



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 167 - Keeping to the Straight and Narrow

(Colossians)

The Drunken Peasant

Martin Luther described the church as a drunken peasant. It spends little time in the middle of the saddle where it belongs and, instead, leans to one side or the other and is constantly in danger of falling off the horse.

- How have you seen this tendency play out in American religion today?
- Why are pastors and theologians so important for the church?
- Why is it important to have knowledgeable laypeople holding their pastors and theologians accountable to the teachings of Scripture?

The New Heresy: Gnosticism

As Paul went on his missionary journeys, he spoke first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles. These Roman citizens and subjects spoke Greek and were influenced by Greek philosophy. It shouldn't be surprising that some of those Greek ideas found their way into early Christian congregations.

- Which unscriptural values from our society have a hold on your family and friends?
- What values of our society are exerting an influence in your church?

One of Gnosticism's lasting effects on the church continues today. It is present when we place more emphasis on our soul going to heaven at death than upon our bodily resurrection and eternal life on the new earth when Jesus returns.

- Why is it important to stress "the resurrection of the body" and "the life of the world to come"?
- What difference does it make to our stewardship of the earth when we recall it is God's creation that He still cares for and preserves—and that Christ Jesus will perfectly restore it when He returns?

They're back

The Gentile members of the church at Colossae were being influenced by Gnostic philosophies, which Jewish Christians in the congregation would more easily recognize and expose. The Jewish Christians were being influenced by the Judaizers, who wanted Gentile Christians to observe the rules and traditions of Judaism.

- Why was it so hard for Jews to shake the legalism and works-righteousness behavior that had taken control of their religion?
- What things in our congregational life can lead us to legalism and works righteousness?
- How can we enjoy the good traditions our churches have handed down through the ages, without being entrapped by a false sense of righteousness through them?