

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY ~ OF THIS NEXT SECTION OF COLOSSIANS, ~ chapter 2, ~ verses 6-23.

▶▶ Again, ~ recall in [verse 5](#), ~ Paul had commended these believers ~ for staying faithful in the face of false teaching.

▶▶ Now, ~ in [2:6-23](#), ~ he gives ~ a series of five exhortations, ~ calling them, ~ and us indirectly, ~ [↴↴](#)

▷▷ to continue to stay faithful, ~ and not buckle under the pressure of false teachers.

▶▶ As we noted, ~ basically, ~ beginning with [verse 5](#), ~ the overarching idea ~ of [verses 6-23](#) ~ is this.

▷▷ For though I am absent in body, ~ yet I am with you in spirit, ~ rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ. ~~

↵↵ Consequently, ~ continue to stay faithful, ~ and do not buckle under the pressure of false teachers.

▶▶ So, ~ in [2:6-23](#), ~ Paul lays down a series ~ of five ~ exhortations ~~ calling believers ~ to continue ~ to stay faithful, ~ and not ~ buckle under the pressure ~ of false teachers.

▷▷ But not just a list of exhortation.

↵↵ Additional teaching. [↴↴ 1/15](#)

TO MAKE SURE ~ WE'RE ALL ON THE SAME PAGE, ~ I'LL ONCE AGAIN IDENTIFY THE bare bones ~ of the five exhortations.

▶▶ And, ~ as noted, ~ we'll look at Paul's elaboration as we deal with each one.

▷▷ Again, ~ will help you outline the passage in your reading.

▶▶ Verse 6b. ~~ Stay faithful to sound doctrine in both belief and practice ~ and ~ to our commitment to Jesus.

▶▶ Verses 8a. ~~ See to it ~ that no one takes you captive.

▶▶ Verses 16a. let no one pass judgment on you.

▶▶ Verse 18a. ~~ Let no one disqualify you.

▶▶ Verse 20. ~~ why, ~ as if you were still alive in the world, ~ do you submit to regulations.

▶▶ Skeleton

LAST WEEK, ~ WE LOOKED AT PAUL'S FIRST EXHORTATION AND PAUL'S ELABORATION.

▶▶ Stay faithful, ~ Paul urged us, ~ to sound doctrine in both belief and practice ~ and ~ to our commitment to Jesus.

▶▶ Then Paul spelled out ~ four safeguards ~ that will help us stay faithful.

▷▷ 1st, ~ by having ~ a rock-solid commitment to Jesus.

▷▷ 2nd, ~ by growing ~ in the knowledge ~ about Jesus. 📖 2/15

▷▷3rd, ~ by being ~ well grounded ~ in God's word.

▷▷And 4th, ~ by abounding ~ in thanksgiving ~ to our heavenly Father.

▷▷Practicing these four safeguards ~ will make it ~ much less likely ~ that we will be pulled into false teaching.

▷▷And ~ I do believe ~ we need all four ~ working at the same time ~ to give us adequate protection ~ against false teachers.

THIS MORNING, ~ WE WILL BEGIN TO LOOK AT ~ PAUL'S SECOND EXHORTATION ~ elaboration of it. ⇨⇨

▶▶Chapter 2, ~ verses 8-15.

▶▶The passage can be outlined this way.

▷▷8a, ~ The exhortation.

↳↳See to it that no one takes you captive.

▷▷8b-15, ~ Paul expands on the exhortation.

↳↳8b, ~ The means by which false teachers attempt to capture believers.

↳↳8c, ~ The 2 sources of false teaching.

↳↳And 9-15, ~ Rebuttal.

▶▶Today, ~ exhortation, ~ means, ~ and the 2 sources. ⇩⇩ 3/15

NOW LET'S LOOK AT THE SECOND EXHORTATION ~ CALLING BELIEVERS ~ to continue ~ to stay faithful, ~ and not ~ buckle under the pressure of false teachers.

VERSE 8a, ~ SEE TO IT THAT NO ONE TAKES YOU CAPTIVE.

▶▶ "See to it" ~ is an ongoing thing, ~ calling us to be on watch at all times.

▶▶ Could be paraphrased this way.

▷▷ Maintain a constant watch, ~ so that ~ no one takes you captive.

▶▶ We must always ~ be on guard against false teaching.

▷▷ Though covering every aspect of the Christian life, ~ what Peter says ~ certainly applies here.

↳↳ 1 Pet. 5:8.

→→ Be sober-minded; ~ be watchful. ~ [why:] ~ Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, ~ seeking someone to devour.

▷▷ We need to have ~ a high-level watchfulness and attentiveness, ~ in order ~ to not be taken by surprise and fooled ~ by false teachers.

