

The Epistle to the Colossians, Chapter 2

ΠΡΟΣ ΚΟΛΟΣΣΑΕΙΣ Β'

Each verse opens with the running Greek, an English translation, and a **discourse note** (its connective, relation, and role in the argument). Below follows the word-by-word breakdown in six tiers: gloss, case (color), parsing, *syntax*, **semantic force**, and a | lexical note.

CASE ■ Nominative ■ Genitive ■ Dative ■ Accusative ■ Vocative ■ Verb (no case) ■ Indeclinable

Discourse notes head each verse: **relation** · connective · clause-flow. Indentation marks prominence — flush-left = main line of argument; indented = supporting / subordinate material.

Discourse structure of the chapter

A · 2:1–5

Paul's struggle for their assured knowledge of Christ

Paul wants them to know the agony of his striving for them and the Laodiceans (1), aimed at hearts knit in love and the full riches of assured understanding — the knowledge of God's mystery, Christ (2), in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (3). He says this lest anyone delude them with persuasive speech (4); for though absent in body he is with them in spirit, rejoicing at their order and the firmness of their faith in Christ (5).

B · 2:6–7

Walk in the Christ you received

The hinge and thesis of the chapter: as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him (6) — rooted, built up, and established in the faith as taught, overflowing with thanksgiving (7).

C · 2:8–10

Warning against philosophy: the fullness is in Christ

Watch lest anyone take you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, by human tradition and the elemental spirits, and not according to Christ (8) — for in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily (9), and in him, the head of every rule and authority, you have been filled (10).

D • 2:11–15

Dead and alive with Christ: circumcision, burial, victory

In him you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, the stripping off of the body of flesh, the circumcision of Christ (11); buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised through faith in God's working who raised him (12). You who were dead in trespasses and uncircumcision he made alive with him, forgiving all our trespasses (13), having erased the certificate of debt against us and nailed it to the cross (14), and having disarmed the rulers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in him (15).

E • 2:16–19

Against legalism: the substance belongs to Christ

Therefore let no one judge you over food, drink, festival, new moon, or sabbath (16) — these are a shadow of what was to come, but the substance is Christ's (17). Let no one disqualify you, delighting in false humility and worship of angels, puffed up by what he has seen, without holding to the Head (18–19), from whom the whole body, supplied and knit together, grows with the growth that is from God.

F • 2:20–23

Against asceticism: dead to the elements

If you died with Christ to the elemental principles, why submit to regulations — 'Do not handle, taste, touch' (20–21) — rules about things that perish with use, mere human commands and teachings (22)? Such things have a reputation for wisdom in self-made religion, false humility, and severity to the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh (23).

1 Θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναι ἡλίκον ἀγῶνα ἔχω ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ ὅσοι οὐχ ἐόρακαν τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ἐν σαρκί,

For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on behalf of you and those in Laodicea, and all who have not seen my face in the flesh,

GROUND / DISCLOSURE **γὰρ** γάρ links back to 1:29: Paul discloses the intensity of his agonizing labor — extended now to the Colossians and Laodiceans whom he has never met in person.

Θέλω

I want

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · θέλω

main verb

→ customary present

θέλω: 'will, wish, desire'; a disclosure formula ('I want you to know') opening fresh information.

γὰρ

for

explanatory conjunction

ὕμᾱς

you

Accusative

accusative subject of εἰδέναι

εἰδέναι

to know

Perf Act Inf · οἶδα

complementary infinitive (of Θέλω)

→ perfect with present force (settled knowing)

οἶδα: 'know' (perfect with present sense); cognitive certainty, here the awareness Paul wants them to have.

ἤλικον

how great

Accusative

interrogative/exclamatory adjective (modifies ἀγῶνα)

ἤλικος: 'how great, how large'; an exclamatory correlative stressing the magnitude of the contest.

ἀγῶνα

struggle

Accusative

direct object of ἔχω

ἀγών: 'contest, struggle' (athletic/agonistic imagery); the strenuous toil of intercession and care (cf. 1:29 ἀγωνιζόμενος).

ἔχω

I have

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · ἔχω

main verb (rel./indir. clause)

→ stative present

ἔχω: 'have, hold'; here 'I am engaged in (a struggle).'

ὑπὲρ

on behalf of

preposition + genitive (advantage)

ὕμῶν

you

Genitive

object of ὑπὲρ (advantage)

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

τῶν

those

Genitive

article (substantizes prep. phrase)

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (place)

Λαοδικεία

Laodicea

Dative

dat. of place

Λαοδικεία: a neighboring city in the Lycus valley (cf. 4:13–16); its church shares the Colossian situation.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

ὅσοι

as many as

Nominative

relative pronoun (subject of ἐόρακαν)

ὅσος: 'as many as, all who'; gathers in everyone not personally acquainted with Paul.

οὐχ

not

negative particle

έώρακαν

have seen

Perf Act Indic 3 Pl · ὀράω

main verb (rel. clause)

→ extensive perfect (state from past)

ὀράω: 'see'; the perfect marks the abiding fact — they have never met him face to face.

τὸ

the

Accusative

article

πρόσωπόν

face

Accusative

direct object

πρόσωπον: 'face, presence'; 'my face in the flesh' = personal, in-person acquaintance.

μου

my

Genitive

genitive of possession

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (sphere)

σαρκί

flesh

Dative

dat. of sphere (bodily presence)

σάρξ: here neutral, 'physical body/presence' — Paul's bodily, in-person presence, as opposed to spiritual (v.5).

2 ἵνα παρακληθῶσιν αἱ καρδίαὶ αὐτῶν, συμβιβασθέντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ καὶ εἰς πᾶν πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως, εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ θεοῦ, Χριστοῦ,

that their hearts may be encouraged, knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto a knowledge of God's mystery, namely Christ,

PURPOSE OF THE STRUGGLE ἵνα The goal of Paul's agonizing labor: hearts strengthened and bound in love, brought to the full riches of certain understanding — which is nothing less than the knowledge of the mystery, Christ himself.

ἵνα

that

conjunction (purpose)

παρακληθῶσιν

may be encouraged

Aor Pass Subj 3 Pl · παρακαλέω

verb of purpose clause

→ ingressive aorist subjunctive

παρακαλέω: 'encourage, comfort, exhort' (παρά + καλέω, 'call alongside'); strengthening of the inner person.

αἱ

the

Nominative

article

καρδίαι

hearts

Nominative

subject (of passive verb)

καρδία: 'heart'; the Hebraic seat of mind, will, and affections — the whole inner self.

αὐτῶν

their

Genitive

genitive of possession

συμβιβασθέντες

having been knit together

Aor Pass Ptc · Nom Pl Masc · συμβιβάζω

adverbial ptc. (manner/attendant); constructio ad sensum (masc. for persons)

→ constative aorist

συμβιβάζω: 'bring together, unite, instruct'; here 'knit/welded together' in love (cf. v.19 of the body).

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (sphere/means)

ἀγάπη

love

Dative

dat. of sphere/means (bond of union)

ἀγάπη: 'love'; the cohesive bond that binds the community (cf. 3:14, 'the bond of perfection').

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

εἰς

unto

preposition + accusative (goal)

πάν

all

Accusative

attributive adjective

πλοῦτος

riches

Accusative

object of εἰς (goal)

πλοῦτος: 'wealth, abundance'; the lavish fullness of the assurance to be attained.

