

Theme: Counterfeit spirituality depends on rituals, hyper-spirituality, and legalism, rather than on the simplicity of Christ, Who alone delivers from sin.

I. Intro – Do they meet on the Sabbath?

- A. Man visited the church years ago
- B. Parents against it - we did not meet on Saturday
- C. He was committing sexual immorality, doubting faith
- D. They had gotten divorced not long before
- E. But what mattered was if we met on Saturday or not!
- F. There are counterfeits to real faith in Jesus everywhere

II. Counterfeit Spirituality Through Rituals

- A. The problem - a false judgment (v16)
 - 1. Do not let them judge you - they are trying (v16)
 - 2. Notice this is judgment based on rituals - not morals
 - 3. People always look for ways to be superior
 - 4. We must refute & ignore - don't be drawn in
- B. The basis of this judgement - OT rituals (v16)
 - 1. Many could be pagan (drink; religious festival)
 - 2. But some must be OT - Sabbath day - all fit OT
 - 3. This group wants to keep OT rituals
 - 4. Like the people in the intro - keep the Sabbath!!!
 - 5. They don't just do it themselves - they make it law!

C. Some modern examples of this

- 1. The people in the intro - rituals over reality!
- 2. Some groups love to return to OT rituals, days
- 3. These have been fulfilled - no longer binding for **anyone**

D. The truth - a shadow fulfilled in Christ (v17)

- 1. Jesus has fulfilled all of these - no longer binding
- 2. We are free to observe or not observe (Rom 14:5-6)
- 3. Actually the weaker who follow these rules (Rom 14)
- 4. Either way, we must not judge based on such things
- 5. Rituals - spirituality through what I do
- 6. Reality - spirituality through what Jesus did!

III. Counterfeit Hyper-Spirituality

- A. The problem - disqualifying for the prize (v18)
 - 1. Do not let them - just like the judging in v16
 - 2. If we listen to them, they will rob us
 - 3. They claim to be umpires of our spirituality
 - 4. We must refute & ignore - don't be drawn in
- B. The basis of 'disqualification' - hyper spirituality (vv18-19)
 - 1. False humility, angel worship, visions, idle notions
 - 2. Key point - love to talk about their "experiences"
 - 3. They claim a "super-spirituality" - more than others

- C. Some modern examples of this
1. Todd Bentley - constantly talked about angels, visions
 2. God talked to him ALL the time; told him what to do
 3. Then he left his wife, kids for a ministry worker
 4. Don't listen to these hyper-spiritual promises

- D. The reality - they have a false spirituality, losing Jesus! (vv18-19)
1. They are unspiritual, losing connection with Jesus!
 2. The WHOLE church is in Christ - no super-Christians
 3. Hyper-spirituality - spirituality through special experiences
 4. Reality - spirituality for ALL equally in Jesus ALONE

IV. Counterfeit Spirituality Through Legalism

- A. The problem - legalism (vv20-22)
1. Basic principles of world - στοιχείων - world's rules
 2. Not God's Law - just our own human rules
 3. Restrictive - DO NOT eat, taste, touch (ascending)
 4. People who want to be the Holy Spirit - control others
- B. The basis of these rules - our own ideas - not God's Law
1. Basic principles of world - στοιχείων - its rules
 2. Not God's Law - just our own human rules
 3. Legalism - rules for which we do not have DIRECT Bible
- C. Examples of this today
1. Fundamentalism is eaten up with this tendency

2. Legalism on alcohol, movies, books, etc.
3. Anywhere we go beyond Scripture - legalism

- D. The reality - no help in sanctification
1. Legalism sounds good - but does not work
 2. Only Christ and the Spirit can free us - and they do!
 3. Legalism - spirituality through what I don't do
 4. Reality - spirituality through what Jesus did not do- SIN!
 5. Reality - freedom in Christ

V. Applying the Word

- A. Am I trusting Jesus - or a counterfeit?
1. Is my faith in Jesus - or rituals, experiences, legalism?
 2. Where do I find my acceptance, peace before God?
 3. Have I moved my eyes from Jesus to even good things?
- B. Am I preaching Jesus - or my own counterfeit?
1. Do I talk more about Jesus - or rituals, etc.?
 2. Do my words point people to Jesus - or me?
 3. Do people connect me with Jesus - or rituals, etc.?
- C. Closing prayer - looking to Jesus ALONE

Counterfeit Spirituality

Colossians 2:16-23

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Prayer

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. 6 He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

Romans 14:5–6

16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. 18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. 19 He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. 20 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: 21 “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? 22 These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Colossians 2:16–23