

“Don’t Lose Your Head!”

I. **INTRO:**

- A. **Illustration:** Back in WWII they invented the “*Military Decoy Paratrooper Dummies*”, aka *paradummies*.
1. They’ve been used as recently as the **Gulf War** where special forces implemented these dummies to distract **Iraqi troops**. They have also been used in **Afghanistan**.
 2. Sometimes these **rubber dummies** have firecrackers to help distract the enemy from where the **real attack** is about to hit.
- B. Have you ever been **taken by surprise** by one of Satan’s **rubber dummies** in your life?
1. You found yourself fighting the wrong enemy. You were **wrestling against flesh & blood**, & didn’t realize you had the wrong enemy in your grips!
- C. Greatest Pursuit of **Hebrews** was **Light** [The Lord is my light & salvation];
 Greatest Pursuit of **Greeks** was **Knowledge** [These things are written that you might **know** you have eternal life]
 Greatest Pursuit of **Romans** was **Glory** [We know nothing matched the splendor of Rome; It wasn’t built in a day; & all roads led there]¹
1. Thus Paul inspired by the *H.S.* said **For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.** 2 Cor.4:6
 2. Paul born a **Hebrew**; raised in a **Greek city**; & of **Roman citizenship**.
 - a) He knew what **their pursuits** were all about, & knew **the answer** for all...was in the face of Jesus!
- D. **Last week** we tackled **Gnosticism**, which believed the **spirit** alone was good; **matter** was essentially evil! (lived out in rigid asceticism, or loose morality)
1. This week we’ll hear Paul’s warning against other false teachings that crept in to Colosse: **Legalism; Mysticism; & Asceticism**.
- E. **The flesh** loves to be **religious**, so long as that religion doesn’t have a cross to crucify the flesh!

¹ From Ravi Zacharias Podcast

II. **DON'T LOOSE YOUR HEAD!**

A. **LEGALISM OR, CLEAN SLATE!** (11-17)

B. (11-13) **The Circumcision of Christ** - (11) is not speaking of His physical circumcision as a child, but rather His death on the cross.

1. His **water baptism** pointed to the symbol of **suffering on the cross** **I have a baptism to be baptized w/and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!** Lk12:50
2. His **circumcision** as an infant pointed to His putting off the body when He **took our sins** on Calvary.
 - a) Circumcision removes a **fragment of the flesh** from the body, **but** our identification w/Christ puts off **the whole fleshly nature!**

C. **What kind of forgiveness?** - **See Luke 7:42** (*nothing to pay*) *Wow!*

1. **All trespasses** - ALL!

D. **Wiped out** (14) - washed over & **wiped out**. (i.e. Washing out writing on a papyrus)

1. It was used for wiping out a memory of an experience **or** for canceling a vote **or** annulling a law **or** canceling a charge of debt.

E. **Handwriting** - it was a written acknowledgment of a debt; an **I.O.U.**; a statement of indebtedness, personally signed by the debtor.

F. **Requirements** - decree, edict, something decided. A legal obligation which was a **binding law** or edict which was placed on a public place for all to see.

G. **Against us** - hostile, directly opposed to us.

H. **Taken it out of the way** - put it out of sight.

I. **Nailed it to the cross** - the manner in which Christ removed the handwriting(I.O.U.).

1. He nailed the **Mosaic Law** with all its decrees to His cross, & it **died** with Him!

J. **Illustration:** My speeding ticket in Canyon Lake.

1. It was a **trespass**(*Did you know you were doing 53 in a 35? No way!*); I talked with them, Kim talked with them, about the specific ticket because it was **\$250!!!**
2. **We tried to pay it last week, but it had been mysteriously “wiped away!”**
3. The **handwriting** that was against me (my signature, *see card!*)
4. The **requirement** that was against me (*A legal obligation which was a binding law or edict which was placed on a public place for all to see; well not all, but my bro & sis*)
5. **It was some how taken out of the way** (*put out of sight...Praise God!!!*)
 - a) But Brian you deserve to pay the fine(*I know!*); you don't deserve grace(*I know!*)

K. (15) **Results?**

L. **Disarmed** - to strip off. As one puts off a garment.

1. Christ divested(*desvistere* des=**removal**; *vistere/vestis*=**garment**) Himself at the cross of the evil powers which had struggled with Him so strongly during His ministry in attempts to force Him to abandon the pathway of the cross.²

M. **Public Spectacle** - expose; to display as a victor displays his captives or trophies in a triumphal procession. (Lightfoot)

N. **Triumphing** - It pictures a **victorious general leading** his prisoners in that triumphal procession.

O. (15) (Message Bible) **He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets.**

P. So far, the OT Covenant Laws are now set aside; Satan has been completely defeated(15); **therefore** enjoy the **liberty** you have in Christ, **Let no one judge you**(16).

