

V. Analysis of the Practical Section (Exhortations, mostly) 2:4 --4:6

A. The Necessary Warning: Let no one separate you from the truth that is in Christ. 2:4-23

1. The Tendency: there is a natural tendency to think we need more of most everything and to seek truth from added sources in spiritual matters. This is the way cultic groups get a grip on unbelievers and believers alike. They suggest there is something the person should know and it can only be learned mysteriously from the cultic teacher. These persons generally do not honestly identify themselves but try to work on what we already know of Christianity and improve on the system
 - a. The weakness is first within ourselves...doubting fully the adequacy of the work of Christ.
 - b. It is then in the power teaching of others who seek to make us their disciples. The force of their teaching is in their personality and the appeal within us towards "something else".
2. The First Test: 2:4-7
 - a. The warning: let no one deceive you...let no one fool you...let no one play a spiritual trick on you.
 - b. The means used will be enticing words and the suggestion is that this will happen without doubt at some time.
 - c. Note Paul's concern in vs 5...he has an honest spiritual interest in the company
 - d. The way to "pass the test" and not be beguiled is to follow the instruction of vss 6-7..."Having received, walk and grow and be thankful." In addition, we might add, don't listen to anyone who makes his ideas more important than those of Jesus.
3. The Second Test: 2:8-17
 - a. The warning: Don't allow anyone to make you his prisoner (the idea in "spoil" you). Do not shrivel your spiritual life by being a man's follower or servant to the denial of Christ. We would be saved a lot of grief if we followed this strictly and tested every teacher by how that teacher stands with regard to Jesus.
 - b. The means used: Human wisdom and appeal to your intellect or ability after the thinking of men and not after the biblical truths given by Jesus.
 - c. The means to passing this test are: