



"Elemental Spirits"

- Referring to the cosmology of the day: sun, moon, planets – and the gods associated with these entities
- The idea was that these elemental spirits/underlords were intermediaries between believers and Christ

- We do not need them because in Christ the fullness of deity dwells bodily (v9)
- 'Deity' – 1x in New Testament
'divinity' – all of God is known in Christ

The fullness of the godhead came to live in a truly human life which was lived out in our world as the perfect "image of God" in a human person (1:15).

Ralph P. Martin

The Result

- We have come to fullness in him (v10)
- We have access to God in Christ
- We need nothing or no one else in this journey to God.

The Heresy

- What is being offered in this heresy is a form of syncretism
- Not unknown today
- Add to your spirituality elements of other belief systems

In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision, by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

Colossians 2:11-12

2. The New Circumcision

- Addressing Jewish 'add-ons' of requiring physical circumcision – similar to Galatians 4
- They argued such a process helps one access the Father

- Paul responds that this is unnecessary because of the circumcision of Christ (v11b) – which addresses a circumcision of the heart (Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6)

- What is key is baptism (v12) that becomes a symbol of new life in Christ – being raised with him through the power of God (also Romans 6:1-4)

- It speaks to the founding moments that we can hold onto which establish us in the faith

3. The Triumph of Christ

And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands.

He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.

Colossians 2:13-15

Sin and the law have been dealt with in Christ

1. Through forgiveness of sins (v13)
2. Through the laws which condemn us – now undone by the cross – all of our offenses (v14) are nailed to the cross – paid for by Christ

3. Cosmic powers have been disarmed (v15)

- Satan, 'the powers' cannot condemn us - we have been freed from their domain
- Showing that Christ is indeed sufficient for us
- Referring to Roman victory march after 'conquering the enemy'

None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

1 Corinthians 2:8

The 'Powers'

- What are the powers that work in our world today?
- Angels & demons made popular by the Divinci Code – the demonic, occult

- The powers that our culture creates that rise up and destroy life – Frankenstein story
- Nuclear warfare, environmental destruction motivated by greed, oppression through injustice, racism, xenophobia

There is only one message of hope to modern man/woman in his/her frustration and despair, and it is the message which Paul proclaimed to the Colossians. Christ crucified and risen is Lord of all; all the forces of the universe are subject to Him, not only the benign ones but the hostile ones as well.

They are all subject to Him as their Creator; the latter are subject to Him also as their Conqueror. And therefore to be united to Him is to be liberated from their thralldom, to enjoy perfect freedom, to overcome all the power of evil because Christ's victory is ours.

F.F. Bruce