

Scripture reading: Col 1:12-15; 20 to 22

... giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

... and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.

Praise God that you are all here today. I know that many of you are in fear because of the coronavirus. But let me tell you something, you have nothing to fear because, if you are in Christ, you have the ultimate protection to the most deadly virus of them all – that virus is a million times worse, a million times deadly, than the coronavirus, it's called sin. It kills everyone – there are no survivors.

Today, we have no cure for the coronavirus, but fortunately, we do have a cure for sin, and that cure is found only in Jesus. Let us feed on Jesus today through His Word for our sustenance and for our life, our eternal life.

Now as we feed upon His word, let us again review a few points we learned over the past few weeks studying the book of Colossians. Let's start with some contextual information. **When** was this epistle of Paul written?

- **When Paul was in prison, approx. A.D. 60-63**

- Approximately 30 years after the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ.

Who is Paul writing to?

He is writing to the Church in Colossae.

- Consisted of both Jew and Gentile, but according to Bible scholars this church was probably mostly Gentile.

Where is Colossae?

Colossae lay in the heart of a cluster of cities (near Laodicea and Hieropolis) in SW Phrygia, in the Roman province of Asia Minor, or modern-day Turkey.

Located in Modern-day Turkey

In this map of Turkey, we see Colossae in land, close to the major cities of Laodicea and Hierapolis.

Today, unfortunately Colossae has had no major archaeological excavation, as most archeological attention has been focused on nearby Laodicea and Hierapolis, though plans are reported for an Australian-led expedition to the site.

Now, to test your memory, do you remember ...

What is one of the main themes of Colossians?

Christ is sufficient, the Gospel is sufficient, His grace is sufficient.

You don't need anything more!

What is the theme passage in Colossians?

My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Col. 2: 2,3)

2 이는 저희로 마음에 위안을 받고 사랑 안에서 연합하여
원만한 이해의 모든 부요에 이르러 하나님의 비밀인
그리스도를 깨닫게 하려 함이라 3 그 안에는 지혜와 지식의
모든 보화가 감취어 있느니라 (골로새서 2:2,3)

To highlight the sufficiency and supremacy of Christ, you will notice in this passage that Paul uses adjectives like “full,” “complete” and “all.”

Although Paul wants the Christians in Colossae to have full and complete understanding of all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Christ, The Gospel is so simple that even A young child can say, after reading the Gospel in the Bible,
“I am sorry for my sins. Please forgive me, God. As the Bible says I believe that Jesus saved me from my sins. He paid for all of my sins through His death on the cross! Jesus did it all. God forgives my sins all because of Jesus. Thank you Jesus!”

The Gospel is simple and anyone can simply come to saving faith in Christ through hearing the Gospel and believing in it.

- But the false teachers that were infiltrating the church were teaching that it's not that simple. You need more than Christ.
- These false teachers taught there's something **more** – like a secret/mysterious knowledge/experience that

only these teachers (aka super-apostles) had. The more is that you have to do more -- more to believe, more to experience, more to understand. Jesus is not enough! There is something else and we privileged super-apostles are the only ones who can reveal it to you.

- Colossian Heresy 골로새교회 이단/
Proto-Gnosticism 원영지주의
- Made claims of special new insight into the powers of darkness, offering special protection.

So these false teachers – the proto-Gnostics – tried to convince the Christians in Colossae that they were missing something, even if they had Christ.

But What did Paul call the believers in Colossae?

Paul Calls Them Saints/Holy Ones 성도

From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the saints, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ, at Colossae. (Col. 1:1,2)

하나님의 뜻으로 말미암아 그리스도 예수의 사도 된 바울과 형제 디모데는 골로새에 있는 성도들 곧 그리스도 안에서 신실한 형제들에게 편지하노니 우리 아버지 하나님으로부터 은혜와 평강이 너희에게 있을찌어다 (골로새서 1:1,2)

But Scripture says only God is holy

For you [God] alone are holy. (Rev. 15:4)

오직 주만 거룩하시니이다 (요한계시록 15:4)

2 Chronicles 6:36

There is no man which sinneth not.

