

Jesus Paid It All

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Bible Text: Colossians 2:8-15
Preached on: Sunday, July 2, 2023

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Well, grab your Bibles and we'll not be going to Titus. I have, um, a lot, a lot of work done on Titus and I just, I'm just convinced that God has led us into a very, um, momentous season where he's allowing us to, could we say, raise the foundation a little bit, raise the standard and then build upward from there? And in one of those ways would be in our commitment of biblical marriage, the biblical Christian home, and particularly because there's such vicious attacks against them, the role of the woman in the home and in the church and in the world. You know, ladies are being so viciously and unrelentingly attacked who are trying to honor Christ. So I have a lot of work done there, and Pam came in from being with her mom and dad yesterday afternoon. I said, "Pam, I've got so much to say. I hate to even tell you this, but the phrase, love your husbands, I probably have two if not three messages on that. Now, not because I want to berate or correct our ladies, but I want to correct the error in the world about ladies so that our older women who are, I think, adequately equipped, but will will be more adequately equipped to teach and disciple our younger ladies in the biblical truths of true womanhood." So she said, "Jeff, don't do that today and then miss a month and pick it back up. That needs to be together." So I submitted to her and, uh, that relieved me, because I had put so much into it. And typically, if I'm gonna be away a little while, I wanna leave you with a Christ-filled admonition. So that's what we're gonna do.

Look at Colossians chapter 2. Colossians chapter 2, beginning in verse 8. Jesus paid it all. Colossians 2, verse 8. Paul writing to the church at Colossae says,

8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. 9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him [past tense] you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; 11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; 12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 having canceled out the

certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

Jesus paid it all. First of all, let's note his perfection. Paul wants to just take veil off after veil off and expose afresh to this church and to our church today all that we have in Jesus Christ. He is God's exclusive one. He is the only one. He is the one of supreme dignity and holiness, and he is our perfect Savior. His perfection.

In verse 8, Paul says in this section, "See to it that no one takes you captive." The phrase "see to it" is imperative, which means it's a command. You're to look to yourself and say to yourself, "Self, do not let these things happen." What things? Well, the things we're about to look at. It's a command, "See to it. See to it. Don't let this happen." Well, what should we disallow happening in our hearts and our minds? Well, the things that he will talk about here, the things that back in verse 4 he said will delude you, things that will cheat you by false reasoning, and now we come down to our verse, verse 8, he said, and the false reasonings that you'll find in your culture, of course, this is the ancient Greco-Roman culture, but they came under two headings, sometimes there's a lot of overlapping, but two basic headings of false reasonings that will tempt you to look to something other than Christ or to look to something in addition to Christ.

What are those two false reasonings? Well, number one is philosophy. Number one is philosophy. Look at there in verse, uh, 8. He said, we'll read it all again, "See to it that no one takes you captive," that's the idea of a plunderer, a plunderer that would come into the the sheep herd and carry away the sheep that they can and then scatter those that they can't carry away. He gives us lots of metaphors and imagery here as we'll go through this text. He said, "There's guys who wanna come in with their teaching and get you off of Christ and all they're doing is wanna cheat you. They wanna rob you of all you have in Jesus Christ. They wanna carry you away or scatter you if they can. And one of the ways they're trying to mislead you and cheat you," he says, "through," middle of verse 8, "through philosophy." Philosophy is that which is derived of man. Philosophy is that which has man, fallen man, sinful man, base man, as its source. Philosophy is that which may seem wise and seem reasonable, but it's contrary to sound Bible doctrine. Your pastor must preach to you in such a way that you are ready as you go out into the world and somebody comes up with this very good sounding reasoning thing, but an alert, alert, an alarm goes off in your heart and mind says, "Wait a minute, that's contrary to sound Bible doctrine." See to it that no one comes to you with these philosophies. Later in verse 8, he calls them empty deceptions. That's what they are. They're empty deceptions. Jesus plus the Jewish law. Jesus plus circumcision. Jesus plus the Jewish sacrificial system. Or Jesus plus a sinner's prayer. Or Jesus plus walking down the aisle. Or Jesus plus the ordinance of baptism. He says, "See to it that nobody deludes you and takes you captive with adding extra things in philosophy."

Well, someone once said that philosophy, or philosopher is a blind man in a dark room trying to find a black cat that isn't there, and that's basically what you have. It's empty

deception because it begins with man, so it has a faulty starting point. Now listen for a moment. All of this stuff in our culture today that's being thrown at us, like it's this brand new, higher, elite, pseudo-intellectual, uh, uh, information and teaching that will bring our culture to a new utopia. No, it's not. It all starts with man. It's not new. It's old false teaching with new contemporary clothing on it. There's nothing new under the sun, brothers and sisters.

Well, the second false reasoning, the second heading that the false reasoning can come at us, and again, usually there's an interplay of both of these, but it is religion. Religion, and I alluded to that very clear earlier. In this context, highly likely it was the religion of Jewish influence, of the old Jewish covenant, but the Greeks and the Romans had their religious system, their polytheism, and it's just natural for man to want to take, if they're introduced to Christ, and if they're drawn to Christ, it's just very natural for them to say, "But you know what? I'll bring some of my old stuff with me." But you cannot put the new wine of Jesus and truth into the old wineskin of religion or philosophy. It'll crack it and burst it open and ruin it all every time. You add.. see to it, that no one brings religious systems, typically two aspects here in religion and he calls these the, what's the wording he used? They're elementary principles. In other words, they're common in the world's thinking. You can go anywhere in the world and say, "I'm a new spirit guide, I'm a new prophet, I have an insight from the divine, and I'm gonna give you eight do's and six don'ts, and if you keep the do's and don't do the don'ts, then maybe you'll get to heaven," you'll get a following every time, every time because it's elementary in us to want to do some sort of works, some sort of ethics, some sort of cleaning up your own life. But we know self-cleaning is a lie. "See to it," Paul says, "Don't add that to Jesus. Christ and Christ alone is your only hope of salvation."

He uses the phrase there also in verse 8, not only according to the eliminated principles of the world, but but "according to the traditions of men" in the middle of the verse. What are the traditions of men? Those those sincere, well-thought-out systems of joining a religious movement, going through their rituals or their rites or their ceremonies, keeping the few rules they lay out, but missing Jesus Christ. "See to it," he says, "let no one do that to you."

Now, it's just so common in professing Christendom, and I don't mean real Christianity, I mean professing Christianity, for people to add works religion. To show you how common it is, we go all the way back to the beginning to Cain. Cain was to bring an offering before God, and Cain brought some crops. He planted, he toiled, he fertilized in some way, I'm sure, but he brings the fruits of his works to God because Cain's offering pointed to himself. "God, look what I have done." Abel brought a sacrifice, a bloody sacrifice, which pointed outside of Abel and pointed to the coming Christ and Abel's offering was accepted. So ever since the beginning, religion in the form of bringing your crops, bringing your work. has been elementary to man. It's been the tradition through the ages. But once you hear the gospel, Paul says, "See to it," it's a command, "do not let your thinking look to anything, anyone, any teaching, any philosophy, any religion, any ritual, any rite, any rules system, any law system, look only to Christ. Look only to Christ. He is perfect, you don't need anything else."

Now in verses 8 through 10, he amplifies this. Well, the last part of verse 8, he says, "rather than according to Christ," which means once you begin to embrace anything, you begin to oppose Christ. Listen to me. Anytime you would include anything that might give you a right standing before God in addition to Jesus, Jesus leaves the room. He tolerates no rivals. You've got to come to God saying, "I solely, wholly, absolutely only trust in Your Son's work for me on the cross, period. That's my salvation." Because once you do that, you're opposing Jesus Christ. You do not add philosophies to Jesus. You do not add the traditions of men, the elementary principles of the world that that come out in the form of religions and religious systems to Jesus. You trust Christ and reject all others. The Bible says there is salvation in no one else for there's no other name that's been given among men whereby we must be saved.

Now he wants to drive the nail deeper into the wood so he amplifies how perfect Christ is by saying in verse 9, "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form." Here's Paul's point: in him you've got God of very God pledging his all, even his blood on the cross to save you, that's perfect, what else do you need? He's he's the fullness of deity. It means that unlike the Greek and Roman demigods of the day, gods that were kind of like man, but yet more powerful and superior to man, he said, "No, no, no, he's not kind of like God. He doesn't have just some of the components or attributes of God. He is God of very God. God incarnate. God in human form. All the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form." Here's the point point: if God has saved you, what can you add to that? If God put on human flesh, walked this sinful sod, went to the cross, bore your sin and the wrath your sin deserves on the cross, what can you add to a God-wrought salvation? He's perfect. Look to nothing else. You do not need some process. You do not need some ceremony. You do not need need some rite or ritual or rules or insight for man-centered philosophy. You do not need any of that. You need someone, and his name is Jesus. Are you resting there? Are you shipwrecked on Jesus and stranded on omnipotence? That's the place to be.

