

# Colossians Series

Lesson #48

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Dean Bible Ministries

[www.deanbible.org](http://www.deanbible.org)

Dr. Robert L. Dean, Jr.

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?**

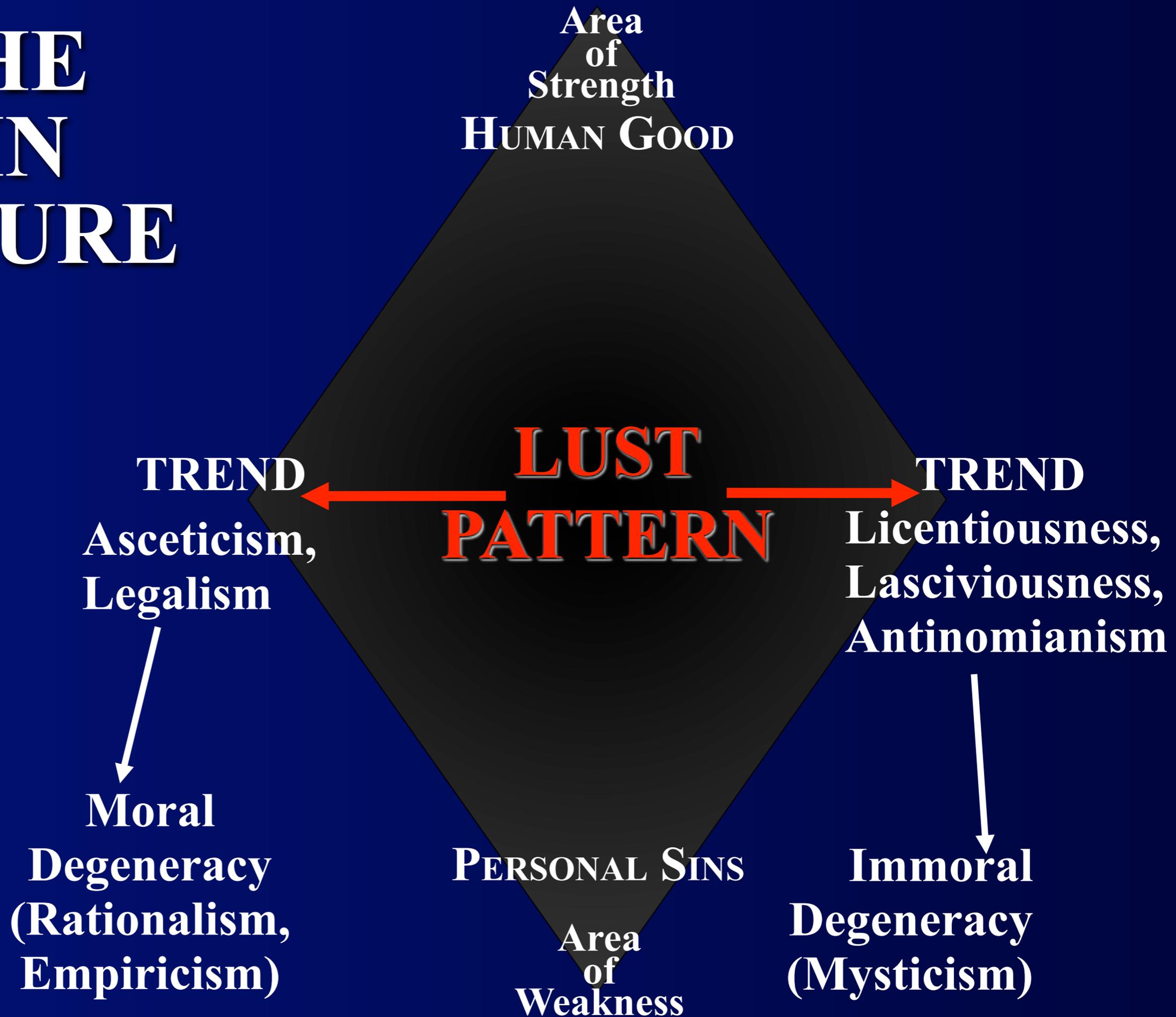
**Colossians 2:16–19**

**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

<b>Autonomous Systems</b> <b>Viewpoint</b>	<b>SYSTEM</b>	<b>STARTING POINT</b>	<b>METHOD</b>
	<b>RATIONALISM</b>	Innate ideas Faith in human ability.	Independent use of logic & reason
	<b>EMPIRICISM</b>	Sense perceptions External experience; Scientific method; Faith in human ability	Independent use of logic & reason
	<b>MYSTICISM</b>	Inner, private experience; intuition Faith in human ability	Independent, nonlogical, nonrational, nonverifiable
	<b>REVELATION</b>	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.”**