<p>τῆς of the Genitive <i>article</i></p>	<p>πληροφορίας full assurance Genitive <i>genitive of content (riches consisting of full assurance)</i> πληροφορία: 'full assurance, complete certainty'; settled conviction, not bare opinion.</p>	<p>τῆς of Genitive <i>article</i></p>	<p>συνέσεως understanding Genitive <i>objective/source genitive (assurance that understanding gives)</i> σύνεσις: 'insight, comprehension' (lit. 'a putting-together'); the grasp of how truths cohere.</p>
<p>εἰς unto <i>preposition + accusative (goal, restated)</i></p>	<p>ἐπίγνωσιν knowledge Accusative <i>object of εἰς (goal restated/intensified)</i> ἐπίγνωσις: 'full knowledge' (ἐπί-intensive of γνώσις); deep, personal recognition — a key term against the false 'knowledge.'</p>	<p>τοῦ of the Genitive <i>article</i></p>	<p>μυστηρίου mystery Genitive <i>objective genitive (knowledge of the mystery)</i> μυστήριον: 'mystery'; not a riddle but a once-hidden, now-revealed plan of God (cf. 1:26–27).</p>
<p>τοῦ of Genitive <i>article</i></p>	<p>θεοῦ God Genitive <i>possessive/subjective genitive (God's mystery)</i> θεός: God; the mystery is God's own — his eternal saving purpose.</p>	<p>Χριστοῦ Christ Genitive <i>genitive in apposition (the mystery = Christ)</i> Χριστός: 'Anointed,' Messiah; placed in apposition — the mystery of God simply is Christ (cf. 1:27).</p>	

3 ἐν ᾧ εἰσιν πάντες οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ γνώσεως ἀπόκρυφοι.

| in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

RELATIVE EXPANSION (CHRIST) ἐν ᾧ A relative clause on Χριστοῦ: every treasure of wisdom and knowledge is stored up in Christ — a frontal answer to teachers offering wisdom apart from him.

<p>ἐν</p> <p>in</p> <p><i>preposition + dative (sphere)</i></p>	<p>ᾧ</p> <p>whom</p> <p>Dative</p> <p><i>relative pronoun (antecedent Χριστοῦ)</i></p>	<p>εἰσιν</p> <p>are</p> <p>Pres Act Indic 3 Pl · εἰμι</p> <p><i>main verb (copula)</i></p> <p>→ stative present</p>	<p>πάντες</p> <p>all</p> <p>Nominative</p> <p><i>attributive adjective (emphatic 'all')</i></p> <p>πᾶς: 'all'; emphatic — not some, but every treasure, leaving none outside Christ.</p>
<p>οἱ</p> <p>the</p> <p>Nominative</p> <p><i>article</i></p>	<p>θησαυροὶ</p> <p>treasures</p> <p>Nominative</p> <p><i>subject</i></p> <p>θησαυρός: 'treasure, storehouse'; the precious deposit — here of wisdom and knowledge.</p>	<p>τῆς</p> <p>of</p> <p>Genitive</p> <p><i>article</i></p>	<p>σοφίας</p> <p>wisdom</p> <p>Genitive</p> <p><i>genitive of content (treasures of wisdom)</i></p> <p>σοφία: 'wisdom'; the comprehensive, practical understanding of God and his ways.</p>
<p>καὶ</p> <p>and</p> <p><i>coordinating conjunction</i></p>	<p>γνώσεως</p> <p>knowledge</p> <p>Genitive</p> <p><i>genitive of content (coordinate)</i></p> <p>γνώσις: 'knowledge'; here paired with σοφία — the apprehension that the rival teachers claimed to possess elsewhere.</p>	<p>ἀπόκρυφοι</p> <p>hidden</p> <p>Nominative</p> <p><i>predicate adjective (treasures hidden/stored)</i></p> <p>ἀπόκρυφος: 'hidden, stored away' (cf. 'apocrypha'); treasures laid up in Christ, accessible by faith, not esoteric secret-lore.</p>	

4 Τοῦτο λέγω ἵνα μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς παραλογίζηται ἐν πιθανολογίᾳ.

I say this so that no one may delude you with persuasive speech.

STATED PURPOSE / WARNING **ASYNDETON** Paul names his aim: the foregoing is preventative — that the persuasive rhetoric of false teachers not lead them astray by faulty reasoning.

Τούτο

this

Accusative

direct object (cataphoric to vv. 1–3)

λέγω

I say

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · λέγω

main verb

→ instantaneous present

λέγω: 'say, tell'; introduces the purpose behind what he has just written.

ἵνα

so that

conjunction (purpose)

μηδείς

no one

Nominative

subject of subjunctive

μηδείς: 'no one'; the indefinite adversary — recurring in the chapter (vv. 8, 16, 18).

ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

direct object

παραλογίζεται

may delude

Pres Mid Subj 3 Sg · παραλογίζομαι

verb of purpose clause

→ conative/ongoing present subjunctive

παραλογίζομαι: 'deceive by false reasoning, defraud' (παρά + λογίζομαι); to cheat someone through specious argument.

ἐν

with

preposition + dative (means)

πιθανολογία

persuasive speech

Dative

dat. of means (instrument of deception)

πιθανολογία: 'plausible/persuasive speech' (πιθανός + λόγος); rhetoric that convinces by sounding good, not by being true.

5 εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῆ σαρκὶ ἄπειμι, ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι σὺν ὑμῖν εἶμι, χαίρων καὶ βλέπων ὑμῶν τὴν τάξιν καὶ τὸ στερέωμα τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν.

For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing and beholding your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

GROUND (PASTORAL PRESENCE) **γὰρ** Paul grounds his warning in pastoral solidarity: bodily absent but spiritually present, he gladly observes their disciplined ranks and the solid front of their faith — military metaphors of a church standing firm.

εἰ

if

conjunction (concessive condition)

εἰ ... καί: 'even if, though'; concedes the fact of bodily absence.

γὰρ

for

explanatory conjunction

καὶ

even

adverbial (with εἰ, concessive)

τῇ

the

Dative

article

σαρκὶ

body/flesh

Dative

dat. of respect/sphere (absent as to the body)

σάρξ: here neutral, 'physical body'; the sphere of his absence, set against τῷ πνεύματι.

ἄπειμι

I am absent

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · ἄπειμι

verb of concessive clause

→ stative present

ἄπειμι: 'be away, be absent' (ἀπό + εἶμι); contrasted with εἶμι 'I am (present).'

ἀλλὰ

yet

adversative conjunction (apodosis)

ἀλλὰ: 'but, yet'; the strong contrast answering the concession.

τῷ

the

Dative

article

πνεύματι

spirit

Dative

dat. of respect/sphere (present in spirit)

πνεῦμα: here Paul's own spirit — his attentive, caring presence, not bodily but real.

σύν

with

preposition + dative (association)

ὕμιν

you

Dative

object of σύν (association)

εἶμι

I am

Pres Act Indic 1 Sg · εἶμι

main verb (apodosis)

→ stative present

χαίρων

rejoicing

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · χαίρων

adverbial ptc. (manner/attendant)

→ present (concurrent)

χαίρων: 'rejoice, be glad'; the joyful tone characteristic of Paul's prison letters.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

βλέπων

beholding

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · βλέπων

adverbial ptc. (manner/cause of joy)

→ present (concurrent)

βλέπων: 'see, look at'; as if observing, with a glad eye, their ordered standing.

ὕμων

your

Genitive

genitive of possession (fronted)

<p>τὴν the Accusative <i>article</i></p>	<p>τάξιν good order Accusative <i>direct object of βλέπων</i></p> <p>τάξις: 'order, arrangement' (military: orderly ranks); the church's disciplined cohesion.</p>	<p>καὶ and <i>coordinating conjunction</i></p>	<p>τὸ the Accusative <i>article</i></p>
<p>στερέωμα firmness Accusative <i>direct object (coordinate)</i></p> <p>στερέωμα: 'solid part, firmness, bulwark' (military: solid front/rampart); the steadfast strength of their faith.</p>	<p>τῆς of the Genitive <i>article</i></p>	<p>εἰς in <i>preposition + accusative (object of faith)</i></p> <p>εἰς Χριστόν: 'faith directed toward Christ'; the article + prepositional phrase make 'faith-in-Christ' a unit.</p>	<p>Χριστόν Christ Accusative <i>object of εἰς (direction of faith)</i></p>
<p>πίστεως faith Genitive <i>genitive (firmness of the faith)</i></p> <p>πίστις: 'faith, trust'; the object-directed trust in Christ whose firmness Paul gladly notes.</p>	<p>ὑμῶν your Genitive <i>genitive of possession</i></p>		

6 Ὡς οὖν παρελάβετε τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον, ἐν αὐτῷ περιπατεῖτε,

As therefore you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,

INFERENCE / THESIS οὖν The pivot of the letter and the chapter: drawing on all that precedes, Paul commands that the received tradition — Christ Jesus the Lord — govern the whole of life. Everything in vv.8–23 unfolds this 'walk in him.'

