

Colossians 2:8-10

8 **Beware lest anyone CHEAT you through PHILOSOPHY and empty DECEIT, according to the TRADITION of MEN, according to the basic principles of the WORLD, and NOT according to Christ.**

• **Matthew 7:15** “_____ of _____, who come to you in _____ clothing, but _____ are ravenous _____.”

• **Ephesians 5:6** ““Let no one _____ you with _____ words, for because of these things the _____ of _____ comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

• **Galatians 4:3 & 9** “Even so we, when we were children, were in _____ under the _____ of the _____.” (Verse 9) “But now after you have known God, or rather are _____ by _____, how is it that you turn again to the _____ and _____, to which you desire again to be in _____?”

Definition: “Beware lest anyone CHEAT you through PHILOSOPHY” – Paul is continuing his warning against false teachers that began in the previous verses. The word here for “philosophy” is the same word for “religion” in the Greek. These would be **religious ideas not depending on Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross. These would be man-made religions and traditions.** Most of the religious cults today try to tell you that you’re missing out on something by not following their religious “philosophies” and ideas. They try to tell you Jesus Christ is not enough, or the Bible is not enough.

• **Hebrews 3:12-13** “_____, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil _____ of _____ in _____ from the living _____; but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today’, lest any of you be hardened through the _____ of sin.”

• **I Timothy 6:20** “Oh, Timothy! _____ what was committed to your trust, avoiding the _____ and _____ babblings of what is falsely called _____ – by professing it, some have _____ concerning the _____. Grace be with you. Amen.”

Definition: “Empty DECEIT” and “According to the TRADITION of MEN” – Jesus had a lot to say about the Pharisees and others who followed man-made religious traditions instead of following the word of God. This is still a problem in the world today, and many churches have been infiltrated and ruined by false teachers who have come in, and no one stopped them. **The words “empty deceit” are also translated as VANITY in some Bible translations, and Paul calls them “vain babblings” in I Timothy 6:20. Vanity is something VAIN and worthless, EMPTY.**

• **Mark 7:6-7, 9 & 13** “He answered and said to them (the Pharisees), ‘Well did Isaiah prophesy of you _____, as it is written: “This people _____ Me with their _____, but their _____ is _____ from Me. And in _____ they worship Me, _____ as doctrines the _____ of _____.”’”

(Verse 9) “And He said to them, ‘All too well you _____ the commandment of _____, that you may keep your _____.’” (Verse 13) “Making the _____ of _____ of _____ effect through your _____ which you have handed down. And many such things you do.”

• **Ecclesiastes 1:13-14** “And I set my _____ to seek and search out by wisdom

concerning all that is done under heaven; this grievous task God has given to the sons of man, by which they may be exercised. I have seen all the _____ that are done _____ the _____; and indeed, all is _____ and grasping for the _____.”

Definition: “All the WORKS that are done UNDER the SUN” – In the book of Ecclesiastes, whenever you see the words “under the sun”, it refers to **the things of THIS WORLD**, and NOT the things of God. In Ecclesiastes 1:13-14, it is especially referring to the things that we humans do in our own strength, in the flesh, and not doing God’s will, or being led by His Spirit.

•**Galatians 4:3** “Even so we, when we were children, were in _____ under the _____ of the _____.”

Definition: “WE WERE CHILDREN..... in BONDAGE under the ELEMENTS of the WORLD” – “Elements of the world” is the same as “**basic principles of the world**” in Colossians 2:8 & 20, and it means the basic, worldly rituals of man-made religion - people trying to reach God through a human system of works. Jewish believers, **BEFORE they were SAVED, were like SLAVES** under the Hebrew rituals. Gentile believers were “**slaves**” to their **HEATHEN GODS and goddesses**, and every false religious system out there in the world. **Paul WARNS Christian Believers NOT to put themselves back under that kind of BONDAGE of RELIGIOUS RITUALS** and regulations (commandments), whether Jewish or Gentile religion.

•**Colossians 2:20-23** “Therefore if you _____ with _____ from the _____ principles of the _____, why, as though living in the world, do you _____ yourselves to _____ – ‘Do not _____, do not _____, do not handle,’ which all concern things which perish with the using – according to the _____ and _____ of men? These things indeed have an _____ of wisdom in self-imposed _____, _____ humility, and _____ of the _____, but are of _____ value against the _____ of the _____.”

Definition: “These things indeed have an APPEARANCE of WISDOM in SELF-IMPOSED RELIGION” – People who are involved in religious activities and **rituals that “seem to be so holy”** (that’s what it means by “have an appearance of wisdom”), especially if they are “neglecting their body” by fasting, living in poverty, or not being allowed to legitimately get married (teaching that celibacy is somehow “more holy”), are in fact only following the “traditions and commandments of men” rather than living for God. **The Bible calls this “SELF-IMPOSED RELIGION” - it is man-made.** Colossians 2:20-23 tells us that this “false humility, and neglect of the body” has “**NO VALUE against the indulgence of the flesh.**” In the case of the false teaching of celibacy (not being allowed to get married) supposedly being “more holy” for priests, we see in the news (and from history) that **it does NOT work.** More and more scandals of Roman Catholic priests sexually molesting children, or having sex with women parishioners, or nuns getting pregnant, only prove that these **man-made, self-imposed religious rules and regulations DO NOT** keep people from indulging their fleshly desires and lusts. **Only the Holy Spirit can give us the power to keep from indulging our fleshly lusts.** Another form of self-made religion is to have people keep certain dietary commandments and only eat certain foods. God’s word tells us that **God is interested in the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives** (Galatians 5:22-23), **not a list of foods** that we eat or don’t eat.

•**Galatians 5:22-23** “But the _____ of the _____ is _____, joy, _____, longsuffering (patience), _____, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, _____ - _____.” Against such there is no law.”

