

Colossians Series

Lesson #48

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Dean Bible Ministries

www.deanbible.org

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A landscape photograph showing a field of bare trees in the foreground, a dark hill in the middle ground, and a range of mountains with some snow in the background under a clear blue sky.

COLOSSIANS: Jesus Christ is All-Sufficient

**Are We “Holding Fast”
to Christ?**

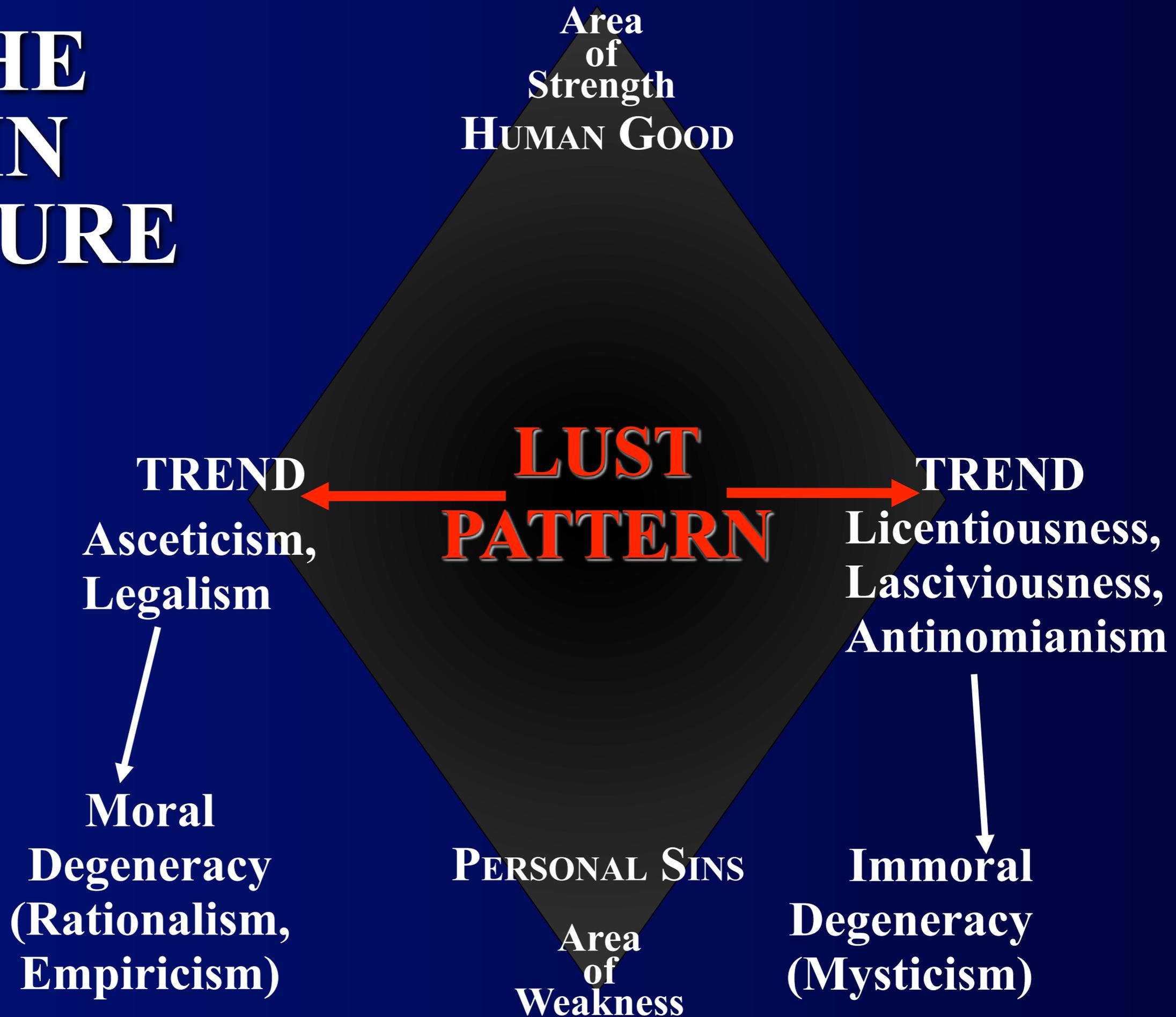
Colossians 2:16–19

Col. 2:6, “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

Col. 2:7, “rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

Col. 2:8, “Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”

THE SIN NATURE



The Basis of Knowledge

Autonomous Systems Viewpoint	SYSTEM	STARTING POINT	METHOD
	RATIONALISM	Innate ideas Faith in human ability.	Independent use of logic & reason
	EMPIRICISM	Sense perceptions External experience; Scientific method; Faith in human ability	Independent use of logic & reason
	MYSTICISM	Inner, private experience; intuition Faith in human ability	Independent, nonlogical, nonrational, nonverifiable
	REVELATION	Objective revelation of God	Dependent use of logic and reason

Reverse-Engineering the Colossian Heresy

- 1. Philosophy according to the traditions of men. Pre-socratic elements: earth, fire, water, air; Platonic rationalism, Aristotelian empiricism, Stoicism, Epicureanism. Col. 2:8**
- 2. Some element of circumcision. Col. 2:11**
- 3. Asceticism elements: dietary regulations, feast days related to new moons and sabbath observance. Col. 2:16, 20–21**
- 4. Emphasis on self-denial, pseudo-humility. Col. 2:16**
- 5. Worship of angels, either worshipping angels, or worshipping like angels. Col. 2:18**

Reverse-Engineering the Colossian Heresy

6. **Seeking knowledge of what has not been revealed.
Col. 2:18**
7. **Giving up sufficiency of Christ, which includes sufficiency of revelation. Eternal Truth has many sources.**
8. **Emphasis on the *stoichea*, the elemental principles of the world. Fire, wind, earth, water.**
9. **All of these proceed from a fundamental emphasis on self-indulgence.**
10. **The issue is authority. Who is the ultimate determiner of truth? God, or the creature?**

Reverse-Engineering the Colossian Heresy

Mysticism

“an individual, emotional sense of identification with no specific expressible content in which language points beyond itself to an inner, non-rational, subjective experience of something that can be indicated only in paradoxical statements and that transcends all empirical content as ultimate reality.”

Reverse-Engineering the Colossian Heresy

Mysticism

Rejects meaning through logic or reason.

Motivated by a desire for a more intimate connection with the “divine.”

Embraces a feeling of liberation from restraint, sometimes epistemological, sometimes ethical.

Often connected with forms of asceticism, self-denial, but may also be connected with some types of licentiousness and sensuality.

Almost all religious systems develop some type of mysticism, which rejects elements of the formal absolutes of the religion. Sufism in Islam, Charismatic/Pentecostalism, monasticism in Christianity.

Reverse-Engineering the Colossian Heresy

Jewish mysticism: Essene mysticism, *merkebah* mysticism

Greek philosophies: rationalism, empiricism, stoicism, epicureanism, skepticism

Gnostic religions: mystery religions, Dionysius, Eleusinian, Orphic, Cybele-Attis cult

Persian dualism

Asceticism

Col. 2:16, “Therefore let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

Col. 2:17, “which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

Col. 2:18, “Let no one cheat you of your reward, [by] taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

Col. 2:19, “and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.”

1 Cor. 3:5, “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one?”

1 Cor. 3:6, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.”

1 Cor. 3:7, “So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.”