

Title: It's All About You Jesus – Colossians 2 11-23

Read:

¹¹⁻¹⁵ Entering into this fullness is not something you figure out or achieve. It's not a matter of being circumcised or keeping a long list of laws. No, you're already in—insiders—not through some secretive initiation rite but rather through what Christ has already gone through for you, destroying the power of sin. If it's an initiation ritual you're after, you've already been through it by submitting to baptism. Going under the water was a burial of your old life; coming up out of it was a resurrection, God raising you from the dead as he did Christ. When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ! Think of it! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ's cross. He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets. ¹⁶⁻¹⁷ So don't put up with anyone pressuring you in details of diet, worship services, or holy days. All those things are mere shadows cast before what was to come; the substance is Christ. ¹⁸⁻¹⁹ Don't tolerate people who try to run your life, ordering you to bow and scrape, insisting that you join their obsession with angels and that you seek out visions. They're a lot of hot air, that's all they are. They're completely out of touch with the source of life, Christ, who puts us together in one piece, whose very breath and blood flow through us. He is the Head and we are the body. We can grow up healthy in God only as he nourishes us. ²⁰⁻²³ So, then, if with Christ you've put all that pretentious and infantile religion behind you, why do you let yourselves be bullied by it? "Don't touch this! Don't taste that! Don't go near this!" Do you think things that are here today and gone tomorrow are worth that kind of attention? Such things sound impressive if said in a deep enough voice. They even give the illusion of being pious and humble and ascetic. But they're just another way of showing off, making yourselves look important.

Think:

I go to a Church where we like to think that the children's and youth works top notch. I think secretly we sit there sometimes and think, our youth work is better than that other church. Now that can't be right can it? I've seen other Churches who have excellent musicians and think that God accepts their worship because it's cool. Now I'm pretty sure that God accepts all our worship, as long as we are focussed on him. Finally I have been to other Churches that do things in strict order. Stand this way, kneel that way, say these words in this order, stand on one leg. OK maybe they don't stand on one leg but worshipping our God isn't about rules. You and I following Jesus isn't about doing youth work in a certain way, doing worship in a certain way or any other set of rules, it's about following Jesus. Jesus accepts your worship as you sing to him or speak to him on your way to school, there's no need for a Church building. God loves for you to pray to him for help, when you're sitting at your desk, he doesn't only listen when you are on your knees. Adults may have put lots of rules around these things but as we can see from this passage, it's not about the rules, it's all about following Jesus and making him part of your life at school and college.

Pray:

Lord would you please help me forget the rules and simply build our relationship up. Father help me follow you in all of my day. Amen.

Action:

Adults aren't the only ones who make rules up. What box have you put God in? Do you think you can only pray in Church? Whatever it is, make an effort today to ditch the rule that's limiting God in your life. Bye.