

## From Darkness into Light Colossians 1:13-14

### I. Introduction

- A. I've chosen one of my favorite passages about the character of God and how His character impacts the lives and eternal destiny of those He has chosen.
  - i. I believe that you can unlock the major concepts of book of Colossians from these two verses and hope to show you how and why.
  - ii. It's my desire that you would see more clearly that God is a Rescuer-Deliverer and that He is a Life-Changer.
  - iii. I also want you to recognize that you truly are a foreigner here on earth and have been transformed into a totally new person by His power. (2 Cor 5:21 new creation)
- B. Secondly, I hope to stimulate you to want to dig deeper into the truths embedded in the Scriptures and demonstrate one way to approach a passage of Scripture in order to get at the heart of what truths it teaches.
  - i. I'm a scientist, so that influences how I think when I read the Scriptures and examine them for truth, just like who you are affects how you approach the Scriptures.
  - ii. I like to analyze passages, see patterns in a paragraph or book to see how it fits in the overall scheme of the Bible, and determine how the passages or truths fit together into a united whole.
- C. Decided to unfold this passage by way of The Five "Ws" - Who, What, Where, When, and Why
  - i. This approach will cause us to jump back and forth in the passage as we examine and dissect it, but then we will bring it all together at the end.
  - ii. Hopefully it will keep you engaged, help you to be able to remember these concepts afterwards and whet your appetite to examine the Scriptures in a new way.
  - iii. So, let's dive into today's text!
    - a) The section is titled, "The Incomparable Christ" & begins with Col 1:13-14
    - b) "For He rescued 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".

### II. Unfolding the Verses

- A. **Who** is the focus?
  - i. **He** - The Subject, the one performing the action in this sentence; How do we know who "He" is referring to? By the previous paragraph.
    - a) vs. 12 - "giving thanks to the Father,..." [the Father of us all] and all the way back to the opening paragraph - vs. 3 "We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (His full redeeming name; where it all began!)
      - vs. 5 The Father by whom "hope [is] laid up for you [us] in heaven,..."
      - vs. 12 The Father "who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints..."

- He has made us sufficient [or provided a way for us] to be in His family through adoption paid for by the blood of His Son, our brother, Jesus Christ. He is a Father who provides for our needs
  - He provides eternal security; security which is a hallmark of fatherhood
- b) vs. 6 “grace of God” implies that He is a giving God, a generous God, who gives grace in truth
- He can be trusted because He will not lie
  - He can be trusted because He will not change His mind and take back what He has promised
- c) He is a God who can be known; not only through His creation, but in a deep, personal and detailed way
- vs. 9 “knowledge of His will” implies that He is the God who has a will (gracious design or plan)
  - vs. 10 “knowledge of God”
    - which means that He is a “knowable”, in an ongoing, precise and correct way - not just information about Him
    - It is why He gave us His words in hundreds of pages included in 66 books by 35 authors covering several thousand years of His interaction with mankind
    - He gave us a lifetime of information about Himself to explore!
- d) vs. 2:12 Raiser and receiver of the dead,
- We know that Christ's dying was an acceptable sacrifice for sins because the Father raised Him from the dead.
  - We know that the sacrifice was completely satisfactory or adequate because God the Father received Jesus back into His presence - God cannot look upon sin in His presence!
- ii. Us - The Object - Who is God writing these things to and for?!
- a) vs. 2 the letter is addressed to the “saints [also in vss. 1:4, 12, 26] and faithful brethren”
- “saints” means to be separated from sin and set apart to God; holy ones
  - this term for “faithful” is used exclusively in the NT of believers; it's especially and specifically used to describe us!
- b) The point is that you need to pay attention and that you need to see yourselves correctly from God's point of view; not your own or someone else in the world.
- iii. His Beloved Son - Object of the Prepositional Phrase
- a) Sounds kind of like being the afterthought doesn't it, but He's actually the key to the entire book! First, let's back-track a few verses.
- vs. 10 “Lord” - Master; the One to be obeyed; the One who governs over the affairs of all men, but especially of the church - those of us to whom this very letter was written!
  - vs. 12 “saints **in Light**” - the same word is interpreted as “illumination” in the sense of making previously hidden or misunderstood concepts to

be understandable

- intellectually as divine truth
- morally as divine purity
- Now let's look ahead in the letter: vs. 15ff “the image of the invisible God” - Creator, Eternal, Sustainer of all life, Head of the Church, Firstborn/Preeminent One from the dead, Lord, Fullness of God (als2:9), Reconciler/Peacemaker between God & man, 2:2b-3 God's mystery hiding all wisdom and knowledge, 2:15 Disarmed the enemy, 3:1 Honored one,
  - If you have “seen” Jesus, you have seen or known the Father.

B. **What** has God done?

- i. Rescued - “to drag out of danger” and “to draw to oneself”; What danger did we need rescuing from?
  - a) Condemnation of the guilty before a holy God! The eternal wrath of a holy and perfectly just Judge! Jas 2:10 guilty of one sin = guilty of the entire Law! Not loving God with all that you are! Eze 18:4 soul who sins must die, Heb 9:22,
  - b) Draw to oneself - Like watching rescue operation from fire, sinking ship, precarious cliff - typically have the person stay where they are and the rescuer reaches out to them or takes hold of them to draw them near
  - c) Liberated from a life-threatening (eternal life threatening) situation which is destructive and harmful and worsening minute-by-minute; like a spreading cancer that moves from organ to organ.
- ii. Transferred - What does this look like?
  - a) Literally it means “To remove from one place to another”
  - b) Having drawn us out of danger and unto Himself, God puts us in a different place - He relocates us.
  - c) So let's look at where we were and where we are now.

