

THE COLOSSIAN HERESY / *Colossians 1:15*

Paul answered the various tenets of the Colossian heresy that threatened the church. This heresy was a “mixed bag,” containing elements from several different heresies, some of which contradicted each other (as the chart shows).

The Heresy	Reference	Paul's Answer
Spirit is good; matter is evil.	1:15-20	God created heaven and earth for his glory.
One must follow ceremonies, rituals, and restrictions in order to be saved or perfected.	2:11, 16-23; 3:11	These were only shadows that ended when Christ came. He is all you need to be saved.
One must deny the body and live in strict asceticism.	2:20-23	Asceticism is no help in conquering evil thoughts and desires; instead, it leads to pride.
Angels must be worshiped.	2:18	Angels are not to be worshiped; Christ alone is worthy of worship.
Christ could not be both human and divine.	1:15-20; 2:2-3	Christ is God in the flesh; he is the eternal one, head of the body, first in everything, supreme.
One must obtain “secret knowledge” in order to be saved or perfected—and this was not available to everyone.	2:2, 18	God's secret is Christ, and he has been revealed to all.
One must adhere to human wisdom, tradition, and philosophies.	2:4, 8-10; 3:15-17	By themselves, these can be misleading and shallow because they have human origin; instead, we should remember what Christ taught and follow his words as our ultimate authority.
It is even better to combine aspects of several religions.	2:10	You have everything when you have Christ; he is all-sufficient.
There is nothing wrong with immorality.	3:1-11	Get rid of sin and evil because you have been chosen by God to live a new life as a representative of the Lord Jesus.