Well, he says, and this one who is the fullness of deity, he's, verse 9, in bodily form. That means God now has a body since Jesus has entered into the full incarnation. He has become man, but he remained fully God. As a theologian said, Jesus is 100% God as if he were not man at all and at the very same time, he's 100% man as if he were not God at all, but he's always totally both. He's the God-man. God in the old era, in the old dispensation, revealed himself partially to Moses. He he allowed Moses to see something of his glory in the pillar of cloud, and something of his justice and judgment in the pillar of fire, and something in his power in parting the Red Sea. And then we saw God partially in the types of the Old Testament, the temple and the sacrificial system, and all the elements of the temple. The bread represented Jesus. We saw pictures of him, but now we see God wholly and fully in Jesus Christ. That's Paul's point. We have God in Christ essentially and wholly. That's why John 2:23 reminds us, "He who has the Son has the Father also." You got Jesus, you've got God, you've got salvation wrought of God. It's perfect. You need nothing.

When you receive Jesus, you gain entire perfection in the eyes of God. Did you hear that? When you receive Jesus Christ, you gain perfection in the eyes of God the Father so why in the world would you clamor and stress and have anxiety and worry, "Did I do this right? Did I do that right? Did I jump through that hoop right? Did I jump through this hoop right? Did I do the rituals right, or the ordinances right, or did I repent enough, did I overcome enough sin?" Stop it! Look to Jesus. You see, what you're doing, you're formulating your own little ritual system and your own little philosophy about how it works. Stop it and say it's only Jesus. "Lord, I cast myself in whole bankrupt abandonment on You." He's God. He's in me. I am in him. And he, as my God, is my Savior. And he, as my God and my Savior, is my advocate before the Father.

No one and no thing can remove me from the family of God which will last for all eternity because as he says, as he continues there, look down at verse 10, and he's "Head over all rule and authority." If it's not enough that he's the fullness of deity, verse 9, he dwells in bodily form, came down here to save us. In him you've been made complete. By the way, the word "complete" means "crammed full." You've been crammed full of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. You see, you don't get to heaven on your righteousness. You get to heaven on Christ's righteousness. You ride his coattails all the way into heaven.

Well, Paul says, "Look, Jesus paid it all. Look to nothing else because of His perfection. He's the perfect one," now listen to me, "He perfectly executed the Father's plan of redemption for the children. It's all settled and all done in Him." Now secondly, Paul says, not only do we look and rest in him fully because of his perfection, but also his provision. His provision. Paul's now gonna use lots of imagery metaphor to try to illustrate to us how fully Christ has effectually covered our sins and made us righteous in the eyes of God.

Now, first subpoint is, he's our provision giving us victory over the offense of our flesh. You see, your natural body, this this body you're housed in down here, the whole the whole totality of your natural being is polluted, stained, soiled, corrupted by sin. It's vile in God's sight and so a holy God can't look on that kind of package and not be offended by it and also judge it. If he does not judge your flesh, then he's not God, because then he would be unjust. He can't function in injustice. But Jesus removes this offensive, polluted, corrupted, vile flesh and he uses the figure of circumcision, of course, brought over from the Jews, and he makes a point with it. Look at verse 11, "and in Him," that's in Jesus Christ, that is in his performance and in what he's done for you, "you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." Now, circumcision was a symbol God gave the Jews in the old economy, where they would bring a little boy in on the eighth day after he was born, and the heads of the tribe would cut off the foreskin of that little boy and take that foreskin away and discard it. It was to symbolize God purifying and removing the offensiveness of the sinful, corrupt, stained, polluted flesh so that God could welcome them now, being purified, and they would be welcomed into the family of God. The problem is the Jews got the literal ritual, but they didn't get the higher truth it was pointing to, and that was Jesus. Christ now is the reality of what ancient circumcision

prefigured. Christ is the reality of what the ancient uh uh ritual of circumcision pictured. You know, it's one thing to be on a trip and look at a picture of your wife and your family, but it's so much better when you get home and you get the real thing. Well, that's Jesus' point. Quit looking at the picture, the old rituals of circumcision, and look at the real thing, the one who actually purifies your flesh and causes you to now be righteous, pure, and accepted before God and into the family of God.

In verse 11, he's called it the removal of the body of the flesh. Uh it's it's a vivid picture in the original language. It's the idea of taking off a garment. Jesus literally came down and he took your flesh off of you like you take a coat off and says, "Now now, Father, look at him now. Now that I've died for him, now that I've washed him in my blood, now look at him." He takes that old coat of corrupt, polluted flesh off, and now God can look on us and God's not offended by the wretched, sinful stains that we once had before that.

