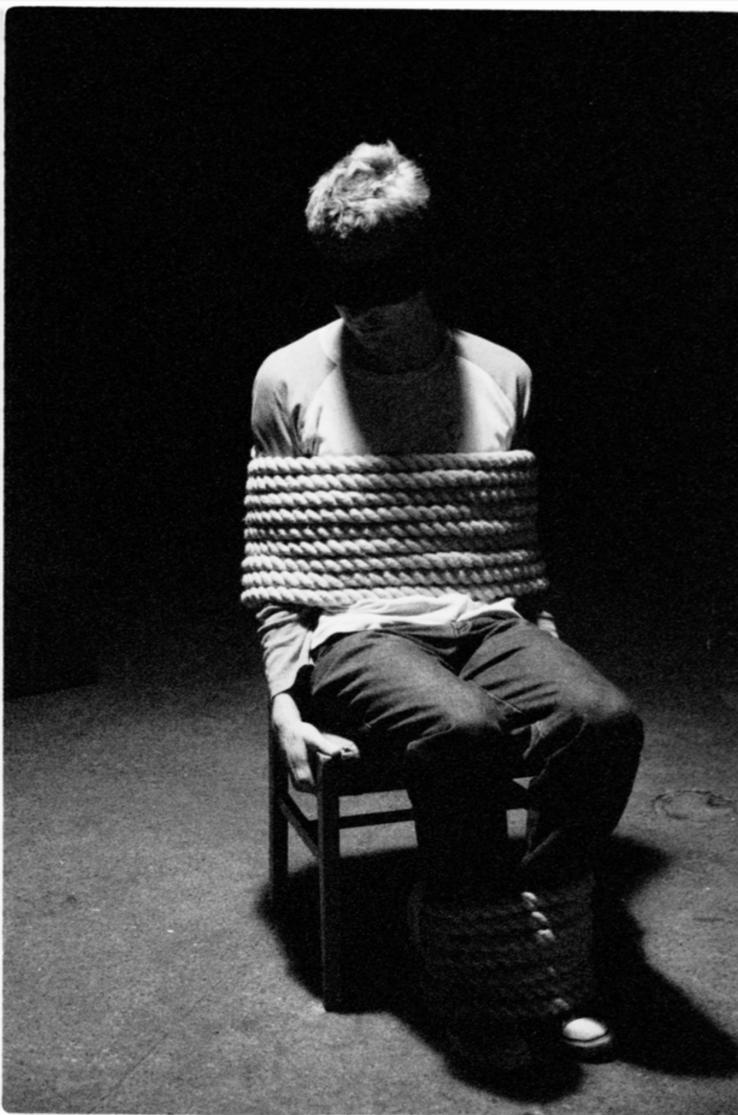


ARE YOU BEING HELD HOSTAGE?



By Paul Miles

Let's consider Colossians 2:8:

“ **See that no one will be your captor through the philosophy and empty trickery in accordance with the tradition of men, in accordance with the principles of the world, and not in accordance with Christ.**

SEE THAT NO ONE WILL BE YOUR CAPTOR

As believers, we have been called to a life of **liberty from the tyranny of sin**. Unfortunately, there is a tendency for free men like us to wander back into a lifestyle of slavery. Paul commands the church in Colossae (and us by extension) to be on the lookout to make sure that they aren't captured in their freedom in Christ and led away as prisoners to the enslavement that is outside of Christ's desire for His body. Paul goes on to explain what this captivity looks like:

THROUGH THE PHILOSOPHY AND EMPTY TRICKERY

The most common theological problem that the early Christians wrote against was called *Gnosticism*, which basically refers to several heresies that combined Greek pagan philosophy and hermeneutics with Christianity, Judaism, etc. to form hybrid religions. Combining religions or philosophies is called syncretism, and just as it was going on back then, it is still happening today. Anyhow, Paul calls syncretism "*philosophy and empty trickery*," and through it, our Christian experience can easily be ruined. Paul further classifies these errors:

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TRADITION OF MEN,

The first category of philosophy and empty trickery is walking "in accordance with the tradition of men." Colossae was a small Phrygian city, so one of the traditions there would have been to celebrate the festival, Megalesia, in honor of the goddess, Cybele. Many well-intending (and not-so-well-intending) people get wrapped up in the religious customs that have been handed down to them to the extent that clear, biblical teaching takes a back seat to tradition. Are you celebrating Megalesia to honor a false god? Probably not. But Christians are still being derailed by the traditions of men today. One way to test yourself to see if you are going along with the traditions of men rather than the word of God is to consider a belief that you have and ask yourself why you think that way. For example, are you pro-life or pro-choice? Why? Is your first answer, "Because I was raised that way," or is it "Because the Bible says _____?" There are many Christians who are pro-life and many who are pro-choice simply because they are going the way of the traditions around them. Often people come to the right conclusion, but take the wrong path to get there. Then, when things get shaky, they're already on the wrong path and can easily get talked out of their conclusion.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE WORLD,

Paul's second category of philosophy and empty trickery is walking "in accordance with the principles of the world." The world is a tricky place. Often, the line between the world and Christianity is blurred so that it's hard to tell the difference. I mentioned Gnosticism and Cybele earlier. Another Phrygian god was Sabazios. There was a heresy that arose in the second century B.C. because some Romans took the God of the Jews and combined Him with Sabazios and Jove (the Roman top god). Back then, it was normal to say, "Well, you worship Yahweh, and I worship Jove, and he worships Sabazios, but aren't they basically the same thing? I mean, don't all paths lead to the same destination? We can combine our gods into one if we'd like." These are some of the principles of the world. There's nothing new under the sun! Are you combining the God of the Bible with some of the local gods? I hope not. But, even though the Greek pantheon isn't as popular as it was 2,000 years ago, the essence of their theology is still alive today. If we are honest, we can test ourselves to see if we have fallen into this old trap. Just consider a contemporary issue. Take homosexual marriage, for example. Do you think that homosexual marriage is ok? Why or why not? If your answer starts with "Well, it's not for me but if it makes them happy..." then you are already wrong. The correct answer starts with "The Bible says..."

AND NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHRIST.

The bottom line is that if we have been led away by worldly traditions and principles, then we are not in accordance with Christ. And, if we are not living in accordance with Christ, then we are cheating ourselves out of the freedom that is available through Him. In an earlier [article](#), Grant Hawley pointed out:

“ **Everything in existence can be divided into two categories:**

- 1) God (Father, Son, and Spirit)
- 2) Everything Else

Everything good has its source in God. Everything else is sourced in everything else.

Philosophy and empty trickery is sourced in "everything else." If we want what is good, we will only find it while walking "in accordance with Christ." Do not be deceived, my brothers and sisters. Check yourself.

WE ARE SOCIAL



✈ TWITTER FEED

Tweets by [@boldgracedotorg](#)

MINISTRY PURPOSE

BOLD GRACE MINISTRIES EXISTS TO:

Unite believers under the banner of God's grace (Eph 4:3-6), **share** the gospel and aid those who will proclaim it faithfully (Rom 10:14-15), **increase** believers' confidence in the power of the indwelling Christ (Gal 2:20), **love** without hypocrisy (Rom 12:9a), **proclaim** the hope of Christ's glorious kingdom (Rom 8:18-21), and **equip** the saints to share Christ's matchless grace and love with others (2 Tim 2:2).

✉ info@boldgrace.org

📍 Allen, TX and Lviv, Ukraine

CONTACT INFORMATION

✉ info@boldgrace.org

📍 410 N Bonham Dr, Allen, TX 75013

☎ 214-450-7706