

An aerial view of Prague, Czech Republic, at sunset. The Vltava River flows through the city, with the Charles Bridge in the foreground. The city is filled with historic buildings, including a prominent church with a green dome. The sky is filled with soft, golden light from the setting sun.

**WELCOME**  
to the  
**International Baptist Church**  
of Prague

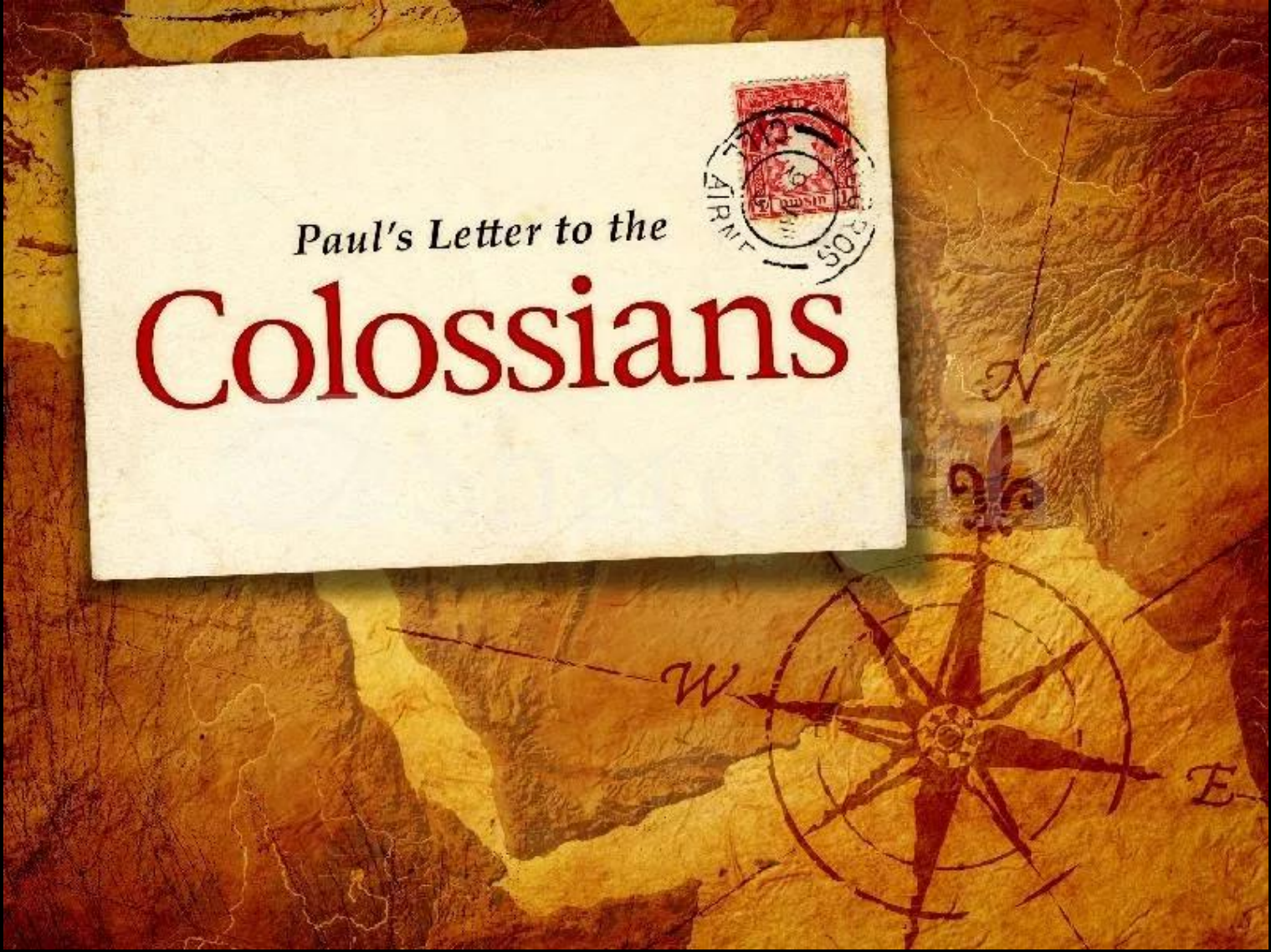
**SUNDAY 25 OCTOBER 2020**





# SERMON





*Paul's Letter to the*  
**Colossians**

**Colossians 2:16 – 3:4**  
**“Freedom in Christ”**

## Colossians 2:16-19 ESV

**2** <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. <sup>18</sup> 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, <sup>19</sup> 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 2:16-9

- ❖ Paul is correcting the false teaching of the Gnostics
- ❖ “Gnosis” = “secret knowledge”
- ❖ Two types of Gnostics rebuked by Paul –  
Ascetics, like Judaizers, preach that observing Jewish practices & the Law of Moses led to deeper spirituality  
- Second group were hedonistic, saying we can do whatever we want in our physical bodies, esp. sexually, because we are really primarily spiritual beings, not physical
- ❖ **BOTH IDEAS ARE UNBIBLICAL**