C. **Where** have we been and **where** are we going?

- i. Domain of Darkness
  - a) Synonyms for Domain: dominion, **tyranny**, authority, rule; the power of rule or authority
  - b) Deception and wickedness - smoke and mirrors; a reality that is veiled which looks pleasant by description when your eyes are closed, but is gross and vile and putrid when the lights are turned on and your eyes are opened
  - c) It's a counterfeit for which man was not created, but was conceived by a usurper - the ultimate anti (not, opposite of) Christ our Creator.
- ii. Kingdom of His Beloved Son - I am not going to give a comprehensive review of the Kingdom of God or Heaven; that would take multiple weeks. Peak your interest. **Jesus is the Light of the World, so this is the Kingdom of Light!**
  - a) Basically, it's a group of people ruled by a king.
    - I like the description of a righteous king in Psalm 45:3-7
      - sword of victory in battle to show might
      - Splendor and majesty - the concept of showing regalness
      - For the **cause** of truth & righteousness & justice

- Strength (right hand) to teach awesome/fearful things to all, especially the enemy
  - Scepter of uprightness will be the standard, not duplicity and deception
  - Loving righteousness and hating wickedness **results in joyous living!**
- b) You've gone from being comfortable with living in filthy, wickedness to only being comfortable when living in purity. 2 Co 5:21 A new creation!
- c) It's like falling asleep in Tampa and waking up in the Middle East or Asia to live forever! Everything is different and foreign at first. Then you learn the language and the customs and everything becomes a new normal and familiar.

D. **When** are these things active?

i. Now -

- a) In Mt 3:2 John the Baptist says, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" and Jesus is quoted as saying the same in Mt 4:17. Mt is the Kingly Portrait gospel.
- b) I will give two of Jesus' statements showing how the kingdom is now
- Mt 5:2 "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven."
  - Mt 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter."
- c) The kingdom now is about Jesus' control of our hearts through the Spirit and His authority to command us to follow His ways as long as we're on earth.

ii. Throughout Eternity

- a) 2 Peter 1:10-11 [Which Bruce preached from last year] Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.
- b) It's still about living and walking in a righteousness given to you by Jesus Christ, but it will never end and it will be perfectly lived by you without any sin or temptation to sin.
- c) Imagine a timeline that stretches into history without stopping - before the act of creation and goes on beyond the scene at the Tree of Life in The Revelation Chapter 22.
- d) He will set up His Millennial kingdom here and, afterwards, He will set up an eternal kingdom in a totally new reality unlike anything we have seen or can imagine.

E. **Why** has He done it?

i. Redemption

- a) Delivery from bondage by paying a ransom like freeing a slave
- we were slaves to sin and now we are slaves
  - Romans 6:17-18 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to

which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

- Ephesians 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace
- b) But more than that, it is the final joining of our spirit and body in perfect holiness like the glorified body of Jesus.
- Ephesians 4:30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
- This is referring to the specific day when we are in our glorified bodies, but don't take my word for it; search the Scriptures to find out for yourselves whether it is so.

#### ii. The Forgiveness of Sins

- a) Legal term “to pardon” or “grant remission of a penalty”
- b) Remember earlier when we were talking about rescuing and we said that if you break one of God's laws, you're as guilty as breaking them all?
- c) Hebrews 9:22-28 And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.
  - 23 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;
  - 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
  - 27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,
  - 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, **will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin**, to those who eagerly await Him.
    - And so, the culmination of it all, ultimately, is our final salvation into the Eternal Kingdom to reign with Him forevermore!
    - What a finale!

### III. Putting it all together “What does it mean to me?”

#### A. Walking in newness -

- i. 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.
- ii. Remember that you are the “saints in Light” - truth rather than deception and purity rather than debauchery
- iii. This should be your personal reputation and the church's collective reputation

#### B. Standing in awe of God our Savior

- i. He's the image of the invisible God
- ii. God, the invisible, is accurately and precisely knowable.
- iii. God, the invisible God, **can be seen by us** through how Christ is revealed in the Scriptures from Genesis through The Revelation.
  - a) How can that not blow your mind?!?! It's incomprehensible!

- b) How can that not motivate you to read and try to understand the entire book from the first word of it to the last word!!!
- C. Letting the transformation influence others
  - i. He's shown Himself to us so that we can reflect His image to be known by others around us.
  - ii. Back to Colossians 1:10 "so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, ... bearing fruit in every good work..."
    - a) living righteously and showing it in your Christ-like deeds to others
  - iii. Ending Colossians 1 with verses 28-29 shows the heart of vss 13-14 come alive
    - a) We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.
  - iv. The entire letter is pulled together via vss 1:13-14 in that the final two chapters contain specifics about how to live a Christ-like life.
    - a) It contrasts Christ's Spirit-filled living versus carnality (fleshly living) via instruction and Paul's example (throughout the letter).
    - b) What a Christian family and home should look like, as well as how to conduct ourselves at work and with unbelievers.
    - c) It shows the Christian graces and how Paul exemplifies them with his parting words in the letter.
- D. So I admonish you to think about God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, rescuing you from a worthless life and transferring you into a meaningful life that will not finish with everlasting pain and punishment, but will go on in joyful praise of the One who called you into His own Kingdom and glory.

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Colossians 1:28-29