



DISCUSSION GUIDE

THIS WEEK: Colossians 2:6-23

GETTING STARTED

What is one thing you are thankful for this week and what is one thing we can pray for you this week?

Remind each other of our simple expectations for meeting together

Growing up in your church tradition—how did you understand the meaning and purpose of baptism? How is it similar or different from your understanding today?

QUICK REACTIONS

Which baptism testimony was most encouraging or moving to you and why?

Have you been baptized and/or publicly shared your story of coming to Christ? Share your experience or whether you haven't been baptized.

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [Colossians 2:6-23]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.)

How did Paul tell the Colossians to continue in Christ? (2:6-7)

What false teaching was Paul concerned about? (2:8)

What did Paul affirm about Christ? How? (2:9-10)

What did God give the Colossian believers? (2:10)

Why do Gentile Christians have no need to conform to Jewish rules and regulations? (2:11-12)

What symbol does Paul use to replace "circumcision"? (2:12)

How did the Cross cancel your past record? (2:13-14)

From what did Christ deliver us? How? (2:15-17)

How did Paul encourage the Colossians to practice their freedom in Christ? (2:16)

How did Christ fulfill what the Old Testament foreshadowed? (2:17)

Whom did Paul accuse of trying to rob believers of their spiritual rewards? (2:18)

What were the characteristics of the false teachers? (2:18-19)

How did Paul challenge the legalism that had infected the church? (2:20-21)

What are the failings of human commands and teachings? (2:20-23)

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

Key Context for studying Colossians (from gotquestions.org)

As with all the early churches, the issue of Jewish legalism in Colosse was of great concern to Paul. So radical was the concept of salvation by grace apart from works that those steeped in Old Testament law found it very difficult to grasp. Consequently, there was a continual movement among the legalists to add certain requirements from the law to this new faith. Primary among them was the requirement of circumcision which was still practiced among some of the Jewish converts. Paul countered this error in Colossians 2:11-15 in which he declares that circumcision of the flesh was no longer necessary because Christ had come. His was a

circumcision of the heart, not the flesh, making the ceremonial rites of the Old Testament law no longer necessary (Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4, 9:26; Acts 7:51; Romans 2:29).

1. In what ways do you think we make “additions” to faith in Christ within the Christian community? (e.g. to be acceptable to Christ, to His community, you need Jesus + these things)
2. What “Christian rule” did you think was very important to follow 5-10 years ago, but now you see is either non-essential, debatable, or not as important as you use to think it was? Why?
3. In light of Colossians 2, how can we better discern the difference between what is essential (faith in Christ alone) and yet uphold important “moral” commands that God gives us? What is our responsibility and not our responsibility? In what way may verses 6-9 help us to know our responsibility?
4. What would you put in the category of “empty philosophy” and “high-sounding nonsense” today? What is our responsibility in light of those things?
5. Paul seems to be encouraging people to look back to their baptism (v12) in order to remember who they belong to and what He has accomplished for you. In what way can our baptism remind us that Christ is sufficient and all that we ever need?
6. What does it mean that you were dead in your sins, but now alive with Christ?
7. In what way can we “keep on following the rules of this world; don’t touch, don’t taste, don’t touch?”
8. How does Paul describe the soul sucking, life draining consequences of following human teaching and pious devotion? Why don’t they provide help to conquer the desires we would like to see die off?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?

What may God be asking you to change, do differently, repent of, pray about as a result of engaging with this passage?

How can we pray for each other?