

Culture Wars #2
The Asian Culture

Word

Scripture Reference

Colossians 2:6-10, 16-23

Discussion Questions

1. Cite examples of ethnic cultural practices that are neutral, meaning that its practice do not conflict with Bible doctrines. Share with the group some non-neutral cultural practices that you know and discuss why you should definitely abstain from doing these things.
2. Colossians 2:6-10 tells us that in engaging the culture, we need to know that our identity in Jesus Christ is as a Christian. You are a Christian first and your ethnicity second. How did the apostle Paul tell the Colossians to remain in Christ even though the people lived in a very syncretistic* culture? What cultural beliefs sidetrack you from living as a follower of Jesus Christ? Discuss how being assured in your identity in Christ can help prevent your ethnic culture from hindering you to be rooted, built up, and strengthened in your faith?

**Syncretistic means combining different forms of belief or practice.*
3. As a Christian, your actions should be driven by your set of beliefs, which must be according to Jesus Christ (v. 8-10). What wrong teachings was Paul concerned about in verse 8? Give examples and discuss how Filipino-Chinese traditions and beliefs drive your values and how these values drive your actions. How in turn does your Christian belief influence the values which drive you into action?
4. Paul, who was a skilled philosopher, warns us against any philosophy of life that is grounded only on human beliefs and experiences. One such philosophy is legalism, or advocating obedience to rules which are not in the Bible (v. 16-17). What is the danger of legalism? How could these rules prevent you from actually living in obedience to the Word of God? In the Chinese culture, what customs do we practice and think are harmless, but are actually binding us from being obedient to God?

5. The false teachers in Colossae were teaching the people that since God was far away, they could approach Him through angels (v. 18). A belief in beings other than Jesus Christ to mediate for us and to “improve” our relationship with God is called mysticism. The danger of this philosophy is that it takes your focus away from Jesus and what He has done for you on the cross. Asians give great value to honoring our elders and practice a tradition called ancestral worship, where we honor the dead through prayers and offerings. What is the danger of regarding our ancestors with great adoration or respect? As a Christian, how can you make a stand to not “worship” ancestors without disrespecting your elders?
6. What are the flaws of human rules and teachings (v. 20-23)? What is the danger of asceticism, the philosophy that believes, “If I abstain, I will gain favor”? Share an example in your culture where asceticism is practiced. How could it shackle you from doing what pleases God?
7. As a group, list the beautiful parts of our Filipino-Chinese culture that has no religious connotation. Discuss creative ways in how you could engage the culture by (a) keeping these customs but changing the meaning of it, or (b) keeping the meaning but changing the custom.

Walk

Reclaim the culture! Show the people in your circle of influence that Jesus Christ and the Chinese (or other) culture are not mutually exclusive. You are a walking testament of that. How do you plan to apply this truth into your life?

Worship & Prayer

Pray for...

- Wisdom for God’s people to live rightly when Bible and culture contradict.
- Blessings for those who were baptized as they live faithfully in obedience to Christ.
- Wisdom in preparing for the October 5 “Parents Appreciation Day” program.
- Healing for Ang Chu Lan, IB,
- DJU, FW, EG, good result of BC’s mammogram.
- Political leaders to listen to godly counsel and exercise good governance.
- Safety of all residents near Mount Mayon in Albay, Legaspi.
- Reconciliation of Philippines & China ties.