

Col Ch 2 Vs 11-15

Needing Nothing More

Vs11-15

In the life of Jesus here on earth, healings were an absolutely essential, in fact vital aspect of His ministry, because they signified several things. For example; they solidified, or established His messianic credentials- you recall that a certain centurion had come to Jesus one day and said, Lord, my servant is at home and he's paralyzed and just dreadfully tormented. and The Lord knowing what this man was petitioning Him for said, "I'll come and heal him." But the centurion said, hey, that's not necessary, I understand authority because I have people over me and I have people under me and I understand the chain of command. and Besides I'm not even worthy to have you set foot under my roof, so you just speak the word and my servant will be healed. and You know the story, the Lord marveled because here was this gentile exuding faith that He couldn't even find in all of Israel.

From there the account takes us to Peter's house where his wife's mom had a fever and with just the simple touch of the hand she was healed, and we read that when evening had come, the towns people brought many to Him who were diseased or demon-possessed, or sick, and we read where He healed them all. and In Vs 17 of Matt ch 8 we read that all this was done, *"that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities And bore our sicknesses."* The "He Himself" being a reference to the Messiah, the healings of Jesus established His messianic credentials.

Of course His healings demonstrated the tender mercies and compassion of God, and His desire to restore broken down and tattered lives; they were a foreshadowing of the Millennial Kingdom when Christ will *banish* sickness and disease, but they also demonstrate an important principal regarding salvation. Because when Jesus would heal someone, He would make them completely whole, they would become totally healthy.

To the woman who had a flow of blood for 12 yrs and had exhausted all her worldly means to seek healing at the hands of the contemporary physicians of that day only to wind up poor, ripped off and unchanged. But when she turned to the Great Physician, by simply coming to the feet of Jesus and touching the hem of His garment we read where Jesus turned to her having sensed power going out from Him and said, *"Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour.*" Or it could be understood, "was made completely whole from that hour."

In Matt 15:28 we read where after a short conversation with a Canaanite woman seeking healing for her daughter, *"that Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.*" and Really, I suppose that the entire healing ministry in the Life of Jesus here on this earth could be summarized in the words of Matt 15:31 which says, *"So the multitude marveled when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed made whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel."*

Because when Jesus does a work, He does a work, they didn't need to seek further treatment after He'd touched their lives, they didn't need other supplements to fill in the gaps where His work had been found lacking in them. They were completely healthy, made whole, there was no lack to the work of Christ in their lives, Him doing for them what they could never do for themselves, His work was a complete work. and The point that I'm seeking to make here, is that the same thing is true when it comes to the salvation that Jesus provides for you as well, there's nothing lacking in His atoning work on the cross. There's no supplemental work that's left for you and me to do that will "fill in the gaps" where His work has been found lacking for you because His work on the cross isn't lacking, it was a complete work. You remember what we read last week there in vs 9-10 (read).

Now this is the heartbeat of this passage that we've been working around for the last 2 weeks; Paul was demonstrating the *deficiency* of humanistic philosophies, intellectualism, and the traditions of men and exalting the *sufficiency* of Christ. and Now that he's made this bedrock, concise, conclusive and definitive statement as to the sufficiency of Christ and how there's no lack in Him. These next several vs here seem to sort of exhaust this statement, or expound on this reality through a number of illustrations that further defuse the heretical notions that was confronting these Colossian believers.

Because in many ways like us today they were confronted with the idea that they needed to supplement the work of Christ in order to elevate themselves to a higher standard. Or in short they were being tempted through legalism to try and make themselves more spiritual. and So Paul is simply continuing to hammer in the point that you *need nothing more* than to be in Christ to be made perfectly whole, completely righteous before God, you cannot improve upon the righteousness of Christ that's been imputed to you.

In these vs (11-15) Paul illustrates 3 areas in which you, being in Christ, are complete, he demonstrates complete salvation in vs 11-12, complete forgiveness in vs 13-14, and complete victory in vs 15. Now, it's the desire of the flesh to take a hold and attach some form of credit to itself regarding any and all of these areas. We can't stand the fact that we can't do anything to gain merit before God, we can't earn His favor or somehow do something deserving of salvation. and The flesh repulses that idea, and we cringe at the fact that we can't make up for one bad thing by doing 2 or 10 good things, thereby getting God to feel sorry for us (or something) and eventually forgive us our sin debt because we've done so much good.

