

## Colossians 2:11 – 23

11 Circumcision was the battle ground with the Judaizers. Paul insisted that it was not necessary for Gentiles. Their hearts were circumcised when they came to Christ. (Romans 2:29) The new outward sign was baptism. The New Testament does not call the body evil. It can be used in an evil way or a godly way. (1Corinthians 6:13-20)

12 Instead of circumcision, a new sign that had an even greater significance, being buried and raised with Jesus. They died to their old religion and way of life, and rose in Christ, trusting He would one day raise them because of His accomplishment. Not just a part of the body was affected but one's entire being. While Romans 6:6, 8 are the future resurrection, this passage is speaking of a present resurrected life. We are a new creation!

13 Our old nature was dead to the Spirit. Dead men can do nothing. We could do nothing. It was Jesus who came to us and whose grace made us alive, raised with Jesus, for God had forgiven us ALL our trespasses. Resurrected life is now! (Romans 8:11) What should that look like?

14 "record of debt" - *cheirographon*- signature, often to acknowledge a debt incurred, like an IOU.

"canceling" - *exaleiphein* - Unlike modern ink, ancient ink sat on the surface of papyrus and could be wiped off and something else written instead. When God wipes off our sins, there is no evidence it ever existed. The demands of the Law were met on the cross. The penalty of the law was fully met by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. We no longer operate by those laws but rather by the leading of the Spirit. (Romans 6:14; Ephesians 2:14-16)

15 Like a Roman general in a victory march through Rome with his defeated foes trailing behind, Jesus defeated the forces against mankind. He is the Victor. We need only trust in Him. There is no need for angelic mediation or any other power.

16 The end of Torah requirements means you don't need to be condemned by all the do's and don'ts of religion. Gnostics and Jews had strict regulations on what could be eaten and drunk and which days were holy. (Matthew 15:17) Theirs was ritual to placate celestial powers, not our living personal relationship based on love.

17 The Jewish feast days all pointed to Jesus and were fulfilled in Him. Why would you want to focus on a shadow when the reality had come? Literally written, "the substance the Christ".

18 "The sense is, 'let no one impose upon you his arbitrary standards of Christian conduct; do not feel yourself inferior because your own life is not governed in the way that he declares to be necessary.' Tender consciences are often needlessly disturbed by the condemnations pronounced by the "unco guid," (super religious) who make profession of a superior piety." Interpreter's Bible, The - Exegesis – Col. 3:18 – Volume 11.

The head mystic would say they were unworthy for the higher wisdom because they did not keep certain rituals. Tell them to go fly a kite! Paul sounds as if he is mocking the leader of the cult's claims as all in his fanciful head.

19 Spiritual growth does not come from the mystics but from Jesus the Head of the body.

20 -23 Gnostic rituals and Jewish legalism or any other program of ritual behavior can do nothing for our spiritual life and are self-made religion. We have died to the world to live in Christ, still the church is constantly promoting some program rather than each individual and church seeking the leading of the Holy Spirit for their location and time.