ὧς

as

conjunction (comparison/correspondence)

ὧς ... (οὕτως): 'as ... so';
correspondence between the reception
and the required manner of life.

οὖν

therefore

inferential conjunction

οὖν: 'therefore'; draws the practical
conclusion from chs. 1–2 thus far.

παρελάβετε

you received

Aor Act Indic 2 Pl · παραλαμβάνω

verb of comparative clause

→ constative aorist

παραλαμβάνω: 'receive (a tradition),
take over'; the technical term for
receiving authoritative teaching handed
on (cf. 1 Cor 15:3).

τὸν

the

Accusative

article

Χριστὸν

Christ

Accusative

direct object

Χριστός: the object received is not
merely a doctrine but the person,
Christ himself.

Ἰησοῦν

Jesus

Accusative

apposition

τὸν

the

Accusative

article

κύριον

Lord

Accusative

apposition (title, emphatic)

κύριος: 'Lord'; the confessional climax
— 'Christ Jesus the Lord' is the content
of the received faith (cf. Phil 2:11).

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (union/sphere)

αὐτῷ

him

Dative

object of ἐν (sphere of the walk)

περιπατεῖτε

walk

Pres Act Impv 2 Pl · περιπατέω

main verb (imperative)

→ customary present imperative (ongoing
conduct)

περιπατέω: lit. 'walk about'; a Semitic
metaphor for the whole conduct of life
(cf. Heb. hālak).

7 ἑρριζωμένοι καὶ ἐποικοδομούμενοι ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ βεβαιούμενοι τῇ πίστει καθὼς ἐδιδάχθητε, περισσεύοντες ἐν αὐτῇ ἐν εὐχαριστίᾳ.

rooted and being built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, overflowing in it with thanksgiving.

MANNER OF THE WALK **ASYNDETON** Four participles unfold the 'walk in him' with mixed metaphors — botanical (rooted), architectural (built up), legal/firm (established) — capped by overflowing thanksgiving, all anchored in the apostolic teaching received.

ἑρριζωμένοι

rooted

Perf Pass Ptc · Nom Pl Masc · ῥιζόω
adverbial ptc. (manner; modifies περιπατεῖτε)

→ intensive perfect (settled state)

ῥιζόω: 'cause to take root, plant firmly';
the perfect pictures a completed,
abiding rootedness in Christ.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

ἐποικοδομούμενοι

being built up

Pres Pass Ptc · Nom Pl Masc ·
ἐποικοδομέω
adverbial ptc. (manner)

→ present (ongoing process)

ἐποικοδομέω: 'build up upon' (ἐπί +
οικοδομέω); the present marks
construction still in progress on the one
foundation.

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (sphere)

αὐτῷ

him

Dative
object of ἐν (foundation/sphere)

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

βεβαιούμενοι

established

Pres Pass Ptc · Nom Pl Masc · βεβαιόω
adverbial ptc. (manner)

→ present (ongoing)

βεβαιόω: 'make firm, confirm, establish';
a legal/commercial term for
guaranteeing — the faith made secure.

τῇ

the

Dative
article

<p>πίστει</p> <p>faith</p> <p>Dative</p> <p><i>dat. of respect/means (established in/by the faith)</i></p> <p>πίστις: 'faith'; either personal trust or 'the faith' as the body of teaching — established in it.</p>	<p>καθώς</p> <p>just as</p> <p><i>conjunction (comparison)</i></p> <p>καθώς: 'just as, according as'; appeals to the standard of the original instruction.</p>	<p>ἐδιδάχθητε</p> <p>you were taught</p> <p>Aor Pass Indic 2 Pl · διδάσκω</p> <p><i>verb of comparative clause</i></p> <p>→ constative aorist</p> <p>διδάσκω: 'teach'; the faithful instruction (probably from Ephras, 1:7) as the norm against innovation.</p>	<p>περισσεύοντες</p> <p>overflowing</p> <p>Pres Act Ptc · Nom Pl Masc · περισσεύω</p> <p><i>adverbial ptc. (manner)</i></p> <p>→ present (ongoing)</p> <p>περισσεύω: 'abound, overflow'; superabundance — gratitude that brims over.</p>
<p>ἐν</p> <p>in</p> <p><i>preposition + dative (sphere)</i></p>	<p>αὐτῇ</p> <p>it</p> <p>Dative</p> <p><i>object of ἐν (antecedent τῇ πίστει)</i></p>	<p>ἐν</p> <p>with</p> <p><i>preposition + dative (manner/accompaniment)</i></p>	<p>εὐχαριστία</p> <p>thanksgiving</p> <p>Dative</p> <p><i>dat. of manner (accompanying the abounding)</i></p> <p>εὐχαριστία: 'thanksgiving, gratitude'; a recurring keynote of Colossians (1:12; 3:15–17; 4:2).</p>

8 βλέπετε μή τις ὑμᾶς ἔσται ὁ συλαγωγῶν διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, κατὰ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου καὶ οὐ κατὰ Χριστόν·

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ;

WARNING (THE FALSE TEACHING) **ASYNDETON** The chapter's central polemic opens: a sharp 'watch out!' against being carried off as plunder. Four 'according to' phrases triangulate the danger — human tradition and the world's elements over against the single legitimate standard, Christ.

βλέπετε

see to it

Pres Act Impv 2 Pl · βλέπω

main verb (imperative of warning)

→ present imperative (continual vigilance)

βλέπω: 'look, watch'; here 'beware, see to it' — an alert, ongoing watchfulness.

μή

lest

conjunction (negative purpose/apprehension)

μή: introduces the feared outcome after a verb of caution.

τις

anyone

Nominative

subject (indefinite)

τις: 'someone, anyone'; the shadowy false teacher(s) left deliberately unnamed.

ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

direct object (of the participle)

ἔσται

will be

Fut Mid Indic 3 Sg · εἶμι

periphrastic future (with ptc.)

→ predictive future (vivid warning)

εἶμι: here in periphrasis with συλαγωγῶν — 'will be the one carrying off'; the future makes the danger concrete.

ὁ

the (one)

Nominative

article (substantizes ptc.)

συλαγωγῶν

taking captive

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · συλαγωγέω

periphrastic ptc. (with ἔσται)

→ present (ongoing action)

συλαγωγέω: 'carry off as spoil/booty, kidnap' (σύλη 'plunder' + ἄγω); a vivid, rare word — to be made another's plunder.

διὰ

through

preposition + genitive (means)

τῆς

the

Genitive

article

φιλοσοφίας

philosophy

Genitive

object of διὰ (means)

φιλοσοφία: 'love of wisdom'; the only NT occurrence — here the rival teaching's self-flattering label, not philosophy in general.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (hendiadys)

κενῆς

empty

Genitive

attributive adjective

κενός: 'empty, hollow, vain'; the 'philosophy' is exposed as a void — impressive talk with no substance.

ἀπάτης

deceit

Genitive

object of διὰ (likely hendiadys: 'empty, deceptive philosophy')

ἀπάτη: 'deception, deceit, seduction'; the lure that promises wisdom but delivers a trap.

κατὰ

according to

preposition + accusative (standard/source)

τὴν

the

Accusative

article

παράδοσιν

tradition

Accusative

object of κατὰ (standard)

παράδοσις: 'tradition, what is handed down'; here merely 'of men' — set against the παρελάβετε of v.6, the tradition of Christ.

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article

ἀνθρώπων

men

Genitive

subjective/source genitive (human origin)

ἄνθρωπος: 'human being'; the merely human pedigree of the teaching damns it (cf. Mark 7:8).