▶▶ And John, ~ in his first epistle ~ points out the importance of this high-level of watchfulness and attentiveness.

▷▷ for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

PAUL SAYS, ~ MAINTAIN A CONSTANT WATCH, ~ SO THAT ~ NO ONE TAKES YOU captive. ↯↯ 4/15

▶▶ Several times in Paul's letters ~ believers are warned ~ of dangers we are facing.

▶▶ Here ~ Paul is pointing again ~ to the danger ~ that false teachers pose.

THE PHRASE, ~ TAKES YOU CAPTIVE, ~ PROVIDES A DRAMATIC IMAGERY ~ ¶¶

▶▶ of the power ~ of those who spread false teaching.

▶▶ Such imagery is similar ~ to the sayings of Jesus ~ ¶¶

▷▷ when he describes the binding of the strong man and robbing him of his possessions.

▶▶ In this case, ~ Paul is applying the imagery ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to ~ false teachers taking the believers ~ away from the gospel ~ and into ~ the slavery of error.

▶▶ Jesus said, ~ "you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

▷▷ On the other hand, ~ false teaching, ~ like sin, ~ leads us into slavery.

ALSO, ~ THE PHRASE ~ "TAKES YOU CAPTIVE" ~ accentuates the spiritual warfare involved.

▶▶ Always remember, ~ as Paul says (Eph. 6:12), ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, ~~ but ~ against ~ the rulers, ~~ against ~ the authorities, ~~ against ~ the cosmic powers over this present darkness, ~~ against ~ the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

▶▶ False teachers ~ are simply instruments in Satan's hands. ¶¶ 5/15

▶▶ We are in a spiritual, ~ not a physical, ~ battle.

▷▷ We really need to wrap our heads around this.

▷▷ Satan is a master of deflection.

MAINTAIN A CONSTANT WATCH, ~ SO THAT ~ NO ONE TAKES YOU CAPTIVE, ~ PAUL exhorts.

▶▶ How is it possible ~ for false teachers to capture believers?

▶▶ Simple, ~ these captives are not well-grounded in sound doctrine.

▷▷ When a believer does not know the doctrines of the Christian faith, ~~ he/she ~ can easily ~ be captured by false teaching.

↳↳ Because, ~~ how will you know ~ when you're being lied to?

▶▶ Spiritual immaturity ~ is a second factor, ~ which actually goes along with the first.

▷▷ But it's worth highlighting on its own.

▷▷ When we are spiritually mature, ~ we will, ~ as Paul says in Eph. 4:14, ~ CSB ~ ¶¶

↳↳ no longer be little children, ~~ tossed by the waves and blown around ~ by every wind of teaching, ~ by human cunning ~ with cleverness in the techniques of deceit.

▷▷ We will no longer be immature ~ like children.

▷▷ We won't be tossed and blown about ~ by every wind of false teaching. ¶¶ 6/15

▷▷ We will not be influenced ~ when heretics try to trick us ~ with lies so clever ~ they sound like the truth.

▷▷ The implication, ~ of course, ~ is that spiritually immature believers ~ will ~ 77

↳↳ be tossed and blown about ~ by every wind of false teaching.

→→ They will be fooled and influenced ~ by the clever lies ~ of false teachers.

NOW, ~ I THINK ~ WE NEED TO PAUSE HERE ~ and point out ~ something extremely important in this context.

▶▶ And that is, ~ Jesus does not want us to be immature, ~ spiritually speaking.

▷▷ He does not want us to lack understanding, ~ or ~ 77

↳↳ to be highly impressionable, ~ gullible, ~ foolish, ~ and childish ~ in biblical doctrine and behavior.

↳↳ Rather, ~ Jesus wants us to constantly be moving forward in spiritual growth.

▶▶ How know this?

▷▷ Paul ⇔⇔ Hebrews ⇔⇔ Peter

OK, ~ THE SECOND EXHORTATION ~ CALLING BELIEVERS TO CONTINUE ~ TO STAY faithful, ~ and not ~ buckle under the pressure of false teachers.

▶▶ Verse 8a, ~ Maintain a constant watch, ~ so that ~ no one takes you captive. 77 7/15

THEN, ~ AS NOTED, ~ PAUL EXPANDS ON THE EXHORTATION.

IN VERSE 8b, ~ PAUL NOTES THE MEANS BY WHICH ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE BELIEVERS.

MAINTAIN A CONSTANT WATCH, ~ SO THAT ~ NO ONE TAKES YOU CAPTIVE BY philosophy and empty deceit.

▶▶ 1st glance - 2 things. ⇔⇔ Not.

▶▶ Word for word translation ⇔⇔ Drawbacks ⇔⇔ Nuances

▶▶ Grammar: ~ empty deceit ~ describes philosophy.

▶▶ NIV: ~ See to it ~ that no one takes you captive ~ through hollow and deceptive philosophy.

▷▷ Digress. ⇔⇔ Have word for word and a meaning for meaning.

▶▶ Not slamming philosophy.

▷▷ A horrible mistake

▶▶ Literally means "love of wisdom."

▶▶ It is said ~ that Paul ~ was a gifted philosopher.

▷▷ So, ~ he was not condemning education ~ or the study of philosophy.

↪↪ Instead, he was condemning ~ a certain type ~ of philosophy, ~ one that was hollow and deceptive. ⇓⇓ 8/15

▶▶Of course, ~ Paul is talking ~ about ~ the doctrines of the false teachers.

▷▷Overarching reason for writing.

▶▶The heretics' hollow and deceptive ideas ~ might appear reasonable, ~ and even compelling, ~ 77

▷▷until one examines them carefully ~ and discovers ~ there is absolutely no substance.

▷▷The whole system is designed ~ to fool the unwary.

▷▷We can find an apt analogy ~ in modern advertising. ⇔⇔ Think about it.

↳↳For that is precisely ~ what false teaching is: ~~ deceptive marketing ~ meant ~ to trap gullible people ~ looking for a quick fix.

▶▶Peter and Jude ~ use very descriptive language ~ in describing false teachers, ~ in 2nd Peter and Jude respectively.

▷▷Peter says that the false teachers exploit people "with false words."

↳↳"false" refers to ~ fictitious and deceitful.

▷▷He also describes them ~ as "waterless springs."

↳↳False teachers give nothing because they have nothing to give.

→→What good is an empty spring when you're thirsty?

↳↳False teachers cannot quench ~ the spiritual thirst of people. 77 9/15

▷▷ Peter further describes them ~ as "mists driven by a storm."

↳↳ "mists" refers ~ to the Palestinian haze ~ that precedes dry weather ~ ¶¶

→→ and suggests ~ the false appearance of moisture.

↳↳ Their teachings are not what they appear to be.

↳↳ They appear good; ~ but in reality, ~ they are ~ fictitious ~ and deceitful ~ and destructive.

▷▷ Jude calls false teachers "waterless clouds, ~ swept along by winds."

↳↳ Like waterless clouds, ~ false teachers and their doctrines ~ are all show ~ but no substance.

→→ Their doctrines ~ are founded ~ on emptiness.

▷▷ And Jude also calls them "fruitless trees in late autumn."

↳↳ He compares false teachers ~ to trees promising fruit ~ but giving none.

▶▶ To sum up, ~ the hollow and deceptive doctrines of the false teachers ~ ¶¶

▷▷ promise much ~ but deliver nothing.

THE DESCRIPTION ~ HOLLOW AND DECEPTIVE ~ SETS UP A CONTRAST ~ FIRST ~ WITH Jesus.

▶▶ As Paul said in 1:19, ~ God, ~ in all his fullness, ~ became human. ¶¶ 10/15

▶▶ And as we saw in 2:3, ~ all that a person needs to know ~ ¶¶

▷▷ in order ~ to establish an eternal relationship with God ~ can be found ~ in Jesus ~ and His accomplishment for mankind.

FURTHERMORE, ~ THE DESCRIPTION ~ HOLLOW AND DECEPTIVE ~ sets up a contrast with the gospel.

▶▶ The gospel ~ is the word of truth.

▶▶ And the gospel ~ is the living and enduring word of God ~ and bears fruit.

▷▷ I.e., ~ it produces salvation in all who call upon Jesus for salvation.

▶▶ False teaching ~~ is deceptive, ~ destructive, ~ hollow, ~ detrimental, ~ and deadly.

▶▶ Jesus and the gospel ~~ are ~ true, ~ substantive, ~ beneficial, ~ life-giving, ~ and life-transforming.

▷▷ My . . . , ~~ accept ~ no substitutes.

IN VERSE 8c, ~ PAUL IDENTIFIES ~ THE TWO SOURCES ~ OF FALSE TEACHING.

ACCORDING TO HUMAN TRADITION, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ according to the elemental spirits of the world.

▶▶ 1st, ~ according to human tradition.

▷▷ I.e., ~ they come from the human mind. ¶¶ 11/15

▷▷Jeremiah, ~ chapter 14, ~ verse 14, ~ "And the Lord said to me: "The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. ~ I did not send them, ~ nor did I command them or speak to them. ~ They are prophesying to you a lying vision, ~ worthless divination, ~ and the deceit of their own minds."

