

If we study the Word for ourselves and become familiar with it inside and out we will not be deceived by false teachings.

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we are to be firmly rooted. Throughout the Bible we see this concept. Believers are often compared to trees or healthy crops. Why? How can we be firmly rooted?

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The way to be rooted is to have a firm grasp of the Bible. And there are five ways (fingers) to grasp onto the Bible (Hear, Read, Study, Memorize, Meditate).

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We should have a deep root in the Word, but the tree is not complete without the foliage and the fruit.

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A tree with only roots doesn't do anybody any good and a tree without roots will die.

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that circumcision as a ritual made them better than other people and more acceptable to God.

Note:They mistakenly though being DIFFERENT automatically meant BETTER.

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Originally, circumcision was a sign of the covenant between God and His chosen people, the Jews. Abraham believed God and had a relationship with God prior to ever being circumcised.

Note:Abraham was "the father of the faithful," not the father of the circumcised.

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But in the time of Paul faith was discounted and the tradition of circumcision was exalted. Jews thought that merely by following the law religiously they could merit God's favor.

Note:Because there was a broad lack of awareness of sin, and the natural human condition, circumcision became one concrete thing they could do that made them stand out from their neighbours in the eyes of God.

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Our good deeds should be a loving response to God's grace rather than a prideful habit.

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Canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands - Debt is another way that

Paul uses to describe our situation prior to coming to Christ.

Note:"handwriting of ordinances" - see notes in the Premier Study Bible... it was a list of debts written in the debtors own hand, a personal affirmation of his own lack of ability to pay. It was this "admission of sins" that Jesus paid for...He paid a debt I could not pay... and cannot repay no matter how long I live or how "good/holy" I live.This should, however, motivate me to love him back and to avoid returning to place he saved me from.

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Believers began to divide over some of these issues and accuse each other.

Note:Are these two things related? Division over issues leads to accusations?

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The Pharisees did all of these things, but they performed them only as a ritual to demonstrate their righteousness when in fact they were far from God.

Note:If we DO everything we can think of, but have NO relationship with Jesus, it is ALL wasted.

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Let no one defraud you

Note:We can be "defrauded" by distractions! Not by sinful living as much as by distracted living. WE can get so wrapped up in the decorations that we lose the point of the party. The wedding is meaningless without the people who are getting married.

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Denying oneself just for the sake of denying oneself is not beneficial. Spiritual pride can come in when we follow rules hoping to earn merit with God.

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Healthy fasting and denying ourselves specific things for a period of time is useful when we use that extra time to worship our Lord.

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Verse 20 – Died to the elementary principles.

Note:Good list of them in that paragraph... human ideas, man-made religion, making up for past mistakes, do enough good to "balance" the scale...

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Man made rules and standards appear wise because we are men and we made up these ideas.