



Lesson 5

2:11-15 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Notes:

- Paul is now transitioning from a false Gentile/pagan philosophy to a mixture of Jewish errors and misunderstandings.
- “the written code” = lit. “the hand-written note” which was said of one’s legal indebtedness
- “the powers and authorities” – once again not only in the earthly realm but more so in the heavenly
- “triumphing” (v. 15) is referring to a Roman triumph parade

5.) What does it mean that we were buried and raised with Christ in baptism? What was buried? What was raised/given life?

Romans 6:3-7 Don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵ If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

John 3:5-6 Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.”

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

6.) What is the comfort in knowing that our signed/personal indebtedness to God's commands is nailed to the cross?

7.) When did Christ make a public spectacle and triumph over the powers and authorities? (cf. also the Apostles' Creed)

1 Peter 3:18-20 Christ also suffered once for sins in our place, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in flesh but was made alive in spirit, ¹⁹ in which he also went and made an announcement to the spirits in prison. (EHV)

2:16-19 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.

Notes:

- v. 16: "Sabbath" = the seventh day, also meaning "rest"
- v. 17: "the reality" = lit. "the body" (*pointing back to 2:9 "all the fullness of deity lives bodily in X."*)
- v. 18: "the worship of angels" – Why would this be an important detail in Gnosticism?
- v. 18: "disqualify" = comes from the noun denoting the official judge (umpire/referee) at the Olympic games, who determined the winner of the prize
- v. 19: "unspiritual mind" = "mind of the flesh"
- v. 19: "puffs him up" = root word for a pair of bellows
- v. 19: the phrase "with idle notions" is explanatory and not found in the Greek text

1.) Based on the preceding, what is all included in this "therefore"?

2.) What are the dangers involved with judging one's faith and orthodoxy by the metric of their diet or their observance of religious festivals (be they attached to the Old or New Testament)?

Romans 14:5-8 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. ⁷ For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

Galatians 4:9-11; 5:1-4 But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? ¹⁰ You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! ¹¹ I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you. ... ^{5:1} It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. ² Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. ³ Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. ⁴ You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

3.) Respond to the following from the Archdiocese of Minneapolis and St. Paul Q and A: “Why don’t Catholics eat meat on Fridays?” Where does the Roman Catholic teaching contradict Paul’s command (“Do not let anyone judge...”)?

Catholics abstain from flesh meat on days of penance, such as Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and the Fridays of Lent. Abstinence is one of the oldest Christian traditions. “From the first century, the day of the crucifixion has been traditionally observed as a day of abstaining from flesh meat (“black fast”) to honor Christ who sacrificed his flesh on a Friday” (Klein, P., Catholic Source Book, 93). In recognition of Friday as the day of the crucifixion, canon law calls for abstinence from eating meat on all Fridays of the year (see Canon 1251). The bishops of the United States have determined that outside of the Fridays of Lent, Catholics may choose to substitute another penance that is particularly meaningful to them, although they continue to recommend abstinence on all Fridays for Catholics. Abstinence from meat is required for all Catholics age fourteen and older and has no upper age limit. Since Jesus sacrificed his flesh for us on Good Friday, we refrain from eating flesh meat in his honor on Fridays. Flesh meat includes the meat of mammals and poultry, and the main foods that come under this heading are beef, pork, chicken, and turkey. While flesh is prohibited, the non-flesh products of these animals are not, things like milk, cheese, butter, eggs, and sauces made from animal fats. ...Abstinence is a form of penance. Penance expresses sorrow and contrition for our wrongdoing, indicates our intention to turn away from sin and turn back to God, and makes reparation for our sins. Reparation helps to cancel the debt and pay the penalties incurred by our transgressions.¹

4.) Explain how the following are Old Testament shadows of the better reality we have in Christ?

- The exodus from Egypt precipitated by the Passover/Plague of the firstborn.
- The daily sacrifices and sacrifices for sins.
- The celebration of the Sabbath Day.

5.) What are we to make of visions of angels and/or vivid dreams that some claim to have from God?

Jeremiah 23:25-29 “I have heard what the prophets say who prophesy lies in my name. They say, ‘I had a dream! I had a dream!’ ²⁶ How long will this continue in the hearts of these lying prophets, who prophesy the delusions of their own minds? ²⁷ They think the dreams they tell one another will make my people forget my name, just as their fathers forgot my name through Baal worship. ²⁸ Let the prophet who has a dream tell his dream, but let the one who has my word speak it faithfully. For what has straw to do with grain?” declares the LORD. ²⁹ “Is not my word like fire,” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?”

¹ <https://www.archspm.org/why-dont-catholics-eat-meat-on-fridays/>

2 Corinthians 11:13-14 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

1 Timothy 4:1-5 The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. ² Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. ³ They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. ⁴ For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵ because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

1 John 4:1-3 Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2:20-23 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.

Notes:

- v. 20 “you died with Christ” – referring to God’s work in Baptism (2:12)
- v. 23 “Self-imposed worship” = from “want/will” (verb) + “worship” (KJV)
- v. 23 “in restraining sensual indulgence” = “against indulgence of the flesh”

1.) What are some “basic principles of this world” that we are empowered to make “dead” to us in baptism?

2.) Why must we always be on the lookout for “will-worship”?

3.) Why can’t physical and dietary restrictions serve as a meaningful curb the sinful flesh?