



How to Find Freedom from Spiritual Superstition

Colossians 2:20-23

February 1, 2026

BIG IDEA

Spiritual superstition quietly replaces trust in Jesus with false guarantees. True freedom, peace, and growth are found not in rules, rituals, or formulas — but in humble, daily reliance on Christ alone.

In Colossians 2:20–23, Paul exposes a form of spirituality that looks wise, disciplined, and serious, yet is disconnected from Christ. The false teachers in Colossae promoted man-made rules and severe self-denial as pathways to spiritual victory. But Paul reveals the truth beneath the surface: these practices have no power to transform the heart or defeat sin.

Believers often drift into subtle superstition — trusting methods, disciplines, and formulas more than the Savior himself. Prayer becomes a lever. Obedience becomes a transaction. Faith becomes a system of control instead of a relationship of trust.

Paul calls the church back to freedom. Because we have died with Christ, we are no longer bound to human systems of spirituality. Our life, security, and righteousness are found in Christ alone.

This passage invites believers to stop managing their spirituality and start trusting their Savior. It calls us to forsake superstition and rest fully in Jesus — the only one who truly saves, sustains, and satisfies.

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Colossians 2:20-23 (ESV)

20 If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations—

21 “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch”

22 (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings?

23 These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and



asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

MAIN THEME

The believers in Colossae were being pressured to supplement their faith in Christ with man-made rules, severe self-denial, and ritualistic obedience. These practices promised spiritual success, but quietly replaced trust in Christ with superstition.

Paul confronts this thinking with gospel clarity. Because believers have died with Christ, they are no longer under the authority of worldly spiritual systems. Human regulations may look wise, but they cannot change the heart or defeat sin.

Spiritual superstition offers control, but Christ offers freedom. Superstition offers formulas, but Christ offers relationship. Superstition promises outcomes, but Christ promises himself.

Paul reminds the church that true holiness does not come from harsh discipline or religious performance — it flows from humble dependence on Jesus. When believers submit to Christ instead of rituals, they discover lasting peace, real growth, and enduring joy.

DISCUSSION & APPLICATION

1. Spiritual Superstition Replaces Trust in Jesus

Colossians 2:20–21; Proverbs 3:5–6

- What forms of “rules” or spiritual formulas tempt believers today?
- Why do people crave guaranteed spiritual outcomes?
- Where have you been tempted to trust methods more than Christ?
- What does it look like to truly rely on Jesus instead?

2. Spiritual Superstition Cannot Transform the Heart

Colossians 2:23; Romans 8:1–4

- Why do self-made religious systems feel powerful?
- Why can outward discipline never defeat inward sin?
- Where have you seen performance replace dependence?
- How does grace change the way we pursue holiness?

3. Spiritual Superstition Leads to False Hope



Colossians 2:23; Galatians 3:3

- Why does superstition eventually disappoint?
- How does the prosperity gospel reflect this mindset today?
- What happens when life does not follow the promised formula?
- How can disappointment either weaken or deepen faith?

4. Submission to Christ Produces True Freedom

John 14:8–9; Matthew 11:28–30

- Why is submission harder than superstition?
- What does it mean that Jesus is “enough”?
- Where is God inviting you to stop striving and start trusting?
- How can Ridgewood model grace-filled reliance on Christ?

PRAY

Dear Lord, forgive us for the subtle ways we try to control our spiritual lives instead of trusting you. Teach us to rest in your sufficiency. Free us from formulas, fear, and performance. Help us submit joyfully to Christ alone. Shape our hearts to love you, trust you, and walk humbly with you. May Ridgewood be a church that depends fully on Jesus and lives in the freedom he provides. Amen.

DIG DEEPER

For further study this week:

- Galatians 2:19–21 — Living by faith in Christ
- Romans 6:1–11 — Dead to sin, alive in Christ
- Matthew 11:28–30 — Rest in Jesus
- John 14:1–11 — Jesus is enough
- Philippians 3:1–9 — Righteousness in Christ alone

NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA

See the things that are above and keep your eyes on Jesus.
Colossians 3:1–4

