

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, May 20, 2026 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



COLOSSIANS: ROOTED IN CHRIST – PART 4

“Forgiven by God”

Colossians 1:13-14

*“¹³ He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”
– Colossians 1:13-14 (NKJV)*

BIBLICAL BACKGROUND FOR COLOSSIANS

The following is some of the general background information for the book of Colossians. Let’s quickly review what we have previously said about the book of Colossians just to give us a bit of context...

Some General Background Information on Colossians:

- (1) The author of Colossians = **The Apostle Paul** - The Apostle Paul identifies himself as the author (1:1; 4:18)
- (2) An important character in Colossians = **Epaphras** - Epaphras likely planted the church by bringing the gospel he heard under Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:10) back to his home city of Colossae (1:7; 4:12)
- (3) Date, place and type of writing = **A.D. 60-62, A prison epistle/letter written from Rome** - Paul writes this letter from a Roman prison around 60-62 AD (4:16)
- (4) Important information about Colossae = **Small but diverse city** - Colossae was a small but diverse city in Rome’s Asia province, modern day Turkey

- (5) **2 key words to understand Colossae = Pluralism and syncretism** - They were immersed in an environment of pluralism and syncretism where most people simply borrowed from the religious and philosophical ideas of the day
- (6) **Identified false teaching/doctrine in Colossians = “The Colossian Heresy”** - Throughout the book Paul hints at a “Colossian heresy.” However, he focuses on Christ-centered, correct teaching rather than the contents of the false teaching
- (7) **What we know about this false teaching/doctrine = It is “not according to Christ”** - Whatever this false teaching is, it is “not according to Christ” (2:8) and it undermines the sole supremacy and sufficiency of Jesus
- (8) **John Calvin’s summary of Colossians = “This Epistle...to express it in one word, distinguishes the true Christ from a fictitious one.”**
- (9) **Layout of the book = Half doctrinal, half practical** - Like other Pauline letters, the first half builds a rich theology that the second half exhorts us to then live out
- (10) **Relation to other N.T. books = Ephesians and Colossians are companion books** - These two books/letters were written around the same time, and they overlap greatly and can help explain one another

Our theme verse for this study is **Colossians 2:6-7**. This passage not only serves as a premise for this particular study, it also identifies a primary purpose for Paul’s letter...

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.” -Colossians 2:6-7 (NKJV)

Theme Verse Truths (Colossians 2:6-7):

- (1) **If you are truly saved you will show it by walking in Him** – What does it mean to “walk in Him”?
- (2) **Genuine Christians will continue to grow in Him and never stop growing** – Why is this true? How do we grow? Being saved and coming into relationship with Jesus Christ is only the beginning of a life time of adventure. You have not arrived with you accept Christ. You are to go on and continue to grow and “abound” in Him. If you ever stop growing, reaching, striving, pushing further in toward Christ and Christlikeness you will stagnate and die.
- (3) **The faith of a truly saved believer will be established and not fluctuating** - Does this mean that our faith never comes under attack or that at times it doesn’t grow weak and perhaps even a bit shaky? Explain our answer
- (4) **An important part of growing in your faith is to be teachable and to sit under solid Biblical teaching** – A person claiming to be a Christian but doesn’t love the teaching and preaching of the Word, won’t humbly submit themselves to the teaching of the Word, won’t spend time in God’s Word loving it, cherishing it, hungering for it is an oxymoron (contradiction, paradox, self-contradiction) and anomaly (incongruity, abnormality, gross inconsistency)
- (5) **A spirit of thankfulness and expressed gratitude will exude from the life of a genuinely saved individual (*even in the harshest of circumstances*)** -

The following are some “application questions” that may help us probe a bit deeper at the how and why of spiritual growth in our lives as believers...

