

Colossians - Chapter 2
“Getting Wrapped Up in Angels”
Colossians 2:18

Verse 18

1. Now we come to another problem that was threatening this church - the issue of religious mysticism. This is a belief that a person can tap into the invisible spirit world and have contact with spirit-beings.
2. Obviously, there were people at Colosse that were claiming to have had contact and experiences with angels.
3. How relevant this is for today's world! You don't have to look far to see that people are enamored with this subject of mysticism and the supernatural. Angels have even become a big money business with Hollywood, capitalizing on it through television and movies.
4. Paul addresses this subject in a very straightforward manner. Believers had better take heed to Paul's instruction, lest you be deceived by Satan.
5. Paul basically gives three reasons why these false teachers had become engrossed in religious mysticism and angels.

A. First reason - they had been beguiled. vs. 18

- The word “*beguile*” means “to defraud.” It carries the idea of taking something away from someone on false pretences, or by deceiving them.
- Paul used this word “*beguile*” in verse 4, and taught that others were attempting to beguile them with “*enticing words.*”
- What these false teachers were saying sounded good. It appealed to the emotions, senses, mind, and feelings.
- As these false teachers tell of their mystical experiences, it sends chills down your spine, raises the hair on your arms, and gives you a tingling sensation. People say, “It had to be of God. I tingled all over and my hair stood on end.”
- Paul says, “It is all a deceptive sham, and they are threatening to cause you to lose your reward.” When Paul speaks of our “*reward,*” he isn't talking about believers getting material and monetary benefits in heaven.
- In heaven, our reward will be to shine forth the glory of Christ in the heavenlies for all to see and behold. But, there will be degrees of glory in heaven. Our glory will depend on what we have done to build up our inner man through Christ and His Word.
- Satan loves nothing more than when believers get caught up in mystical experiences, rather than focusing on God's Word and their completeness in Christ.

- We stand complete in Christ, but the goal of the enemy is to keep you from understanding your position and standing in Christ. He would love for you to look to angels rather than to look to God's Word and your riches that you possess in Christ.
- When we get caught up into religious mysticism, we have been beguiled.
- But, there is a second reason why they had become engrossed in angels and mysticism:

B. Second reason - they possessed a false humility.

- Paul speaks of their “*voluntary humility and worshipping of angels.*”
- Humility is a good attribute, but here it is bad. It was a **false** humility. It is the idea of “I'm the most humble person I know, and I'm proud of it!”
- Religion says, “You're not good enough to approach God in worship. You must perform our mystical rites and rituals. You must go through our religious leaders, or through dead saints, or through angels to approach God.”
- This is a false humility, and leads people to get wrapped up in seeking angelic experiences, and mystical, supernatural experiences. **Illustration:** You hear of people praying to dead saints, or bowing before statues and a dead saint or angel appears. This leads to what Paul said, “*...vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.*”
- True humility is confidence properly placed. True humility says, “I am in Christ, and through Him alone I can boldly and confidently enter into the presence of God, and commune with my heavenly Father.” Ephesians 2:18, 3:12; Hebrews 4:16, 10:19
- True humility causes you to stand in the completeness you have in Christ, and not chase after angelic mediation or other mystical visions. In the Bible, we are told to worship only God, not angels or dead saints.
- False humility says, “I'm not good enough to approach God, so I'll start with one of His angels.” We certainly don't need any type of angelic mediation. There is one mediator between God and men - Jesus Christ. 1 Timothy 2:5
- Trying to approach God any other way than through His Son is idolatry.

C. Third reason - they were intruding into areas that were counterfeit.

- What does it mean to intrude?
 - If you invite someone to your house, they are a guest.
 - If someone that doesn't belong there enters your house uninvited, he is an intruder.
- These believers that had become engrossed with angels were intruding into areas where they didn't belong, and were obviously claiming to have seen angels.

- But, God's Word says that they **didn't** see them. Whatever they claimed to see was not from God, and was not one of God's angels. It was counterfeit. Satan loves to give people counterfeit experiences that they think are from God. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
- God's Word condemns any type of attempt to communicate with spirit-beings or the departed spirits of people. Deuteronomy 18:9-14
- In this dispensation, there is no need for a believer to see or communicate with an angel. We walk by faith in Christ and His Word, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7
- These people had become involved in experience-based religion, resulting in an infatuation with angels, and they delved into areas that were counterfeit.

6. There are two responses that believers can have to Paul's teaching:

- First, they can become vainly puffed up in their fleshly mind. vs. 18
 - People say, "I don't care what the Bible or preacher says, I know what I've seen and experienced."
 - People can know that they are vainly puffed up when their experiences become the basis of truth. You become the center of things - what you see, and what you experience, and what you think.
 - The words "*puffed up*" carry the idea of being "inflated." This is what experience-based religion does. It inflates your ego, but leaves you spiritually empty. Anything that doesn't root and build you up in Christ will leave you empty.
- Second, believers can choose to hold the Head (Jesus Christ). vs. 19
 - These false teachers were holding to their religious experiences, but were not holding the Head (Christ).
 - The word "holding" carries the idea of grabbing onto something and not letting go. **Illustration:** Matthew 28:9 (They held Christ by the feet and worshipped Him. Same word is used here.)
 - Believers can trust God's Word, stand complete in Christ, and grow in His grace.
 - What a shame when people cling to everything **but** Christ.
 - Remember, we are in Christ. Everything we need to be strengthened and nourished and to grow is found in Him (vs. 19). This is how true spiritual progress is made. Ephesians 4:14-16
 - This is what Paul is saying in verse 19. Everything that we as members of the body of Christ need is found in Christ.
 - Through Christ we are nourished spiritually in our inner man.
 - Through Christ we are able to minister and serve.
 - Through Christ we are able to function as one body, knit together.
 - Through Christ we are able to grow spiritually (increase).

- If a people don't draw from the spiritual wellspring of Christ, they become malnourished. There is no real spiritual growth. Yet these false teachers thought they were hyperspiritual because of their experiences.
 - **Illustration:** The little dogs next door to us they think they can whip me, my Golden Retriever, or any other big dog that comes along. Reality – they're just little runts!
 - There is nothing more obnoxious or cancerous to a church than a person who thinks he is spiritually elite, and in reality, he is a spiritual runt. This kind of person is trouble!
- Don't fall for Satan's lies, and allow him to beguile and defraud you by getting you to chase after experiences. Hold the Head, cling to Christ, study God's Word, and discover all that God has made you in Christ. This is how you grow up spiritually!