Q. (16a) **Diet** - No one should condemn another believer for what he or she **eats** or **drinks**.

R. (16b) **Days**-No one should condemn another believer 4 not celebrating certain holy days

1. **Festival**/yearly(like Passover, Pentecost) ; **new moon**/monthly; & **Sabbath**/weekly.
2. **For these old rules were only shadows!**

S. (17) **Shadow** - OT ritual observances were **dim outlines** of the **NT redemptive truths!**

1. He says, "watch it, you are going out of the **sunlight** into the **shadows**".³
2. **It's as bad as a boyfriend who admires his girlfriends photo, while he ignores his girlfriends presence.**
 - a) So they had turned from the *fullness of Christ*, to the *ABC's of the world*(20).

T. **MYSTICISM - DON'T LOOSE YOUR HEAD!**(18,19)

U. (18) **Let no man sit as umpire** in your life -

V. **False humility** - A **counterfeit** that tries to imitate *genuine* spiritual humility.

1. This word was often used in connection w/**fasting** which some believed this *ascetic practice* was an entrance into the heavenly realm.

W. **Mysticism** teaches that **God can only be known through 2 methods**: worship of angels & seeing visions.

1. **Truth: One can only know God *through Christ* who is the head of the body, the church.**

² Linguistic Key to the Greek N.T.; pg. 575

³ Warren Wiersbe; Outlines of the NT.

- X. (19) **The Head**(Christ) - He is **the Head** we members of **the body**.
1. A body functions through **nourishment**, not **legislation**.
 - a) **You don't tell your body** "Start digesting!" or "Stop hurting!"
- Y. This is where we witness the difference between **history** & **the gospel**?
1. **History** says, "*Jesus died*"; **the Gospel** says, "*Jesus died..for me!*"
 2. **History** says *it really happened*; **the Gospel** says, *it really happened...for me!*
 3. **History** says, "*His death changed history*"; **the Gospel** says, "*His death changed history..for me!*"
- Z. **Grows** - not from a **denial** of **certain foods**, but rather growth comes from **God!**

AA. **ASCETICISM - A SELF-IMPOSED RELIGION!** (20-23)

- BB.(21) **How the flesh loves legalism:** fasting, regulations about food, bodily disciplines.
1. **Special religious observances with their regulations make people feel spiritual!**
 2. Nothing wrong with **spiritual discipline**, in the spirit, to the glory of God; **but** when it is done in the **flesh** & for our own **praise**, **then** it becomes **sin!**
 3. **Giving up certain habits or pleasures doesn't automatically make you spiritual!**
 - a) **E.g.** Fish on Friday during Lent(fast from meat).
 - b) Like **Carnival & Mardi Gras**. They're Pre-Lenten festivals, last opportunity for excess before Lent begins.
 4. **Obedying man-made religious regulations might impress some people as spiritual, but Paul states clearly that these practices cannot control or overcome the flesh!**
 - a) They might seem to help us develop **piety & superior spirituality**, **but they are useless** as far as God is concerned.

CC. **Asceticism teaches that one can purify the spirit by punishing the body.**

1. But the spirit **can't** be purified by punishing the body. **Why?** Because his body is already **dead**(died w/Christ,vs.20) how can beating a dead man help you?

DD. **So Paul you're saying, all the believer needs is Jesus Christ? Yep!**

1. Paul says don't fall back to "**Kindergarten living**"; we must **graduate** into a higher level of Christianity.
2. It is impossible for the flesh to control itself, better itself, or perfect itself.
 - a) **Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?** Gal.3:3

EE. **The Cross:** where **Truth** met **Love**; where **man's worse** collided with **God's best**; where **righteousness** kissed **Justice**; & where it's **nothing** you deserve, but **everything** you may appropriate for the asking!