

Study 5

COLOSSIANS 2:1-5

A DIFFERENT WISDOM

The apostle Paul held grave concerns for the Colossians. To counter the dangerously false teaching from the Gnostics, the imprisoned apostle wrote two epistles intended for the Colossians. The first was the Epistle to the Ephesians. They were to exchange their Epistle with the one written to the Colossians. The two Epistles are complementary. Both are about Christ's relationship to His Church.

1. Note Colossians 2:1-2. Circle the correct answer. When confronted with the news that the Colossian church was being infiltrated by Gnostics, even though the Apostle Paul was in prison, he
 - (a) knew that there was nothing he could do about it.
 - (b) didn't want to create an unnecessary confrontation.
 - (c) chose to address the dangerous teachings head on by writing his Epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians.
 - (d) struggled and prayed earnestly for them to the full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ.
 - (e) did both (c) and (d).
2. Based on Colossians 2:3, as we seek to know and be in Christ's presence, what else might we experience?

3. What kind of arguments was the Apostle concerned with which might have led to the Colossians being deluded (ESV) or deceived (NET) or “(led) off on some wild-goose chase” (The MESSAGE), or beguiled (KJV)? (Colossians 2:4)

4. How else can we guard against such dangerous but yet non-dangerous-sounding arguments? Discuss.

These false teachers *sounded* like they were Christians. Their message, on the surface of it, sounded like it was Biblical. Their arguments for their ‘brand’ of Christianity sounded reasonable, plausible, enticing, and were “persuasive [but thoroughly deceptive] arguments” (Amplified)! They spoke about ‘hidden wisdom’ that required more than Christ to achieve. But Paul tells the Colossians that *hidden wisdom* is only found *in* Christ (not *in addition to Christ*). This, of course, doesn’t mean that we can’t learn anything from anyone other than Christ—after all, He gifts teachers to teach—but it does mean we need to develop our *d_____t* skills.

In Colossians 2:5, Paul’s fatherly words to the Colossians should give any parent concerned about their wayward children both a strategy and cause for hope.

5. How are Paul’s words to the Colossians in Colossians 2:5 similar to how the father of the prodigal is presented, and what strategy and hope might this give the believing parent of a wayward or distant child?

Amen.