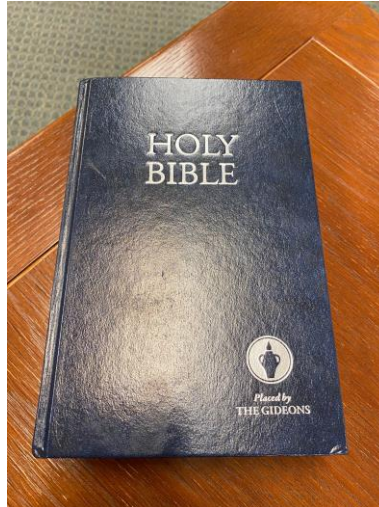


Colossians 2:11-15, “So Thankful: Dead, Now Alive”

11.24.19



Each year we take up an offering to support the work of the Gideons. You've probably seen their Bibles in a hotel room. The Gideons have been around since 1899 and celebrated the placement of their 2 billionth bible in April 2015. It took less than 14 years to go from one billion to two billion bibles given out worldwide. The average Gideon bible last around six years and will be read by about 1/4th of people who check into a hotel room. We will take up an offering next Sunday and on Dec 8th. Thank you for helping to spread the Word of God throughout the world! **Goal: \$4000**

Thursday is **Thanksgiving**, and I want to tell you what I'm thankful for... I'm thankful that Jesus Christ was willing to come to this earth and pay my sin-debt on a cross! I'm thankful that He came to dwell inside of me when I came to Him in repentance and I called on His name to save my soul. I'm thankful that all of my life He has been faithful! That all my days I've been held in His hands. I'm thankful that He has led me through the fire, through the darkest nights...I'm thankful He's like no other. I'm thankful that I've known Him as a Father and as a Friend...I'm thankful that His goodness is running after me...and I'm so thankful that I have lived in the *Goodness of God, that we were just singing about*. How about you?

Thanksgiving...oh...it's true...as we come this morning...we might have a lot of tough stuff going on in here today that's hard or difficult...but, one thing's for sure...if you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior...you and I can be thankful for Him and all of His goodness! We can all be thankful for the cross of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sin! **The title of today's message...the Sunday before Thanksgiving, is: “So Thankful: Dead, Now Alive.”**

As we've studied this wonderful letter...we've seen for 2 ½ chapters how the Apostle Paul points to Jesus Christ ALONE as the all-sufficient one...for ALL time...for ALL our needs...**for...Ever!** And the reason we can say this is because Jesus is the Authority of all of life as King of Kings and Lord of Lords... You see, let's be reminded of the fact that the Church in Colossae had become infiltrated with False Teachers. They were wanting to blur the truth...compromise it and water it down.



But, the Apostle Paul is pointing out the truth...



Part of the lies being propagated in Colossae were the lies of heresy that Jesus was not God and that He did not really come in a human body, but was rather some sort emanation...some ethereal spirit...that floated down from heaven, but, that's not what the Bible says...and that's:

Colossians 2:9-10

⁹For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.

Now, those two verses sum up the express reason the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Colossae...he wrote to acknowledge the fact that Jesus Christ is God...He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and all knowledge, power, rule and authority exist with Him because He is the God-man...the one who came in the flesh and died for our sins so that we can know Him and be saved. And today we're going to see another false teaching about circumcision that Paul has to expose that's our text, verses 11-15.

Colossians 2:11-15

¹¹In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵He disarmed the rulers and authorities^[b] and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.^[c]

Part of the false teaching in the Colossian Church was this idea that you had to be circumcised to be a Christian. This was Judaistic Legalism. The Apostle dealt with this issue in great detail in his letter to the Galatian churches. This issue was settled once and for all at meeting the Apostle Paul had in Jerusalem with the Apostle Peter and with the half-brother of Jesus, James...and the church at Jerusalem in Acts chapter 15. That meeting became identified as the Jerusalem Council

and the bottom line was this: The only stipulation for salvation is found in calling on the name of Jesus Christ. There are no other works, nothing else that one must do to be saved. Yet, the false teachers in Colossae said NOPE...you must be circumcised.

Let's talk about circumcision for a moment. Circumcision was a sign of God's covenant that God made with Abraham and the Jewish people that goes all the way back to Genesis 17. It was a physical sign that had great, spiritual significance to the Jews. The trouble was, the Jews came to depend on this physical sign, and not the spiritual. We all know a mere physical operation, such as circumcision doesn't convey salvation and it does nothing at all for the ladies.

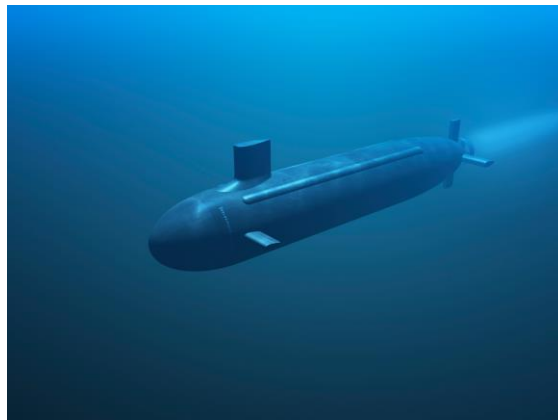
You see, these false teachers taught, that if you were circumcised, if you watched what you ate, and you observed all the Holy Days, then they thought you could become part of the "spiritual elite." But, none of these things are commanded for believers in the New Testament.