▷▷Jeremiah, ~ chapter 23, ~ verse 16, ~ The false prophets "speak visions of their own minds, ~ not from the mouth of the Lord."

▷▷Ezekiel, ~ chapter 13, ~ verse 6, ~ "They say, ~ 'Declares the Lord,' ~ when the Lord has not sent them, ~ and yet they expect him to fulfill their word."

▷▷False teachers claim to speak for God.

↳↳But in reality, ~ they teach and preach deceptive, ~ man-made stories ~ that have ~ no basis in reality ~ and ~ no value whatsoever.

▷▷Furthermore, ~ they may claim to speak for Jesus, ~ ¶¶

↳↳but Paul tells us in Philippians ~ that ~ they are actually enemies of the true gospel.

↳↳Phil. 3:18. ⇨⇨ For I have often told you, ~ and now say again with tears, ~ that many live ~ as enemies ~ of the cross of Christ.

▷▷And within this context, ~ perhaps we would be remiss ~ to not look at John's warning.

↳↳1 Jn. 4:1a, CSB.

→→Dear friends, ~ do not believe every spirit ~ [i.e., ~ every teacher], ~ but test the spirits ~ to see if they are from God.

↳↳The forms of the verbs for "do not believe" and "test" ~ indicate ~ that this is not ~ something that can be done ~ once and for all. ⇨⇨ Habit ¶¶ 12/15

↪↪ "test" means ~ to make a critical examination of something; ~ ¶¶

→→ to determine genuineness, ~ put to the test, ~ examine.

↪↪ We are ~ to constantly ~ examine ~ ¶¶

→→ to see ~ whether a person who is preaching or teaching God's word ~ is genuinely ~ speaking for God.

TO NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FOREST FOR THE TREES, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ we are discussing the two sources of the hollow and deceptive philosophy of false teachers.

▶▶ The 2nd source of false teaching.

▷▷ according to the elemental spirits of the world.

▷▷ The phrase ~ elemental spirits of the world ~ is hard to understand.

▷▷ Four principal meanings have been given to it. ⇔⇔ Don't panic.

↪↪ I'm only going to give you what seems the most likely one.

▷▷ The most likely meaning here ~ is that it refers ~ to the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places, ~ as Paul puts it in Ephesians.

↪↪ Demons. ⇔⇔ the evil spiritual powers of this world.

▷▷ They seek ~ to control and destroy ~ people's lives. ¶¶ 13/15

▷▷ For the following three reasons ~ it is best ~ to view "the elemental spirits" ~ as fallen angels.

↳↳ 1st, ~ In light of numerous references to the angelic powers in the overall context of Colossians, ~ most likely ~ demonic powers are in view here.

↳↳ 2nd, ~ in the immediate context of [verses 8-15](#), ~ they are ~ most likely ~

→→ the "rulers and authorities" ~ that Jesus disarmed ~ on the cross.

↳↳ We'll see that in [verse 15](#).

↳↳ And 3rd, ~ the NT ~ regularly links false teaching ~ with the demonic.

→→ E.g., ~ [1 Tim. 4:1](#).

↳↳ Now the Spirit ~ expressly says ~ that ~ in later times ~ some will depart from the faith ~ by devoting themselves ~ to ~ deceitful spirits ~ and ~ teachings of demons.

→→ And Jesus says in [Matt. 24:24](#), [CSB](#), ~ ¶¶

↳↳ For false messiahs and false prophets ~ will arise ~ and perform great signs and wonders ~ to lead astray, ~ if possible, ~ even the elect.

▷▷ Again, ~ we come back to the reality of the spiritual realm, ~ and it's activity and influence ~ in this world.

↳↳ We need to really grasp this.

▶▶ Ok, ~ false teaching ~ originates ~ from demons ~ and in the human mind. ¶¶ [14/15](#)

THEN, ~ IN VERSE 8d, ~ NOT THAT HE REALLY NEEDED TO, ~ WE'VE ALREADY GOTTEN the point, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ Paul adds, ~ that ~ false teaching ~ does not originate with Jesus.

▷▷ and not according to Christ.

▶▶ Driving the point home

▷▷ The implication ~ is that ~ false teaching ~ in no ~ way, ~ shape, ~ or form ~ is ever approved by Jesus.

CONCLUSION.

MY . . . , ~ LET US MAINTAIN ~ A CONSTANT WATCH, ~ ¶¶

▶▶ so that ~ no one takes us captive ~ through hollow and deceptive doctrines.

▷▷ In addition ~ never forget, ~ the two sources ~ of false teaching ~ are ~ demons ~ and the human mind.

↪↪ And always remember, ~ in no way, ~ shape, ~ or form ~ is false teaching ~ ever ~ approved by Jesus.

LET'S PRAY 15/15