

Be Reformed – Open the bible: study, dig and ask what the main point of the passage is

Be Charismatic – Expect the Holy Spirit: ask God to speak, minister, build up and lead us to maturity

Be Community – Love God's people: share vulnerably, apply, pray and build each other up

Be Missional – Win the world: apply lessons to outreach, make content accessible to non-Christians

Colossians 2:8-15

8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, 10 and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. 11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which

you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Study Guide 19 February 2012 – Deadly Gospel Derailers



Summary

God's plan for His people is for them to be "holy and blameless and above reproach" as they hold on to the "hope of the gospel" (1:22-23). Paul here is concerned that dangerous false teaching that has entered the Colossian church would derail them from God's plans for them, and so teaches them and warns them against falling for these teachings and ways of thinking (1:28, 2:1, 2:4, 2:8).

Three deadly derailers emerge from this text, firstly, the idea that Christians need to experience something more than Jesus (2:9-10); secondly, that they need to perform some ritual to get to Jesus (2:11-12); and thirdly, that they owe a debt to something other than Jesus (2:13-15).

Paul counters each of these derailers by showing that Jesus is the fullness of God in bodily form, that Christ has died on the cross fulfilling all the ritual requirements of the Old Testament, and that Christ has already paid the greatest debt we owe, which is to God, hence canceling every other debt against us.

Key points

Jesus Christ is all we need to get to God, and to stay in God.

Questions

>>What are some experiences or rituals that you have been told you need to have or perform in order to get to God? How do these fit into a framework of understanding that we get to God, and are saved, not by the good works that we do, but by God's grace alone?

>> What are some areas in my life where I still feel indebted to institutions, persons, or even ideals? Is that in line with God's plan for me to be 'holy and blameless and above reproach'?

>>What are some concrete ways we help one another to think and live 'according to Christ' (2:8) and not according to the 'elemental spirits of the world' (2:8)?

Final thoughts

In Jesus Christ, the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.