NO! As Christians we're not bound to anything that was meant for the nation of Israel, by way of the OT Jewish Law. We don't observe feast days, these OT holy days and the Sabbath. We don't worship on Saturday. We don't have to wash our hands in ritual ceremony, or abstain from certain kinds of foods. The Holy Spirit through Paul says, no...you don't need to be circumcised...you need only to look to Jesus... He is speaking of a circumcision of the heart... See it again...verses 11 and 12.

Colossians 2:11-12

¹¹In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

There in verses 11 and 12, the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle, uses the illustration of baptism to counter this idea of a physical circumcision. Now let's think about baptism... What is being shown here in verse 11 and 12 is a literal and figurative baptism. The literal meaning of the word baptism in verse 12, is the Greek word: "*baptisma*," and it means to "immerse or submerge." It's what a submarine does



it goes below the water. It's what a ladle does when it goes into soup. It's not sprinkling...it's not dabbing...it's immersion...after a profession of faith has been made we are baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Bible knows nothing of infant baptism.

We copy what Jesus did with His cousin, John the Baptist, in Matthew chapter 3.



Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John, his cousin, which kicked off the three-year-ministry of Jesus. Now that is the literal meaning of baptism...but there is also a figurative meaning, and that figurative meaning is best described in my mind in **Romans chapter 6.**

When we are baptized after our profession of faith in Jesus...we are then “identify with Jesus.” What does that mean? It means we identify with Jesus by dying to ourselves, that’s the going under the water...that’s our death and subsequent burial...but, we don’t stay there...we don’t stay dead, we rise again...out of the water...washed and cleansed and walking in the newness of life.

Romans 6:3-11

³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self^[a] was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For one who has died has been set free^[b] from sin. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

So you see, in the figurative sense, when we get saved...we die to our old lives and we become alive to brand new lives in Jesus. We identify with His death, burial and resurrection. And that is the song we were singing, “Resurrecting.” We have the victory over death, hell and the grave and sin!

***Your name, Your name
Is victory
All praise, will rise
To Christ, our king***

Church family, when Jesus died and rose from the dead, He won the complete and final victory over sin. What the Law could not do, in that we couldn’t perfectly follow the Law, Jesus did for us. He paid our sin-debt on the cross, so that when we receive Him by faith, we take on that new nature (we become a new creation) 2 Cor. 5:17, says the old passes away and all things become new. Do you understand...at salvation, the old self is rendered inoperative, as we allow the Spirit

of God to lead our lives...and that's a daily thing. It's a daily thing to take up our cross and follow Jesus.

Listen, never forget this...we do NOT have to succumb to sin. We have the power to live the Christian life, but we have to use the power of the Holy Spirit to do it. Look at this picture... What's going on:



Charging a cellphone, right? Yes... Question: Will that cellphone charge if it's not plugged up? NO! It won't charge until you plug it in. Listen, many Christians aren't plugged in to the power of the Holy Spirit, they aren't praying or spending time with Jesus or reading the Word and thus, they're not charging! They are trying to live the Christian life in their own strength and that's why they are worn out. We get our strength from the Holy Spirit. That's verse 12...

Colossians 2:12

¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

We have the power of the Holy Spirit living inside of us...but we quench Him when we sin. We have to choose to walk in HIM... Are you doing that? Are you plugging up? Are you walking in the power of the Holy Spirit...the same power that raised Jesus from the dead? Sin does not have to reign in our bodies because Jesus destroyed the power of sin on the cross... As Christians today, we are to be dead to sin and alive to Christ. **That's verse 13.**

Colossians 2:13

¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

Turn to Ephesians 2. As you are turning, let me ask you a question. What can a dead person do? NOTHING. You see, you and I were born spiritually dead. We were dead in our trespasses and sin. Therefore, before we came to know Jesus, we were SPIRITUALLY DEAD! A dead person is unable to do anything. And that's why God came to us. God looked down on us...humanity...dead in our sins, without hope, without any way to get to Him and what did He do? Well, what's the one thing a dead man needs most? Life. And He sent the Life...He sent Jesus to this earth to die for our sins, so that we might overcome the death caused by our sins and might be made alive!

