



## Discussion Guide: SUPREME - A Supreme Philosophy

April 26, 2026

New River

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**Scripture:** *Colossians 2:1-15 (ESV)*

### **Icebreaker**

We all live by little phrases and ideas that guide how we think and act - things we picked up from family, friends, books, or social media. What is one saying or philosophy you have carried most of your life, and where did it come from?

### **Big Idea**

Every person is being guided by a philosophy - whether they know it or not. The world offers many: Gnosticism tells you that you are nothing and must transcend yourself through secret knowledge; Legalism tells you that you are everything and must achieve your way to God's approval. Paul's warning to the Colossians - and to us - is this: do not let anyone kidnap you with their philosophy. The supreme philosophy is not an idea you develop or a rule system you obey. It is a person and what he has done. God made you alive when you were dead. He forgave every trespass. He canceled the record of debt against you and nailed it to the cross. Let that philosophy stand over everything you do.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Pastor Keith opened by asking: what are the philosophies you actually live your life by? Not the ones you would say in church - but the ones quietly running in the background. What idea or belief most shapes how you respond when life gets hard, when you feel like you've failed, or when you're deciding what to chase next?
2. The two big "isms" Paul was fighting were Gnosticism - salvation through hidden knowledge, with the body being irrelevant or evil - and Legalism - acceptance through rule-keeping and achievement. Which of those two temptations do you find more alive in your own heart right now, and how does it show up day to day?
3. Colossians 2:8 warns: "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ." The verb tense is literally: do not let someone kidnap you with their philosophy. What are the philosophies in the culture around you right now - in social media, at work, in the news - that feel most like they are trying to carry you away from simple devotion to Christ?
4. Pastor Keith laid out the two competing voices: one says "you are nothing - transcend yourself and your understanding." The other says "you are everything - achieve more to matter to God and to those around you." Both ultimately leave

Christ out. Where do you feel the pull of each of those voices most strongly in your life right now?

5. Colossians 2:13-14 says God made you alive together with Christ, having forgiven all your trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against you and nailing it to the cross. What does it do to you to picture the legal record of everything you have done wrong - literally nailed to the cross, canceled, gone? Is that a truth that feels real and present in your daily life, or does it still feel distant?

6. Pastor Keith gave three concrete ways the Gospel changes everyday life: when you have been rescued, jealousy starts to lose its grip. When no debt stands against you, you have the confidence you need. When you are no longer under condemnation, the shame after falling short can melt away. Which of those three feels most true - or most needed - for you right now?

7. The closing challenge from Sunday was to start by naming the places where you feel bound - the lies that are robbing you of the freedom that comes from the Gospel. What is one belief or thought pattern you are carrying that you know is not aligned with what Christ has actually done for you? What would it look like to bring that into the open this week?

### **Closing Reflection**

The sermon ended with three honest questions: *What are the places of shame and guilt that keep you bound? What are the lies that are robbing you of the freedom that comes from the good news of your life in Christ? What philosophies of life are degrading the power of what God has created for you in Christ?* This week, sit with those questions. Write down one lie you have been living under and one Gospel truth that answers it. Come back next week ready to share what shifted.