κατὰ

according to

preposition + accusative (standard/source)

τὰ

the

Accusative

article

στοιχεῖα

elemental principles

Accusative

object of κατὰ (standard)

στοιχεῖον: 'elementary thing, rudiment, elemental spirit'; debated — rudimentary teachings or cosmic/spiritual powers governing the old age (cf. Gal 4:3, 9).

τοῦ

of the

Genitive

article

κόσμου

world

Genitive

genitive (sphere of the elements)

κόσμος: 'world'; the present age/order whose 'elements' belong to what is passing away.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

οὐ

not

negative particle

κατὰ

according to

preposition + accusative (the true standard)

Χριστόν

Christ

Accusative

object of κατὰ (the sole legitimate norm)

Χριστός: the climactic standard — any teaching 'not according to Christ' is thereby condemned, however learned.

9 ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ κατοικεῖ πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος σωματικῶς,

because in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,

GROUND (THE DEITY OF CHRIST) **ὅτι** The doctrinal ground for 'according to Christ': in him the totality of the divine nature permanently and bodily resides — so nothing of God is to be sought beyond him.

ὅτι

because

causal conjunction

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (location, emphatic)

αὐτῷ

him

Dative

object of ἐν (fronted for emphasis)

ΚΑΤΟΙΚΕῖ

dwells

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · κατοικέω

main verb

→ stative present (permanent residence)

κατοικέω: 'dwell, settle down permanently' (κατά intensive); not a passing visitation but a fixed, abiding indwelling.

πᾶν

all/whole

Nominative

attributive adjective

πᾶς: 'all, whole'; emphatic — the entirety, not a portion.

τὸ

the

Nominative

article

πλήρωμα

fullness

Nominative

subject

πλήρωμα: 'fullness, that which fills'; possibly a slogan of the false teachers, reclaimed — the full divine plenitude is in Christ (cf. 1:19).

τῆς

of the

Genitive

article

Θεότητος

deity

Genitive

genitive of content (fullness consisting of deity)

θεότης: 'deity, Godhead, divine nature/essence' (distinct from θειότης, 'divine quality'); the very being of God, not merely godlike attributes.

σωματικῶς

bodily

adverb (manner)

σωματικῶς: 'bodily, in bodily form'; the divine fullness dwells in the incarnate Christ — embodied, not abstract or dispersed among intermediaries.

10 καὶ ἐστὲ ἐν αὐτῷ πεπληρωμένοι, ὅς ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλὴ πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας,

and you have been filled in him, who is the head of every rule and authority,

CONSEQUENCE (THE BELIEVER'S FULLNESS) καὶ Since the fullness is in Christ, those in him lack nothing: 'you have been filled' in the One who is supreme over every cosmic power — the very powers the rivals revered.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

ἐστὲ

you are

Pres Act Indic 2 Pl · εἶμι

main verb (periphrastic with ptc.)

→ stative present

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (union)

αὐτῷ

him

Dative

object of ἐν (sphere of fullness)

πεπληρωμένοι

filled

Perf Pass Ptc · Nom Pl Masc · πληρῶ

periphrastic ptc. (with ἐστέ)

→ intensive perfect (completed, abiding fullness)

πληρῶ: 'fill, make full, complete'; the wordplay with πλήρωμα (v.9) — believers share Christ's plenitude and need no supplement.

ὅς

who

Nominative

relative pronoun (antecedent αὐτῷ)

ἐστιν

is

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · εἶμι

main verb (copula, rel. clause)

→ stative present

ἡ

the

Nominative

article

κεφαλή

head

Nominative

predicate nominative

κεφαλή: 'head'; connoting both source and supremacy — Christ ranks above every power (cf. 1:18; 2:19).

πάσης

of every

Genitive

attributive adjective

πᾶς: 'every, all'; no power is exempt from his headship.

ἀρχῆς

rule

Genitive

genitive (head over rule)

ἀρχή: 'rule, ruler, principality'; a class of spiritual powers (cf. 1:16; Eph 1:21) — Christ is their head.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

ἐξουσίας

authority

Genitive

genitive (coordinate)

ἐξουσία: 'authority, power'; paired with ἀρχή for the spiritual authorities the rivals venerated and feared.

11 ἐν ᾧ καὶ περιετμήθητε περιτομῇ ἀχειροποιήτῳ ἐν τῇ ἀπεκδύσει τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκός, ἐν τῇ περιτομῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ,

in whom also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the stripping off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ,

UNION BENEFIT (CIRCUMCISION) ἐν ᾧ A new chain of 'in him' benefits begins. Against any demand for the knife, Paul declares a circumcision already received in Christ — not of hands but a decisive stripping-off of the fleshly self.

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (union)

ᾧ

whom

Dative

relative pronoun (antecedent Christ)

καὶ

also

adverbial (ascensive)

περιετμήθητε

you were circumcised

Aor Pass Indic 2 Pl · περιτέμνω

main verb

→ constative aorist (the conversion event)

περιτέμνω: 'circumcise' (lit. 'cut around'); here spiritual circumcision — the inward reality the OT sign foreshadowed (Deut 30:6; Rom 2:29).

περιτομή

with a circumcision

Dative

dat. of means/cognate (instrumental)

περιτομή: 'circumcision'; the cognate noun, qualified at once as 'not made with hands.'

ἀχειροποίητῳ

made without hands

Dative

attributive adjective

ἀχειροποίητος: 'not made with hands' (ἀ- + χεῖρ + ποιέω); a divine, not human, work — distinguishing it from physical circumcision (cf. Mark 14:58).

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (means/definition)

τῇ

the

Dative

article

ἀπεκδύσει

stripping off

Dative

dat. of means (defining the circumcision)

ἀπέκδυσις: 'a putting/stripping off' (rare, perhaps coined here); the decisive removal of the old self, like discarding a garment (cf. 3:9; v.15).

τοῦ

of the

Genitive

article

σώματος

body

Genitive

objective genitive (what is stripped off)

σῶμα: 'body'; here 'the body of the flesh' = the whole self as dominated by sinful flesh.

τῆς

of the

Genitive

article

σαρκός

flesh

Genitive

attributive/epexegetical genitive

σάρξ: here ethical — fallen human nature in its hostility to God, the old self now stripped away.

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (means/agency)

τῇ

the

Dative

article

περιτομῆ

circumcision

Dative

dat. of means (defines/agency)

περιτομή: 'the circumcision of Christ' — either the circumcision Christ performs, or his death (his 'stripping off' on the cross) in which believers share.

τοῦ

of the

Genitive

article

Χριστοῦ

Christ

Genitive

subjective/possessive genitive

Χριστός: the circumcision belongs to/derives from Christ — radically distinct from the Mosaic rite.

12 συνταφέντες αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βαπτισμῷ, ἐν ᾧ καὶ συνηγέρθητε διὰ τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐνεργείας τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν·

having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead;

UNION BENEFIT (DEATH & RESURRECTION) **ASYNDETON** The circumcision/stripping is unfolded as co-burial and co-resurrection: baptism dramatizes union with Christ's death and rising, the new life received through faith in the God who raised him.

συνταφέντες

having been buried with

Aor Pass Ptc · Nom Pl Masc · συνθάπτω

adverbial ptc. (manner/means of the circumcision)

→ constative aorist

συνθάπτω: 'bury together with' (σύν + θάπτω); union with Christ's burial — the old self decisively interred (cf. Rom 6:4).

αὐτῷ

with him

Dative

dat. of association (with the σύν- verb)

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (sphere/means)

τῷ

the

Dative

article

βαπτισμῷ

baptism

Dative

dat. of sphere (the locus of co-burial)

βαπτισμός: 'baptism, washing'; here the rite enacting union with Christ's burial and resurrection.

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (relative; antecedent debated)

ἐν ᾧ: 'in which' (baptism) or 'in whom' (Christ); either way the sphere of being raised.

ᾧ

which

Dative

relative pronoun (antecedent βαπτισμῷ/Christ)

καὶ

also

adverbial (ascensive)

συνηγέρθητε

you were raised with

Aor Pass Indic 2 Pl · συνεγείρω

main verb (rel. clause)

→ constative aorist

συνεγείρω: 'raise together with' (σύν + εγείρω); the believer's resurrection with Christ — already accomplished, the basis of new life (cf. 3:1).

