

'Warnings, Truth and a Question'

Colossians 2:16-23

At the beginning of chapter 2, Paul issues a series of warnings. The first one is in verse 8, and then there are two in verses 16 & 18. After these warnings, there is a rhetorical question in verse 20. This passage (2:16-23) is laid out as warning, truth, warning, truth, question, truth.

1. What warning do we read in verse 16? Pastor Don mentioned that he had seen more people affected by these issues than you would think. Does that shock you?
2. Paul goes on to say that it's not that we can't follow the OT laws but that there is no spiritual advantage. It doesn't accomplish us 'drawing near to God. What are other examples in our lives or in the lives of those around us where there can be traditions or cultural things that can be the equivalent of the OT laws?
3. Since there is no spiritual advantage to us following the OT laws, we should not allow someone to pass judgment on us regarding these things. How do we not let someone pass judgment on us? How do we not allow that condemnation to shape our lives?
4. Paul reminds us not to change our traditions of living out our faith and not to be influenced by peer pressure. How can we do that? How have you seen that happen? How do we decide between 'good' peer pressure and 'bad' peer pressure?
5. If you attach spiritual significance to following OT laws or traditions, what happens to our faith and trust in Christ?
6. What truth is taught in Verse 17 that teaches why the warning is essential? All the OT laws and festivals are a shadow of the body of Christ. The shadows don't give us a perfect picture of the real thing, but once you see the real thing, the shadow makes sense. Why do we need to be warned not to return to the 'shadow'?
7. What does it mean that the OT is the shadow and Christ is the fulfilment or completion of those things?
8. What is the second warning found in verse 18? The language can be confusing and tricky. The first warning warned us not to take the judgment of others and then compel us to change. This second warning warns us not to disqualify ourselves. What is false humility? Why is it dangerous?
9. Pastor Don said, "If you disqualify yourself, you are saying 'Christ is not enough.'" Talk about that statement as a group. What did Pastor Don mean?
10. What are things that can make us 'disqualify' ourselves? Are there other examples of this in scripture? How is it easy for that to slip into our lives?
11. Paul also talks about people who have had a 'super spiritual experience' (i.e. A vision), but it's of the flesh. How can we guard against that? Often when we encounter someone that has had that "superior" experience, we feel inadequate. How can we combat that feeling?
12. In Colossians 2:20, there is a rhetorical question. Why can it feel easier to 'check off the boxes' of a religious experience? Pastor Don said, "You can look like the best Christian in

the room but be dead inside.” Discuss this as a group. Have you experienced that yourself? Have you seen examples of that in others?

13. What is the value of self-discipline?