

“Salvation 101: Operation Rescue”

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Scripture

Colossians 1:9-14

“We have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. **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.”

Last Week

One of my key takeaways from the Gospel of John

Jesus was full of grace and truth

We should be people of grace and truth, as well

Being willing to give grace to others but also being called to be people of the truth, too

This Week

Salvation 101 -> how are we saved?

Do we need to discuss this?

Come on, don't we all know how we are saved?

Don't we ask for forgiveness from our sins and Jesus saves us?

That's only our (the human) side of the salvation story

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians – Colossians 1:9-12

- a) Knowledge of God's Will
- b) Having Spiritual Wisdom and Understanding
- c) Walking in a Worthy Manner
- d) Pleasing the Lord in Everything
- e) Bearing Fruit in Working for the Lord
- f) Increasing in the Knowledge of God
- g) Strengthening in Power
- h) Being Steadfast and Patient
- i) Living Joyfully and Thankfully

What a great prayer for the Colossians and Us!

Paul says, "This is what I'm praying. I want you to know that this is my prayer for you!"

Why is Paul praying for them?

Because they are the Lord's children -> something has happened in them

Colossians 1:13-14

"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."

"He rescued us" – who is the "He" mentioned here?

God the Father rescued us

rhomai – Greek word for "rescued" meaning "to snatch away" or "to deliver"

It is the same word at the end of the Lord's prayer -> **Matthew 6:13** -> "Deliver us from the Evil one"

Have you ever thought of the Lord's perfect prayer as a prayer to save you -> a salvation prayer?

This was a rescue operation

We needed to be rescued!

Why? -> Believers were in the domain of darkness!

"domain of darkness" -> Satan's kingdom on Earth

1 John 5:19

"The whole world lies in the power of the evil one."

Jesus called Satan "the ruler of this world":

John 16:11

"concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged."

Satan's rule is one of darkness

John says that people in Satan's control are walking in darkness:

1 John 2:8-11

"I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, **because the darkness is passing away** and the true Light is already shining. The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But **the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.**"

Jesus said that people love the darkness:

John 3:19-20

"This is the judgment, that **the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.** For everyone who does evil hates the Light and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed."

Even with the Light coming, men desired to stay in darkness -> Satan's power over them is strong

There is no way that we could overcome Satan's power on our own

Paul noted our condition without God's rescuing power:

Ephesians 2:1-3

"You were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and **were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."**

We were dead in our sins -> living under the power of "the prince of the power of the air" -> Satan

If we go hang out in the cemetery, do we think we're going to see any movement from the graves?

Romans 6:23

"For the wages of sin is death"

How many dead people have the power to change anything about their condition?

"were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest" -> we were just like the rest -> all men born in sin

We're born in sin, living under the power of sin, in complete darkness, members of Satan's kingdom -> Dead

Back to Colossians 1:13

"For He rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son"

Out of our dead and hopeless condition, God the Father acted on our behalf

God Transferred Us

"transferred us" – **methistémi** - Greek word for "transferred" means "to change one's place or location"

The Father moved us from being a member of Satan's kingdom to a different kingdom

"the kingdom of His beloved Son"

We exited Satan's kingdom for Jesus's kingdom

Peter's records our view of our transfer:

2 Peter 1:3-4

"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, **having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire."**

We escaped the darkness -> we escaped the corruption -> we got out of our evil situation

That could make us think that we did it on our own, right?

Many believers pat themselves on the back for their choice of Jesus

Nothing can be farther from the truth -> we do not deserve any credit for our salvation

Let's go back to that **Ephesians 2** passage from earlier this morning:

Ephesians 2:3-9

"...were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

We were dead and unable to change our condition -> children of wrath like everyone else

"But God" -> what a great two words!

- I was in a hopeless situation, BUT GOD!
- I was addicted to drugs, BUT GOD!
- I was in an abusive relationship, BUT GOD!
- I was depressed and suicidal, BUT GOD!
- I was lost, BUT GOD!

"being rich in mercy" -> even though we were guilty of being a sinner

He made us alive together with Christ

"by grace you have been saved" -> only His grace could change our location from Satan's kingdom

"through faith;" -> Faith is the mechanism for our transfer -> our escape according to Peter

"and that not of yourselves" -> We didn't come to faith on our own initiative!

"it is the gift of God" -> He gifted us faith to believe in Jesus

"not as a result of works, so that no one may boast" -> We cannot say we earned it -> no room for boasting

- No one needs to put a notch in their Bible
- No one needs to brag about their choice to become a Christian

If you believe, it is merely the result of the Father transferring you from Satan's kingdom to Jesus's kingdom

As Paul wrote in **Ephesians 1:4**, He planned this before He created the world

Jesus described the Father's plan for our rescue:

Matthew 16:13-18

"When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**" And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and **the gates of Hades will not overpower it.**"

Jesus wants to know what Simon Peter thinks about Him -> "Who do you say that I am?"

Simon gets special revelation from the Father in Heaven -> "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus reiterates that Simon a new name -> He is to be called Peter (which means "a stone")

"upon this rock I will build My church" -> Confession of Jesus is the "huge mass of rock"

Believers confessing Jesus as the Christ is how Jesus will build the church

Then Jesus says, "the gates of Hades will not overpower it"

What is He telling Peter there?

Satan will not be able to stop Jesus from building His church

A gate is a defensive position, right? -> trying to keep people out and protect people inside

God will not be on the defensive against Satan's attacks

Satan will be the one who has to defend against God's rescue mission

This is exactly what Paul is telling the Colossians

"He rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son"

All of us who name the Name of Jesus have been rescued in the same manner -> and go into His kingdom

How many of you feel bad for Satan?

He doesn't know who is going to be taken from his kingdom and he is powerless to stop it

Jesus, on the other hand, knows who has been given to Him for His kingdom:

John 2:23-25

"When He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. **But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.**"

Jesus knows who are His children

Satan does not know who eternally will be his -> this is why he wants to kill them now!

Satan loses people day after day as God rescues them from the domain of darkness

Jesus told Nicodemus that the members of His kingdom had to be born from above:

John 3:4-8

"Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

"The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

We do not know who is going to be in Jesus's kingdom because the Spirit moves on His own

The Spirit moves at the Father's will and direction

What is Jesus's Kingdom all about? -> Righteousness, Truth, Worship, Belief, Daily Commitment to Jesus

Believers Receive Forgiveness

Back to **Colossians 1:14**

"in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins"

From our perspective, we see salvation as a result of our asking for forgiveness

We are the redeemed of God

Ephesians 1:7-8

"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us."

We hear of Jesus's sacrifice on our behalf

We hear about His grace toward us

We ask for forgiveness for our sins

We come into the kingdom

Paul wrote about our individual path:

Romans 10:8-13

"THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"-- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that **if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.**

11For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for **"WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."**

If we confess Jesus as Lord and...

If we believe that God raised Him from the dead

We will be saved and receive the forgiveness we requested

Because everyone who calls on the Lord will be saved -> rescued from Satan's clutches

Transferred into Jesus's kingdom where we have redemption, forgiveness, hope, and a future with Him

Prayer

Benediction