Ephesians 2:1-5

¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of

disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body^[a] and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.^[b] ⁴ But^[c] God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

Both in Colossians 2 and Ephesians 2 we're told that at salvation we were "made alive together with Christ." Do you know what that means? This is a mystery. The Greek verbs indicate that we're co-buried, co-raised, co-alive with Christ. Get this...in some mysterious, divine way, when you and I receive the Lord Jesus by faith into, God saw that act as if we were with Jesus on the cross with Him, in the grave with Him, and raised to life with Him. I don't understand it all, but in the timeless mind of God, He looks back 2,000 years and at our salvation He slams onto that cross with Jesus, and we die with Him there, and we're buried in the Garden Tomb... But, oh...on the third day, we come out of the grave with Jesus to a brand-new life. Oh, this is so fantastic...if we could simply grasp the power at our disposal and live our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit, we'd live above sin and now the power and joy of walking with Jesus!

Look back at the end of verse 13, how many of our sins have been forgiven?

Colossians 2:13b (A/V Team, please only show the last phrase)

¹³ ...having forgiven us all our trespasses,

ALL! How does that make you feel? It makes we feel SO THANKFUL! That's Psalm 32:1

Psalm 32:1

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

It makes me think of that old black spiritual... "Oh Happy Day...When Jesus washed my sins away!"

So, how did God set aside our sins? How could He do that? That's verse 14...

Colossians 2:14

¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

I want you to think about this scene with me:



When the Lord Jesus died on the cross, Pilate had hung a sign above His head that said: “***This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews***” (John 19:19). We know Jesus was publicly executed on Calvary on the grounds that He had led in a rebellion. This, of course, was not true, but that was the public charge against Him. When the people standing there read that sign, they understood that He had been charged with being disloyal to Caesar (the Emperor of Rome) in that He had professed to be a King...King of the Jews...a King who had not been granted authority by Rome. To those who watched Jesus die on Calvary, that was the reason why He was executed on the cross. He had claimed to be a King...without proper authority.

But listen, God had a totally different perspective. You see, when God looked down upon that cross on Calvary...He saw things differently... Perhaps like this...



God saw His Son on an altar. An altar on which His Son, the Lamb of God, the One who takes away the sin of the world was being offered as a sacrifice for all humanity. And thus, God saw a different sign on the cross. He didn't see the sign of Pilate...instead He saw a legal document... See that first phrase of verse 14...

Colossians 2:14a

14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.

That phrase, “record of debt” is one word in the Greek and it means what we would call an IOU. It’s where I would write on a piece of paper that I owe you X amount of money and sign it. In the case of what we’re speaking of here...it’s not money that we owe...it’s a sin debt that we can never repay.

Here’s what’s interesting...in the first century, financial records were often kept on parchment (papyrus) or vellums (animal skin), and the written handwriting could actually be washed off if you got to it pretty quickly, before the ink had time to “bite” into the parchment or vellum. You could actually wipe it off within a few hours and save the paper or vellum. I can hear the words to that old hymn, “Nothing But The Blood?”

Nothing But The Blood

What can wash away my sin?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus

What can make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Oh, precious is the flow

That makes me white as snow

No other fount I know

Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Church family, can you see Jesus...



Can you see Him? When He died on the cross...He became the payment for my sin. How many of my sins? All of them (verse 13) You see, I had an IOU I couldn’t pay and it was a legal document in my own handwriting and instead of wiping it off...when I cried out to Jesus to save me, confessing that I could not pay that sin debt...God saw through time and He looked down at His Son and He nailed CANCELED on my IOU and He laid my sin on Jesus...and nailed it to the cross!



Folks if that doesn't make you thankful at Thanksgiving, I don't know what will?

Verse 15. The last verse of our text. One of my most favorite verses in the entire letter...

Colossians 2:15

¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities^[b] and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.^[c]

When Jesus died on the cross, Satan and his demonic host thought they had won the victory! No doubt...they were having a VICTORY PARTY and celebrating at Calvary. They thought Jesus was their DEAD-victim. But how wrong they were. Jesus mastered them even in death. Jesus put them to open shame by bruising Satan's head...the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15.

Satan and his demonic hoards were put to open shame...and that term is the same term used in Matthew 1:19 to refer to Joseph's unwillingness to expose Mary's pregnancy and bring public shame on her. You see it was at the cross that Satan was crushed and it was at the tomb, three days later, that God ROBBED THE GRAVE (just as we were singing)... Remember the words...

**The tomb where soldiers watched in vain
Was borrowed for three days
His body there would not remain
Our God has robbed the grave
Our God has robbed the grave**

***Your name, Your name
Is victory
All praise, will rise
To Christ, our king***

You see, dear Church family...we win...that's TRIUMPH! That word **triumph** at the end of verse 15 is something the first century people, under Roman occupation, knew all about. Whenever Rome would conquer a territory...they would ride back to Rome in victory, with their captives and their loot, and they would be honored by an official parade known as "the Roman Triumph." Well, for us, as believers in Jesus Christ...He has conquered and disgraced Satan and we, as His Followers, TRIUMPH with Him in complete victory...And one day He will return to this earth and we'll come with Him in that great parade from Heaven, to a New Earth in triumph!

So today, the Sunday before **Thanksgiving**, we can say as Paul did to the Corinthian Church:

2 Corinthians 2:14

¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.

Thanks be to God!