

Study 6

COLOSSIANS 2:6-15

A DIFFERENT SALVATION

The Apostle Paul was deeply concerned about the false teaching endangering the Colossian believers. These false teachers were essentially promoting a “faith in Christ *plus..*” gospel—which is no *gospel* at all.

1. In Colossians 2:6, Paul is saying-
 - (a) that how a person is saved is how that person must continue to be saved.
 - (b) that if a person thinks they are saved by their good works they will think that they have continue to do good works in order to continue to be saved.
 - (c) that if a person receives salvation they are then free to live a life of sin from that point on because God will not hold them to account for their sins.

2. Some Christians have given up on the Church and claim that they don't need to receive teaching, because Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would be our teacher. But how does Colossians 2:7 challenge this, and why does it matter?

3. In Colossians 2:7 Paul states two great truths about how we are saved and how we spiritually grow. In your own words, how would you describe these two great truths?

Philosophy comes from two Greek words - *philo*, meaning 'love', and *sophia*, meaning 'wisdom'. Philosophy is therefore, *the love of wisdom*. It involves thinking about ideas. The Greeks had a long history of producing *philosophers*, most notably - Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Many of the early Christian thinkers highly valued these philosophers and their methods for thinking issues through. In the modern era, many of the world's leading philosophers, such as Alvin Plantinga, are evangelical Christians. In fact, there are so many good Christian philosophers today that there the *Evangelical Philosophical Society* (E.P.S. <https://www.epsociety.org/>) that holds a large annual conference for its members in the United States. I mention this to counter the wrong idea that some Christians have about what the Apostle Paul is saying about *philosophy* in Colossians 2:8.

4. Consider Colossians 2:8 and discuss what kind of 'philosophy' the Apostle Paul is condemning?
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5. How does Paul state that Jesus was unique in Colossians 2:9 and how is this different from how most false religions and cults present Him?
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It seems that the Colossians were not just under threat from the Gnostics, but also faced attack from 'Judaizers' who taught that to become a Christian, one had to become a Jew first. These Jewish Christians were attempting to teach male Gentile converts that they had to be circumcised in order to become a Christian.

6. In Colossians 2:11, what does Paul say to counter this false idea?
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The initiation rite for a male Jew was *circumcision* when they were 8 days old (Luke 2:21). Paul reminds the Colossians that their initiation rite into Christianity was their water b _____ (Col. 2:12), but that it wasn't this that saved them, because their debt of sin was cancelled when C _____ died on the c _____ (Col. 2:13-14). In this way Jesus triumphed (Col. 2:15).

Amen.