## **Colossians 2:16-9**

- ❖ **Asceticism is no better than hedonism apart from a personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ**
- ❖ **Also, we are not to worship any created being, even angels**
- ❖ **As the Reformers said, SOLI DEO GLORIA – To God alone be the glory!**
- ❖ **Paul gives an analogy of the human body to explain how true spiritual growth happens**
- ❖ **Without faith in the true Jesus as the foundation, all other practice and belief is worthless**

## Colossians 2:19-23 ESV

**20 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— 21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” 22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? 23 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 2:19-23**

- ❖ **The Gnostics seemed to justify their beliefs by adapting a wrong understanding of Scripture.**
- ❖ **Gnosticism was a false belief system seeking to put on a Christian veneer to a man-made religion because of the growth of the Christian faith**
- ❖ **Paul emphasizes that we cannot defeat our own struggles with in in our own power**
- ❖ **Sanctification is a work of the Holy Spirit**
- ❖ **God Himself must transform us from within**



## Colossians 3:1-4 ESV

**3** <sup>1</sup> If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

## Colossians 3:1-4

- ❖ **Paul emphasizes that we have truly trusted in Jesus' final sacrifice on the cross for our sins, we have been buried and raised with Christ - Jesus makes it a reality for us**
- ❖ **We are to focus on God not on perishable things on earth; earthly things do not deserve the same attention as God**
- ❖ **If we have truly trusted in Christ, at His Second Coming, we will appear with Him in glory**

## **BUT WE DO STILL HAVE SOME QUESTIONS...**

- If you believe the Bible is inerrant and authoritative, why don't you obey the Law of Moses?**
- If you can apparently decide which laws to obey, why can't others decide to obey what they don't want to obey, like commands regarding sexuality?**
- Why should we obey NT commands? Maybe we have progressed beyond them like we progressed beyond the Law of Moses?**



# Challenging Questions for the Christian

- ❖ **The New Testament does address how the Christian relates to the Law of Moses**
- ❖ **The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5)**
- ❖ **Acts 10-11 & 15**
- ❖ **The whole book of Galatians**
- ❖ **The whole book of Hebrews**
- ❖ **The first half of the book of Romans**

# The Christian & the Law of Moses

- ✧ **It is important to realize that the Law of Moses was always meant to be temporary, though some commands, as we will see, are universally valid.**
- ✧ **Moses predicts a prophet greater than he will come (Deuteronomy 18)**
- ✧ **Pharisees asked John the Baptist, "Are you the prophet?" (John 1:21)**
- ✧ **Jesus came to fulfill, not abolish the Law (Matthew 5:17-20)**
- ✧ **His resurrection demonstrates that He was in fact the Son of God/Son of Man**

# The Christian & the Law of Moses

✧ **It is also important to understand that the Law of Moses contains three types of laws:**

**1) Ceremonial / ritualistic laws**

**2) The Holiness Code (for the theocratic state of Israel)**

**3) Universal Moral Laws**



# 1) Ceremonial Law

- ✧ **Laws regarding sacrifices and offerings**
- ✧ **Laws concerning rituals / holidays**
- ✧ **These were fulfilled in Christ's life as well as in His sacrificial death on the cross and His resurrection**
- ✧ **"It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." (Hebrews 10:4)**
- ✧ **"It is finished." (John 19:30)**

## **2) The Holiness Code**

**✧ These are laws for the theocratic state of Israel**

**✧ They are to set the nation of Israel apart from the other nations**

**✧ Dietary laws, clothing, planting, servitude**

**✧ Messiah was to come from the distinct people of Israel**

**✧ With the advent of the Church, no longer necessary**

### **3) Universal Moral Law**

- ✧ **These are moral laws that are valid for all times and cultures**
- ✧ **9 of the Ten Commandments are in this category**
- ✧ **Sabbath is no longer binding (Hebrews 4); Christ is our Sabbath**
- ✧ **Seventh-Day Adventists – wrong understanding**
- ✧ **Most of these moral laws are specifically repeated in the New Testament**
- ✧ **Laws regarding sexuality among these**



# Salvation has always been by grace, never by the Law

✧ **God did not try to save people by the Law, then when things didn't work out, switch to salvation by grace through faith in Christ.**

✧ **Jesus' sacrificial death was always Plan A (Ephesians 1:4)**

✧ **We are saved by grace through faith. NOT by works. BUT, we still have to obey.**

✧ **"If you love Me, keep My commands." (John 14:15)**

✧ **"Go into all the world, make disciples of all nations...., teaching them everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20)**

## 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

**<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

# The Christian & the Law of Moses

✧ **To believe in the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture, we must interpret and apply it correctly.**

✧ **Scripture does not “inspire” our theology – it determines it!**

✧ **The ceremonial law and holiness code are no longer in effect. They have been fulfilled in Christ.**

✧ **The universal moral law is still in effect.**

✧ **Being saved by grace does not mean we don't have to obey; our unfailing hope is that Christ forgives when we fail.**

✧ **It means our motives for obeying are love and thankfulness to Christ rather than grudging duty or self-salvation.**

✧ **“...if righteousness could be gained by the law, Christ died for nothing.” (Galatians 2:21, NIV)**



To  
God  
be the Glory!