

“From Salvation to Service”

Colossians 1 v19-29

Scripture Ref: Col 1:3; Col 2:9-10; John 1:16; Eccl 3:11; Rom 1:20; Rom 6:23; 1 John 4:10; Rom 8:20-21

1. So far in our study...

a. The faith of the Saints...

i. Faith...Hope...Fruit...Grace...

ii. The beauty of the reality of the church, to which Paul exclaimed...

Col 1:3 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you

b. Growing up in the wisdom and knowledge of Jesus Christ

i. And knowledge transforming to wisdom – which is knowledge in action

c. And what drives this in our lives *is the reality of the person of Jesus Christ – WHO HE IS!*

2. When we come to terms – in our hearts – with who Jesus is...

a. The image of the Living God... who existed before all things...

b. Who created all things... for whom all things were created...

c. That He is the head of all things – especially the church

d. ...the logical and proper response to that reality is to give HIM **PREEMINENCE in our heart and lives**

3. When we consciously do that – it leads us from Salvation – to service...

Salvation

19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

4. Paul makes a statement that goes right to the heart (again) of who Jesus is...

a. Not just a great teacher, or philosopher, or the man who started Christianity...

b. But – the One in whom *all the fullness dwells*...

5. Word - “Fullness” – Greek ‘playroma’ – *“the sum total of all divine power and attributes”*

a. IOW – Jesus does not have *some power, or part of God’s power and attributes*...

- b. But Jesus has *all of the power and divine attributes of God the Father!*
- 6. “Dwell” – “*to be at home permanently*”. Not something added to Jesus, but that His fullness has always been part of Jesus being from eternity past.
 - a. “*It pleased the Father*” to give HIS fullness to Jesus is evidence that Jesus is God

Col 2:9-10 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.
John 1:16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

- 7. So – what happens with this fullness? What is the purpose?
 - a. The reconciliation of all things to God!
 - b. Because of the fact that Jesus has all the fullness of God the Father, He could do what no other human being could do...
 - c. Reconcile sinful man to a Holy God.
- 8. There is a verse in Ecclesiastes that I love – 3:11 “*God has put eternity into the hearts of men*” (paraphrase)
 - a. This is not a random statement that can be disputed...
 - b. As far back as we can see, man has sought to worship and be one with God... whether in truth or ignorance
 - i. In Georgia we visited an ancient city of Vardzai, a city that was carved into the side of a mountain over 1500 years ago.
 - ii. In that place were sites where pagan religious ceremonies took place.
 - c. Man has it programmed into his very DNA that God exists, that we were created by a being greater than ourselves
 - d. And it rests in the heart of every man and woman to be reconciled – rejoined – brought together, with our creator.
 - e. Some fight it – some run – some rebel – but make no mistake, it is there.
 - f. Before I became a Christian, I had many conversations with many “far-gone” sinners
 - g. People given completely over to sin, violent people, criminals–
 - h. ...strange conversations in rooms after everyone else had left, even in a drug and alcohol induced state – the realization that God is real.

Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead,

9. QUEST: How can these people, or anyone, be reconciled to God?
- a. Could God lower His standards, close His eyes, ignore sin?
 - i. Surely that would be worse for man than judgment.
 - b. Perhaps man could “get his act together”, and please God.
 - i. The sad fact is, we are born with a sinful nature
 - ii. We, in and of our own power, are not capable of pleasing God.
10. If there is to be reconciliation between man and God, then GOD must be the initiator.
- a. It will take a power that is far greater than man to accomplish such a thing...
 - b. And that is what God has done, by the fullness of Jesus Christ.
 - c. He has made peace between man and God through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.
11. Because Jesus died on the cross, He fulfilled the just demands of the law

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- a. Because Jesus lived a sinless life, His death was not for HIS sin, because He knew no sin...
- b. His death was accounted to us for OUR sin...

