

## The Substance of Christ

Col 2:16-23



### Background

"No one," said Jesus, "puts new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins -- and the wine is destroyed, and so are the skins. But new wine is for fresh wineskins." You don't have to be a winemaker to appreciate the wisdom of Christ's reminder: Just as new wine can burst old wineskins, so the Way of Christ was never meant to be bound by tradition. Yet, there is a place for the old as much as there is for the new -- both belong to Christ! Come join us this Sunday as we explore the right -- and wrong -- ways we often use tradition as travelers on the ever-new, ever-reforming, ever-reconstructing Way of Christ.

### Sermon Text: Col 2:16-23 (ESV)

[16](#) 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. [17](#) These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. [18](#) 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, [19](#) 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.

[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.

### Discussion Questions

#### 1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- c. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you the most?

## 2. Sunday questions

- a. Since this was Eugene's last sermon of this series, reflect a bit on what you want to remember from this series. Here are some of his themes:
  - The Way of Christ is a lifelong journey.
  - The Way of Christ is full of trustworthy guides.
  - The Way of Christ is open to everyone.
  - The Way of Christ changes us from the inside-out.
  - The Way of Christ takes us into the New Creation.
- b. The false teachers in Colossae seemed to display a "spirituality through strict self-discipline." What is a healthy view of discipline in faith? What is not? Would you say you have a healthy view? Why or why not?
- c. It seems the false teachers in Colossae were offering control over their spirituality through rituals and "always being criticizing, condemning and coercing (ABCCC)." Have you ever felt controlled in your spiritual life? Why or why not?
- d. Eugene said that the 3<sup>rd</sup> way, the way of Christ, is "unpredictable, unsure and uncertain, ... yet it is in these liminal spaces where God grows our faith, heals us and gives us hope." Are there places in your life where this has happened? Moving forward, how does this encourage you?
- e. "Is your heart willing to be stretched like a new wineskin? ... Are you willing to take new steps forward or to take old steps in a new way through the Spirit and firm on his Word? What new steps is God calling you to take these days?"