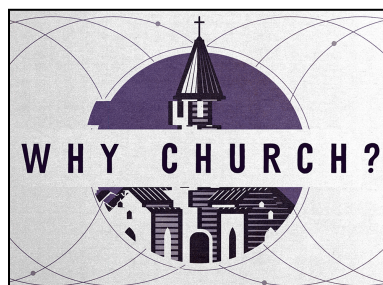


Sermon-Based Bible Study**August 3, 2025****“Exploration”** - #2 in the series *Why Church?***Texts (CEB):**

Colossians 2:16-23, 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21



1. Consider the presence of rules in almost every aspect of our lives - from our personal and collective health to our day-to-day routines, how we manage our homes and families, our local communities, and how we govern ourselves through our state and national systems, as well as the ways we conduct diplomacy with our world partners.
 - When are rules helpful, and when do they pose challenges?
 - What do you think makes some of us more inclined to follow rules than others?

2. **Read Colossians 2:16-19.**
 Paul wrote to the Colossians because of problems with rules concerning sacred-day practices observed by the local church.
 - How do Paul’s words, “The head nourishes and supports the whole body through the joints and ligaments, so the body grows with a growth that is from God.” help you think about his caution against unnecessary rules?
 - Why is it so easy for these kinds of ritualistic rules to interfere with the relational practices of our faith?

3. **Read Colossians 2:20-23.**
 Paul condemns the rules in question as having the appearance of wisdom and being based on human commands and teaching.
 - Have you had the experience of questioning religious teachings or practices that seemed confusing or contrary to your understanding of your faith in Jesus?
 - How did you navigate that experience, and what did you learn from it?

4. **Read 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21.**
 A popular TV show, “The Repair Shop,” showcases the talents of master craftspeople who renovate and repair a variety of damaged, yet cherished, objects. Here are the steps they generally follow in their process:
 - Completely disassemble the object to examine each part carefully.
 - Clean each part, removing any accumulated dirt or foreign substances.
 - Repair damaged elements to working order.
 - Reassemble the object and test to see if it works.
 - How does this example shed light on the idea of “Exploration” of our faith as a way to preserve a strong relationship with Christ?
 - Why might this kind of exploration seem risky when it comes to our faith?
 - In what ways do we invite and encourage spiritual exploration at Hope?

5. How can we pray for you?