

Opening Question

When you hear the word “legalism,” what is the first thing that comes to your mind? Why do you think that is so?

Read Together

Colossians 2:16-3:4.

Big Idea

Don't settle for anything less than the fullness of Jesus.

Discussion Questions

1. Colossians 2:16-23 are written as a response to teachers who showed up in Colossians and taught false doctrine. Review these verses. From what you read, what can you tell about what these false teachers believed and taught?
2. What “shadows” were the Colossians adding to the “reality” they had found in Jesus? (vv. 16-17, 20-23)
3. What are ways in which Christians tend to judge each other these days in the way the Colossians were being judged? Does this seem like a form of legalism to you? Why or why not? (vv. 16-17)
4. Do you know of examples of people who have made decisions that would line them up with how Paul describes the false teachers in verses 18-19?
5. What value have you found in developing restrictions and personal rules and regulations about the way you live your life under Christ? (vv. 20-23)
6. What does Paul say is the truth about the traditions of men? (vv. 22-23)
7. What does Paul prescribe as the antidote to the things he warns the Colossians about in 2:16-23? What does Colossians 3:1-4 say?
8. What is one way in which you could apply Colossians 3:1-4 in your daily life this week?

Challenge

This week commit to looking for any sign of what Paul warns the Colossians about in Colossians 2:16-23. If you spot any hint of this in your life, take it to God and talk to Him about it.

Prayer

Colossians 2 is all about the fact that we are made complete in Christ – we experience fullness in Him. Take some time to pray and thank God for the fullness you have experienced in Christ.

Next Step

If you'd like to do more reading about the idea of legalism in our lives, you might enjoy reading John Fischer's book entitled *12 Steps for the Recovering Pharisee (Like Me)*, which is available on amazon.ca.

