

fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Hebrews 1:1-4 NKJV – (1) God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, (2) has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; (3) who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, (4) having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Gnostics also held to asceticism – which separates the soul and the body. The soul is spiritual the body is evil.

Since the body is evil – they would chase after revelations and out of the body experiences, because spirituality was “out there.”

Psalm 73:25 NKJV - Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.

IV. JOINED TO JESUS (vs. 19)

Colossians 2:19 NKJV - And not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.

Intimacy with Him is the key to everything else in our lives.

We will only grow and mature as long as we are connected with the Head and the rest of the Body.

CONCLUSION

Do the things we believe, and the things we hear lead us to stronger desire for Christ or are they leading us away from Christ?

STILL CHASING SHADOWS?

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INTRODUCTION

Colossians 2:11-19 NKJV – (11) In Jesus you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, (12) buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. (13) And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, (14) having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (15) Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. (16) Let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, (17) which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. (18) Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, (19) and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.

Either people are caught up with traditions that only point to Christ or they are caught up with additions that point away from Christ.

I. SHADOWS VS. SUBSTANCE

Shadows are merely a one-dimensional outline of the real thing.

The body exists before the shadow. Christ existed before – all the truths, blessings and promises of grace are from Him and by Him and He Himself the sum of them all.

II. SHALLOW SHADOWS (vs. 16)

Hebrews 10:1, 9-10 NKJV – (1) For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. (9) Then He [Jesus] said, Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God. He takes away the first that He may establish the second. (10) By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all.

We have a better high priest, we have better promises, we have a better covenant – the shadow has no worth now!

Hebrews 8:6-7 NKJV – (6) But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. (7) For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

Hebrews 9:24 NLT – For Christ did not enter into a holy place made with human hands, which was only a copy of the true one in heaven. He entered into heaven itself to appear now before God on our behalf.

2 Corinthians 1:20 NLT - For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory.

Hebrews 8:7-13 NLT – (7) If the first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need for a second covenant to replace it. (8) But when God found fault with the people, he said: "The day is coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. (9) This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and led them out of the land of Egypt. They did not remain faithful to my covenant, so I turned my back on them, says the Lord. (10) But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of

Israel on that day, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. (11) And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, 'You should know the Lord. 'For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already. (12) And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins.'" (13) When God speaks of a "new" covenant, it means he has made the first one obsolete. It is now out of date and will soon disappear.

He's calling us to live in the substance rather than chase shadows!

III. DISTRACTING ADDITIONS (vs. 18)

Colossians 2:18 ESV - Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind...

Gnostics lived in the conviction that they possessed a secret and mysterious knowledge...this knowledge of theirs was not based on reflection or scientific inquiry and proof, but on revelations and speculations.

2 Corinthians 12:1-7 NLT –(1)I will reluctantly tell about visions and revelations from the Lord. (2) I was caught up to the third heaven fourteen years ago. Whether I was in my body or out of my body, I don't know—only God knows. (3) Yes, only God knows whether I was in my body or outside my body. But I do know (4) that I was caught up to paradise and heard things so astounding that they cannot be expressed in words, things no human is allowed to tell. (5) That experience is worth boasting about, but I'm not going to do it. I will boast only about my weaknesses. (6) If I wanted to boast, I would be no fool in doing so, because I would be telling the truth. But I won't do it, because I don't want anyone to give me credit beyond what they can see in my life or hear in my message, (7) even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God.

Revelation 19:10 NKJV - And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your