

Christian Philosophy

Every person views their life through a filter. For example, optimists see opportunity in every situation they face, while pessimists can only see defeat and failure. Both could be facing the same circumstances, but their filter determines how they respond. That filter could also be called their philosophy.

A philosophy is simply a way of thinking. And whether you know it or not, the direction that your life is going has been influenced and controlled by your personal philosophy or your dominant way of thinking. Proverbs 23:7 says, “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.” If that is true—and it is—then it makes sense to be sure that you are viewing your life through the right filter.

Colossians 2:8 says, “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

In this scripture, Paul was giving the believers in Colosse a warning. The word “beware” is being used in the sense of a sentry on guard duty. It’s a military term talking about being on guard, being on the lookout. And the word “spoil” is not talking about food; it’s talking about the spoils of war that go to the victor—the gold and silver and land.

Paul was saying to be on guard lest you be overcome by an Enemy that will strip you of your treasure, which is the truth that God has placed in your heart. That Enemy, the devil, wants to steal what God has given to you, using the world’s philosophies and the religious traditions of man.

Jesus referred to this in Matthew 15:8-9, which say, “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”

The people believed the commandments of men more than the Word of God. They maintained a form of godliness but denied the power of the Gospel of Jesus (2 Tim. 3:5). Jewish leaders were saying that Jesus was not enough, that the people still needed to observe rituals and ceremony, and those requirements were making the Word of God of no effect in their lives: “Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition” (Matt. 15:6).

They were operating according to a philosophy, but the wrong one. Many Christians are doing the same thing today. They have bits and pieces of the Word of God filed away in their brains, but they have not meditated on them enough to change their core beliefs. When the pressures of life come, they are able to quote dozens of scriptures claiming God’s promises, but they act according to their heart values.

A good example of this can be seen in the life of one of our recent Bible college students. She’s in her sixties and a really great woman of God. She had listened to my teachings on prosperity and could quote all the related verses. Intellectually, she understood everything I taught.

But at the heart level, she still had a poverty mentality, or you could say a poverty philosophy. She had been raised by parents who went through the Depression and had successfully indoctrinated her with the fear of lack. She was so fearful that she stored and hoarded everything, even keeping her money at home, not trusting banks.

Although she had accumulated some money with her philosophy, she still saw herself as poor, and it affected all of her decision making. Her philosophy, or way of thinking, was actually holding her captive and limiting what God could do through her life.

If at your core, you have a philosophy—a way of thinking—that is negative, it will manifest in your life. If you see yourself as broke, sick, or a failure, it will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. On the other hand, if at your core you see yourself as prosperous, healthy, and successful, that will be what manifests in your life. So, it's important that your philosophy is based on the truth of God's Word.

It's through the subtle deception of human philosophy that Satan tries to deceive us. The first example of that can be found in Genesis 3:1-5.

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Now think about this: It says that the serpent was more subtle. The word subtle means crafty, sly, cunning, and deceptive. He wasn't using a frontal attack to overpower Adam and Eve; he was attempting to change their way of thinking, their philosophy.

Adam and Eve began with a pure philosophy. They were completely dependent upon God and never questioned His wisdom and goodness. Satan first caused them to question God's word, and then he caused them to question God's goodness. He beguiled them, which is what Paul was writing about in 2 Corinthians 11:3 – "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

Satan has never changed his tactics. He is at work through our society and culture trying to create a philosophy that is contrary to God's Word. He is always trying to devalue the finished work of Jesus and His Word. Sad to say, it's working. Even most Christians today do not have their belief systems firmly in place. They are influenced more by culture, motion pictures, their upbringing, or the opinions of others than by the Word of God.

Many of you reading this letter know what the Scripture says. You have read that God wants you to prosper and be in health even as your soul prospers. You have read that by His stripes, you were healed and that Jesus came to give you life and life more abundantly. Yet when you look in the mirror, you see a failure, a loser, or a sick and defeated person. Why is that?

It's because of your core philosophy. Maybe your parents told you that you would never amount to anything, or a previous mate convinced you that you were worthless. Or perhaps a religious leader told you that you were cursed because of your behavior, and you believed him or her. Whatever the root cause for your belief (philosophy), you are being spoiled, and your treasure is being stolen.

If that is you, then begin changing the way you think. Study and meditate in the Word of God, and change your basic core beliefs. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

In my own life, as I began to change the way I thought, it opened the door to the blessings that God had for me all along. I was actually limiting God by my small thinking; i.e., my philosophy. You may be doing the same thing. If you are, don't waste any more time—change your mind.

Every believer needs to have a clear biblical philosophy, and it must be based solely on the Word of God. Without it, you will be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.