1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

- 12....and not only is man reconciled to God, but ALL CREATION... (and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven)

(Entropy – all things are in a state of decay)

Rom 8:20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

(so) 21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled 22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight -- 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

- 13. We were talking the other morning about Paul, and how with his extensive knowledge of the OT scriptures, the prophecies of the Messiah**
- a. How it must have shaken his world to the foundation to come face to face with the Messiah, and realize that it was in fact Jesus of Nazareth.**
 - b. In that one instant it changed his life direction, purpose,**
 - c. Everything that had been important was suddenly rubbish**
 - d. His title, position, standing before man, his mission in life...**
 - e. Paul set it all aside and became a minister of the gospel – the TRUTH.**
- 14. What about us? It's true that perhaps we have not had a "Damascus Road experience" like Paul...**
- a. But when the truth of the gospel, and who Jesus is, and what He has done for us, permeates our life...**
 - b. Should there not be some change?**
 - c. Of course yes – we should "live like a Christian" and not do the same immoral things we used to do...**
 - d. And Jesus gives us the power to have victory over sin and our immoral flesh.**
- 15. But there is a secondary response that is just as important – it should cause us to step forward in service to the King of Kings...**

Service

24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, 25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, 26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. 27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. 29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

- 16. Paul says a lot here...**
- a. Paul is pouring out his very life in service to Christ – by serving and ministering "for the sake of His body, which is the church"**
 - b. Telling people about Jesus**
 - c. Telling people about the riches of the glory of this mystery – that God has grafted in the Gentiles into his church**

- i. Remember, only the Jews had the covenant, the law, the sacrificial system of atonement...

17. MISSION – PURPOSE - ACTION

- a. What was Paul's mission?
 - i. Preaching – sharing the good news of the gospel
 - ii. Warning – against the lies of the enemy, against false doctrines, against sin in our lives
 - iii. Teaching – instructing people with the Word of God, the knowledge of Christ, the wisdom of God.
- b. What was Paul's purpose?
 - i. Seeking to build up the church, to “present every man perfect”
- c. What was Paul's action?
 - i. Laboring, striving (IOW – Hard work!) – but according to God's power which was working in Paul.
- d. ...and Paul considered it a privilege to be a part of God's work here on earth... even though it involved... suffering

18. “sufferings for you” – I have an problem – can I share it?

- a. There are some in the church that have a perception that once we get saved, life becomes a big “bless-fest”.
- b. You can “have it all”, be the “best you”....
- c. No more problems, no more hurt, no more effort...

19. Thing is, someone forgot to tell Paul this... or Peter, or John

- a. Apparently these guys had some real struggles in their lives and ministry over the course of the next 30-60 years after Jesus went to the cross.
- b. Now that I think about it, Jesus apparently missed this – He had no home, no wealth, no riches...
- c. He was mocked, scoffed at, all of His followers left after He quit feeding them...
- d. What gives?

20. I have news for you – living the Christian life can be very hard. WHY?

- a. You are going to be opposed by a powerful being – Satan
- b. You are swimming against the tide of the world

21. Honest – I think that when Christians are all about “my blessed life”, Satan leaves those people alone – their too self-focused to have any impact on the world around them

- a. But you just decide that you are going to step out and do something for God –
- b. And see what kind of opposition comes your way.

22. And yet Paul tells us about the “riches of His glory”...

- a. **How could Paul be suffering in a jail cell, suffering through his labor and striving, and yet be blessed?**
- b. **Because Paul understood something...**
- c. **God still had him on this earth for a reason, a purpose...**
- d. **God had made him a steward – of a mystery – to declare the gospel to the gentiles.**

23. Guess what, God has a purpose for YOU – each one of you.

- a. **You may not be Paul – but God has made you a steward of something...**
- b. **Maybe to teach children, maybe to be part of the outreach teams, or to worship God**
- c. **And I believe that when each of us begins to truly realize the reality of the one we worship as “God”**
- d. **That our natural, logical, appropriate response is... just like Paul on that road to Damascus...**
- e. **“Lord, what would you have me to do?”**

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