

The Right Stuff
Colossians 2:16-3:4

Recipes are something we are all aware of, probably from our mothers who cooked and baked for us as we grew up. Some of us even had the privilege of being taught even a little, so when we went off on our own, we could fend for ourselves. Some of us paid attention – some not. It was a good thing for me when I went off to Seminary that others knew a little bit more than me. Of course, learning and experiencing sometimes, more often, than not, in failure – usually by not following the recipe. And often it was inedible. I’m not a chef nor a baker.

But following directions and measuring correctly is important in so much. Not just so a cake will rise, but also a building, a plane, a car, a bridge, or anything constructed won’t fall apart. Humans are so use to this that even in pagan cultures those practicing witchcraft are essentially proclaiming, “Follow this formula and we can manipulate the world – matter and spirit. But that craft, like all other religions and non-religions like scientism and evolutionism despite the formula’s they enlist are faulty because they leave out one essential ingredient – the one true God.

We’re talking about that today on *Wings of the Morning*. First, listen to a song from Third Day

“I Need a Miracle”

In the Bible, Paul’s letter to the Colossians, Chapter 2 beginning at verse 16: *“Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New*

Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. He has lost connection with the Head, from who the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: 'Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!' ... They lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence."

So, let's dive into this mess. Paul is looking at these believers (who had, as he said, connection to Jesus Christ, the Head) and asking, why are you going back to the rules and recipes for eating, drinking, following a particular calendar and formula for religiously, checking out lesser spiritual beings like angels and on and on. He tells them that he understands that all these things appear to be wise and pious. They follow the patterns of the rest of the world in false humility and even beating up your own body. But he says they lack value. He is saying that all these religious practices and all those of civilizations and religions around the world are of no value in the most mundane thing (controlling your sensual indulgences) and for sure, in reaching out to God. Any of this, even in its best form was a "shadow" he says.

What is real is Christ. Connection to Christ, because God in Christ, reached out to us, is what works, what causes us to resist the bad and practice the good. Angels can't help us. Religious rules can't help us. Basic principles, even witchcraft can't help us. He says these are all based

on human commands – in other words, men trying to reach God and these, therefore, will all perish, die, dissolve.

So, is it then right that since all these religious rules have no effect to correct, that we should just give up and give in? No!

“Since you have been raised with Christ...” When were they raised? After they died with Christ to the world. *“For you died”*, he says, *“...and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.”* In fact, he says, Christ is your life. So, Christ, if you have submitted (died to the world) to Christ and now raised – with Christ living in you, lives through you to be righteous, do good, show love, be kind, be merciful, give grace – like all those things that are in heaven.

So, Paul says that they are to follow something – not rules, but someone. They are to follow Christ who after his resurrection ascended back to heaven to be with the person of God the Father. In other words, it is not as all these other religions, man trying to reach God or the god he follows but God reaching us changing us.

Paul actually goes on in the third chapter of Colossians to talk about the effects of all this. But let’s just say that Christ changing us is the only right recipe for life and eternity.

How about it? Are you willing to give up trying to change yourself? Or maybe you once did (like the Colossians) and have gone back to forgetting about your relationship to Christ and instead following just rules.

2/25/24

Why don't you pray:

Dear Jesus, I'm tired of trying to make it on my own effort. Please forgive me. Be my Savior. In Jesus' name, Amen.

If you prayed that prayer, please call or write to me. You can call 877-306-HOME. You can reach me at Sunday Breakfast Mission or online at sundaybreakfastmission.org. I want to send you something to help you in this new life. And may God richly bless you.