

Sermon Discussion Guide

Colossians 2:16–23

Preaching Date: September 7, 2025 — *Pastor Josh Peglow*

Opening Prayer

Thank God for the sufficiency of Christ and the freedom we have in Him. Praise Him for saving us from dead religion and drawing us into living union with Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you discern truth from error and grow in grace.

Recap

In Colossians 2:16–23, Paul exposes the danger of false religion that appears spiritual but lacks Christ. Legalism, mysticism, and asceticism had begun influencing the church — urging believers to pursue growth through rules, visions, or self-denial. But these are only shadows of the substance, which is Christ.

Paul calls the church to hold fast to Christ as the Head. From Him flows true growth and unity. Believers have died with Christ to the world's religious systems and now live by grace. We must not return to the self-made religion that cannot save, sanctify, or satisfy.

Understanding the Text

1. **What is the origin of the false teachers' emphasis in verse 16?**
Why are they promoting laws about food, festivals, and Sabbaths?
2. **What does Paul mean by "shadow" and "substance"?**
How does this language help us understand the difference between Old Covenant forms and New Covenant fulfillment in Christ?
3. **What is the basis of the false teachers' authority in verse 18?**
What spiritual experiences are they emphasizing? What does this reveal about their hearts?
4. **What is their most serious error, according to verse 19?**
5. **What foundational truth does Paul appeal to in verse 20?**

6. What is the main message of this passage?

Summarize Paul's warning and encouragement.

Personal Reflection & Application

1. Have personal convictions ever hardened into religious "rules"?

What does that reveal about where you're placing your hope?

2. Have you been tempted to listen to those who have an impressive spiritual resume without carefully considering their teaching?

How can we avoid

being misled?

3. Are you actively growing with the body of Christ?

How are you using your gifts to build up others?

4. Do you sometimes fall back into a law-keeping mindset apart from Christ?

How do you fight this tendency?

5. How can we help one another avoid error and stay rooted in Christ?

What does loving accountability look like?

Going Deeper in the Word

Shadow vs. Substance

- *Hebrews 10:1*
- *Romans 14:16–17*

Man-Made Religion and Legalism

- *Isaiah 1:13*
- *Galatians 4:9–11*
- *1 Timothy 4:3–5*
- *Titus 1:13–14*
- *Hebrews 13:9*

Life in the Body of Christ

- *Ephesians 4:15–16*