

Victorious, Triumphant Forgiveness Colossians 2:13-15

INTRO: In verses 11-12, Paul emphasized that salvation is full and complete apart from any religious ritual (circumcision, baptism). Now in verse 13-15, he emphasized that forgiveness is full and complete apart from any human works.

Colossians 2:13-15 is a series of vivid pictures showing what Christ has done for sinful man. Paul's aim is to show that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has done all that can be done for the salvation of man; nothing else need be done.

I. VS 13a, MEN DEAD IN THEIR SINS

- A. Before salvation, the Colossians were dead in sins (Eph 2:1).
 - 1. They had no power to overcome sin. They had no power to atone for sin. They were dead.
 - 2. "Dead" is the Greek word *negros* meaning, "lifeless, destitute of life, without life."
 - 3. Spiritual death— that's the picture here.
 - a. Unbelievers are totally depraved; they exist in the realm of spiritual death.
 - b. Spiritual death means to be devoid of any sense, to be unable to respond to spiritual stimuli; just like the physically dead are unable to respond to physical stimuli.
 - c. The person in this state:
 - 1- Is locked in sin's grasp and cannot help but live in sin.
 - 2- Is unable to respond to God.
 - 3- Is unrighteous.
 - 4- Is unprofitable. "They are all gone out of the way, they are all together become unprofitable; there is none that goeth good...." (Rm 3:11b).
 - 5- Is not seeking God. "There is none that seeketh after God" (Rm 3:11b).
 - 6- Is unable to make any sense out of spiritual truth, and cannot understand the Bible.
 - 7- Is dominated by the world, the flesh, and the Devil.
 - 8- Is devoid of spiritual life; has no eternal life.

- 9- Is a child of wrath (Eph 2:3).
- 10- Is unqualified and unable to save himself.
- B. "The uncircumcision of the flesh...." Not only were the Colossians dead in sins, but they were also "the uncircumcision of the flesh" before salvation.
 - 1. "Uncircumcision of the flesh" means they were outside the covenant.
 - 2. The Gentiles were in worse shape than the unbelieving Jews who were at least a part of the covenant people who possessed the Law of God.
 - a. No wonder Paul describes the Gentiles as "having no hope, and without God in the world."
 - b. Ephesians 2:11-12.

II. VS 13b, MEN FORGIVEN AND RAISED TOGETHER

- A. "Quickened" means that God showed mercy to those who did not deserve it, and made them alive spiritually.
 - 1. We were dead spiritually, but He raised us from the dead! This is a work of power; it puts life into dead men.
 - 2. We are "made alive with him." This stresses the believer's union with Christ.
 - a. 2:10: "Ye are complete in him."
 - b. 2:11: "In whom [Christ]... ye are circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands...."
 - c. 2:12: "Buried with him.....risen with him...."
 - 3. Christ did what we could not do ourselves. He saved us. Making alive implies forgiveness (vs 13), blotting out a writing (vs 14), disarming spirits (vs 15).
- B. "Having forgiven you all trespasses." This is the result of being made alive with Christ. This brings untold joy to the believer: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psa 32:1).
 - 1. God forgives the sins of those who trust in Him. The Scriptures emphasize this truth:
 - a. Psalm 130:3-4: "If thou Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared."
 - b. Colossians 1:13: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
 - c. Micah 7:18: "Who is a God like unto thee, that

pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage....”

- d. Read carefully the words of Isaiah 1:18. God forgives believing sinners.
 - e. At the Lord’s Supper, Jesus said: “This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission [forgiveness] of sins” (Mt 26:28).
 - f. “Through his name [Jesus] whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission [forgiveness] of sins” (Acts 10:43).
 - g. Ephesians 1:7: “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.....”
2. The characteristics of God’s forgiveness:
- a. Gracious– not earned, a free gift (Tit 3:5).
 - b. Bountiful– not of His riches but according to His riches (Eph 1:7).
 - c. Eager- God “entreats” men to be reconciled to Him. God is anxious to forgive. “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.....”
 - d. Certain- Acts 26:18, because it is based on God’s promise.

III. VS 14, MEN WITH THEIR SIN DEBT ERASED

- A. Jesus Christ blotted out the handwriting of ordinances against us.
- B. “Handwriting” is the Greek word *cheirographon* meaning, “charge list, certificate of debt.”
 1. Used to refer to an IOU, a certificate of indebtedness, hand written by the debtor in acknowledgment of his debt. Men were in debt because of sin and knew it.
 2. The certificate consisted of ordinances and decrees against us. “Ordinances” is Greek *dogma* which refers to the Mosaic law (Eph 2:15). We all, Jew and Gentiles, owe God a debt because we have violated His law.
- C. “Contrary to us.” This certificate was hostile to us. It was enough to condemn us to hell (Gal 3:10).
- D. “Blotting out”– Greek *exaleipho* which means “canceled out, to wipe off.” It is like erasing a blackboard.
 1. Ancient documents were written either on papyrus or vellum. Ancient ink had no acid in it so it did not sink into

- the paper. A sponge could be used to wipe the writing out.
2. God in mercy wiped out, banished, our sin debt so completely that it is as if it had never been— not a trace remains.
- E. “Nailing it to his cross.”
1. The indictment against us was itself crucified, executed, put clean out of the way.
 2. God annulled our debt when His Son satisfied the law’s just demands of perfect obedience.

IV. VS 15, MEN HAVE VICTORY IN JESUS

- A. God canceled the believers debt defeating Satan and his demons.
- B. Jesus Christ stripped the powers of darkness and made them His captives.
 1. Jesus stripped the enemy of his weapons and armor. He broke the enemies power.
 2. The picture is of a triumphant Roman general having won a notable victory. He marches his victorious armies through the streets of Rome. Behind him followed the conquered kings and leaders and defeated army branded as spoils.
- C. Jesus is conqueror. Satan is beaten, defeated forever.

CONCLUSION: These verses picture the total adequacy of the work of Christ. Sin is forgiven; evil is conquered.