There is no man without sin – we all are guilty of sin. We human beings are all sinners!

If we are all sinners and God is holy – set apart from sin -- how can Paul consider the Colossian Christians

Saints/Holy Ones 성도?

- The church in Colossae believed in Jesus' life, death and resurrection for the forgiveness of their sins and that is why we can call them holy ones and that is why I can also call you holy ones – saints – but only for those who trust in Christ for their salvation.

Romans 4:7,8 says,

“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.” (Romans 4:7,8)

7 그 불법을 사하심을 받고 그 죄를 가리우심을 받는 자는 복이 있고 8 주께서 그 죄를 인정치 아니하실 사람은 복이 있도다 함과 같으니라 (로마서 4:7,8)

Why did the Lord not count the sins of the Colossian Christians against them?

Because they had faith in their Savior.

Since we heard about your faith in Christ Jesus and the love that you have for all the saints.
(Col. 1:4)

They were justified 칭의 by faith

They had been declared righteous ‘의롭다 함을 선언받는 것’, holy (they were justified) because of their faith in Jesus, because of the Gospel.

And that’s not all,

Their faith in the Gospel produced the fruit of love and good works.

Just as in the entire world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, so it has also been bearing fruit and growing among you from the first day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth. (Col. 1:6)

이 복음이 이미 너희에게 이르매 너희가 듣고 참으로 하나님의 은혜를 깨달은 날부터 너희 중에서도 같이 또한 온 천하에서도 열매를 맺어 자라는도다 (골로새서 1:6)

Now as I said last week, we have to be careful we don’t confuse the fruit from the root or conversely the root from the fruit.

The fruit (our good works which flows from the Gospel) is not what saves us. The root – the Gospel (Christ) – is what saves us.

In vs. 12, Paul gives thanks to the Father.

What were the reasons Paul gave thanks? Do you remember?

To help jog our memory, let us go back and read vs. 12 and 13.

“He has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness.” Col. 1:12, 13

우리로 하여금 빛 가운데서 성도의 기업의 부분을 얻기에 합당하게 하신 아버지께 감사하게 하시기를 원하노라.

그가 우리를 흑암의 권세에서 건져내사 그의 사랑의 아들의 나라로 옮기셨으니 (골로새서 1:13)

In vs. 12, it states that God our father qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints.

Paul says that God is our Father.

Just knowing that we were made the children of God – that we can call him Father should make us extremely thankful.

The reason: We don't deserve to be called His children. We didn't earn it. Yet, He qualified us in this great inheritance. Before we became children of God, we were imprisoned by the dominion of darkness.

Because of our sin, in Eph. 2:3 it says that, like all mankind, **we were once by nature children of wrath.**

But God became flesh and lived among us to rescue us, like a superhero that comes to save the day, like a knight in shining armor,

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Col. 1:13,14

God rescues us, while we were helpless and hopeless, from the domain of darkness and transfers us into His Kingdom, making us heirs.

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of **adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" Rom. 8:15**

You see, we don't deserve to be His children, but because of his grace, mercy and love, we were adopted as His children.

And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for **adoption** as sons, the redemption of our bodies. Rom. 8:23

According to the passage, our adoption entails the redemption of our bodies.

God sent His Son ... to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive **adoption** as sons. Gal. 4:4,5

Adopted! Through His Son, we are now adopted children of God, He has qualified us.

We did not do the qualifying. He – God – qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints. Wow!

This is amazing!

Meritoriously, only Jesus, God's only begotten Son deserves the inheritance, but because of God's grace, mercy and steadfast love, we now share in Jesus's inheritance. It is a free gift given to us by our Father.

In vs. 13, 14, it says, "He transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

Thus, we have been transferred. We have taken out of the dominion of darkness – freed -- and have been made citizens of the Kingdom of Christ, a glorious Kingdom where there are no tears, no pain, no sin, no death, but just eternal joy.

Praise God!

Because of this great hope, Paul commands us to be joyous always (Phil. 4:4).