Application Questions

- 1. Which is the bigger problem in our day: Christians who suffer from guilt or those who have no sense of guilt, even when they violate God’s standards?**
- 2. Is there anything we can do to make unbelievers who are content in their sins feel their desperate condition before God?**
- 3. If unbelievers are spiritually blind and unable to understand the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4), how can God hold them accountable for not believing it? What’s the point of even sharing it?**
- 4. An unbeliever tells you, “I forgive others when they wrong me. Why can’t God just forgive everyone?” Your reply?**



Black Sheep by Ben Fuller

You broke through a thousand fences, been rescued from a thousand ditches
 You still swear you don't fit in, so you kick and scream and you're gone again
 Wandering off into the devil's wind

[Chorus]

But how's it going out there? Acting like you ain't scared
 How's that heart of stone? Ain't so hard when you're alone
 Crying tears you hope nobody sees, guess the good news is He'll never leave you be
 Jesus loves you black sheep

You hate everything about you, you think we're better off without you
 You wear your pain out on your sleeve, and you paint it on in rebel ink
 But the alcohol and pills ain't fixed a thing

[Chorus]

So, how's it going out there? Acting like you ain't scared
 And how's that heart of stone? It ain't so hard when you're alone
 Crying tears you hope nobody sees, guess the good news is He'll never leave you be
 Jesus loves you black sheep, Jesus loves you black sheep

[Bridge]

Can't tell you when, I ain't no prophet, but there'll come a point in time when you can't stop it.
 The Good Shepherd's love smells like smoke. There ain't no hell so low where He won't let
 the hounds of Heaven go. Seek 'em, let the hounds of Heaven go

[Chorus]

So how's it going out there? Acting like you ain't scared
 How's that heart of stone? Ain't so hard when you're alone
 Crying tears you hope nobody sees, guess the good news is He'll never leave you be
 And amazing grace is a pesky, pesky thing, but the good news is He'll never leave you be
 Jesus loves you black sheep, Jesus loves you black sheep

Guilt has plagued the human race since Adam and Eve fell in sin. The various ways of trying to get rid of guilt are so numerous that they would be funny, if guilt were a laughing matter.

7 Age-Old Ways Mankind Tries to Deal with Guilt:

- (1) **Operation Fig Leaf** - The oldest method is "*Operation Fig Leaf*"—cover up your sin and casually pretend that there's no problem. But facing the holy God while wearing fig leaves is like attending a black tie dinner in your underwear. You can't feel comfortable or inconspicuous!
- (2) **Blame** - The second-oldest method is to *blame* the other person, or to blame our circumstances, or even to blame God. When God confronted Adam with his sin, Adam blamed both his wife and God by saying (Gen. 3:12), "*The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.*" Parents know that all children are born with this technique in place, ready to use at the first twinge of guilt. But we keep using it as adults. We're all prone to swear at the pedestrian when we're driving and at the driver when we're pedestrians.
- (3) **Rationalization** - Another tactic is *rationalization*: "It wasn't really wrong and besides, everybody is doing it." Some rationalize by blaming circumstances: "What else could I have done in that situation?"
- (4) **Time will take care of it** - Then there's the "*time will take care of it*" approach. This is the theory that if you just give it enough time, people will forget what you did and your guilt will dissipate into the air like smoke.
- (5) **Attack** - Another common method is for those who were wrong to *attack* those who accuse them of wrongdoing: "Look who's talking! You've got plenty of dirt in your life and you're accusing me?" Or, they accuse God of being unfair or unloving. But they refuse to admit that they were at fault.
- (6) **Comparing** - Still others deal with guilt by *comparing themselves* to others who are worse than they are: "Sure, I get angry, but I'm not like those terrorists, blowing up innocent people!" Or, "Yeah, I sometimes look at porn—after all, I'm a red-blooded guy! But I'm not a child-molester or a sex addict!" Often this approach is coupled with *balancing* out their guilt by saying that they're a basically good person, or they have a good heart.
- (7) **Deny, deny, deny** - A more brazen approach is simply to *deny* guilt by arguing that there is no such thing. These folks go to a psychologist who doesn't believe in God and he assures him that guilt isn't real. "You're a good person; you shouldn't have these bad thoughts about yourself! Focus on building your self-esteem."

You can probably come up with many more strategies for dealing with guilt that you've encountered—maybe some of them you've even used yourself!. But the amazing thing is that in spite of all of these creative approaches to get rid of guilt, it still persists as a major problem for the human race. We can try to push it down and ignore it, but it keeps gnawing at our soul. Or if, through a seared conscience, we're able to block it out completely, we still

must face the very real possibility that when we die we'll stand before God, the righteous Judge of all the earth.