διὰ

through

preposition + genitive (means)

τῆς

the

Genitive

article

πίστεως

faith

Genitive

object of διὰ (means)

πίστις: 'faith'; the instrument by which the co-resurrection is appropriated — not the rite alone.

τῆς

in the

Genitive

article

ἐνεργείας

working

Genitive

objective genitive (faith in the working)

ἐνέργεια: 'working, effective power, operation'; God's active power — the object/ground of the faith that saves.

τοῦ

of

Genitive

article

θεοῦ

God

Genitive

subjective genitive (God's working)

θεός: God; whose resurrection power is the pledge of the believer's own raising.

τοῦ

the (one)

Genitive

article (substantizes ptc.)

ἐγείραντος

who raised

Aor Act Ptc · Gen Sg Masc · ἐγείρω

attributive participle (modifies θεοῦ)

→ constative aorist

ἐγείρω: 'raise, wake'; the resurrection of Jesus as the paradigm and power of the believer's new life.

αὐτόν

him

Accusative

direct object (of the participle)

ἐκ

from

preposition + genitive (separation)

νεκρῶν

the dead

Genitive

object of ἐκ (separation/source)

νεκρός: 'dead (one)'; 'from among the dead' — the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

13 καὶ ὑμᾶς νεκροὺς ὄντας ἐν τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν, συνεζωοποίησεν ὑμᾶς σὺν αὐτῷ, χαρισάμενος ἡμῖν πάντα τὰ παραπτώματα,

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

UNION BENEFIT (MADE ALIVE) καὶ The main line resumes with God as subject: the spiritually dead, doubly disqualified (sinful and uncircumcised Gentiles), he co-vivified with Christ — the cause being a sweeping, gracious forgiveness of every trespass.

<p>καὶ and <i>coordinating conjunction</i></p>	<p>ὑμᾶς you Accusative <i>direct object (resumed by ὑμᾶς later, for emphasis)</i></p>	<p>νεκροὺς dead Accusative <i>predicate accusative (with ὄντας)</i> νεκρός: here figurative — spiritual death, lifelessness toward God, the state before grace.</p>	<p>ὄντας being Pres Act Ptc · Acc Pl Masc · εἰμί <i>adverbial ptc. (concessive: 'though dead')</i> → present (state)</p>
<p>ἐν in <i>preposition + dative (sphere/cause of death)</i></p>	<p>τοῖς the Dative <i>article</i></p>	<p>παραπτώμασιν trespasses Dative <i>dat. of sphere (realm of the death)</i> πράπτωμα: 'trespass, false step, transgression' (παρά + πίπτω); concrete acts of falling away from God's path.</p>	<p>καὶ and <i>coordinating conjunction</i></p>

τῆ

the

Dative

article

ἀκροβυστία

uncircumcision

Dative

dat. of sphere (coordinate)

ἀκροβυστία: 'uncircumcision, foreskin'; literal of Gentile status and figurative of an unregenerate, 'uncircumcised' heart.

τῆς

of the

Genitive

article

σαρκὸς

flesh

Genitive

attributive genitive

σάρξ: here the fallen nature/Gentile fleshly condition that left them outside the covenant.

ὑμῶν

your

Genitive

genitive of possession

συνεζωποίησεν

he made alive with

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · συζωποιάω

main verb (subject: God)

→ *constative aorist*

συζωποιάω: 'make alive together with' (σύν + ζωή + ποιέω); resurrection life imparted in union with Christ (cf. Eph 2:5).

ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

direct object (resumptive, emphatic)

σὺν

with

preposition + dative (association)

αὐτῷ

him

Dative

object of σύν (union with Christ)

χαρισάμενος

having forgiven

Aor Mid Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · χαρίζομαι

adverbial ptc. (means/cause of the vivification)

→ *constative aorist*

χαρίζομαι: 'give freely, forgive graciously' (from χάρις); forgiveness as a free gift — the ground of the new life (cf. 3:13).

ἡμῖν

us

Dative

dat. of advantage (shift to 'us': Paul includes all)

πάντα

all

Accusative

attributive adjective (emphatic)

πᾶς: 'all'; not one trespass excepted — the completeness of the pardon.

τὰ

the

Accusative

article

παραπτώματα

trespasses

Accusative

direct object (of the participle)

παράπτωμα: 'trespass'; the very offenses that constituted the death are wholly forgiven.

14 ἐξαλείψας τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν ὃ ἦν ὑπεναντίον ἡμῖν, καὶ αὐτὸ ἤρκεν ἐκ τοῦ μέσου προσηλώσας αὐτὸ τῷ σταυρῷ·

having erased the certificate of debt against us with its decrees, which stood opposed to us; and he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross;

MEANS OF FORGIVENESS (THE CANCELLED DEBT) ASYNDETON How the forgiveness was effected: God wiped clean the IOU of accusatory decrees that stood against us, and removed it utterly — fixing it to the cross of Christ where the debt was paid.

ἐξαλείψας

having erased

Aor Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · ἐξαλείφω

adverbial ptc. (means of forgiveness)

→ constative aorist

ἐξαλείφω: 'wipe out, erase, obliterate'; to sponge ink off papyrus — the record is blotted clean (cf. Acts 3:19).

τὸ

the

Accusative

article

καθ'

against

preposition + genitive (opposition)

κατά: here 'against' — the document stood as a charge against us.

ἡμῶν

us

Genitive

object of κατά (opposition)

χειρόγραφον

certificate of debt

Accusative

direct object of ἐξαλειψας

χειρόγραφον: 'handwritten document, bond, IOU' (χείρ + γράφω); a signed note of indebtedness — the legal record of our obligation/guilt.

τοῖς

with the

Dative

article

δόγμασιν

decrees

Dative

dat. of respect/means (the bond consisting of decrees)

δόγμα: 'decree, ordinance, regulation'; the legal demands that made up the binding record against us (cf. Eph 2:15).

ὃ

which

Nominative

relative pronoun (subject of ἦν)

ἦν

was

Impf Act Indic 3 Sg · εἶμι

main verb (rel. clause, copula)

→ descriptive imperfect (its standing condition)

ὑπεναντίον

opposed

Nominative

predicate adjective

ὑπεναντίος: 'hostile, opposed, set against' (intensive of ἐναντίος); the bond was actively against us, like a hostile witness.

ἡμῖν

to us

Dative

dat. of disadvantage

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

αὐτὸ

it

Accusative

direct object (resumptive, emphatic)

ἦρκεν

he has taken away

Perf Act Indic 3 Sg · αἴρω

main verb

→ consummative perfect (permanent removal)

αἴρω: 'take up, take away, remove'; the perfect stresses the abiding result — the bond is gone for good.

ἐκ

out of

preposition + genitive (separation)

τοῦ

the

Genitive

article

μέσου

midst

Genitive

object of ἐκ (ἐκ τοῦ μέσου = 'out of the way')

μέσος: 'middle, midst'; ἐκ τοῦ μέσου, an idiom — 'removed from the scene entirely.'

προσηλώσας

nailing

Aor Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · προσηλώω

adverbial ptc. (means of removal)

→ constative aorist

προσηλώω: 'nail to, fasten with nails' (πρός + ἥλος 'nail'); the bond posted/cancelled by being nailed up — vividly fused with the crucifixion.

αὐτό

it

Accusative

direct object (of the participle)

τῷ

to the

Dative

article

σταυρῷ

cross

Dative

dat. of place/destination (nailed to the cross)

σταυρός: 'cross'; the place where the debt was cancelled — Christ's death as the discharge of our obligation.

15 ἀπεκδυσάμενος τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας ἐδειγμάτισεν ἐν παρρησίᾳ, θριαμβεύσας αὐτοὺς ἐν αὐτῷ.

having disarmed the rulers and the authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in him.

VICTORY OVER THE POWERS **ASYNDETON** The cross's cosmic dimension: God stripped the hostile powers of their armor, exposed them to open shame, and led them as captives in Christ's triumphal procession — the very powers the rivals revered are vanquished.

