

Christ Community Covenant Church
Redeemed: "I Stand Redeemed!"
Pastor Dave Scherrer - June 21, 2015

Psalm 107:1-2

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever!

² Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,
whom he has redeemed from trouble

[Song . Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!]

Redemption - being redeemed - is **the** major theme of this little letter of Paul. And it is **the** major theme of the entirety of Scripture. You see the Scriptures know that one of the most desperate conditions of the human race is hopelessness. Have you ever been at the place where you have nothing to offer when it comes to a problem or heart ache? It doesn't happen as often in our circumstances or perhaps quite as often or deep as there are so many resources that can be bought to apply against a problem. A friend or loved one is sick and there is nothing you can do. You have run out of money and you have an emergency that requires a lot of money. You have an important relationship and it is going poorly and you are without hope. This helpless condition is what makes suicide seem like such a viable option . hope has run out.

At the core of this hopelessness is our helpless condition regarding the spiritual fate of the human race. Scripture tells us that all of us have sinned; we have all fallen short of God's minimum standard . perfection! God is perfectly holy and to allow anything or anyone imperfect or unholy into His presence is logically impossible. So our eternal circumstances are hopeless. The ever living, never dying part of us can never be with God if left to our own devices. And the result of this circumstance the bible says is death and permanent separation from God. So with all the hardships and terrible things happening in the world today and happening in our world as we live here moment by moment, it might be easy to come to a place of hopelessness.

Why have hope? The Gospel!

The word gospel literally means good news. That is why the four books of the New Testament that record the life of Christ are called gospels (the gospel of Mark, etc.) - because the life of Christ . His person, work and teachings (as we talked about the first week of this study) is really incredible good news for us. There are actually two gospels that the theologians talk about. The Gospel of Atonement that is immanently personal and then the Gospel of the Kingdom, which is really quite a lot bigger in concept and purposes. Let's look at these one at a time. First, the more personal gospel of atonement.

The Gospel of Atonement

The word in English was essentially invented to describe this source of our new found spiritual hope. The meaning of the word is simply 'at-one-ment' - the state of being at one or being reconciled. Our hope of peace with God is all based on the death of Christ on the cross as the payment for our debt of sin. By faith, receiving this extravagant gift for ourselves frees us from the penalty of sin and makes us at one with God. Let's look at our passage this morning which should brighten all our moods with hope:

Colossians 1:21-23

And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Romans 10:9

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Oh what a God we have. What a marvelous savior. If you don't feel this way, then you have misunderstood and under-appreciated what has happened here. The ever living never dying part of us has been delivered from certain death, a terrible living kind of death where hopelessness is the only emotion that you will ever feel. Instead we are free to exclaim as often as we want % God of mine, what a mighty God we have!+% God of mine, what a merciful God we have, O God of mine, who saves us from the pit, who lifts our heads from despair and places our feet on sure ground. Holy Ground! On the sure Eternal Ground of Heaven!+

%God creates out of nothing. Wonderful you say. Yes, to be sure, but he does what is still more wonderful: he makes saints out of sinners.+ Søren Kierkegaard, *The Journals of Kierkegaard*

Fanny Crosby sang it;

%Redeemed how I love to proclaim it. Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Redeemed thru His infinite mercy His child and forever I am.+ *Fanny Crosby and William James Kirkpatrick*

There is another wonderful atonement theme that fills us with even more hope if that is possible.

The Gospel of the Kingdom

This is the hope that *all things* are being made new and are being made right by the grace and mercy poured out by the Father as a result of Jesus' obedience on the cross.

Let's go look again at a verse that we looked at our last two weeks . verse 20;

And through him to **reconcile to himself all things**, whether on earth or in heaven, **making peace by the blood of his cross**.

This is what Jesus was referring to when He was speaking of the gospel of the Kingdom;

Matthew 24:14

And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

[Secular vs Spiritual conversation]

This big idea of reconciliation again is the theme of Scripture. From Genesis to Revelation, the book is about making old things new, dark things light, dead things alive again. This is good news and there is much to consider. It turns out that big ideas like this demand big words to capture their girth and breadth.

Big ideas demand big words

Redeemed: To buy back out of being held hostage, ransomed, to be given value again

Kidnapped and ransomed back.

1 Peter 1:18-19

Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

There is another big word for a big idea, that word is JUSTIFIED;

Justified: A legal or judicial term whereby a person is made right against the punishment of law

Romans 5:6-10, The Living Bible

⁶When we were utterly helpless, with no way of escape, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners who had no use for him. ⁷Even if we were good, we really wouldn't expect anyone to die for us, though, of course, that might be barely possible. ⁸But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. ⁹And since by his blood he did all this for us as sinners, how much more will he do for us now that he has declared us not guilty? Now he will save us from all of God's wrath to come. ¹⁰And since, when we were his enemies, we were brought back to God by the death of his Son, what blessings he must have for us now that we are his friends and he is living within us!

Romans 5:1

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Titus 3:7

So that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The last big word that helps us understand this hope giving good news of atonement is RECONCILED;

Reconciled: An accounting term where accounts are made even, or a relational term where warring nations or people are made to be at peace

The New Testament is filled with this word. The classic verse that helps us understand it is found in the second letter to the Corinthians:

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

The word reconciliation goes far beyond a relationship between two human beings. It is used in the Bible to speak of a man's relationship to God in terms of the restoration of the right relationship between a man and God. Reconciliation, then, is God being reconciled back to man, or man, if you will, being reconciled back to God. Now the term, the familiar term in the Bible is katallasso (ka-to lasqso) . . .