Lifeway Research asked 1,000 Americans three questions to discover their feelings about shame, guilt and other issues:

1. *Which of these feelings (shame, guilt, or something else) do you seek to avoid the most?*
2. *Which of these desires is strongest in your life? Which do you struggle with the most?*
3. *Which of these directions do you find you life most going (shame, guilt, something else)?*

What they discovered was that the highest percentage of those surveyed said they wanted most to avoid “shame” with a desire to avoid “guilt” a close second... “fear” was a distant third. What people most want to avoid and the one that most evades them is “shame” and “guilt.” Though guilt and shame are twins, born in the garden, only moments apart, they aren’t identical twins. They are different.

Try your hand the following to see how well you can differentiate between what is “guilt” or “shame.” Read each statement and beside each write the word “guilt” for those statements that you believe are a reflection of what guilt is, and the word “shame” beside those statement that best define shame.

Let’s see if we can get a clearer picture of guilt and shame with a couple of helpful descriptions of each..

Defining and Distinguishing Guilt and Shame

1. **Guilt** is a feeling about something you’ve done
2. **Shame** is feeling bad about who you are as a person
3. **Guilt** is painful regret and responsibility for one’s actions
4. **Shame** is a painful feeling about oneself as a person
5. **Guilt**, in Christian teaching, can serve a constructive purpose and is often referred to as “godly sorrow” which leads to repentance and reconciliation with God.
6. **Shame**, in Christian teaching, is viewed negatively and leads to feelings of isolation and despair, distancing a person from God rather than drawing them closer to Him.

GUILT OR SHAME

- “I deserve to be punished” _____ SHAME
- “I am worthless” _____ GUILT
- “I am bad” _____ GUILT
- “You did something wrong” _____ GUILT
- “That’s why you need to hide” _____ SHAME
- “Is a wound” _____ GUILT
- “Is a scar” _____ SHAME
- “Your no good” _____ GUILT
- “I’m embarrassed” _____ SHAME

- “I’m blameworthy” _____ GUILT
- “Your not good enough” _____ SHAME
- “I’m to blame” _____ GUILT
- “I’s not good enough and never will be” _____ SHAME
- “If you know what I’ve done” _____ SHAME
- “I can never tell anyone or I’d lose everything” _____ SHAME
- “Results from the fact that we are sinner” _____ GUILT
- “Results from disgrace and humiliation you can’t shake” _____ SHAME
- “Embarrassed, humiliated, dishonored, lost face” _____ SHAME
- “At fault, to blame, in the wrong” _____ GUILT

So the crucial question is...

- *How can I really be forgiven by God?*
- *How can I know that when I stand before Him someday, my sins will be covered?*

We need to answer that question carefully by viewing God as He has revealed Himself in His Word, not by how our society may conceive Him to be. Our culture commonly views God as a “good ol’ boy,” who may not like sin, but who would never judge it. If that’s how God really is, then we don’t need to worry about our sins and we can shrug off our guilt feelings. But if God is holy and has settled wrath against all sin, then our guilt is real and must be dealt with God’s way. Since we’ve all sinned many times and many ways, we all need to understand clearly, “How can I really be forgiven by God?”

Paul gives us an answer to that question in these two short verses in Colossians 1:13-14. In the context, he’s sharing the content of his prayer for these relatively new believers whom he had not seen.

He prays that they would be filled with the knowledge of God’s will so that they would walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him in all respects. One aspect of pleasing Him is to give thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.

Verses 13 & 14 sum up the greatest of those blessings, that in Christ the Father has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to Christ’s kingdom, where we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. So the solution to guilt is to be forgiven by God, and ...

KEY THOUGHT: *To be forgiven by God we must see our desperate condition and lay hold of God’s only solution.*

Our desperate condition is that if we are not in the kingdom of God’s beloved Son, we are under the authority (“domain”) of darkness, helpless to rescue ourselves. God’s only

solution involves redemption, the forgiveness of sins, which we obtain through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Col. 1:4; Acts 26:18).

