

Colossians 2:16-19

- It is likely Paul is using phrases used by the false teachers and familiar to the Colosse church.
- There is Jewish, Hellenistic and syncretism elements in these doctrinal errors. The rules had become man made laws.
- Dietary laws of Mosaic covenant:
 - Set aside by Christ for the preferred New Covenant (Mark 7:19)
 - Never applied to the Gentiles in the past or now (Acts 10:9-16; 15:19-29)

2:16 – **“Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.**

	3361 [e]	3767 [e]	5100 [e]	4771 [e]	2919 [e]	1722 [e]	1035 [e]	2532 [e]	1722 [e]
	Mē	oun	tis	hymas	krinetō	en	brōsei	kai	en
16	Μή	οὐν	τις	ὑμᾶς	κρινέτω	ἐν	βρώσει	, καὶ	ἐν
	Not	therefore	anyone	you	let judge	in regard to	food	or	in regard to
	Adv	Conj	IPro-NMS	PPro-A2P	V-PMA-3S	Prep	N-DFS	Conj	Prep

	4213 [e]	2228 [e]	1722 [e]	3313 [e]	1859 [e]	2228 [e]	3561 [e]	2228 [e]	4521 [e]
	posei	ē	en	merēi	heortēs	ē	neomēnias	ē	sabbatōn
	πόσει	, ἢ	ἐν	μέρει	ἐορτῆς	, ἢ	νεομηνίας	, ἢ	σαββάτων
	drink	or	in	regard	to a feast	or	a New Moon	or	Sabbaths
	N-DFS	Conj	Prep	N-DNS	N-GFS	Conj	N-GFS	Conj	N-GNP

1. False teachers at Colosse had instituted strict regulations to obtain and maintain “spirituality” of some sort concerning:
 - a. eating
 - b. drinking
 - c. religious calendar dates and events
2. “Therefore” clearly indicates that the previous sufficiency of Christ and his total victory made these false practices:
 - a. Unnecessary
 - b. Distracting
 - c. False, demonic doctrines and practices:
 - i. 1 Timothy 4:1-3 – “Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.”
 - ii. Galatians 4:3, 8-9 – “In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world... Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn

back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?"

3. Notice the similarity of the opening line of 2:16 with 2:8. Chapter 2 verse 8 presents the overall warning, but chapter 2:16 gives some details of how the captivity of believers takes place:
 - a. Colossians 2:8 – “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit...”
 - b. Colossians 2:16 – “Therefore let no one pass judgment on you...”
 - c. Even consider Colossians 2:4 – “I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.”

Colossians				
2:4	I say this	no one	delude	you
2:8	See to it	no one	take captive	you
2:16	Therefore	no one	pass judgment	you
2:18	Let	no one	disqualify	you

- d. Tools of deception:
 - i. **Delude you** - 2:4 – plausible or fine-sounding arguments
 - ii. **Take you captive** - 2:8 – philosophy, empty deceit, human traditions, fallen spirits
 - iii. **Pass judgment** - 2:16 – legalism, dietary laws, religious festivals, holidays and Sabbaths
 - iv. **Disqualify** - 2:18 – asceticism, worship of angels, visions
4. This verse may indicate the “written document” of 2:14-15 is clearly any religious regulations including the Law of Moses.
5. The Colossians believers were not to allow anyone to judge their standing before God based on their religious observations.
 - a. Galatians 5:1 – “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.”
6. We do know from Romans and 1 Corinthians to be sensitive to the “weak” believer (those who do not fully understand, yet) and not put a stumbling block in their way concerning these things:
 - a. Romans 14
 - b. 1 Corinthians 8
7. These dietary regulations may have been:
 - a. Taken from the Mosaic Law
 - b. Ascetic practices from Pagan religions – asceticism is practiced by those trying to obtain access to spirituality, mystic experiences or interaction with angelic beings
 - c. Likely, the Colosse heresy involved pagans in the church looking to the Jewish Law to justify their similar pagan acetic practices.
8. Religious days and seasons:
 - a. Religious festival – (yearly, annual) -
 - b. New Moon celebration – (monthly) -

- c. Sabbath day – (weekly) – This is clearly a Jewish reference since Sabbath is unique to Judaism.
9. Two true concerns:
- a. Every day is holy to the Christian. Every day is a day of worship and celebration in Christ.
 - b. In our modern Western world the Sabbath is no longer a real issue.
 - i. This is NOT because we as a Western culture have become more convinced of the sufficiency of Christ. We have not become more mature in Christ.
 - ii. This is because we have become more secular living as secular humanist who are not drawn to worship the Lord on any day. We have become more secular with a drift towards paganism.