How many of you would like to be a citizen of that kind of kingdom? – a kingdom where there is no pain, tears, sin and death, but just eternal joy – joyous always.

Well guess what? If you are a true believer, then you are a citizen.

You have dual citizenship (two citizenships):

On earth, you are all citizens of your respective countries: for most of you it's Korea; some of you, the US; for Jacqueline, hers is Kenya, and me, Canada; but we are also -- as adopted children with the inheritance of the saints -- we are also citizens of the Kingdom of God's beloved Son.

You did nothing to earn this heavenly citizenship – God did it all for us!

Now, because we did nothing and because God did it all, does that mean we do nothing from now on?

Because God has saved us – once and for all – does that mean we can go and sin all we want?

No, as Christians, in our walk, in our sanctification, we work, we do good deeds, not to preserve our salvation, as the Roman Catholics do.

The Roman Catholics believe they are saved by grace, but they must cooperate with that grace infused in them. In other words they must continue to work with the grace given to them or else, they lose their grace, and eventually their salvation.

So out of fear of losing their grace, they do their “good works.”

Their motivation, their basis for their good works is fear – fear of their loss of their own personal salvation. And if you think about their motivation, their basis for their good works – it's actually selfish, egocentric. “I'm doing something nice for you because I'm trying to keep my salvation.”

But what about us Protestant Christians, why do we do good works?

We do it out of gratitude – thankfulness -- not fear.
Why?

We believe we are justified by grace alone, through faith alone on account of Christ alone.

Thus, our good works does not save us.

But because God did all the saving, and we did none of the saving, we are grateful for what God has done for us.

And as a result, we cannot help but bear fruit – to love God and to love neighbor.

Hence, our love, our good deeds, is not out of fear. Our good works is not driven by a selfish motive – to work hard to save ourselves – like the Roman Catholics.

No, Protestant Christian believers in Christ are freed, because we know we are saved, so we are now finally free to truly love God and neighbor – all out of gratitude.

If God loved us and truly saved us completely, how can we not go out and love others?

Thus our good works is a natural response to our salvation and those good works become real evidence of our faith, of our salvation.

And our salvation is 100% a free gift.

But, although it was 100% free, it was actually costly – costly to the Father.

It cost the life of His Son.

He paid the price for our debts.

I'm reminded of my dad.

My father, before I was born, back when Korea was one of the poorest countries in the world, did something.

He acquired skills, worked hard, and set himself apart from others and, as a result, he earned his way to Canada.

Canada, at that time, was, and still is, one of the best countries in the world to live in.

Canada has a high standard of living.

It has free health care.

Canadians also enjoy a good reputation around the world, so we Canadians are given much freedom in traveling and staying in other countries.

When I was a young child, my father -- because of what he had done, his merits, his work experience -- was given an opportunity to immigrate to Canada.

So our family, immigrated to Canada, and after several years of hard work in Canada and obeying all the Canadian laws, my father earned our way to becoming Canadian citizens. He did what he had to do, he did all the paperwork for his family and thanks wholly to my father, I, as a child, became a Canadian citizen.

My father did everything;

I did nothing to receive that citizenship.

In the same way, Because of what God has done for us through Jesus Christ, we reap the benefits of adoption, of redemption, of the forgiveness of sins, of citizenship in His Kingdom.

This is what we call grace – undeserved goodness – nobody deserves to be a citizen because we were under the dominion of darkness.

But “undeserved goodness” is only half the definition of grace.

That undeserved goodness was costly – it was at the expense of His Son.

In Col. 1:20 it says, “and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.”

You see, because of our sin, in Col. 1:21 says, “Once you were alienated from God and were enemies” of God – alienated and hostile, doing evil -- but God made peace by the death of his Son.

That righteous blood that he spilt paid the price for our sins.

And so in vs. 22, it says, “He has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.” Col.1:22

Praise God that we are presented holy and blameless – saints – justified above reproach before him as a result of the covering of Jesus’s blood.

So once again, let us give thanks to the Father. Praise God!

Let us pray!