Now I'm going to give you two quick truths from our passage in Colossians 1:13-14 about finding forgiveness from God, and then we want to dig into each of these a little deeper... you ready? Here we go!

2 Truth Concerning Finding Forgiveness From God: (Colossians 1:13-14)

- (1) To be forgiven by God we must see our desperate condition**
- (2) To be forgiven by God we must lay hold of God's only solution**

TO BE FORGIVEN BY GOD WE MUST SEE OUR DESPERATE CONDITION

2 Keys in Recognizing Our Desperate Condition:

- (1) If we are not in the kingdom of God's Son (*in other words, not genuinely saved*), we are under the authority of darkness – Notice Paul's words in **verse 13** there in our passage (Colossians 1:13), *"He delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love."***

Clearly, Paul saw only two possibilities...

2 Possibilities Paul Sees:

- 1. We are either in the kingdom of God's beloved Son**
 - 2. Or we are under the power (authority) of darkness**
- *the only two possibilities*

There is no middle ground. Paul's designation of Jesus as *"the Son of His [the Father's] love"* is probably an allusion to Jesus' baptism, where God's voice came out of heaven (Mark 1:11), *"You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."* God spoke the same words on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:5): *"This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"* These references point to the eternal relationship of love between the Father and the Son and to the fact that Jesus is the only one whom God sent who could save us from our sins through His death on the cross. The term here emphasizes the contrast between being in Satan's evil domain of darkness versus being in God's kingdom, where we are placed in Christ, the supreme object and expression of God's love.

The *kingdom* of God's beloved Son is the realm where Jesus Christ rules, where He is Lord. I believe there is a future kingdom when Jesus will return and reign on earth on the throne of David in fulfillment of God's many promises to Israel (2 Sam. 7:12-13; Dan. 7:13-14). *But here, Paul is talking about the present form of Christ's kingdom, where He is king over all who have submitted to His rightful lordship.* The idea that you can believe

in Jesus as your Savior, but wait until later to submit to Him as Lord, is foreign to the Bible. You are either under Jesus' lordship or you are in darkness under Satan's authority.

Paul is echoing here what the risen Lord Jesus had said to him on the Damascus Road at the moment of his conversion. In Acts 26:15-18, Paul relates the Lord's words... (READ: Acts 26:

"⁹Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities. ¹²While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, ¹³at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. ¹⁴And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' ¹⁵So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. ¹⁷I will ^[b]deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'" – Acts 26:9-28 (NKJV)

Note all of the parallels between the Lord's words to Paul at his conversion and Paul's words to the Colossians in our text.

- In both texts the Gentiles move from darkness to light
- In Acts, God opens their eyes so that they turn from darkness to light
- In Colossians, God rescues them from darkness and transfers them into the realm of light.
- In both texts, there is mention of forgiveness of sins and an inheritance that the Gentiles receive in Christ.
- Acts mentions faith in Christ, which Paul also states in Colossians 1:4.
- But the point both in Acts 26 and in Colossians 1 is that there are two and only two possibilities: either a person is under Satan's domain of darkness, or he is in the kingdom of God's beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is no middle ground. "Darkness" in the Bible can represent a number of unfavorable conditions.

3 Things “Darkness” Represents in the Bible:

1. It can refer to **spiritual ignorance** (Ephesians 4:18, 1 Corinthians 4:3-4) - In Ephesians 4:18, Paul says that the Gentiles are *“darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.”* In a similar vein, he says of the unbelieving (2 Cor. 4:3-4), *“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”* Just as blind people are in total darkness and cannot do anything to see, so spiritually blind people are unable to see the light of the gospel, unless God opens their blind eyes.
2. **Darkness also pictures sin** (John 3:19-20, Romans 13:12) - John 3:19-20 states, *“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.”* In Romans 13:12, Paul writes, *“Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.”* He goes on to mention the sins of drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, and strife. But even worse, there is a malevolent evil being behind the pervasive spiritual ignorance and sin.
3. **Darkness is also representative of Satan’s domain** (as in our text) (Luke 22:52-53, Ephesians 6:12) - In Luke 22:53, Jesus said to the Jewish chief priests and temple guards who had come to arrest Him, *“but this hour and the power of darkness are yours.”* In Ephesians 6:12, just before exhorting us to put on the full armor of God, Paul explained, *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”* We live in a world temporarily given over to Satan, where spiritual and moral darkness prevail.

