

Easy As 1-2-3



Colossians 2:11-23 ¹

It's As Easy As 1-2-3

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Overall Understanding

Colossians 2:1-23 ²

The Colossian believers were facing many false doctrines. Here, Paul addresses them.

¹In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

We were circumcised in Christ. The fleshly nature was cut off from us. We don't have two natures. We have one new nature.

We were buried and raised with Him. We already died. We don't need to keep dying to be saved.

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¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

We are alive,

All of our sins are forgiven. All of them: past, present, and future.

¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that were against us, which were contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Jesus canceled our debt by being nailed to the cross. He nailed the law, the accusations against us, to the cross. This is why there is no condemnation for us—because we are not under the law's curses. The wage of sin is death, but this wage was paid by Christ.

We are also not under man-made religious laws.

¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Jesus disarmed the devil and demons.

Hebrews 2:14-15

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Satan can only lie to you. He cannot take any action against you.

¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

We do not submit ourselves to the law or any religious law. Stand up for the rights Jesus purchased for you.

This is a warning to us today. Beware. Stand fast against these:

- Excessive ritualism: Devotion to religious law and ritual.

- Asceticism: Practicing strict self-denial as a measure of personal and spiritual discipline
- Angelic meditation: The false idea that God is still speaking to man through the mediation of angels instead of through His Son (see Hebrews 1)

These things are used to intimidate the church. Don't allow yourself to be intimidated by those who claim to have a higher revelation than Scripture. Beware of spiritual manipulation and domination.

¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

We are unlike Old Testament saints who only have a shadow of what was to come. The Law was a shadow. We have Christ now, who is light, not a shadow. You are right with God. Period. We don't need to add religious practices to become better with God or closer, or even to maintain. Jesus died to give us everything.

We are not to have a consciousness of sin but the peaceful knowledge that we are completely forgiven of all sins due to what Jesus accomplished on the cross. (See Hebrews 10.)

Galatians 3:23-25

But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

²⁴ *Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* ²⁵ *But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.*

¹⁸ Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false* humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

Don't allow "super-spiritual" people to cheat you of your reward. All of this is flesh.

The Amplified puts verse 18 this way:

Let no one defraud you by acting as an umpire and declaring you unworthy and disqualifying you for the prize, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, taking his stand on visions [he claims] he has seen, vainly puffed up by his sensuous notions and inflated by his unspiritual thoughts and fleshly conceit.

Don't allow yourself to be bullied by false spiritual leaders.

¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase *that is* from God.

Paul primarily addressed the false teaching of the Judaizers (those who taught that we need Jesus + Mosaic law).

Now he shifts his focus to Gnosticism and Asceticism (the practice of seeking angelic visions or strict "spiritual disciplines.")

We received Jesus by grace through faith. It is an assault to the cross to think that now, we get closer to God through fasting and other spiritual disciplines.

You can recognize these when the people teaching it imply they are closer to God than you are because of what they *do*.

We are close to God because of the blood of Jesus, not through our works.

The written word of God is our authority, not supposedly more spiritual leaders.

Hold fast to the Head, who is Jesus. Know who you are in Christ. Know what He has done for you. This will cause you to grow.

²⁰Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as *though* living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—²¹“Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,” ²²which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men?

Don't submit to the basic principles of the world. We died in Him. We rose with Him.

²³These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, *false* humility, and neglect of the body, *but are* of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

These religious practices look good at first, but they are worthless. It's all self-righteousness. These practices are purely flesh. Don't

let shadows rule you when you have the real thing: Jesus. Don't let yourself be defrauded and deceived. Stand fast in the liberty you have been given.