EIGHT Mistakes Believers have made with **Colossians 2:14-17**

1. The phrase *Handwriting of ordinances* means the Law of Moses, or the "Ceremonial Law."

2. The Law of Moses is *against us, contrary to us*, just read **Deuteronomy 31:26, Ezekiel 20:25**.

3. Paul was saying not to let fellow believers (including himself) judge you.

4. Some even say that Paul nailed the clean/unclean flesh statute (**Leviticus 11** and **Deuteronomy 14:3-21**) to the cross.

5. Paul nailed the festival Sabbaths (and the new moon observance which tracked the festival calendar) to the cross.

6. The phrase "Sabbath *days*" means the ceremonial or annual Sabbaths.

7. **Colossians 2** says the meat and drink, holydays, new moons, and ceremonial Sabbaths were shadows of things to come. They all met anti-type at the crucifixion.

8. Bad grammar—see below.

Some try to nail the "ordinances" to the cross because Passover is an ordinance (**Exodus 12:12-14**). This argument fails when you realize that the verb is singular not plural. If you presented a school paper that said "The ordinances was nailed to the cross," you would have been penalized for bad grammar, yet this is precisely what many are doing. They are forcing their theology onto the text. Please note also that "of ordinances" is a prepositional phrase and cannot be the subject of the verb. The "handwriting" was nailed to the cross and it was the "handwriting" that was against us. This is the handwritten record of our sin (made by our recording angel) that is "nailed" when we repent.

Here's another problem: notice the pronoun, *and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.* If "ordinances" were in reference here, Paul would have said "and took them out of the say, nailing them to his cross." Now, read **Colossians 2:14** again!

Rebuttals to these diabolical schemes, misinterpretations, misrepresentations, and poor exegesis on reverse.

1. The phrase "handwriting of ordinances" is translated from *Cheirographon tois dogmasine* and does not appear anywhere else in Scripture. We have no second witness. It does not mean the Law of Moses or the ceremonial law because the phrase "law of Moses" is in the Greek Old Testament, (the Septuagint) many times and *Cheirographon tois dogmasine* is never used. Also, the Greek word for law (nomos) does not appear anywhere in the whole book of Colossians. However, from archeological digs scholars have learned that this phrase is a Hebrew idiom, a business term meaning, Bond or Certificate of debt with it's requirements. It is an IOU. What record of debt is recorded against you in heaven? What debt that you can never repay would you like to have blotted out? **Psalm 51:1**, **Psalm 51:9**, **Isaiah 43:25**, **Isaiah 44:22**. Peter agrees…**Acts 3:19**.

2. The Law of Moses is not against us....it is a **witness** against us. Every law, including the Decalogue is a witness against you if you transgress against it. A law points out our lack. Observing the statutes is for our good. **Deuteronomy 6:24**, **Deuteronomy 10:13**, **Nehemiah 9:13**. Observing any righteous law is always in our best interest. It is not legalism. It is obedience. Legalism means doing what is right. If this creates a problem, perhaps you prefer illegalism?

3. Paul was saying not to let the false teachers with their vain precepts judge the service of the Colossians (which Paul had taught them). A modern application is to be made. It is only understood if the added italicized words (*days* in verse 16 and *is* in verse 17) are removed. Scholars say that the line "Which are a shadow of things to come" is a parenthetical statement. Meaning that if you put it in parentheses that it will be better understood. *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath* (*which are a shadow of things to come*), *but the body of Christ*. Do not let anyone **BUT** the body of righteous believers judge you.

4. Do you think Paul, a Pharisee, would tear off a part of the Law of Moses? **Matthew 5:17**, *Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.* Destroying one jot or tittle of the Torah would make Paul (or anyone else) a false teacher, **Isaiah 8:20**--*To the Law* [Torah] *and to the testimony* [of the prophets], *if they speak not according to this word, there is no light in them*. This word law (nomos) is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word Torah. (The books Moses wrote) Nowhere in Scripture are the health laws repealed. *Fulfilled* means He came to show us how it was to be successfully observed, not destroyed. Peter did not believe that the dietary laws had been abrogated. See **Acts 10**, paying close attention to **Acts 10:17-28** and also **Acts 11:1-18** as he gives his interpretation of the vision he received.

5. Passover will be observed in heaven, **Mark 14:22-25**. The Holy Spirit (Pentecost) still has not fallen in full measure on the assembly of believers. Judgment (Day of Atonement) is still not complete. The final harvest, Second Coming (Feast of Tabernacles) has not taken place. The new moons will be observed in the new earth, **Isaiah 66:22-23**. Has type met antitype for Paul to so brashly nail them to the stake? Paul continued to keep the feasts well after the Crucifixion: **Acts 18:21**, **20:16**, **27:9**, **I Corinthians 5:7-8**, and **16:8**.

6. In every other place in Scripture that "*Sabbath days*" is used as a phrase it refers to the weekly Sabbath. (**Matthew 12:5**, **12:10**, **12:12**, **Mark 3:4**, **Luke 4:31**, **6:2**, **6:9**, and **Acts 17:2**). Why would **Colossians 2** be the exception? Fact is, *days* is in italics--therefore is added text and should be immediately discarded. It should read as Sabbaths. (Note: The term *ceremonial Sabbath* or *annual Sabbath* is foreign to Scripture.) Paul was actually referring to several Old Testament passages: **I Chronicles 23:31**, **II Chronicles 2:4**, **8:13**, **31:3**, **Nehemiah 10:33**, **Ezekiel 45:17** and **Hosea 2:11** where the three different appointments in time are listed together: annual feast days, monthly new moons, and weekly Sabbath. If Paul was referring to the annual Sabbaths, he was needlessly repeating himself. Feast days, new moons, feast days.

7. Sorry, Paul rightly said that they ARE shadows of things to come. He wrote this book about 33 years after the crucifixion and he was speaking in the present future tense, not past tense. They point to some yet future fulfillment.