Then he amplifies again verse 11 and says, "by the circumcision of Christ." So where the ancient Jewish fathers removed the foreskin of a little boy the eighth day after he was born and took away that skin, symbolizing the removal of the impure matter so God could now accept them, he said, Jesus is the true surgeon that came in and he cut out the entire sin tumor out of all of us and he has taken it away so now the Father can look at us without offense and now all the Father sees is the righteousness of his Son, Jesus Christ. What a provision that is. What a provision. Jesus paid it all. What a provision that is.

Well, secondly, Paul says, I can't just end there. There's so much more to talk about Jesus. He gives us victory over spiritual death. Look at it, if you would, in verses 12 and 13, "having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." Verse 13 and "When you were dead," being dead and not being able to fix it. Uh Dr. Jimmy Millican, my theologian theological professor in graduate school used to say, "How dead were you? Sort of dead? Kinda dead? Mostly dead?" No, you were graveyard dead. So in your state of spiritual death, you can't hear God, see God, look for God, taste God, desire God, dead. But in that state, Jesus did something for us. "When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh," still packaged in this old sin-defiled package of humanity that God must judge, "He," middle of verse 13, "He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions."

So we walk down here in this death existence, biologically alive, but wholly, fully spiritually dead. That's why when you went into a church with Bible preaching, it didn't mean much to you. That's why when you're around people who really sought to please and love Christ, you weren't drawn that much to them. But after Jesus saves you, he births new life in you, and you become spiritually alive where you once were dead. The old prophet said, "Can these dry bones live? O Lord, you know." God can take your old sin-parched to the core, lifeless dead bones, and bring about brand new life, spiritual life. He gave us this. He raised us up with him. The phrase there, "He made you alive," middle verse 13, and fixed it all for us. Victory over the um offense of our flesh, victory over our spiritual death, and then victory over the curse of the law. Of course, this would hearken to the Jews primarily, however, the Romans had their systems of religion with certain

laws and rules within, but we know that here, he's emphasizing the Jewish law that was from God, given by God through Moses, which showed us how far we fall short, which show us how completely we are transgressors, if you will, how totally we are out of sync with God.

Look at it in verses 14 and 15. So what'd Jesus do about this? He gives us victory over the curse of it, "having canceled out the certificate of debt," and that's another word for God's law there, but it's a certificate of debt because it shows us what we owe God and what we owe God's justice, being sinners. Jesus took the debt, the certificate of debt consist consisting of decrees against us, and he has canceled it out. The picture there is canceling out is rubbing it off. It's it's like a dry erase board where you you wipe it off and you clean it, and it's not there anymore. It's not there anymore.

He says it's "a certificate of debt consisting of decrees that were against us and hostile to us." That's pretty powerful. Now, wait a minute. The law's not bad. The law's righteous and holy and good. The law's not wrong, no. The law is righteous and right and just. Well, then how does Paul say it's it's against us and it's hostile to us? Because we're bad. Because we're not righteous. Because we're not holy or just. And God has promised through the work of his Son that he would save his elect church. So how is God gonna do this when his righteous law cannot be altered, but it condemns us and demands our eternal uh condemnation under the justice of God? What's going to happen? Jesus is gonna fix it. Jesus and only Jesus could take that righteous and holy perfect law that spells out our rightful condemnation and remove it from being against us, and as a claim that demands our eternal, the eternal wrath of God in retribution against us.

Now in the ancient world, and this is what Paul's figuring here, he wants you to have a picture in your mind, in the ancient world, if you had a debt against you, you are bound to pay that debt and obligated to the law courts if you failed to pay your debt, if you signed on at the bottom. In those days, it was a piece of leather or parchment paper. You signed, "Okay, I bought so-and-so land from so-and-so for \$20,000." If you signed it, you're obligated. That debt is against you. And if that debt was paid off, archaeologists have uncovered from this era certificates of debt that had a big X marked across them, which means they paid it. So it's no longer against them. When uh Paul writes Philemon in Philemon 19, Paul tells Philemon, "Now Philemon, I I found your runaway slave. I know it's cost you a lot of money because you you take care of him, you pay him at some level, and he's ran away from you, and that part was wrong, but he's become a believer, Philemon. He's become our brother in Christ now. I'm gonna send Onesimus back to you, and now Philemon, if he owes you anything, I'll pay for it." He said, "I'm writing it with my own hand." What was what was Paul saying? The custom of the day, "I've put my name on here with my own hand. I'm bound for the debt of Onesimus when he comes back to you."

