



Finding Victory in Christ

Colossians 2:11-15

January 11, 2026

BIG IDEA

The Christian life is not built on religious performance, spiritual effort, or outward rule-keeping. True freedom and joy are found in Christ alone. In Colossians 2, Paul reminds believers that their victory does not come from legalism, self-denial, or human systems of spirituality — it comes through what Christ has already accomplished through his death and resurrection.

Through Christ, our old sinful nature has been decisively dealt with. The “old self” that once belonged to Adam — broken, fallen, and enslaved to sin — has been put off. In Christ, we are made new. We are buried with him in death, raised with him to new life, and now live under a new authority: not the Law, but the life of Christ himself.

Paul wants the church to understand that legalism can never produce spiritual life. Rules may shape behavior, but only Christ transforms the heart. Where the Law once stood as a record of our failure — Christ has canceled the debt, wiped the slate clean, and nailed it to the cross. Our sins are forgiven, our record is cleared, and our identity is secure in him.

The gospel does not call us to strive toward victory — it invites us to live from the victory Christ has already won. As Ridgewood Church seeks to follow Jesus “ALL IN,” Colossians 2 reminds us that our strength, hope, identity, and freedom are found in Christ alone.

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Colossians 2:11-15 (ESV)

¹¹ In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.



Ridgewood Church
www.myrwc.org

MAIN THEME

The believers in Colossae were being pressured to adopt Jewish rituals, external religious rules, and strict spiritual practices in order to be considered “truly spiritual.” Paul reminds them — and us — that everything a believer needs is already found in Christ. Through his death and resurrection, Christ has brought about a “spiritual circumcision,” a complete putting off of the old life.

This transformation happens not through human effort but through union with Christ. In salvation, believers are buried with Christ and raised with him to new life. This reality is vividly pictured in baptism — going down into the water symbolizes burial with Christ, and rising again represents resurrection into new life through the power of God.

Before Christ, we were spiritually dead — separated from God and unable to save ourselves. But through Christ, God has made us alive, forgiven our sins, and canceled the record of guilt that once condemned us. The Law that once stood against us has been fulfilled in Christ, and the debt we could never pay has been paid in full at the cross.

Legalism demands effort.
The gospel declares freedom.

This passage calls us to rest in Christ’s finished work — to stop striving for approval and begin living in the victory he has already secured.

DISCUSSION & APPLICATION

1. Christ Gives Us a New Identity — The Old Life Has Been Put Off

Colossians 2:11–12; 2 Corinthians 5:17

- What does Paul mean when he describes a “circumcision made without hands”?
- How is salvation more than behavior change — but a new identity?
- Why is it important to remember that this transformation is something Christ does in us?
- Where are you still tempted to define yourself by your past instead of your new life in Christ?

2. We Share in Christ’s Death and Resurrection

Colossians 2:12; Romans 6:3–4

- How does baptism picture our union with Christ?
- What does it mean to be “buried” and “raised” with him?
- Why do many Christians struggle to live as people who are already made new?
- Where might God be inviting you to walk in your new life rather than old patterns?



3. We Were Dead in Sin — But God Made Us Alive

Colossians 2:13; Ephesians 2:1–6

- How does Paul describe our condition before Christ?
- What does it reveal about God's grace that he made us alive instead of asking us to fix ourselves?
- How should knowing that salvation is God's work — not ours — shape our humility and gratitude?
- When have you experienced God breathing new spiritual life into an area that once felt dead?

4. Christ Has Canceled Our Debt and Brought True Freedom

Colossians 2:14–15; Romans 8:1–2

- How does Paul describe the Law as a "record of debt"?
- What imagery stands out to you in the phrase "nailed it to the cross"?
- Why is legalism so tempting — even for sincere believers?
- How can Ridgewood remain a church centered on grace rather than performance or pressure?

PRAY

Dear Lord, thank you for the victory we have in Christ. Thank you for putting off our old life, for making us new, and for uniting us with Jesus in his death and resurrection. Guard our hearts from legalism, pride, and self-reliance. Help us rest in your grace, live in your freedom, and walk in the new life you have given us. Strengthen Ridgewood Church to live "all in" for your glory — not in our strength, but in the victory of Christ alone.

Amen.

DIG DEEPER

For further study this week:

- Romans 6:1–11 — Buried and raised with Christ
- 2 Corinthians 5:14–17 — A new creation in Christ
- Ephesians 2:1–6 — From death to life
- Galatians 3:23–29 — Freedom from the Law
- Colossians 3:1–4 — Living the new life in Christ

NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA



Ridgewood Church
www.myrwc.org

How to point Your life toward Christ in a way that lasts and has Impact
Colossians 2:16-17



Ridgewood Church
www.myrwc.org