So the picture of the world apart from Jesus Christ is desperate and hopeless... and no two ways about it very bleak... truly hopeless. Please here me... lostness is a sad, lonely, heartbreaking condition... when we speak of these things and give a Biblical understanding of this desperate condition we do not do so deridingly or derisively... it’s tragic reality (lost)

3 Biblical Characteristics of the Lost:

1. **Unbelievers (the lost) are spiritually ignorant and excluded from the life of God because of the hardness of their hearts**
2. **Unbelievers (the lost) love their sin and do not want to come to the light, where their evil deeds would be exposed**
3. **Unbelievers (the lost) are under the domination of the “world forces of this darkness,” headed by Satan himself**

And the startling thing is that there is no middle ground! People are either in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, under His lordship, or they are in Satan's domain of darkness, under his authority. We're talking about relatively nice, good people. Many of them are faithful to their mates. They love their children. They hold down responsible jobs. They're good neighbors. They're good citizens in our country. They're not law-breakers. Many of them are church members. But they're in Satan's domain of darkness! You may be wondering why I'm emphasizing this so heavily. **The reason is, unless we diagnose the problem correctly, we will apply inadequate solutions.**

If the relatively "good" people in the world do not see their true condition as God's Word describes it, they will be content to go on living as they do, not realizing how eternally perilous their situation really is (Martyn Lloyd-Jones has a masterful treatment of this in *Love So Amazing* [Baker], pp. 167-180). They'll think, "Sure, we've got a few problems, but with a little counseling, some psychological techniques, and maybe some prescribed medications to help, we'll be okay." They won't see their need for the gospel. But their desperate condition requires more than some self-help techniques, including a self-help "Jesus" who is their life-coach in the sky. He will get you through your problems by helping you build your self-esteem. But all of the self-help approaches do not diagnose the problem deeply enough. The biblical diagnosis is that if we are not under the lordship of Jesus Christ, we are in Satan's domain of darkness. So, what is required?

- (2) To move from the authority of darkness to the kingdom of God's Son, God must rescue us and transfer us to that radically different kingdom** – Here is how Paul said it in **verse 13** of our passage, **"He delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love."** He conveyed us in the kingdom of God... He did it. "Conveyed" means He transported, transferred, borne or bore us, carried us, took us. He did it!

2 Thing to Remember:

- (1) We cannot rescue ourselves** - For God to rescue us implies that we cannot rescue ourselves. The powerful enemy over the realm of darkness and our spiritual blindness combine to render us spiritually helpless to pull off our own rescue. **In fact, until the Lord opens our eyes, we don't even know that we need rescuing (Acts 26:18)!** God alone has the power to overcome the evil prince of darkness and pull off such a rescue.

The modern terrorist movement has given us a graphic picture of what it means to be under the authority of darkness. When terrorists kidnap a victim, they usually take him blindfolded to a location where he is totally lost, so that if he escaped, he wouldn't know which way to run. They sometimes keep him blindfolded for days, chained to a wall in some bare room. He's not free to come and go and is cut off from family and friends. In a weird psychological condition known as the Stockholm syndrome, some terrorist victims begin to sympathize with and even defend their captors.

Isn't that just like many who are held hostage by the devil to do his will?

- They're lost and blinded
- Enslaved to Satan
- Free only to do what he wants them to do
- They cannot follow God because they're chained by their sins
- Those chains of sin often alienate them from family and friends as relationships are strained and severed
- They're miserable, unable to live as God created them to live
- And yet, when you talk to them about Christ and the freedom He offers, they defend their evil captor in spite of the misery he has brought them!

The hostage situation has also shown us that it's no easy matter to rescue people held captive by terrorists. Sometimes rescue operations succeed and we rejoice, but all too often, they fail and the hostages are killed. Spiritually, salvation is not a human operation. We cannot rescue lost sinners. They can't rescue themselves. Only God can rescue them.

