

Made Alive in Christ
Colossians 2:13-15
March 11, 2012

Introduction

In the long history of the church, there have always been false teachers. The false teachers would prey on people through guilt. To exonerate the guilt, they would use rituals and incantations which do nothing to the reality of guilt. Consider Judas' effort to exonerate his guilt.

Matthew 27:3-5 *When Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. 4 "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood." "What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility." 5 So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.*

He thought that he could relieve his guilt by returning the coins and hoping to stop them from killing Jesus, but nothing was going to stop the Sanhedrin from killing Jesus. Superstition and rituals will never relieve the guilt that weighs so heavily on us.

This is why Paul tells us that we are complete in Christ. There is no guilt for those who are in Christ Jesus. He is guiltless, sinless, and blameless. Nothing in this world can remove our guilt, except Christ Jesus can because He alone took our sins and guilt upon Himself on the tree. He has made us alive in Him. Paul describes it this way:

Colossians 2:13-15 *And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

I. Alive with Christ

- Dead in trespasses (sins)

Ephesians 2:1-3 *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ²in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

- What does a dead man look like?

Titus 3:3 *For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.*

Ephesians 4:17-19 *This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; ¹⁹who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*

- Ignorant
- Darkened understanding
- Hardened hearts
- God's law is foolishness to them
- Slaves to passion, desire

- Loving the world
- Uncircumcision of the flesh

Ephesians 2:11-12 *Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹²that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*

- Gentiles in bad situation
 - Dead in sin
 - Outside the covenant
- God's own work—making us alive
 - Rich in mercy

Ephesians 2:4-5 *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),*

- Creates new life in us

Genesis 2:7 *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*

Ezekiel 37:9-10 *Also He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." ' " ¹⁰So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.*

Note: Only God can give us life. We who are dead have no spiritual life to respond to Him.

- God draws us to Christ
- God calls us to hear His Son

II. Forgiving Our Sins

- Past tense
 - Having forgiven you
 - Happened in past and continues in future without end
- How much forgiveness?
 - All sins (trespasses)
 - Sins of not doing what He commands us
 - Sins of doing against what He commands us
 - Past, present, and future
- Characteristics of God's forgiveness
 - Gracious—unmerited (unearned) by man—gift of Christ

Romans 3:24 *being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.* (See also **Titus 3:4-7**)

- Complete

Ephesians 1:7 *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*

Romans 5:20 *Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,*

- Eager

Psalms 86:5 For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.

- Certain (for sure)

Psalms 89:30-35 If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, ³¹If they break My statutes and do not keep My commandments, ³²Then I will punish their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. ³³Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, nor allow My faithfulness to fail. ³⁴My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. ³⁵Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David.

- Unequal

Micah 7:18 Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy.

- There is no such idea as an unforgiven sin in a Christian

III. Wiping Out the Law

- What is the handwriting of requirement?
 - Certificate of debt (legal term)
 - Focus of both moral and ceremonial laws binding us to perfect obedience
 - By breaking the law—punishment (or curse)

Deuteronomy 27:26 'Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

- How were the requirements against us?

Romans 7:7-12 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."⁸ But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. ⁹I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. ¹⁰And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. ¹¹For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. ¹²Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

- Law holy and good but deadly to us
- Convicts us and brings charges to us that we are guilty in sin

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

James 2:9-10 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

- Denounces us as guilty and sentences us to death

Galatians 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

- How were the requirements voided?
 - Voided
 - Wiped out
 - Taken out of the way
 - Nailed to the cross

Note: Paul categorically challenges anyone to see if any of these charges would be brought against us. He states that they are wiped out—meaning erased or blotted out. If that was not enough then Paul said that they (the requirements) were taken away...to not be shown again. If someone believes them to be hidden for an opportune time, then Paul said that they were nailed to the cross—that they are destroyed by Christ's death.

- Paul paints a picture of a document blotted, taken away and torn and thrown out
- Torn with Christ's body and destroyed with His death
- Voided through Christ's sinless, perfect work
- Voided through Christ's vicarious (substitutionary) sacrifice
- God placed all the requirements that we had broken on Christ (who was without sin) and punished Him instead of us.

IV. Disarming the Devil

- Disarming principalities and powers
 - Principalities and powers

Ephesians 6:11-12 *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

- Means Devil and his demons
- Disarmed

Hebrews 2:14 *Since the children have flesh and blood, He[Jesus] too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil.*

Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*

- Destroyed the devil's work
 - Destroyed the accuser's tool--guilt
- Public display, triumphed over them
 - Picture of Roman general coming back to Rome with all the defeated enemies in parade
 - Parade through streets of Rome, humiliating the defeated enemies

Conclusion