2:17 – **“These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.”**

3739 [e]	1510 [e]	4639 [e]	3588 [e]	3195 [e]	3588 [e]	1161 [e]	4983 [e]	3588 [e]	5547 [e]	
ha	estin	skia	tōn	mellontōn	to	de	sōma	tou	Christou	
17 ἃ	ἔστιν	σκιά	τῶν	μελλόντων	;	τὸ	δὲ	σῶμα	τοῦ	Χριστοῦ .
which	are	a shadow	the things	coming	;	the	however	body [is]	-	of Christ
RelPro-NNP	V-PIA-3S	N-NFS	Art-GNP	V-PPA-GNP		Art-NNS	Conj	N-NNS	Art-GMS	N-GMS

1. “Shadow” is caused by the light shining of the actual object. The shadow is not the real object. It is often times not even a clear representation and often casts an image that is disproportioned.
2. Holding to a shadow or studying a shadow for reality can be misleading. Especially when the real object is clearly available for use, study and worship.
3. Hebrews 8:5-7 – “They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, ‘See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.’ But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.”
4. Hebrews 10:1-2, 10 – “For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?... And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”
5. “Reality” or “substance” or “body” is the translation of **soma** which basically means “a body”.
 - a. Interestingly, and maybe importantly, this soma is the same word used by Paul in 1:18 and 2:19 to refer to the “body (soma) of Christ”:
 - i. Colossians 1:18 – “And he is the head of the **body**, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.”
 - ii. Colossians 2:19 – “and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole **body**, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.”

2:18 – **“Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind,”**

3367 [e]	4771 [e]	2603 [e]	2309 [e]	1722 [e]	5012 [e]	2532 [e]	2356 [e]	3588 [e]	32 [e]
mēdeis	hymas	katabraβeuētō	thelōn	en	tapeinophrosynē	kai	thrēskeia	tōn	angelōn
18 μηδεὶς	ὑμᾶς	καταβραβευέτω	, θέλων	ἐν	ταπεινοφροσύνη	καὶ	θρησκεία	τῶν	ἀγγέλων
No one	you	let disqualify	delighting	in	humility	and	[the] worship	of the	angels
Adj-NMS	PPro-A2P	V-PMA-3S	V-PPA-NMS	Prep	N-DFS	Conj	N-DFS	Art-GMP	N-GMP

3739 [e]	3708 [e]	1687 [e]	1500 [e]	5448 [e]	5259 [e]	3588 [e]	3563 [e]	3588 [e]	4561 [e]	846 [e]
ha	heoraken	embateuōn	eikē	physioumenos	hypo	tou	noos	tēs	sarkos	autou
ἃ	έόρακεν	ἐμβατεύων	, εἰκῆ	φυσιούμενος	ὑπὸ	τοῦ	νοῦς	τῆς	σαρκὸς	αὐτοῦ
which	he has seen	detailing	vainly	being puffed up	by	the	mind	of the	flesh	of him
RelPro-ANP	V-RIA-3S	V-PPA-NMS	Adv	V-PPM/P-NMS	Prep	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Art-GFS	N-GFS	PPro-GM3S

