

Colossians: Rooted in Christ

Message 6:
Shadows and Substance
Colossians 2:16-23



1

Focus Question

What are Paul's warnings to us about legalistic religion?

2

Religious Legalism is. . .

the belief that a person can earn or maintain a right standing with God through strict adherence to rules, laws, or religious practices usually of a man-made type.

3

Galatians 1:10

For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

4

1. Don't let shadow-worshippers condemn you.

5

Col. 2:16-17

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. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

6

2. Don't allow religious referees to rule against you.

7

Col. 2:18-19

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,

8

Col. 2:18-19

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.

9

3. Stop the futility of rule-based religion.

10

Col. 2:20-23

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—²¹ “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”

11

Col. 2:20-23

²² (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? ²³ These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body,

12

Col. 2:20-23

but they are of no value in stopping
the indulgence of the flesh.

13

**4. Practice Christ-centered
devotion.**

14

Col. 2:17b, 19a, 20b

... the substance belongs to Christ

... Hold fast to the head

... Die with Christ to legalistic rules

15

Application Questions

How have you allowed shadow worshippers and religious referees to intimidate you? Are you a shadow worshipper or religious referee? What futile religious rules keep you from a fulfilling relationship with Jesus?

16