

“Don’t Submit any More!”
Colossians 2:20-23

I. Don’t submit to the powers of darkness.

- A. “Elemental spirits” – the spiritual forces of evil opposed to God’s plans and people.
 - 1. Defeated, dethroned, and displaced through Christ’s death
 - 2. Still actively opposed to God’s kingdom
- B. By dying with Jesus, believers were definitively freed from the elemental powers.
- C. Because of this freedom, Christians should no longer succumb to demonically induced commands (“Do not taste...handle...touch!”).

Galatians 4:8–11 - ⁸ Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods. ⁹ But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable forces? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? ¹⁰ You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! ¹¹ I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

- D. Religions that continue to emphasize such radical abstinence show the continuing efforts and influence of the elemental spirits.

II. Don’t play into the hands of the powers of darkness.

- A. Those in the evil spiritual realm just want us to sin, how we get there – by sensual indulgence or radical abstinence – makes no difference.
- B. Pointless, self-imposed restrictions lead very naturally to the sin of pride.
- C. Being trapped in the quest for insatiable lusts *or* unfulfilling affirmation robs us of joy, which is the ultimate goal of the kingdom of darkness.
- D. Look out for modern versions of the same kind of thing (think politically correct virtue signaling).

III. The remedy to both tendencies is Jesus.