

COLOSSIANS 2:15-23

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you. Such people also go into great detail about what they have seen, and their unspiritual minds puff them up with idle notions. They have lost connection with the head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: “Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!”? These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

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*sarx (flesh) + plēsmonē = to indulge,
satisfy*

The Law of Linearity:

...there is an A that leads you to the B you want. Figure out what A is, do it, and you'll have the life you most desire. The pressure's on.

The spiritual journey is not about living as we should so life works as we want. It's not a linear path.... It's not about growing up into maturity of a good self-image and developing the energy to do good things. It is about growing down into the brokenness of self-despair and deepening our awareness of how poorly we love compared to Trinitarian standards. It's not about working hard to get it right so we can present ourselves before God to receive the blessings we desire;...

... it is about coming before Him as we are, honestly pretending about nothing, becoming increasingly convinced that we can't get it right though we try as hard as we can, then listening for the whisper of the Spirit, "Welcome! You're home. You're loved. You'll be empowered to speak with your unique voice as you hear the Voice of God singing over you with great love.

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For many months I was not sure if I would be following or betraying my vocation by leaving. The outer voices kept saying, “You can do so much good here...The inner voice kept saying, “What good I it to preach the Gospel to others while losing our own soul?” Finally, I realized that my increasing inner darkness, my feelings of being rejected by some of my students...my inordinate need for affirmation and affection, and my deep sense of not belonging were clear signs that I was not following the way of God’s Spirit.

The fruits of the Spirit are not sadness, loneliness, and separation, but joy, solitude, and community. After I decided to leave Harvard, I was surprised that it had taken me so long to come to that decision.”

Henry Nouwen

The Road to Daybreak

**The following slides are formatted
without backgrounds for printing**

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