ἀπεκδυσάμενος

having disarmed

Aor Mid Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · ἀπεκδύομαι
adverbial ptc. (means/attendant)

→ constative aorist

ἀπεκδύομαι: 'strip off (from oneself), divest, disarm'; God stripped the powers of their weapons/dignity, as one strips off armor (cf. ἀπέκδυσις v.11).

τὰς

the

Accusative
article

ἀρχὰς

rulers

Accusative
direct object

ἀρχή: 'rule, ruler, principality'; the spiritual powers (cf. v.10; 1:16) now defeated.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

τὰς

the

Accusative
article

ἐξουσίας

authorities

Accusative
direct object (coordinate)

ἐξουσία: 'authority, power'; the hostile cosmic authorities, paired with ἀρχαί.

ἐδειγμάτισεν

he made a spectacle

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · δειγματίζω
main verb

→ constative aorist

δειγματίζω: 'expose, make a public example/show of'; to display defeated foes openly to their shame.

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (manner)

παρρησία

openness

Dative
dat. of manner (openly, publicly)

παρρησία: 'boldness, openness, public display'; here 'in the open,' before all — the defeat was not hidden.

θριαμβεύσας

triumphing over

Aor Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · θριαμβεύω
adverbial ptc. (manner/means)

→ constative aorist

θριαμβεύω: 'lead in triumphal procession'; the Roman triumph image — the conqueror parading captive enemies (cf. 2 Cor 2:14).

αὐτούς

them

Accusative
direct object (the powers)

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (means/instrument)

αὐτῷ

him/it

Dative

object of ἐν (instrument: 'in/by it [the cross]' or 'in him')

ἐν αὐτῷ: 'in him' (Christ) or 'by it' (the cross); the triumph was won at and through the crucifixion.

16 Μὴ οὖν τις ὑμᾶς κρινέτω ἐν βρώσει καὶ ἐν πόσει ἢ ἐν μέρει ἑορτῆς ἢ νομηνίας ἢ σαββάτων·

Therefore let no one judge you in matters of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or sabbaths;

INFERENCE / PROHIBITION (LEGALISM) οὖν Drawing the practical conclusion from the believer's completeness and the powers' defeat: no one is entitled to sit in judgment over dietary or calendar observances — the legalist's tribunal is illegitimate.

Μὴ

not

negative particle (prohibition)

οὖν

therefore

inferential conjunction

οὖν: 'therefore'; the practical inference from vv.9–15.

τις

anyone

Nominative

subject

τις: 'anyone'; the indefinite would-be judge — the legalistic faction.

ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

direct object

κρινέτω

let judge

Pres Act Impv 3 Sg · κρίνω

main verb (3rd-person prohibition)

→ present imperative (prohibiting ongoing practice)

κρίνω: 'judge, condemn, pass verdict'; here 'take you to task, sit in judgment over.'

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (reference)

βρώσει

food

Dative

dat. of reference (sphere of judging)

βρώσις: 'eating, food'; dietary scruples — what may or may not be eaten.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (reference)

πόσει

drink

Dative

dat. of reference

πόσις: 'drinking, drink'; regulations about beverages — part of the ritual scrupulosity.

ἢ

or

disjunctive conjunction

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (reference)

μέρει

matter/respect

Dative

dat. of reference (ἐν μέρει = 'in respect of')

μέρος: 'part, share'; ἐν μέρει, idiom — 'with regard to, in the matter of.'

ἐορτῆς

a festival

Genitive

genitive (the matter in question)

ἐορτή: 'feast, festival'; the annual sacred festivals (Passover, Pentecost, etc.).

ἢ

or

disjunctive conjunction

νουμηνίας

a new moon

Genitive

genitive (coordinate)

νουμηνία: 'new moon'; the monthly festival (Num 28:11–15) — the trio (festival/new moon/sabbath) is a stock OT summary of sacred times.

ἢ

or

disjunctive conjunction

σαββάτων

sabbaths

Genitive

genitive (coordinate)

σάββατον: 'sabbath'; the weekly day — the plural form often denotes the single sabbath day.

17 ἃ ἔστιν σκιὰ τῶν μελλόντων, τὸ δὲ σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

which things are a shadow of what was to come, but the body belongs to Christ.

GROUND (SHADOW VS. SUBSTANCE) ASYNDETON The reason the legalist's verdict carries no weight: the observances were only the cast shadow of coming realities; the solid body that throws the shadow belongs to Christ — to grasp him is to possess the substance.

ἃ

which things

Nominative

relative pronoun (subject; neut. pl. summing the list)

ἔστιν

are

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · εἶμι

main verb (copula; neut. pl. subj. + sg. verb)

→ stative present

σκιὰ

shadow

Nominative

predicate nominative

σκιὰ: 'shadow, foreshadowing'; an outline cast ahead — real but insubstantial, pointing beyond itself (cf. Heb 10:1).

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article (substantizes ptc.)

μελλόντων

things to come

Pres Act Ptc · Gen Pl Neut · μέλλω

substantival participle (objective genitive)

→ present (of impending reality)

μέλλω: 'be about to, be destined'; 'the coming things' — the realities, now arrived in Christ, that the rites prefigured.

τὸ

the

Nominative

article

δὲ

but

adversative conjunction

δέ: 'but'; the contrast between shadow and the solid reality.

σῶμα

body/substance

Nominative

subject (verbless: 'the body [is] Christ's')

σῶμα: 'body'; here the substance/solid object that casts the shadow — and perhaps a hint of the church as Christ's body.

τοῦ

of

Genitive

article

Χριστοῦ

Christ

Genitive

possessive genitive (the substance belongs to Christ)

Χριστός: the reality is Christ's — the shadows find their fulfillment and ownership in him.

18 μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς καταβραβεύετω θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ καὶ θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἃ ἑώρακεν ἐμβατεύων, εἰκῆ φυσιούμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦς τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ,

Let no one disqualify you, delighting in false humility and the worship of angels, dwelling on the things he has seen, puffed up without cause by the mind of his flesh,

PROHIBITION (ASCETIC-MYSTICAL ERROR) **ASYNDETON** A second 'let no one' targets the mystical-ascetic faction: would-be umpires who disqualify believers, prizing self-abasement and angel-worship, parading visionary experiences, yet inflated by a merely fleshly mind.

μηδεὶς

no one

Nominative

subject

μηδεὶς: 'no one'; the rival arbiter, again unnamed.

ὑμᾶς

you

Accusative

direct object

καταβραβεύετω

let disqualify

Pres Act Impv 3 Sg · καταβραβεύω

main verb (3rd-person prohibition)

→ present imperative (prohibition)

καταβραβεύω: 'rule against, decide against, rob of a prize' (κατά + βραβεύω 'act as umpire'); athletic image — let no self-appointed umpire deprive you of the prize.

θέλων

delighting/taking pleasure

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · θέλω

adverbial ptc. (manner; θέλων ἐν, a Semitism: 'delighting in')

→ present (characteristic)

θέλω: 'wish, will'; with ἐν, a Hebraism (cf. LXX) — 'taking delight/pleasure in,' bent on.

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (sphere of the delight)

ταπεινοφροσύνη

humility

Dative

dat. of sphere (object of the delight)

ταπεινοφροσύνη: 'lowliness of mind, humility'; normally a virtue (3:12), but here a counterfeit, ascetic self-abasement (perhaps fasting/mortification).

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

θρησκεία

worship

Dative

dat. of sphere (coordinate)

θρησκεία: 'religious worship, cultic service'; the external practice of religion — here misdirected.

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article

ἀγγέλων

angels

Genitive

genitive (objective: worship directed to angels)

ἄγγελος: 'angel, messenger'; veneration of angelic beings — usurping the honor due to Christ alone, the Head (v.19).

ἃ

the things which

Accusative

relative pronoun (object of ἐώρακεν)

ἐώρακεν

he has seen

Perf Act Indic 3 Sg · ὁράω

main verb (rel. clause)

→ extensive perfect (abiding claim of visions)

ὁράω: 'see'; 'the things he has seen' — claimed visionary experiences on which he presumes.