1. Here mystery religions are introduced. They would involve visions by those members who had:
 - a. been initiated by performing certain rites
 - b. having entered physically into the inner parts of the sanctuary
 - c. communicated with angels
 - d. entered the throne room of heavens
2. “worship of angels” is not biblical
 - a. This would involve worshipping through a hierarchy of spiritual beings in order to attain the next level which would result in ultimately seeing the throne of God for some faithful worshippers.
 - b. Angels in the Bible are servants of the Lord sent to fulfill the Lord’s will and serve the heirs of salvation:
 - c. These angels are likely the already conquered rulers, authorities principalities and powers of the fallen, rebel angels.
 - i. Thus, these are those that create confusion with:
 1. False doctrine
 2. False religious practices
 - ii. These fallen angels are the ones that take captive Christians and steal their productivity and growth
3. These false worshippers appear to be spiritual, advanced, deep, committed or mature, but in their “puffed up mind of flesh” they think they are spiritual, but they are merely misled into empty mysticism. Or, demonism.
4. Note the direct connection with:
 - a. “the flesh” (*sarkos*, often translated “sin nature”)
 - b. “the mind” (*noos*)
 - c. “humility” (*tapeinophrosyne*)
 - d. “worship” (*threskeia*)
 - e. Visions, revelation or insight (“detailing what he has seen”)
5. The concept of “false humility” is a mere appearance since it is actually self-promotion or self-glorification. True promotion or glorification occurs in Christ and by Christ.
6. There is no growth, maturity, fruit or productivity in this scenario.
 - a. There is a lot of noise, activity, rules, rituals, sacrifice, etc.
 - b. It seems very, very religious.
 - c. But it is off this age.
 - d. A zero.

2:19 – “and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.”

2532 [e]	3756 [e]	2902 [e]	3588 [e]	2776 [e]	1537 [e]	3739 [e]	3956 [e]	3588 [e]	4983 [e]	1223 [e]	3588 [e]	860 [e]	2532 [e]
kai	ou	kratōn	tēn	Kephalēn	ex	hou	pan	to	sōma	dia	tōn	haphōn	kai
19 καὶ	οὐ	κρατῶν	τὴν	Κεφαλὴν	, ἐξ	οὗ	πᾶν	τὸ	σῶμα	, διὰ	τῶν	ἀφῶν	καὶ
and	not	holding fast	to the	head	from	whom	all	the	body	by	the	joints	and
Conj	Adv	V-PPA-NMS	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Prep	RelPro-GMS	Adj-NNS	Art-NNS	N-NNS	Prep	Art-GFP	N-GFP	Conj

4886 [e]	2023 [e]	2532 [e]	4822 [e]	837 [e]	3588 [e]	838 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]
syndesmōn	epichorēgoumenon	kai	symbibazomenon	auxei	tēn	auxēsin	tou	Theou
συνδέσμων	ἐπιχορηγούμενον	καὶ	συμβιβάζόμενον	, αὕξει	τὴν	αὕξεισιν	τοῦ	Θεοῦ
ligaments	being supplied	and	being knit together	increases	with the	increase	-	of God
N-GMP	V-PPM/P-NNS	Conj	V-PPM/P-NNS	V-PIA-3S	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Art-GMS	N-GMS

1. These false teachers and their followers in the church have been separated from Christ:
 - a. Galatians 5:4-5 – “You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness.”
 - b. Romans 8:23 – “Not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”
 - c. 1 Corinthians 1:7 – “Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly await the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
2. “supported” or “being supplied” – *epidhoregoumenon* – is present participle meaning the process of support and nourishment is continuing today.
3. Likewise, “being knit together” is an ongoing experience of the True Church.
4. The last phrase of 2:19 is literally, “it grows the growth of God”
 - a. This seems to mean “the church grows into the growth of God”
 - b. Meaning the church is growing into the image of God, or we are being individually and corporately transformed into the image of Jesus Christ to fulfill the purpose of God.
5. The false teachers may call themselves “Christian”, but they are not growing the growth of God, they are not being transformed into the image of Jesus Christ and they will not fulfill the purpose of God.

2:20 – “If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations”

1. Those who follow the false teaching are not living in the victory and freedom of being in Christ.
2. The elemental spirits (fallen angels and demons) can only put people into the bondage of this age (self-help, self-service, human effort, will power of mankind, etc.).
3. There is no power, no freedom and no growth in Christ in false teaching. Only religious slavery to the fallen nature of man.