ. The Galatians faced a similar dilemma with a group known as the Judaizers, who were teaching that one must keep the Mosaic law (especially in circumcision) and place faith in Christ in order to be saved. Paul’s message was the same: As you began in Christ, so continue in Him!

5. Read Galatians 3:1-6. What are the similarities between the Galatians and the Colossians? What was Paul’s admonition to both congregations?
6. It is easy to mistake outward signs for true inner transformation. Practices like quiet time, Bible study, and even community service can have an appearance of spiritual maturity but lack substance. What are some of the dangers in relying on these outward practices to gauge spiritual growth?
7. How does this mindset separate us from Christ? How does it affect our relationships with fellow believers?

Hold fast to the head; Jesus is the head. That is our big idea this week – that is truth that sets you free! Just like our brothers and sisters in the Colossian church, we too can be tempted away from holding fast to Christ by adding something to make us feel like we are good enough. But the good news is we have everything we need in Christ! The good news is that we have been made alive in Christ; He has canceled our record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. He nailed them to the cross! We are free in Him (Col. 2:13-15). If we are connected to Him, we don’t need anything else. So refuse the legalists and hold fast to Christ!

8. Identify an area or areas where you are tempted to fall into legalism. How can you begin to apply the truth of this passage to that struggle this week?

Closing Prayer

Lord – thank You for the cross. Thank You for the assurance of salvation in Your completed work. I confess that it is so easy to fall back into rules and regulations, to try to be “good enough” for You. But the truth is we have all we need in You. You are our sufficiency. We glory in this truth. Help us to rest in Your love. Amen.

Share Prayer Requests (10-15 minutes)