

Sermon: Protecting the Power of the Gospel
Scripture: Colossians 2:8; 16-23

1 Timothy 1:18-19 (NASB)

¹⁸This command I entrust to you, Timothy, *my* son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight,
¹⁹keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.



The Christian philosophy of life is that our hope for restoring the glory lost through sin is through a love, faith relationship with Jesus Christ and with Him alone.

Colossians 2:8-23 (NASB)

⁸See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

¹⁶Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—

¹⁷things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

¹⁸Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on *visions* he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,

¹⁹and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

²⁰If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,

²¹“Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!”

²²(which all *refer to* things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?

²³These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, *but are* of no value against fleshly indulgence.

Three philosophies that lead to shipwreck

1. Legalism

¹⁶Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day— ¹⁷things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

²⁰If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as,

²¹“Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!”

This philosophy emphasizes a rule driven, performance driven relationship.

The dangers

- It looks so good on the outside.
- It breeds exclusivism.
- It feeds our ego.

2. Mysticism

¹⁸Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on *visions* he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,

This philosophy emphasizes an experience driven relationship.

The dangers

- It universalizes experience.
- It diminishes the authority of scripture.

Mysticism may be defined as the pursuit of a deeper or higher subjective religious experience. It is the belief that spiritual reality is perceived apart from the human intellect and natural senses. It looks for truth internally, weighing feelings, intuition, and other internal sensations more heavily than objective, observable, external data. Mysticism ultimately derives its authority from a self-actualized, self-authenticated light arising from within. This irrational and anti-intellectual approach is the antithesis of Christian theology. MacArthur NT Commentary: Colossians, p120

- It breeds spiritual elitism.
- It feeds an up and down walk with the Lord.

3. Asceticism

¹⁸Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement
This philosophy contributes to a **guilt** driven relationship.

²³These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, *but are* of no value against fleshly indulgence.

The dangers

- It seeks to validate spirituality through **self-abasement**
- It portrays a false sense of **humility**.
- It functions out of poor **self-esteem**.