But hey, even if we can't do anything to deserve salvation, or get God to forgive us on the "good guy" mentality, then at the very least, surely we can fight our own battles. "*I mean thanks for getting me this far God, I'll take it from here.*" But not according to the Word of God, you remember that just before David slew Goliath he said these words, "*The LORD does not save with sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands.*" In 2 Chron 20:15 we read, "*Thus says the LORD to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's.'*"

Or to put it in the NT vernacular, Rom 8:37 “*in all these things* (all what things, the conflicts and confrontations or battles in this life) *we are more than conquerors* (how) *through Him who loved us.*” God will share His glory with no man, therefore there is no aspect of your life as it pertains to the Kingdom of God that God will allow you to take credit for, be it salvation, forgiveness, or victory, it’s all apart of the package deal that’s offered to you in Christ.

Vs11

Now why would Paul bring up circumcision? Well, because this Gnostic heresy was kind of this conglomeration of both pagan philosophies and Jewish legalism, we’ll see in our next study where the observance of certain days and foods and festivals were also in view in order to attain to these spiritual elitist type heights and righteousness before God. But again, here Paul is underscoring the fact that you are complete in Christ, that you need nothing more to be added to your life, or any supplement of the flesh in order to complete the work that He’s accomplished for you. and That it’s in fact heretical to say that you need something more than what Christ offers to be made righteous before God. I don’t care if it’s bead counting, repetitive prayers, wearing certain clothes, knocking on so many doors or passing out so many magazines, or the physical aspect of circumcision that he’s speaking of here. None of those things will attain you a special righteous standing before God. and In reality I urge you to exercise caution in doing *anything* that would cause you to glory in your own doings and seek some type of assurance or security by means of your own works. Because that's exactly what Paul is confronting here. You see the Jews required circumcision of not only their own male children, but also anyone else who desired to be converted into Judaism. Why, well, because it was written in the Law, that this was the sign that testified of God’s covenant with them concerning His promises to them as a nation and it would *testify* to the fact that they were the people of God.

How, by demonstrating the fact that they had severed the life lived after the flesh and that they’d ceased following after the *desires* of the flesh in order to follow in obedience after God in a life led after the Spirit. That’s what circumcision was to testify of, a severance of the life lived after the flesh, to turn my heart now toward the things of the Spirit that I might follow after God.

But what Paul is saying here is that in Christ we’re *all* circumcised and it has nothing to do with gender because it’s the circumcision made with out hands. In other words it’s not the physical ritual that was *required* of the law, but it was that which God had always *desired* that the law could never achieve that’s been accomplished for you in Christ, which is the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh. In Christ you’ve renounced the life lived after the flesh. You see that was the tragic error of the Jews, they were tied to the letter of the law, but blind to the Spirit of the law. Therefore they trusted in the physical r-i-t-e to make them spiritually r-i-g-h-t before God. But even in their own law God had stated multiple times that it wasn’t the matter of the physical that He was looking to.

We read in Deut 10:16, “*circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.*” Deut 30:6 says, “*the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.*” But what they would do, would be to go through the legal rite for the sake of false assurance, but then continue to follow after the flesh. and They thought that since they’d gone through this ritual, then they were saved, they’d entered into the fullness of the covenant relationship with God. But Paul told them that by simply going through the legal outward conforming, with out the inward spiritual transforming, and just continuing to follow after the flesh that they were completely annulling the whole ritual, it was pointless to do something outwardly that wasn’t paralleled inwardly in your heart. Look at Rom ch 2 vs 25-29.

You see in looking to the letter of the Law, they’d allowed the ritual to take the place of the reality, and what Paul is saying is that the gentiles, even though they’d never gone through the physical rite of circumcision, they’d forsaken the life led after the flesh through Christ, therefore it was accounted to them as circumcision, why? Because as we read earlier even in their own law, God is looking to the heart.

So Paul is saying here that the circumcision of Christ-made with out hands, is the work of the Spirit of God in my heart that causes me to turn away from the life after the flesh and walk in the spirit by the power of Jesus Christ in my life through the work of His cross. Whereby our only pool of strength from which to draw from being the body of the sins of the flesh (or natural human resource) was severed. Rom 6:6 puts it like this, “*knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*” You see the reason that the body of sin no longer needs to have a dominating power or influence over our lives is because our old man that it used to dominate was crucified on the cross with Christ.

Let me give you 1 more, Phil 3:2-3 “*Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!* (Speaking of course of those who trust in the physical ritual of circumcision for their righteousness.) *For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*” You can know that a sure indicator of someone who has received the circumcision of Christ is that they worship God in the Spirit, make their boast (not in the things of this world) but in Christ, and they take no confidence in the flesh, or their own natural human resources.

I’m always leery of the individual who when approached about their relationship with Jesus Christ immediately reverts to the age when they were baptized. You approach someone and say, “Hey, do you know the Lord?” and The 1st thing they say is, “Well, I was baptized when I was 10.” What are they doing? They’re taking confidence in the flesh, the things that they’ve done to gain them credence, or acceptance in the sight of God.

You see, the church today doesn't struggle with the physical rite of circumcision, but we've replaced it with the ritual of baptism. and So many think that when they stick to the letter and are baptized that in and through that, they've entered into the fullness of what God has promised in Jesus Christ But after they're baptized they just continue to lead their lives after the lusts of the flesh, doing whatever seems right in their own eyes, and there's no change in their lives. But just like with circumcision, to go through the outward conforming to the letter without the inward transforming of the heart is to completely annul the entire ritual, because there's been no parallel to what it speaks of take place in your heart. and That's what God is interested in, your heart.

Now, should a believer be baptized? Absolutely, will the physical ritual of baptism save a person? No more than the physical ritual of circumcision saved the Jew, Peter said that the baptism that saves is, "*(not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God).*" 1 Peter 3:21 In other words, it's not the physical act, but that which takes place in your heart, now Paul addresses that in vs 12 here.

Vs12

Now you see this is where we need to be careful in our division of the Word or else we'll be miss directed as to the baptism this is referring to. Because the 1st inclination that one would be prone to make would be to see this as a reference to water baptism. But understand that there's no amount of water that's going to literally bury you with Christ. Water baptism is only the outward *ritual* that merely testifies of the *reality* of this baptism. The bible uses the word "baptism" in both the physical and figurative sense, and many times throughout the Epistles as with this mention, Paul is speaking figuratively. and It simply speaks of being "identified with", for example when we read in 1 Cor 10:2 that the children of Israel were "baptized" into Moses in the passing through the Red Sea. We know that he's speaking of figurative baptism that speaks of them being identified with Moses because there was no water baptism of the children of Israel under Moses, as a matter of fact the one's who got the water were the Egyptians and they were immersed to the point of death, God drowned them all by allowing the sea to close in on them. But in that baptism, they were identified with Moses in his leadership of the people of God in him taking them out of bondage on into the promises of God.

Here Paul is speaking of us being identified with Jesus in His leading us out of the bondage of the world and of the flesh and leading us into the fullness of the provisions and promises of God for our lives. and Even as when Ab believed the promises of God and it was accredited to him as righteousness some 14yrs before he was circumcised, even so when you believe the promises of God in Christ, you will be accredited that same righteousness prior to the time that you're ever water baptized. As far as God was concerned, Ab had received the blessing that belonged to the circumcision the moment that He believed, because at that point He'd been circumcised in heart.

The physical act was only a testimony to that, and with us, the moment you believe in Jesus, this baptism which buries the old man, which died and raises you in the newness of life, is accredited to you. and Then the physical act of baptism will serve as a testimony to that inward working of Christ in your life. But your salvation was complete the moment you received Christ into your life. (You might look sometime at Rom 6:4-5 concerning this same type of identification.) Buried with Him, through identification with Him, and raised with Him, as surely as Christ's death before God is counted as our death, so when He was raised from the dead, as far as God is concerned, you and I were at that point resurrected into a whole new life in Him. How, can this be? Through faith, (in what) in the working of God, what God was doing in Christ on our behalf.

Vs13-14

God's forgiveness towards you in Christ is complete, and it is concrete. Notice in vs 13, you were dead (spiritually speaking) because you were in sin and trespasses, and the natural human resources passed onto you in Adam dominated your life, "the uncircumcision of your flesh." That tie to the flesh and the drives thereof hadn't been yet severed through the work of the cross on your behalf.

But God has made you alive together with Him, how? Having forgiven you "all" trespasses, (circle that word "all.") You now share in the life of Christ; in fact Christ is your life, as a believer you walk in the resurrection power and life of Christ, because the wages of sin is death, "*but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" and God has granted those who believe in Christ eternal life through the forgiveness of sin, we can't merit God's forgiveness in anyway, all we can do is receive His forgiveness by what He's done for us in Christ, because in Christ He's wiped out (finish vs 14).

What's this talking about, well, specifically this speaks of the Law, the law of God has never been for us, (as in on our side). The reality of the matter is that it's against us, it's contrary to us, people who think that they'll live by the 10 commandments have a grave misunderstanding of scripture because #1 they can't do it, and #2 it's not there to help you out, it's there to show you how sinful you are.

Now, no doubt the moral standards of the Law are right and just and should be morally adhered to, we consent that the Law is good, it's right. But we lack the ability to uphold it, not only morally but (as with everything else in the word of God) as it pertains to the heart. The 1st commandment is to have no other gods before the Lord; well how many of us have lived everyday, all the day, for our entire lives, with God as our priority, our passion, and paramount in our lives?

#2 You're not to make any graven images to worship, or fashion for yourself your own god, yet how many people worship their cars or their guitars, or their estates or whatever? People say, "Well, the god I serve would never allow anyone to go to hell." "Well, maybe the god you serve wouldn't, but you obviously don't serve the God of the bible who is Holy and just, therefore you've fashioned for yourself, your own god."

#3 You're not to take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Ever use the Lord's name in a non-respectful or reverent fashion so as to glorify Him? Ever call yourself a Christian, when the fact of the matter you were about as far from the biblical definition of a Christian you could be? Then you've taken His name in vain.

#4 Remember the Sabbath, ever do any work on a Saturday? #5 Honor your mother and your father, well, we've all blown that. #6 You shall not murder, ever hate anyone, or despise someone in your heart? You've wiped them off this planet in your heart? Then God considers you a murderer? #7 You shall not commit adultery, I know that you've all lusted in your heart at some point or another over a person of the opposite gender; the bible calls you an adulterer. #8 You shall not steal, and it doesn't matter if it was a pencil from the office or a bank teller, a jolly rancher at the convenience store or grand theft auto, it's all the same. #9 You shall not bear false witness, ever lied? and #10 You shall not covet, ever wish you had something that belonged to someone else? Now, these are the righteous standards of God and yet everyone on this planet has violated everyone of them with out exception

Aren't you glad that God has taken these requirements that were contrary to us, that were completely beyond our capability to uphold, and nailed them to the cross, having taken them out of the way? All the law says is "be holy, and by the way you're not." You're all condemned to hell according to the letter of the law. The bible says that the Law was a tutor that was put in place to lead us to Christ. To show us our insufficiency, and our desperate need for a Savior. Christ, and Christ alone fulfilled the righteous requirements of the Law not only outwardly but also inwardly, and then willingly laid down His life as a ransom, taking all of these requirements and our violations of them with Him to the cross, to make the payment for our sin that in Him we might experience the forgiveness of sin and cross over from death to life. Now don't miss understand, He didn't annihilate the Law, He fulfilled it, but He abolished its condemning accusations over us. In Christ, now He Himself becomes our standard, and He Himself by the power of the Holy Spirit matures us day by day through His grace in that progression until the day that we see Him face to face. and We know that when we see Him, and He is revealed, that we will be like Him for we will see Him as He is. Every condemning accusation held over us according to the law was nailed to the cross; our forgiveness is complete in Him. and Finally (very quickly)

Vs15

Maybe we'll comment a little more on this next time, but God has in Christ stripped every power and principality (which are rankings of demonic spirits, those fallen angels) of any authority whatsoever over you. and Don't be deceived into thinking that Satan and God are equal opposites, that couldn't be farther from the truth, and as to where God is omniscient Satan is limited in his knowledge, and I'm sure that when they nailed Jesus to the cross, he did a victory dance thinking he'd won. But what man meant for evil, and Satan meant to destroy the Son of God, God would use as the means to save mankind from their sins (as many as would call upon His name.) and Though Satan may've bruised His heal, Jesus would crush his head, by means of the cross and by the cross make a public spectacle of every power and principality triumphing over them in it. You have victory in Jesus.

But maybe you're here and you're not in Jesus, and if that's the case you need to know that you lie under the accusation and just condemnation of the Law of God. and The only way to have the just sentence of everlasting separation from God eradicated from you (as it were wiped out) and obtaining a clean slate before Him is to come to Christ. God didn't send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. Jesus doesn't condemn you this morning, He wants to set you free, He loves you, that's why He laid down His life on the cross. and If you'll receive Him into your life and into your heart, you'll be made alive together with Him, Him having forgiven you all your trespasses. Your every offense will be blotted out and you'll stand complete in Him, in victory, in forgiveness and in salvation, it's a free gift, but it's only available in Christ.