

**THE APOSTLE’S SALVATION – AND OURS**

Colossians 1:12-14

Reader: Phil Livesley

**Intro:** Last Sunday I had the privilege of pointing out to you the results, or the fruit, of a holy walk, beginning with verse 10 of Colossians

1. They are”

1) “Being fruitful in every good work,

2) Also in verse 10, “increasing in the knowledge of God.”

3) And then in verse 11, “Strengthened with all might . . .”

4) And fourthly, “Giving thanks unto the Father.”

All of this was a part of Paul’s prayer. He did not pray this just for some of the believers in Colosse, but for all of them!

Now I want you to notice this morning that with this request Paul moved ahead into the next part of his letter to the Colossians, and this had to do with salvation – Paul’s salvation, the Colossians salvation, and I can also say, to *our* salvation! Salvation is not one thing for an apostle, and something else for the Colossians. It was not one thing for the believers in that day approximately twenty centuries ago, and something else for us today. There is only one salvation for all generations. It is always through Christ, and it is always to the glory of God.

Notice how Paul said “us” in verse 12, and “us” twice in verse 13, and “we” in verse 14. Paul did not have a greater salvation than we do, nor does any believer today have any more than you do. Some may be more active in showing the results of salvation, but all of us have the same salvation.

And notice that the thanksgiving for our salvation belongs to God, and also to “His dear Son” which is how Paul referred to the Lord Jesus Christ in verse 13. I have neither the knowledge nor the words to express how “dear,” how precious, the Lord Jesus Christ is to the Father. It is so great that it is beyond our comprehension. The Lord Jesus Himself spoke of it in that verse of verses, John 3:16,

For God SO loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Paul was referring to the love of God for His Son, when He wrote, speak-

ing of God,

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things (Rom. 8:32).

And incidently, both of these verses which speak of God's love for His Son, also speak of God's love for us because God would give His Son for our salvation.

Our salvation was initiated by God. There are many verses in the Bible which speak of salvation originating with God. One of the most amazing is found in the companion epistle of Colossians, the letter to the Ephesians. Listen to what Paul wrote as he began that epistle:

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace (Eph. 1:3-7).

When Paul said "blessed" at the beginning of this passage, it was basically what he was doing what he exhorted the believers at Colosse to give thanks to God. God ordained our salvation. He chose those who would be saved. He sent His Son to die for those whom the Father had chosen. And the Lord came and died in obedience to the Father's will and for the Father's glory. And it is the Holy Spirit Who has sought us, and brought us to Christ, and by Him we have been born again.

All Three Persons of the Godhead are to be glorified for our salvation, but in our text Paul was thinking about where the whole idea of salvation got started. It was with the Father!

Now these three verses do not give us all that can be said about salvation. Even before we get through chapter 1, Paul was speaking again of salvation. See 1:21 and 22. And there is more in chapter 2. But we want to understand what Paul's words in chapter 1, verses 12, 13, and 14 mean,

and we will get to the others later.

What did Paul mean when he said in verse 12 that the Father “hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light”? This is Paul’s statement of what God has done for us through the Gospel, and in verses 13 and 14 we are told how He has done it.

Notice first the words, “made us meet.” This basically means that *God has qualified us for salvation*. Or to state it another way, it means that He has made us worthy of salvation. Or to state it still another way, he had made us worthy of salvation.

But I can almost hear some of you saying that you are not worthy of salvation. You agree that you need to be saved, but you know that you don’t deserve to be saved. You know that God would be perfectly righteous to turn away from you and forget all about you. You agree with Jacob in the book of Genesis 32:10 when he was on his way back home, and would face the consequences of what he had done to Esau. He said to the God of his father and grandfather, “I am not worthy of the least of all of the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto thy servant.” There is something very wrong with us if we don’t feel the same way about our relationship with God. We know that we would have no hope if it were not for the love and grace and mercy of God. How could any of us say that we are qualified for salvation, that we deserve to be saved? Stay with me, and we will see how Paul answered that question in just a moment.

Notice what Paul said that we are qualified to received? It is that we are qualified “to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

A partaker is one who shares in the inheritance. When a loved one dies, his or her will is read to give and only those whose names are listed in the will are partakers of the inheritance, whether it be large or small. They are the ones who are qualified. Others may say that they are heirs, but if their name is not listed, they have no right to the inheritance. Paul was talking about “the inheritance of the saints.” A saint is one of the Bible words for a child of God, a true Christian.

In Romans 8 the Apostle Paul had this to say about heirs:

16 The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

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17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Also in Ephesians the Apostle Paul spoke of our inheritance. Listen to his words in Ephesians 1:9-12:

9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

I read this passage because it tells us that we already have our inheritance, and what our inheritance is: “That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ. We have it now, but we will have it in an even greater way when we get to heaven.

You remember the story that the Lord told of the son who claimed his inheritance, and then went and wasted it all in a life of sin. In our society an inheritance cannot be claimed until the person giving the inheritance dies. But we have our inheritance now, but we are going to claim it in its fulness when we get to heaven.

But what does “in light” mean? It has to be in contrast with the word “darkness” which appears in verse 13. You have light and darkness contrasted also by Paul in 2 Corinthians 4, and this will help us to understand the meaning of light here. I read to you verses 3 and 4 and 6 from 2 Corinthians 4:

3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

And then in verse 6:

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The “light” is the Gospel, and the Gospel is “the light of the knowledge of

God in the face of Jesus Christ.

So what qualifies us for salvation? It is the Gospel. The Gospel is about Jesus Christ Who died for sinners, and Who rose again because He had accomplished everything necessary for our salvation.

Verse 13 gives us more about how we are qualified for salvation.

Before we were saved we were helplessly in bondage under “the power of darkness,” which means the power of the Devil, and of sin, and of death. And we have been “translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son,” or, *the Son of His love*. Our deliverance is pictured like a person would be who was caught in a rushing mighty river while others looked helplessly on. But “translated” means to be removed from a place of certain death to a place of absolute safety. Here it is under the sovereign authority of God’s dear Son.

What a picture this is of salvation? So we are qualified for salvation not because of who we are, and any good works that we have done, but we are qualified by Jesus Christ, Who He is, What He did on the Cross for us, and how He continues to keep us until at last we see Him in glory, and become like Him.

So our inheritance is in the Gospel, which includes our justification, our sanctification, and our glorification.

But Paul we on in verse 14 to tell us more about our inheritance in Christ. (Read verse 14.)

This is where Paul completed that idea that you and I are qualified for salvation. We have “redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

The word that Paul used here for “redemption” speaks of the payment of a ransom. God is a righteous God. He is a holy God. He cannot overlook our sins, nor will He accept excuses. “The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek. 18:4, 20). “For the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). “There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not” (Ecc. 7:20). Salvation is “not of works” (Eph. 2:9).

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But “we have redemption through His blood,” the blood of Christ, shed on Calvary’s Cross, not for His sins, for He had none, but for your sins and mine. Through faith in Christ the repentant, believing sinner is acquitted in the court of heaven, *but only by the blood of Christ.*

And when God forgives, He does something which we cannot do; He forgets. God has said, “And their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more” (Heb. 10:17).

**Concl:** I am thankful to be able to tell you this morning that I am fully qualified for salvation. I am qualified because I am a sinner and I need to be saved, but I am also qualified because Jesus Christ died for me, and I am trusting Him for my full acceptance with God, and the forgiveness of all of my sins. And remember that there is no other way. Our Lord said while He was here on earth, and it is still the truth about salvation: “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me”(John 14:6).