Katallasso

. . . and I only mention that because I want to make a distinction in a minute. Katallasso means "to reconcile", and it can also mean to change, or to exchange (redemption centers with grocery store stamps). Now that particular term is used in the New Testament only twice in the reference between God and man; that is, reconciling God to man, that term is only used two times. It occurs in 2 Corinthians Chapter 5 and verse 19 we just read and also in the Romans Chapter 5 passage we read a bit ago. In both of those passages the general basic word katallasso is used. But there is another term for reconcile that is used here in Colossians chapter 1. It is not katallasso that is used, it is Apokatallasso (ap-ok-at-al-las'-so) . . .

Apokatallasso

Whenever the preposition 'apo' is added to the front of a word it intensifies the word, and so what you have here is the word reconciled intensified, so that it means **thoroughly reconciled, completely reconciled, totally reconciled**. That is the terminology that is used here in Colossians; the word is different than the normal word reconcile. It has a greater intensity. And there is a reason for that, and I need to point that out to you.

When Paul is writing in Romans about reconciliation, and when he is writing in 2 Corinthians about reconciliation, he is not fighting against anything. He is not arguing against a false teacher. He is merely making the point of reconciliation, that's all. But in Colossians he is fighting a counter-attack from false teachers. The false teachers that were really confronting the Church at Colossae had said that it could not be possible for a man to be reconciled to God by Jesus Christ alone. It is called the Colossians Heresy . .

The Colossians Heresy

. . . And we will talk about it more when we get to chapter two next week.

Conclusion

We need to wrap up but we need to center our thoughts before we finish. We have so much to celebrate. Our God has taken us from a hopeless circumstance, where we could do nothing for ourselves and He found a way. This is why Jesus was able to state with such authority *I am the way the truth and the life.* At our last building these were the words emblazoned about the sanctuary. These are the words that give us such perfect hope. And here is what we want to keep in mind about this hope of the gospel:

The Hope of the Gospel: Jesus plus nothing equals everything!

We may be content to remain what we call ordinary people but He is determined to carry out a quite different plan. To shrink back from that plan is not humility; it is laziness and cowardice. To submit is not conceit or megalomania; it is obedience. *CS Lewis in Mere Christianity*

Charleston South Carolina Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Account of Forgiveness

WSJ story Updated June 19, 2015 6:50 p.m. ET
NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C.-

One by one, they stood in a courtroom on Friday and addressed accused killer Dylann Roof. One by one, they told him he had hurt them. One by one, they said they forgave him.

We are the family that love built, said Bethane Middleton-Brown, the sister of the Rev. Depayne Middleton, 49 years old, who was one of the nine people killed in Wednesday's mass church shooting in Charleston. *We* have no room for hate, so we have to forgive, she said.

A routine bond hearing for Mr. Roof turned into a raw testament to loss and reconciliation as five relatives of the nine victims accepted an invitation from Chief Magistrate James Gosnell Jr. to speak directly to the man accused in the apparently racially motivated massacre.

I just want everyone to know I forgive you, said Nadine Collier, the daughter of victim Ethel Lance, 70. *You* hurt me, you hurt a lot of people, but I forgive you.

Felicia Sanders, who friends said survived the attack along with her young granddaughter, told Mr. Roof that the Bible study group targeted in the shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston had welcomed him that evening. Her son, Tywanza Sanders, 26, was killed in the attack on Wednesday night.

You have killed some of the most beautiful people that I know. Every fiber in my body hurts, and I will never be the same, she said. *May* God have mercy on your soul.

late won't win," said Alana Simmons, the granddaughter of the Rev. Daniel Simmons, 74.

Anthony Thompson, the grandson of Myra Thompson, 59, said that he and his family forgave Mr. Roof and urged him to repent and turn his life over to Jesus Christ.

Discussion Questions

Re-read Col. 1:21-23

Have one or two in the group share a brief testimony about their conversion, how it is that they came to yield to and receive Christ.

Dave talked about redemption as though it were a big deal - the theme of all Scripture. Do you agree with that? What other theme would you suggest as a primary theme of scripture?

Are you sometimes confused by all the theological terms of the scriptures? Do you tend to read past them or stop and study them? These terms typically represent doctrine. What is your emotional impression of the idea of doctrine?

Dave mentioned 4 words in church on Sunday; Atonement, Redemption, Justification, and Reconciliation. Does any one of these terms hit a soft spot for you, have some special importance? How so?

Some people say they have a simple faith and don't worry too much about doctrine. How do you feel about that?

Dave was saying that you have not only been reconciled to God (Katalasso) but in this passage of Colossians we are told that we are **thoroughly reconciled, completely reconciled, totally reconciled** (Apokatalasso). How does that feel to you? Do you feel holy and blameless and above reproach (v21) or do you feel different than that?

Our job as Christians is to act on the truth not on our feelings. Do you think that having a correct theology of our humanity as God sees us will help us continue in the faith, stable and steadfast (v 22).