

Colossians – Christ and the Old Law
Col. 2:11-23

Thesis: To help us understand that the old law has been done away.

Introduction:

I. Christians must put “off the body of sins of the flesh” (2:11-13).

A. We have been circumcised with “the circumcision made without hands” (2:11).

1. Circumcision was extremely important to the Jews.
 - a. Given to Abraham
 - 1) **Gen. 17:9-14** - And God said to Abraham: “As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. {10} This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; {11} and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. {12} He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. {13} He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. {14} And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”
 - b. Continued with Moses
 - 1) **Lev. 12:3** - And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.
 - c. Done before Israel could take the Promised Land.
 - 1) **Josh. 5**
 - d. Circumcision was the sign of the covenant between God and the people of Israel.
2. The circumcision that Paul talks about is a circumcision of the heart.
 - a. **Deut. 10:16** (Moses reminding the people to be faithful to God) - Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.
 - b. **Jer. 4:4** (God speaking through Jeremiah to Judah) - Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your hearts, you men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest My fury come forth like fire, and burn so that no one can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

3. Therefore, to put “off the body of sins of the flesh” is to change our heart and actions to coincide with the will of God.

B. We put off this “body of sins” in baptism (2:12).

1. When we are “buried with Him in baptism,” we are also “raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”
2. When we are “buried with Him in baptism,” we die to sin and live to Christ.
3. After this baptism, we are raised with Christ (2:13).
 - a. When we are raised, we are “alive together with Him.”
 - b. Rom. 6:1-14

II. Christ has removed the old law through His death on the cross (2:13-15).

A. The death of Christ accomplished many things.

1. Forgiveness of sins
 - a. Col. 1:14 - in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.
2. Peace
 - a. Col. 1:19-20 - For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, {20} and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.
3. Reconciliation
 - a. Col. 1:21-22 - And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled {22} in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight--
4. Purchase the church
 - a. Acts 20:28 - Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.
5. It is through the cross of Christ that we have hope.

B. But it is only through the cross that the old law could be abolished.

1. His death “wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us” (2:14).
 - a. He took “the handwriting of requirements” (old law) out of the way by nailing it to the cross.
 - b. When Jesus went to the cross, He took the old law with Him.
2. It was necessary for Christ to die to bring in His law.
 - a. Heb. 9:16-17 - For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. {17} For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.
 - b. Christ died so that He could establish His covenant with man.

C. There are strong implications to Christ wiping out the old law.

1. No more feasts to God in Jerusalem.
2. No more sacrifices for sin (**Heb. 9:23-28**).

III. Because Christ has removed the Old Law, we do not obey that law (**2:16-23**).

A. Only the law which we live under has any authority over us.

1. For example, because we live in America, we live by the laws of the United States.
 - a. However, those living in another country are not under our laws.
 - b. If we go to another country, we live according to their laws.
2. The great news about the law of Christ is that it is the only law that is in effect.
 - a. There is no other law that can govern us in religious matter.
 - b. We must obey the law of Christ.

B. Because we are under the law of Christ, we do not obey any other religious law, including the law of Moses (**2:16-23**).

1. Because of His death, we are no longer bound by the requirements of the old law.
 - a. They did not celebrate the customs of the Jews (**2:16-17**).
 - 1) Food or drink – clean and unclean animals
 - 2) Festival or new moon – religious holidays of the Jews
 - 3) Sabbaths – the day of rest for the Jews
 - 4) These were merely shadows of the things to come; these all pointed to Christ.
 - b. They were not to be cheated of their reward by those who would lead them astray; but rather they were to follow Christ (**2:18-19**).
2. Because they had died with Christ, they were no longer bound by the law of the Jews (**2:20-23**).
3. As an example, remember **Acts 15**.
 - a. Some Judaizing teachers taught the brethren that “unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved” (**Acts 15:1**).
 - b. The apostles met and wrote to the Gentile Christians that they did not have to keep the law of Moses in order to be faithful to Christ.
4. Today, we live under the law of Christ, not the law of Moses.

Conclusion: