

Sunday, November 15, 2020—Colossians 2:8 Beware Lest Any Man Spoil You, Part 3 (Tradition of Men & Rudiments of the World)

### **Introduction**

- Last Sunday we resumed our study of Colossians by continuing our look at Colossians 2:8.
- Colossians 2:8—Paul is exhorting the Colossians to “beware” i.e., exercise extreme caution lest they be spoiled or taken as a casualty of war. This is not Paul’s first warning in this context.
  - Colossians 2:4
- Colossians 2:8—there are three categories or types of thought that Paul warns the Colossians to be “beware” of on account of their capacity to “spoil” people:
  - Philosophy and vain deceit
  - Traditions of men
  - Rudiments of the world
- Last week looked at the first of these three categories i.e., “philosophy and vain deceit.” In doing so, we observed that Paul’s warning is that the Colossians not be “spoiled” through the “vain deceit” of “philosophy” and man’s wisdom.
  - I Corinthians 1:22—“. . . the Greeks seek after wisdom.”
- This morning we want to finish our discussion of Colossians 2:8 by looking at the final two categories: 1) traditions of men, and 2) rudiments of the world.

### **Traditions of Men**

- The English word “tradition” carries the following meanings according to Noah Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language*:
  - Delivery; the act of delivering into the hands of another.
  - The delivery of opinions, doctrines, practices, rites and customs from father to son, or from ancestors to posterity; the transmission of any opinions or practice from forefathers to descendants by oral communication, without written memorials.
    - Tell the story about the turkey on Thanksgiving.
  - That which is handed down from age to age by oral communication. The Jews pay great regard to tradition in matters of religion, as do the Romanists. Protestants reject the authority of tradition in sacred things, and rely only on the written word. Traditions may be good or bad, true or false.

- II Thessalonians 2:15, 3:6
- When Paul warns about the “traditions of men” he is referring to bad or false traditions in the realm of religion.
- Matthew 15:1-9
- Mark 7:1-13
- Galatians 1:14
- I Peter 1:18
- Colossians 2:22

### **Rudiments of the World**

- The English word “rudiment” carries the following means according to Noah Webster:
  - A first principle or element; that which is to be first learnt; as the rudiments of learning or science. Articulate sounds are the rudiments of language; letters or characters are the rudiments of written language; the primary rules of any art or science are its rudiments. Hence instruction in the rudiments of any art or science, constitutes the beginning of education in that art or science.
  - The original of any thing in its first form. Thus in botany, the germen, ovary or seed-bud, is the rudiment of the fruit yet in embryo; and the seed is the rudiment of a new plant.
  - To furnish with first principles or rules; to ground; to settle in first principles.
- Rudiments are the elemental first principles upon which everything else is based. So, what does Paul mean by the “rudiments of the world.” He is talking about the base principles upon which God founded and set things up. He is talking about the Mosaic Law.
- Galatians 4:1-10
- Hebrews 5:12
- Colossians 2:20—we are dead with Christ from the “rudiments of the world.” How?
  - Colossians 2:14-15
- Colossians 2:20-23
- 1 Timothy 1:6-7

- When believers endeavor to following the Mosaic Law they are willfully subjecting themselves to the base elements of the world.

### **And Not After Christ**

- The spoiling capacity in these three categories of thought is found in the fact that they are not after Christ. They are designed to move the believe away from Christ and thereby entice to the believe to put something in Christ's place and not hold him as the head.
  - Colossians 2:19