•**Colossians 1:10** “That you may have a _____ worthy of the _____, fully _____ Him, being _____ in every good work and increasing in the _____”

knowledge of God.”

9-10 For **IN HIM dwells ALL the FULLNESS of the GODHEAD BODILY**; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

• **II Corinthians 5:19** “That is, that _____ was in _____ reconciling the world to _____, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”

• **I Timothy 3:16** “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: _____ was _____ in the _____, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.”

• **Philippians 2:5-8** “Let this mind be in you which was also in _____, who, being in the _____ of _____, did not consider it robbery to be _____ with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the _____ of a _____, and coming in the likeness of _____. And being found in appearance as a _____, He _____ Himself and became _____ to the point of _____, even the death of the cross.”

Definition: “IN HIM dwells ALL the FULLNESS of the GODHEAD BODILY” – Fullness means COMPLETENESS, LACKING NOTHING, the quality or state of being full. Godhead means the person of God, His nature, who He is. “BODILY” means in the form of a HUMAN BODY.

Everything that God is was **in Jesus** when He was born as a human baby, and grew up to be a man. **Jesus had then, and has now, the complete nature of God.** The only thing Jesus did was give up His **POWERS** as God when he came to earth. If He had not given up His powers as Almighty God, He could not have died for our sins on the cross, because the Roman guards wouldn’t even have been able to drive the nails into His hands and feet! “The Trinity” is a term we use **to describe the Godhead**: the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit **as ONE God.** The word “Trinity” is not found in the Bible, but it **is a word we use to describe a TRUTH that is in the word of God.** The Bible uses the word “**Godhead,**” and as we study Scripture, we see that **the Godhead is made up of three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit,** and yet He tells us that **He is ONE God.**

• **Romans 1:20** “For the invisible things of _____ from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even _____ eternal _____ and _____; so that they are without excuse.”

• **Deuteronomy 6:4** “Hear, O Israel: The _____ our _____ is _____ Lord.”

Definition: “The LORD our GOD is ONE Lord” – The Hebrew word for “one” used here is “echad”, which means a “**UNITED ONE**” - from the verb “achad” - to unify. The same word, “echad” is used in Genesis 2:24, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to (be joined to) his wife; and **they shall be ONE FLESH**” - **two persons becoming a UNITED ONE.** The very word for “God” in the Hebrew is in the plural - **Elohim.** Anytime you see the suffix “im” on the end of a word in Hebrew, it is plural, meaning two or more of something.

• **John 14:8-9** “Phillip said to Him, ‘Lord, _____ us the _____, and it is sufficient for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Phillip? He who has seen _____ has _____ the _____; so how can you say, “Show us the Father?”’”

• **John 5:17-18** “But _____ answered them, “My _____ has been working until now, and I have been working.” Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that _____ was His _____, making Himself _____ with _____.”

• **John 1:1-3 & 14** “In the beginning was the _____, and the Word was with God, and

the _____ was _____. He was in the beginning with God. All things were _____ THROUGH _____, and without Him _____ was made that was made.” (Verse 14) “And the _____ BECAME _____ and _____ among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Definition: “Making Himself EQUAL with God.” — Jesus was ABSOLUTELY RIGHT in making statements that claimed He was EQUAL with God, because He WAS God! He was God come to earth in the FLESH, having taken HUMAN FORM and BECOME a MAN. Jesus is given many titles for Himself in Scripture that belong only to God, such as “Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” Also, He receives WORSHIP from men and angels (see Rev. 5:5-14; Hebrews 1:6).

• **Revelation 1:8 & 11 & 17-18** “I am the _____ and the _____, the Beginning and the End,’ says the Lord, ‘Who is and who was and who is to come, the _____.’” (Verse 11) “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the _____ and the _____.” (Verses 17b-18) “Do NOT be AFRAID; I am the _____ and the _____. I am He who _____, and was _____, and behold, I am _____ forevermore. Amen. And I have the Keys of Hades and of Death.”

• **Isaiah 44:6** “Thus says the _____, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, ‘_____ am the _____ and I am the _____. And there is no _____ besides Me.’”

• **Revelation 22:13 & 16** “I am the _____ and _____, the Beginning and the End, the _____ and the _____.” (Verse 16) “I, _____ have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”

• **Colossians 1:15-18** “He is the _____ of the _____ God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him (Jesus) all things were _____ that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were _____ through Him and _____ Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (hold together). And He is the _____ of the body, the church, who is the beginning (origin, source), the _____ from the _____, that in all things He may have the preeminence (first place).”

Definition: “DID NOT CONSIDER IT ROBBERY” — Another way to say this is “He did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, or HELD ONTO.” The beginning of Philippians 2:6 already said that **Jesus WAS IN THE FORM OF GOD**, so we see that **He ALREADY IS EQUAL with God**. Then, in verse 7, it says He “made Himself of no reputation”, which could also be said as “HE EMPTIED HIMSELF of His powers as God”. In other words, Jesus came to earth as a man, FULLY HUMAN, of His own free will. He never gave up His DIVINE NATURE, but He did **temporarily LAY ASIDE HIS POWERS and PRIVILEGES AS GOD** (God the Son, the second Person of the Triune God) to become a man, and to DIE on the cross. **Jesus, as the second Person of the Godhead**, existed from all eternity and could do ANYTHING He wanted, but **He CHOSE** to come to earth in human form and be OBEIENT to the Father.

• **John 8:28** “Then Jesus said, ‘When you _____ up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do _____ of _____; but as My _____ taught Me, I speak these things.’”

• **John 14:10** “Do you not believe that I am in the _____, and the Father in _____? The words that I speak to you I do _____ speak on My _____ authority; but the _____ who _____ in Me _____ the _____.”