

Further Bible Study Questions

- A) One of Paul's primary goals in writing to the followers of Christ in Colossae was to deal with an insidious heresy which was threatening the faith of Christ's followers. With this in mind, take a moment to re-read Colossians 1:9-14 carefully. As you read, seek to find the heresy against which Paul is writing. You will need to read "between the lines," but by seeing what Paul affirms, you might be able to get a sense for where he is also cautioning the followers of Christ in Colossae. Now, take some time to contemplate these same "heresies" in your own life and relationships. Do you find some of your own issues in Paul's gentle words of encouragement?
- B) "Redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:14) is described by Paul as being provided by "the Father" (God) who "qualified us," 1:12; "rescued us," and "transferred us," 1:13 into the family of God through Jesus Christ. Paul seems to be emphasizing God's role in the process of salvation while purposely diminishing our role as recipients of salvation. Is this consistent with your own understanding of salvation? Why is it important for salvation to be from God? Isn't it possible for mankind to "find God?" What do you believe is true in your life, did you find God or did God find you? What impact could/does this have on living a Christian lifestyle of thanks and response to God?
- C) The concept of "redemption" is pretty simple -- in fact, we use it a lot in the modern day. We redeem coupons at the supermarket for a discount. We redeem gift cards at restaurants for food. You might even redeem a lotto ticket for a prize. The concept is simple. Redemption means that you exchange one thing (which has value) for something else (of equal or lesser value). Redemption is a way to pay for something with an object which has been given value by the issuer. The Bible says that God loved the world so much that He sent His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16) to redeem sinners from one kingdom (darkness) to a new Kingdom of Light (Colossians 1:12-14). His life for yours. A profound transaction, a glorious future. Have you "been redeemed?"

Flowing From The Source

Long Beach Alliance Church • July 22nd, 2007 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**FOR HE RESCUED US FROM THE
DOMAIN OF DARKNESS, AND
TRANSFERRED US TO THE KINGDOM
OF HIS BELOVED SON, IN WHOM
WE HAVE REDEMPTION, THE
FORGIVENESS OF SINS.
~COLOSSIANS 1:13-14 (NASB)**

1) Living In Light Of Redemption

- A) As Paul is praying for the followers of Jesus Christ who live in Colossae, he exhorts them to live a life which is consistent with the source of the Christian life (Colossians 1:10-12).
- B) In order to understand what motivates Paul's exhortation, we must skip ahead to Paul's conclusion, before we can explore those things which are to be characteristic of Christians.
- C) In an effort to dispel the roots of heresy which had begun to grow amongst the Colossians, Paul returns the focus onto the source of faith, namely "the forgiveness of sins" (1:14), the "truth, the gospel" (cf. 1:5).

- D) Note that while Paul uses descriptive phrases about the gospel ("qualified us," 1:12; "rescued us," and "transferred us," 1:13), he is actually referring to a person. The focus of the gospel is not in activities, but in being known by Jesus!

- E) Note also that the gospel activity is God initiated on behalf of those who He rescues! There is no sense of accomplishment for followers of Christ, but rather a sense of thanks and response for a relationship with Jesus Christ.*

- F) When the actions of a Christian flow from a source other than thanks and response to the gospel, relationship is lost. Like any relationship, behavior based on obligation becomes joyless and, eventually lost. This is legalism at its worst.

- G) This is why Paul calls us to "love in the Spirit" (1:8) which is rooted in God's will (1:9), which has been revealed in the "word of truth, the gospel" (1:5). The study and understanding of God's Word gives a "voice" to the Holy Spirit to be able to guide us in God's will for our lives!

* The "redemption" which is ours in Christ is something that God has secured; it implies that our former existence was one of bondage from which we required a ransom from which to be freed. The ransom-price is not explicitly mentioned here; what it was is evident not only from the parallel passage in Ephesians 1:7 ("in him we have our redemption, through his blood") but from other Pauline texts where the same thought is expressed, notably in Romans 3:24-25, where believers are said to be justified freely by the grace of God "through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an agent of atonement by his blood, to be received by faith." It is made clear that the emancipation which the people of Christ enjoy in Him was purchased for them at the price of His life, freely offered up by Him on the cross. Adolf Deissmann asks whether this "manumission" is "merely a single summary act performed once for all in the past" or also (as he thinks probable) "an act of liberation experienced anew, in each single case of conversion, by every person, newly incorporated in Christ." The answer is that it is both: the redemption was provided by Christ for His people once for all, but it is appropriated by them individually as they become united with Him in faith. Excerpt from F.F. Bruce, *New International Commentary of the New Testament, Colossians, Philemon, & Ephesians* page #53.

2) Walking Worthy

- A) In light of living out of our relationship with Jesus (the source of the Christian life), what should our life "look like?" In other words, what does "pleasing God in all respects" with a "worthy walk" look like (1:10)?

- B) **Be A Fruitcake.** When we live according to "love in the Spirit," we will bear the "fruit of the Spirit" (cf. Galatians 6:22-26). Our actions should reveal "the fruit" (Colossians 1:10) in the same way an apple or orange tree reveals its fruit.

- C) **You Are What You Eat.** Connected to "bearing fruit" is good nourishment, which comes through "increasing in the knowledge of God" (1:10). Eat God's Word (1st Timothy 4:6) in order to be "strengthened" from the source (Colossians 1:11) of God's might (cf. 2nd Timothy 3:16-17).

- D) **Get Off The Rollercoaster.** Often, the Christian life can feel like a rollercoaster ride of dizzying heights and stomach churning low moments all strung together by a series of Sundays... Rather, we are called to be steady, marked by a life of patience (balance -- Colossians 1:11).

- E) **Live Gratefully.** No one deserves to be a Christian. Especially me and you. The Bible teaches us to quit living like we deserve this life, and start living out of thanks to God -- who has given us Jesus, the source and substance of our salvation (1:12).