ἐμβατεύων

dwelling on/entering into

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · ἐμβατεύω

adverbial ptc. (manner)

→ present (ongoing)

ἐμβατεύω: 'enter into, take one's stand on, investigate minutely'; perhaps a technical term for initiation — he 'goes deep' into his visions.

εἰκῆ

without cause

adverb (manner)

εἰκῆ: 'in vain, groundlessly, without reason'; his inflation has no real basis.

φυσιούμενος

puffed up

Pres Pass Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · φυσιόω

adverbial ptc. (manner/result)

→ present (ongoing state)

φυσιόω: 'inflate, puff up' (from φύσα 'bellows'); conceited swelling — pride masquerading as humility (cf. 1 Cor 8:1).

ὑπὸ

by

preposition + genitive (agency)

τοῦ

the

Genitive

article

νοῦς

mind

Genitive

object of ὑπό (agent of the puffing-up)

νοῦς: 'mind, understanding'; here a mind ruled by the flesh — the source of his self-conceit.

τῆς

of the

Genitive

article

σαρκὸς

flesh

Genitive

attributive genitive (the fleshly mind)

σάρξ: here ethical — the unspiritual nature; ironically, his 'spirituality' is fleshly to the core.

αὐτοῦ

his

Genitive

genitive of possession

19 καὶ οὐ κρατῶν τὴν κεφαλὴν, ἐξ οὗ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα διὰ τῶν ἀφῶν καὶ συνδέσμων ἐπιχορηγούμενον καὶ συμβιβαζόμενον αὖξει τὴν αὖξησιν τοῦ θεοῦ.

and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, supplied and held together through its joints and ligaments, grows with the growth that is from God.

DIAGNOSIS (SEVERED FROM THE HEAD) καὶ The root failure of the visionary: he has let go of the Head, Christ. Yet only from the Head does the whole body — nourished and bound by its ligaments — receive its true, divinely-given growth.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

οὐ

not

negative particle

κρατῶν

holding fast

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Sg Masc · κρατέω

adverbial ptc. (the decisive failure)

→ present (ongoing)

κρατέω: 'grasp, hold fast, hold firmly to'; not maintaining his grip on Christ — the fatal flaw beneath the piety.

τὴν

the

Accusative

article

κεφαλήν

Head

Accusative

direct object

κεφαλή: 'head'; Christ as both the supreme authority and the living source from which the body lives (cf. v.10; 1:18).

ἐξ

from

preposition + genitive (source)

οὗ

whom

Genitive

relative pronoun (masc., agreeing with Christ behind 'Head')

οὗ: masculine 'whom' though κεφαλήν is feminine — the agreement is with Christ, the Head's referent.

πᾶν

whole

Nominative

attributive adjective

τὸ

the

Nominative

article

σῶμα

body

Nominative

subject

σῶμα: 'body'; the church as Christ's organic body, dependent wholly on the Head for life and growth.

διὰ

through

preposition + genitive (means)

τῶν

the

Genitive

article

ἀφῶν

joints

Genitive

object of διὰ (means)

ἀφή: 'joint, ligament, connection' (point of contact); the body's connective links through which supply passes.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

συνδέσμων

ligaments

Genitive

object of διὰ (coordinate)

σύνδεσμος: 'bond, ligament, that which binds together'; the sinews holding the body in unity (cf. 3:14).

ἐπιχορηγούμενον

being supplied

Pres Pass Ptc · Nom Sg Neut · ἐπιχορηγέω

attributive/adverbial ptc. (modifies σῶμα)

→ present (ongoing supply)

ἐπιχορηγέω: 'supply, provide generously' (orig. of funding a chorus); the lavish provision the body receives from the Head.

<p>καὶ and <i>coordinating conjunction</i></p>	<p>συμβιβάζομενον being knit together Pres Pass Ptc · Nom Sg Neut · συμβιβάζω <i>attributive/adverbial ptc. (modifies σῶμα)</i> → present (ongoing) συμβιβάζω: 'bring together, unite, knit'; the body welded into coherent unity (cf. v.2).</p>	<p>αὖξει grows Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · αὖξάνω <i>main verb</i> → customary/durative present αὖξάνω: 'grow, increase'; organic growth — what the body does when joined to its Head.</p>	<p>τὴν the Accusative <i>article</i></p>
<p>αὕξησιν growth Accusative <i>cognate accusative (grows the growth)</i> αὕησις: 'growth, increase'; the cognate noun — 'grows with the growth that comes from God.'</p>	<p>τοῦ of Genitive <i>article</i></p>	<p>θεοῦ God Genitive <i>genitive of source (growth from God)</i> θεός: God; the ultimate origin of all true growth — not the techniques of the visionaries.</p>	

20 Εἰ ἀπεθάνετε σὺν Χριστῷ ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων τοῦ κόσμου, τί ὡς ζῶντες ἐν κόσμῳ δογματίζεσθε·

If you died with Christ to the elemental principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you submit to regulations:

CONDITIONAL REBUKE (ASCETICISM) **Εἰ** The final movement: a first-class condition assumed true. Since they died with Christ to the world's elements, submission to its taboos is a glaring inconsistency — living as if still belonging to the realm they died out of.

Εἰ

if

conjunction (first-class condition, assumed true)

ει: 'if'; with the indicative, a condition treated as fact — 'since you did die.'

ἀπεθάνετε

you died

Aor Act Indic 2 Pl · ἀποθνήσκω

verb of protasis

→ constative aorist (the death-with-Christ event)

ἀποθνήσκω: 'die'; the believer's death with Christ to the old order (cf. v.12; Rom 6:8).

σὺν

with

preposition + dative (association)

Χριστῷ

Christ

Dative

object of σὺν (union in death)

ἀπὸ

from

preposition + genitive (separation: died away from)

ἀπό: 'from, away from'; with 'die,' marks separation — dead and so released from the elements' jurisdiction.

τῶν

the

Genitive

article

στοιχείων

elemental principles

Genitive

object of ἀπό (separation)

στοιχεῖον: 'elemental principle/spirit' (cf. v.8); the regulatory powers of the old age, to which they have died.

τοῦ

of the

Genitive

article

κόσμου

world

Genitive

genitive (sphere of the elements)

κόσμος: 'world'; the present passing order whose rules no longer bind those who died with Christ.

τί

why

interrogative adverb (expostulation)

τί: 'why?'; the reproachful question exposing the inconsistency.

ὥς

as though

conjunction (manner, hypothetical)

ὥς: 'as, as though'; here marking a false supposition — 'as if you still belonged to the world.'

ζῶντες

living

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Pl Masc · ζάω

adverbial ptc. (manner/condition)

→ present (ongoing)

ζάω: 'live'; 'living in the world' — conducting yourselves as if the old order still held sway.

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (sphere)

κόσμῳ

the world

Dative

dat. of sphere

δογματίζεσθε

do you submit to regulations

Pres Mid/Pass Indic 2 Pl · δογματίζω

main verb (the reproachful question)

→ present (ongoing practice)

δογματίζω: 'subject oneself to / be subjected to decrees' (from δόγμα, v.14); 'why let yourselves be regulated?'

21 Μὴ ἅψη μηδὲ γεύση μηδὲ θίγῃς,

"Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch?"

QUOTED REGULATIONS ASYNDETON Paul mockingly quotes the ascetic taboos themselves — three escalating prohibitions ('don't handle, don't taste, don't even touch') exposing the petty fussiness of the rules.

Μὴ

not

negative particle (prohibition)

ἅψη

handle

Aor Mid Subj 2 Sg · ἅπτω

prohibitive subjunctive (quoted rule)

→ ingressive aorist subjunctive (prohibition)

ἅπτω (mid. ἅπτομαι): 'touch, take hold of, handle'; the strongest of the three — 'do not so much as lay hold.'

