

# JESUS OVER EVERYTHING ELSE

## COLOSSIANS 2:6-23

### CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – FEBRUARY 23, 2025

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#### SCRIPTURE READING

*Colossians 2:6-23*

##### *Alive in Christ*

6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, 10 and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. 11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

##### *Let No One Disqualify You*

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

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— 21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” 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, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

#### ICE BREAKER QUESTION

Think about a time when you tried to “supplement” something that was already complete (like adding unnecessary ingredients to a perfect recipe or “improving” something that worked fine). What happened? How did it turn out?

#### SERMON RECAP

This sermon explored the theme of keeping Jesus central in our faith and not allowing other influences to displace Him. The main points were:

- The greatest threat to Christian faith isn't replacing Jesus entirely but gradually displacing him with other influences that compete for our allegiance. This happens when we believe Jesus is enough to save us but not enough to satisfy us in specific areas of life.
- In the Colossian church, this displacement came through three main ideologies: legalism (trying to earn God's approval through rules), mysticism (pursuing spiritual experiences outside of Christ), and asceticism (extreme self-denial as a path to spirituality).
- In contemporary American Christianity, four main ideologies threaten to displace Jesus: religious relativism (“all paths lead to God”), expressive individualism (prioritizing “authentic self” over Christ's lordship), secular progressivism (abandoning biblical moral foundations), and tribal loyalty (whether cultural or political) that supersedes allegiance to Christ.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

##### **Observation: What does the passage say?**

1. According to verses 6-7, what does it mean to “walk in him”? What specific characteristics does Paul mention?
2. What specific religious practices and beliefs was Paul addressing in this passage? How does he describe their inadequacy?

##### **Interpretation: What does the passage mean?**

1. Why does Paul emphasize Christ's deity and fullness in verses 9-10? How does this connect to his warning about false teaching?
2. How does Paul's description of these first-century challenges parallel modern challenges to maintaining Christ's centrality in our lives?

***Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?***

1. In what areas of your life might you be tempted to "supplement" Christ's sufficiency with other sources of security, significance, or satisfaction? How can you recognize when this is happening?
2. The sermon identified four modern ideologies that can displace Jesus: religious relativism, expressive individualism, secular progressivism, and tribal loyalty. Which of these do you find most challenging in your own walk with Christ? What practical steps can you take to maintain Christ's centrality in the face of these influences?
3. How can we as a community help each other stay "rooted and built up in him" rather than being taken captive by competing ideologies? What does this look like in practice?

## **LEADER NOTES**

**GLOBAL OUTREACH PRAYER FOCUS** | We want regular global prayer to be a rhythm in our Church Groups. Throughout the year, the current week's prayer focus is outlined at [mcleanbible.org/goprayer](https://mcleanbible.org/goprayer). Join us this week as we pray for Ken & Ruth, MBC missionaries serving in Central Asia.