

## Conclusion

Have I been a church bully and unwittingly pulled people away from Jesus?



## Colossians 2:16-23 - Where You Beat Up By A Church Bully?

November 12, 2017

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### Digging Deeper Sermon Study

1. **Read Colossians 2:16-17.** This week, we met Legalistic Larry. He is someone that looks down on others because they don't keep his extra religious rules after following Jesus. Can you think of times when Christians bullied you for not keeping their rules and you let their influence matter more than it should? Are there times when the criticisms of others should be taken seriously? What is the difference? See Proverbs 27:6, Psalm 141:5; Galatians 2:11-16.
2. **Read Colossians 2:18-19.** This week, we met Mystical Martha. She is someone that displayed false humility by making herself the center of attention instead of Jesus. Can you think of times when a Christian displayed false humility because they really wanted to be the center of attention? Can you think of times you felt your Christian life was second-rate because you didn't have supernatural spiritual experiences? What have you learned from Paul's letter to the Colossians about those feelings? See Philippians 2:3; 1 Peter 5:5.
3. **Read Colossians 2:20-23.** This week, we met Self-Denying Sam. He made following Christ about pleasure subtraction instead of Jesus addition. How can self-denial and a minimalistic lifestyle become a distraction from Jesus? Why does a life of denying the good gifts God provides such as food, marriage, children, and monetary resources actually set our eyes on ourselves and result in less worship to Jesus. See 1 Timothy 4:1-5; 8; 1 Cor 10:31.
4. Have you ever experienced these spiritual bullies around the church? Have you ever unwittingly been one of these spiritual bullies in the church and pulled attention away from Jesus?

### 1. Legalistic Larry: The church bully that wants me to follow his rules in addition to Jesus.

*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. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.*  
Colossians 2:16–17 (ESV)

*And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.) And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him." Mark 7:18–20 (ESV)*

*And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God*

has made clean, do not call common.” This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven. Acts 10:13–16 (ESV)

Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. 1 Corinthians 8:8 (ESV)

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Hebrews 10:1 (ESV)

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1 (ESV)

## **2. Mystical Martha: The church bully that wants to be the center of attention instead of Jesus.**

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, 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. Colossians 2:18–19 (ESV)

Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.’ ” Matthew 4:10 (ESV)

## **3. Self-Denying Sam: The church bully that wants to make the life about pleasure subtraction instead of Jesus addition.**

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— “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? 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. Colossians 2:20–23 (ESV)