μηδὲ

nor

negative coordinating conjunction

γεύση

taste

Aor Mid Subj 2 Sg · γεύομαι

prohibitive subjunctive (quoted rule)

→ ingressive aorist subjunctive (prohibition)

γεύομαι: 'taste, partake of; dietary prohibition — abstaining from foods.'

μηδὲ

nor

negative coordinating conjunction

θίγης

touch

Aor Act Subj 2 Sg · θιγγάνω

prohibitive subjunctive (quoted rule)

→ ingressive aorist subjunctive
(prohibition)

θιγγάνω: 'touch lightly, come into contact with'; the gentlest contact — even a light touch forbidden, climaxing the absurdity.

22 ἅ ἐστιν πάντα εἰς φθορὰν τῇ ἀποχρήσει, κατὰ τὰ ἐντάλματα καὶ διδασκαλίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων;

(referring to things that all perish with use) — according to the commands and teachings of men?

REFUTATION (PERISHABLE, MERELY HUMAN) ASYNDETON Two devastating observations puncture the taboos: their objects are perishable consumables that vanish in the using, and the rules themselves are merely human commandments — echoing Isaiah 29:13 (cf. Mark 7:7).

ἅ

which things

Nominative

relative pronoun (subject; the forbidden objects)

ἐστιν

are

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · εἶμι

main verb (copula; neut. pl. subj. + sg. verb)

→ gnomic present

πάντα

all

Nominative

appositional/predicate adjective ('all of them')

πᾶς: 'all'; every one of the forbidden things shares this fate.

εἰς

for/unto

preposition + accusative (destiny/result)

εἰς φθορὰν: 'destined for destruction' — they end in perishing.

φθορὰν

decay/destruction

Accusative

object of εἰς (destiny)

φθορά: 'corruption, decay, destruction'; these foods simply rot or are digested away — too trivial to determine holiness.

τῇ

in the

Dative

article

ἀποχρήσει

using

Dative

dat. of means/instrument (perish by being used)

ἀπόχρησις: 'using up, consumption' (rare); the very act of consuming them destroys them — they perish in the using.

κατὰ

according to

preposition + accusative (standard/source)

τὰ

the

Accusative

article

ἐντάλματα

commands

Accusative

object of κατὰ (standard)

ἐντάλμα: 'commandment, injunction'; echoing Isa 29:13 LXX ('teaching as doctrines the commands of men').

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

διδασκαλίας

teachings

Accusative

object of κατὰ (coordinate)

διδασκαλία: 'teaching, instruction'; the doctrinal content of the taboos — again, merely human.

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article

ἀνθρώπων

men

Genitive

subjective/source genitive (human origin)

ἄνθρωπος: 'human being'; the fatal pedigree — like v.8, of men, not of God or Christ.

23 ἅτινά ἐστιν λόγον μὲν ἔχοντα σοφίας ἐν ἐθελοθρησκία καὶ ταπεινοφροσύνη καὶ ἀφειδία σώματος, οὐκ ἐν τιμῇ τινι πρὸς πλησμονὴν τῆς σαρκός.

These things indeed have a reputation of wisdom in self-made religion and false humility and severity to the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

VERDICT (NO VALUE) ASYNDETON The chapter's closing verdict, notoriously difficult in syntax: for all their veneer of wisdom — self-imposed devotion, humility, bodily harshness — these regulations have no power against fleshly indulgence. Asceticism cannot do what only union with Christ accomplishes.

ἅτινά

which things

Nominative

indefinite relative pronoun (subject; 'the very things that')

ὅστις: qualitative relative — 'such things as,' classing the regulations by their nature.

ἐστιν

are

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · εἶμι

main verb (copula; periphrasis with ἔχοντα)

→ gnomic present

λόγον

a reputation/appearance

Accusative

direct object of ἔχοντα

λόγος: here 'reputation, show, appearance' (λόγον ἔχειν, 'have a name for'); the mere semblance of wisdom, not the reality.

μὲν

indeed

particle (μὲν, anticipating a contrast)

μὲν: 'on the one hand'; sets up an implied 'but' — appearance of wisdom, yet no real power.

ἔχοντα

having

Pres Act Ptc · Nom Pl Neut · ἔχω

periphrastic ptc. (with ἐστιν)

→ present (ongoing)

ἔχω: 'have, hold'; in periphrasis — 'are having,' i.e. possess (a reputation for wisdom).

σοφίας

of wisdom

Genitive

objective/content genitive (reputation of wisdom)

σοφία: 'wisdom'; ironic — the rules look wise but the true treasures of wisdom are in Christ alone (v.3).

ἐν

in

preposition + dative (sphere/means of the reputation)

ἐθελοθρησκία

self-made religion

Dative

dat. of sphere

ἐθελοθρησκία: 'self-chosen/would-be worship' (ἐθέλω 'will' + θρησκεία); a coinage — religion of one's own devising, self-imposed.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

ταπεινοφροσύνη

humility

Dative

dat. of sphere (coordinate)

ταπεινοφροσύνη: here again the counterfeit, self-imposed 'humility' of the ascetics (cf. v.18).

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

ἀφειδία

severe treatment

Dative

dat. of sphere (coordinate)

ἀφειδία: 'unsparing/harsh treatment' (ἀ- + φείδομαι 'spare'); 'no mercy on the body' — ascetic mortification.

σώματος

of the body

Genitive

objective genitive (severity toward the body)

σῶμα: 'body'; the object of the harsh self-discipline.

οὐκ

not

negative particle

ἐν

in/of

preposition + dative (value/estimation)

ἐν τιμῇ: 'of value, in honor'; the disputed clause — 'not in any honor/value,' i.e. worthless for the stated end.

τιμῇ

value/honor

Dative

dat. (predicate of worth)

τιμῇ: 'honor, value, price'; the regulations carry no real worth for the purpose claimed.

τινι

any

Dative

indefinite adjective (modifies τιμῇ)

τις: 'any'; 'not of any value at all.'

πρός

against

preposition + accusative (purpose/reference: 'with a view to checking')

πρός: here 'against, with reference to'; they avail nothing toward curbing fleshly indulgence.

πλησμονήν

indulgence/gratification

Accusative

object of πρὸς

πλησμονή: 'satiety, gratification, indulgence'; the satisfying of fleshly appetite — which asceticism is powerless to subdue.

τῆς

of the

Genitive

article

σαρκός

flesh

Genitive

objective genitive (gratification of the flesh)

σάρξ: here ethical — the fallen self; ironically, rigorous rule-keeping may even feed its pride rather than curb it.

On the text. The Greek follows the standard critical text of Colossians 2, uniform in its main wording across the modern editions (NA28, SBLGNT, THGNT) and itself an ancient, public-domain text; NA28's distinctively copyrighted critical apparatus is not reproduced. Verse punctuation and paragraphing are editorial and conventional. At v.2 the text printed reads 'the mystery of God, namely Christ' (τοῦ θεοῦ, Χριστοῦ), the reading adopted by the modern editions out of a notoriously tangled variation; the many longer expansions (e.g. 'of God, even of the Father, and of Christ') are later. At v.7 'in it' (ἐν αὐτῇ) is read with the editions; some witnesses omit. At v.13 the manuscripts vary between 'forgiving us' (ἡμῶν) and 'you' (ὁμῶν); the first-plural is followed. At v.18 the difficult ἃ ἑώρακεν ('things he has seen') is printed without the negative ('not') that some witnesses insert.

On the labels. Parsing gives Tense·Voice·Mood·Person·Number (+ Case·Number·Gender for participles) and lemma. The *syntactic-function* and **semantic-force** tiers follow standard intermediate-grammar categories (e.g. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*); both involve interpretive judgment, and the majority reading has been chosen where opinions differ. Lexical notes condense commonly cited data (etymology, sense range, synonym contrasts, NT frequency, OT/LXX echoes) and are no substitute for a lexicon.

On the discourse tier. Discourse structure operates above the word, so it is shown at the clause/verse level (the connective, the relation it signals, and the role of the clause) and summarized in the chapter outline. Relation labels, any proposed chiasm, and the paragraph divisions reflect a common reading of the argument; other discourse analyses segment and label some relations differently.