

## COLOSSIANS 2:6-23: Freedom in Christ

→ *Would you say you are free? Really free? If you were honest, where in your life would you like to become freer? What are the bonds that still hold you captive? What would total freedom look like?*

### The THREATS to freedom Paul's readers were experiencing

1. GNOSTIC PHILOSOPHIES were increasingly infiltrating & subtly corrupting basic Christian teaching about Christ & the Gospel (v8).  
→ *Why and how are false teaching and biblical misinterpretations a threat to your freedom? What such teachings are prevalent today?*
2. Insistence on PIOUS SELF-DENIAL or the worship of ANGELS (v18).  
→ *What is self-denial and does it have any benefits? What makes it pious?*
3. Following the RULES of the WORLD (v20-23).  
Don't trust the WORLD to be
  - a) Your GUIDE into freedom.
  - b) The SOURCE of your freedom.
  - c) Where you GO LOOKING to find freedom.CLUE: The god of this world is NOT trying to lead you into GREATER DEGREES of FREEDOM.  
→ *What are the rules the world is trying to get you to follow right now and why? What agendas are at play and to what end?*
4. The tug back into JEWISH LEGALISM (v16-17).
  - \* Jewish converts understandably had great difficult UNTANGLING themselves from orthodox Jewish BELIEFS.
  - \* The details of Jewish religious practice were meant to be a MEANS to an END, which was RELATIONSHIP with God.
  - \* All the rules & regulations were merely SHADOWS of the REAL DEAL, which was JESUS THE MESSIAH.→ *Why do people find Jewish religious observance and/or legalism attractive? What are our modern-day Christian equivalents?*

### What did Paul have to say about all that in Colossians 2?

- A. This Christ you are following is the CHAMPION.  
In the face of all those threats, Christ is:
  - i) The AUTHORITY.
  - ii) He has DEFEATED, DISARMED & SHAMED your enemy.
  - iii) As a result of that you're gloriously FREE.
  - iv) And in all of that, He is POWERFULLY at WORK.→ *"Knowing and understanding this is key to everything. Do you know what Christ has done? Do you really get who He is? Have you grasped what that then means for you and who you now are in Christ?" Discuss!*

- B. The life, freedom, victory & purpose you seek come from FOLLOWING CHRIST, not MAN-MADE RULES (v20, Gal 5:1).  
Paul asks, where does TRUE freedom come from? Is it:
  - a) NO rules
  - b) LOTS OF rules
  - c) SUBMITTING to Christ & OBEYING His Word?

→ *Which of those do you naturally tend towards and why? Which do you think is most prevalent today: No rules or lots of rules? Why do they not work?*

The world is trying to convince you submitting to ANYTHING leads to BONDAGE. But that all depends upon to WHOM you are surrendering.

→ *What does the world teach us about authority? Are there any mixed messages? Why do people love to put individuals on a pedestal and then knock them off?*

→ *True freedom is found in submission. Why is that counter-intuitive? How does it work for us as Christians? Is it true that the more we submit and obey the freer we'll be?*

### APPLICATION

#### **What are the possible things KEEPING US from freedom in Christ?**

- A. Our faith / Christianity / relationship with God is mostly INTELLECTUAL rather than SPIRITUAL, EXPERIENTIAL, RELATIONAL.
- B. Our worship has become REPETITIOUS or RELIGIOUS to the point we're really just going THROUGH THE MOTIONS.
- C. Our faith has become RULES based, not RELATIONAL.
- D. We use our natural PERSONALITY as an excuse to HIDE.
- E. We're STUCK in LAMENT.

#### **How do you BECOME free?**

1. Recognise that whatever the QUESTION, your RELATIONSHIP with Jesus is the ANSWER (John 14:6).
2. Stand on WHO HE IS and PRAISE your way to freedom (Psalm 8:2).
3. If you can get the WORD IN, you can break your SOUL OUT (John 8:32).
4. Stop giving the enemy AUTHORITY he NO LONGER has (Col 2:15).
5. Choose to FOLLOW the One who is LEADING you into the PROMISED LAND (2 Cor 3:17).

### RESPONSE

*Which of the points on each of those two lists are most applicable to you? Pick the two top ones and give yourself a label (e.g. B2 or E4). Now talk through with your group why you've chosen that combination, ask them for any advice that might help you to break free and then to pray with you through that.*