There's a picture of this in Exodus 6:6-8, where the Lord tells Moses, Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, *"I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the Lord."*

- (2) **Salvation is never by self-effort or a joint-effort** - This is to say simply that salvation is from the Lord. It is not due to self-effort and it is not even a joint-effort. It is God's doing. C. H. Spurgeon often made this point in his sermons which God used to bring many to saving faith. In one (*Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* [Pilgrim Publications], 6:259) he said, *"I must say ... that the doctrine which leaves salvation to the creature, and tells him that it depends upon himself, is the exaltation of the flesh, and a dishonouring of God. But that which puts man in God's hand, fallen man, and tells man that though he has destroyed himself, yet his salvation must be of God, that doctrine humbles man in the very dust, and then he is just in the right place to receive the grace and mercy of God."*

When God opens the eyes of sinners to see their desperate condition and that He alone can save them, all that they can do is to cry out to Him for mercy.

TO BE FORGIVEN BY GOD, WE MUST LAY HOLD OF GOD'S ONLY SOLUTION

What is involved in laying hold of God's only solution:

- (1) **God's only solution involves redemption, the forgiveness of sins - Leon Morris** (*The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* [Eerdmans], 3rd rev. ed., p. 11) points out that when we hear the word *redemption*, we immediately think in religious terms, whereas the average man in the first century heard it and thought in non-religious terms.
- It applied especially to the release of prisoners of war by the paying of a ransom or to the freeing of a slave through paying a price.
 - John Stott states, "In the Old Testament property, animals, persons and the nation were all 'redeemed' by the payment of a price."
 - After citing examples of each of these, he (Stott) concludes, "In all these cases of 'redemption' there was a decisive and costly intervention. Somebody paid the price necessary to free property from mortgage, animals from slaughter, and persons from slavery, even death. In the case of our redemption from slavery to sin and Satan, the price was the blood of Jesus Christ."
 - (The KJV adds in our text, "through His blood," which a copyist probably added from Eph. 1:7, but there is not sufficient manuscript evidence for this phrase in Col. 1:14.) Jesus' blood means, His death.
 - He (Jesus) died as a substitute for sinners, paying the just penalty that God decreed.
 - Paul uses the word *forgiveness* rarely. I believe he used it here because the Lord used it with Paul that day on the Damascus Road (Acts 26:18).
 - It means to release from debt.
 - In the case of our sins, God releases us because Christ paid the debt by His shed blood.
 - Thus, God is free to be both "just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).
- (2) **We lay hold of God's redemption and forgiveness by trusting in the Lord Jesus and His death for us** - As the Lord told Paul (Acts 26:18), as he proclaimed the gospel to the Gentiles, they would receive forgiveness of their sins "*through faith in Me.*" Redemption and forgiveness are both *in Christ* (Col. 1:14). By trusting in Him, we receive those benefits which He obtained when He died and rose again.
- We can't do anything to earn God's redemption and forgiveness.
 - We can't do penance or build up merit to qualify for these blessings.
 - Christ did it all!
 - The Puritan, Richard Hooker, put it like this, "God doth justify the believing man, yet not for the worthiness of his belief, but for His worthiness who is believed."
 - As the author of Hebrews makes clear, the Old Testament sacrifices could never take away sins. But Christ offered one sacrifice for all time and obtained eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12; 10:11-14).
 - As a result, the assurance God gives to all who believe is (Heb. 10:17), "*And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.*"

- Believing in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross is the only way to know that God has forgiven all your sins.

CONCLUSION

Years ago, a cartoon showed a psychologist listening to a patient. He said, “Mr. Figby, I think I can explain your feelings of guilt. You’re guilty!”



“Mr. Figby, I think I can explain your feelings of guilt. You’re guilty!”

The human race is guilty before God. *“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Rom. 3:23). But as **Romans 3:24** goes on to say, *“Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.”*

I read (“Our Daily Bread,” 5/93) about a gravestone in a cemetery in New York that has no date of birth, no date of death, and no epitaph. There is only the person’s name and one word: **“Forgiven.”** No matter what you may accomplish in life, “Forgiven by God” are the most important words that could possibly be put on your tombstone! Make sure that it applies to you because your faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ!