

WHY WE SHOULD TREASURE THE GOSPEL

Colossians 1:21-23

INTRODUCTION: The Gospel of Jesus Christ means good news. The gospel message has changed countless lives. It is the greatest news given to any individual who will receive it. The gospel declares that the only way to God is through Jesus Christ. The hell-deserving sinner can receive love, peace, forgiveness, and joy through the reconciling death of Jesus Christ, the risen Lord. In this world full of lies and deception, the gospel is a treasure greater than silver or gold. We will consider this precious treasure today.

The church at Colossae was under attack from false teachers who questioned the deity of Jesus Christ. They were teaching that Jesus was not God. The believer's spiritual life rests totally upon the truth of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. The sinner must build His earthly life upon this foundation. Our Scripture describes the way a sinner becomes a saint.

I. STATUS BEFORE SALVATION

A. SINNERS' ALIENATION FROM GOD. (v21)

Each person born into this world is alienated from God. The reason for this alienation is sin. In this sinful condition, every person is destined to hell. Paul wrote in Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." In Ephesians 4:18, Paul stated that we were alienated from the life of God.

Isaiah 59:2 states: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, that he will not hear." Our sinful condition left each of us as enemies of God.

B. SINNERS' ACTION AGAINST GOD. (v.21)

Webster's dictionary states that to "alienate" means to be unfriendly, hostile, or indifferent to another.

We are rebels against God every day by our evil thoughts and actions. Rebellion is rejecting God's authority and His moral law. We go against His will and His Word. Our pride and arrogant attitudes reveal our hostility toward God. We embrace the world's wisdom. The Bible states in Proverbs 9:10 that "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." We become servants to the world system.

We know that God loves the world of humanity. All we have to do is look at John 3:16 to know this fact. The world system is in rebellion against God. The world's system has made progress in so many ways, but nothing has improved on man's sinful nature. Our sinful nature is not something we can overcome on our own.

James 4:4 maintains that we cannot be friends of this world's system and be in a right relationship with God. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Our minds were set on the things of the flesh causing us to be hostile against God according to Romans 8:7.

Jesus asserted in Matthew 6:24 that "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

We are warned in 1 John 2:15-16, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

II. STATE AFTER SALVATION

A. OUR SAVIOR. (v.22)

Our status changed when we were saved. That change occurred the moment we trusted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We were changed from being His enemy to being His child. It required Jesus' death on the cross to solve our problem of alienation from God. Jesus did not die for us because we were good or because we were deserving of salvation. The Father commendeth His love toward us while we were his enemies. In 2 Corinthians 5:19, Paul stated: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." We have peace with God through the blood of Jesus. It required Jesus' death to reconcile us to God. The Father and the Son worked together to secure our salvation and our reconciliation.

Jesus reconciled us "in the body of His flesh." His death in a human body provided the sacrifice necessary to restore us. Our separation and state before a Holy God can only change by the precious blood of Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:5-6 states: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." We were enemies of God and slaves to every kind of evil. God, in His infinite grace, gave His beloved Son to save us from sin and prepare us for glory.

Once we have been born-again, we can say with Paul in Romans 5:1-2. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." We are delivered from the power of darkness and are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Colossians 1:13-14 states: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

B. OUR STANDING.

Noah Webster uses the following words in his definition of standing: "settled, established, fixed, and not movable." His definition of state is "condition; the circumstances of a being or thing at any given time."

Standing relates to the believer's spiritual position in Christ. We have a standing with God as His children through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Romans 5:1-2 states: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Paul stated in 2 Timothy 1:8-10: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Reconciliation means that enemies become friends. It means that we exchange our hostilities for friendship. In Christ, we are reconciled to God. Reconciliation means to be "brought back into full relationship and fellowship with God." This is what Christ accomplished on the cross for us. God's salvation is about transforming the redeemed into the image of Christ. We see the power of His salvation in the way He changes a life.

God's goal in reconciliation is to make believers holy, blameless, and beyond reproach before Him. God sees believers now, as we will be in heaven when we are glorified. He views us clothed with the very righteousness of Jesus Christ.

We often do not understand the remarkable potential of our salvation. The purpose of salvation is not just to "keep us out of hell" although it does that, but to make us Holy. Christ came to set us apart unto Himself and for His service.

C. OUR STATE

Our state relates to the daily life we live in our earthly bodies on earth. It pertains to our service or the works we do for the Lord after we are saved. (Ephesians 2:10; Titus 3:8) As long as we are in our fleshly bodies, we will never be perfect. (Romans 7:18-25, 13:13-14) Our state does reflect the choices we make in being obedient or disobedient to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We are told not to "grieve the Holy Spirit" in Ephesians 4:30, and not to "quench the Holy Spirit" in 1 Thessalonians 5:19.

It was C. S. Lewis who said, "No man knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good." The apostle Paul said in Romans 7:18-19, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

Our salvation in Christ will never change. We are saved by faith in Christ alone. We will someday give an account for our service to Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:10 states: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." God's grace provides the sinner salvation. Romans 3:24 states that we are "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

III. SECURITY OF SALVATION

A. POSITION IN CHRIST. (v. 22)

Our salvation is established, settled, fixed, sure, perfect, unmovable, and unchangeable in Christ Jesus. Jesus said in John 10:27-28, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Our position in Christ is forever secured in Christ as Savior. It is our legal standing with God. Our sin debt has been paid in full by the blood of Jesus, and we are freed from sin's penalty. Colossians 1:14: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." The security of the saint rests upon the blood of Christ.

B. PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINT. (v. 23)

Paul was not questioning if these believers would continue in the faith. He was assuming that they would continue in the faith.

Warren Wiersbe explained that in this verse Paul was saying, "If you are truly saved, and built on the solid foundation, Jesus Christ, then you will continue in the faith and nothing will move you. You have heard the Gospel and trusted Jesus Christ, and He has saved you."

The evidence of having received salvation is when we continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast. The saint of God will test his own faith and examine his own heart to be sure he is a child of God

In John 17:24, Jesus prayed for us to be with Him, and in John 14:1-3, He promised He would come again and receive us unto Himself. The security of the saint rests upon the faithfulness of Christ.

LESSONS FOR LIFE:

1. The Gospel is the Person of Christ, the Beloved Son of God. Jesus is our treasure.
2. The Gospel is Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus is our treasure.
3. The Gospel is God's grace in securing us in Christ. Jesus is our treasure.
4. The Gospel is for whosoever will receive Jesus. Have you received Jesus as your Savior? If Jesus is not your treasure, let Him become your treasure today.