Now, so that's where we are with this certificate of debt that is against us. Now I think it's very good at this point to think what might that certificate look like? God wants you to picture something. So picture it as a piece of paper and it's up there in heaven and it's a summary of God's law, the 10 Commandments, and the certificate that is against us and

hostile to us, because it points out the with clarity that there's no excuse for any of us. Do you understand? Are you listening? Do you understand that if one moment in time, your entire life, your heart wasn't to joy in God, you violated the 10 Commandments and you're guilty as if you committed all 10 of them every day, all day long? Hostile to us and we've all signed on. The Jews knew, they knew, they signed on with Moses when he brought the law down the mountain, Mount Sinai. They all agreed, "This is the covenant, the law we will keep to maintain our standing with God as God's people." The rest of us Gentiles, we've all signed on through moral assent because God has written the law in our hearts and we know in our hearts that some things are right and always will be right, and we know in our hearts some things are wrong and always will be. Why do we instinctively do that? Matter of fact, there's a Bible verse in Romans that says those Gentiles instinctively do the things of the law. What's he mean? You know in your heart there's a God who's given you moral and absolute right and wrongs.

So we've all signed on with moral assent. The Jews signed on at Sinai to the literal 10 Commandments, but we've all signed on and we're all condemned and it declares that all of us are without excuse and worthy of the judgment of God. But Jesus. But Jesus has taken it out of the way. Look at verse 14, "having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way." Literally, it's the idea of bearing up and carrying away. John the Baptist said when Jesus came for baptism, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." He bears it away. I always think about that Old Testament picture of Samson in Gaza and he knew that uh the men were gonna meet him at at sunrise at the city gate and kill him. So Samson went down to the city gate before sunrise, put his mass shoulders under a gate, post, bars and all and ripped them up out of the ground and took that gate and threw it away on the hillside next to it. That's the picture of Jesus. He comes to the law of God that is an oppressive stronghold against us, and he's taken his massive shoulders, and Jesus has ripped it up, gate, post, bars and all, and he's carried it away and thrown it down. No longer holds us. No longer holds us because of Jesus. It's permanently removed because Jesus has paid for our debt when he died on the cross.

Now, because Paul wants to give us these images, just think about in heaven, there's a certificate of the law, Paul's words, the decrees that are against us, and on that certificate is your name in bold across the top, and under your name, there's this statement, "You shall appear at the Great White Throne judgment to receive just penalty for transgressing the laws of Almighty God." Number one, "You shall have no other gods before me." Out beside it, "Guilty." Number two, "You shall not make for yourselves an idol." Out beside it, "Guilty." Number three, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain." Out beside it, "Guilty." "Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy." "Guilty." "Honor your father and mother." "Guilty." "You should not commit murder, if you've hated in your heart, you're guilty." "You should not commit adultery." Jesus said, "If you've lust in your heart, guilty." "You should not steal." "Guilty." "You should not bear false witness." "Guilty." "You shall not covet." "Guilty." Paul said this is a certificate of debt consisting of decrees that's against us and hostile to us, but the Lord Jesus Christ, having died and been raised from the dead in his perfection and through his provision, Jesus takes that certificate and he takes the stylus of heaven, the golden stylus of heaven, and he dips it

into his own royal, regal, red blood and he takes that certificate and marks a great big red X across the front of it. Then he dips that stylus in his precious blood one more time and signs at the bottom, "Signed the Lord Jesus Christ."

He's taken it out of the way. Then the text goes on to say, he's taken it out of the way, "having nailed it to the cross." Again, a visual picture of God the Father, taking the certificate of debt that's in heaven against you, Jesus has got his red blood X on it and his red blood writing that he's paid it in full, "Signed Jesus Christ," and the Father takes it to a cross hanging outside the gate of Jerusalem, a place called Golgotha, and nails it to that cross and says, "I want every one of y'all to look at that. I want all of you to look at it, exonerated, free, forgiven, cleansed, Mine forever," because of the perfect, priceless provisions of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I want to close with verse 10, that simple phrase in verse 10, "and in Him you have been made complete." In him. The idea is in if Jesus saves you, you're not just kind of barely getting in, you're abundantly saved. You're crammed full. In Jesus Christ, you're crammed full of absolute, forever, past, present, and future, forgiveness. You're crammed full of his cleansing. You're crammed full of his parting. You're crammed full of his purification. You're crammed full of justification. You're crammed full of eventual positional sanctification. You're crammed full of glorification. You're just crammed full. I love that phrase.