

Colossians 2:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

Analysis

Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Paul exposes these regulations' futility: the objects regulated "are to perish with the using" (a estin panta eis phthoran tē apochrēsei, ἃ ἐστιν πάντα εἰς φθορὰν τῇ ἀποχρήσει). Things consumed cease to exist; focusing spiritual life on material items' use or avoidance misses the point. Food digests and disappears; it cannot defile spiritually (Mark 7:18-19).

These regulations follow "commandments and doctrines of men" (kata ta entalmata kai didaskalias tōn anthrōpōn, κατὰ τὰ ἐντάλματα καὶ διδασκαλίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων), echoing Jesus's rebuke of Pharisees (Matthew 15:9). Human tradition substituting for divine command creates religious systems satisfying human ideas of spirituality while missing God's actual requirements. Such systems feel rigorous and spiritual but rest on human authority, not divine revelation.

Historical Context

Jesus repeatedly clashed with Pharisaic tradition elevating human regulation over biblical command. The Pharisees' elaborate purity laws, Sabbath restrictions, and tithing requirements exemplified religious systems multiplying rules beyond Scripture's requirements. Paul fought similar legalism throughout ministry, whether Jewish ceremonialism (Galatians) or Gentile asceticism (Colossians). Both substituted human tradition for gospel freedom.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What church traditions or practices have achieved status approaching Scripture's authority in your thinking?
2. How do you distinguish between biblical commands and human traditions that may be beneficial but aren't mandatory?
3. Where does your Christian community confuse cultural preferences with biblical requirements?

Interlinear Text

ἃ	ἐστίν	πάντα	εἰς	φθορὰν	τῇ	ἀποχρήσει	κατὰ	τὰ
Which	are	all	to	perish	G3588	with the using	after	G3588
G3739	G2076	G3956	G1519	G5356		G671	G2596	
ἐντάλματα	καὶ	διδασκαλίας	τῶν	ἀνθρώπων				
the commandments	and	doctrines	G3588	of men				
G1778	G2532	G1319		G444				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 29:13 (Parallel theme): Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

Titus 1:14 (Word): Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

1 Corinthians 6:13 (Parallel theme): Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

John 6:27 (Parallel theme): Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

Isaiah 29:18 (Word): And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

Daniel 11:37 (Parallel theme): Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.

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