

Freedom In Christ

Please turn to Colossians. Does somebody want to guess at what my message is on today? Christmas? No. What did we worship about today? Freedom. Well, that is my message today. I feel like I really do not need to share because the Lord has brought out in worship just about everything I was going to share. So that is great. Praise the Lord for that.

We will read Colossians 1:13 and 14, and a few more verses in Colossians.

Verse 13 says, "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son." Let me read verse 12 next: "Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light." Let us return to verse 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."

Let us read Colossians 3:1-3, it says "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God."

Let us pray.

Oh, Lord, we are so thankful this morning that You have freed us from all things. We praise You for that. Lord, I do pray that Your Spirit will be upon us now as we share and as we hear the Word and read it. Lord, I pray that You would minister to each one of our hearts. May we be drawn ever closer to You, Lord, just relishing and delighting in what You have done. In Your name I pray. Amen.

Introduction

The last several months I have been meditating on Colossians and verse thirteen has really captured my heart, because I was thinking about the rescued ones, their journey from being rescued. Well, actually, before they were rescued, all the way through Colossians to Colossians 3, where they ended up. I would say it is a documentary about the rescued ones. Really, we are all the rescued ones, so it could be a documentary of our condition as well.

I feel that so much of what God has done for us, not that we take it for granted, but we have heard it so often. I am probably talking about myself, it is not that we overlook it, but it does not mean as much as it used to. And when I considered how He rescued us, it really brings everything else into greater focus and appreciation for what our Lord has done.

The Captives and the Rescue

To start, we are going to consider who holds us captive. I have asked two brothers to read a couple of verses. We are going to read Galatians 1:4, John. And Prem, would you read Acts 26:18?

Galatians 1:4 says, "Who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father."

Acts 26:18 says, "To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me."

Ephesians 2:2 says, "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."

The Domain of Darkness

Brothers and sisters, once you are captive or held captive in the domain of darkness, it is in this present evil world. It is in the domain of Satan, the prince of the power of the air. It is an actual domain, usurped, no doubt, but still a domain. Ones who are held captive are in darkness, they are in great evil, and they are under the power of Satan.

It is an evil, dark, malicious domain that they are under. And so often we forget how crushing the domain of darkness can be, how dark it actually is. I was wondering, Lord, how can I share about ones who are under that domain? A sister at the prayer meeting mentioned Psalm 107. So let us turn to Psalm 107 to consider the ones who are held captive and their condition.

Turn to Psalm 107. We will begin reading in verse 10 through 20. As we read, consider the condition of the captive ones.

"There were those who dwelt in darkness and in the shadow of death, Prisoners in misery and chains." They were in misery; they were chained up, bound. "Because they had rebelled against the words of God And spurned the counsel of the Most High." Go down to verse fourteen, "He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death." So, the ones held captive are in darkness, and they are always under a shadow of death. "He broke their bands apart."

Going down to verse sixteen, "For He has shattered the gates of bronze, And cut the bars of iron asunder." These captive ones are held in a fortress with a cage all around them. There is no way for them to get out.

Verse 17 says, "Fools, because of their rebellious way, And because of their iniquities, were afflicted. They drew near to the gates of death." Verse 19-20 says, "Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble; He saved them out of their distresses. He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions."

So they are under destruction, under the power of a malevolent force. And that is the way we were before we were rescued. It is not like these souls could walk out on their own. They were helpless, unable to save themselves. Now we know the doctrine, we know we cannot save ourselves; but we have forgotten the condition of the lost, where they really cannot save themselves. We, dear brothers and sisters, could not save ourselves. We were under the domain of darkness. And that domain is crushing and blinding and horrific. As we go through this morning, just remember that this is where the soul, there is where we start.

Definition of Rescue

Going back to Colossians. The word “rescue” carries the idea of dragging a person out of the jaws of danger. So, when He says He rescued us, it is a forceful entrance, and the Lord himself dragged that person, that soul, out from the jaws of danger.

Now, I have never considered it in that light, have you? That our rescue was a forceful rescue. This is talking about the domain of darkness. You get from this that the domain of darkness does not want to let any soul go out of its control and authority. The Father here is the rescuer. We will go back to it, but the Father is the rescuer, and He comes in and with mighty force takes that person out of the jaws of danger.

This morning, as I was meditating on this, I thought of David. Remember, he was taking care of his sheep and he said, “When my lambs were attacked,” what did he do to rescue them? He said, “I went and I grabbed that lion and I tore open its mouth and took the lamb out.” What a violent way to rescue your lamb! But he had to because the lamb was in the clutches of a lion.

To me, that is such a picture of what our God has done for us. We were being torn by that lion, and He came and opened the mouth of the lion and took us out, rescuing us. What a wonderful thing He has done for us! It is a forceful taking out of the mouth of the lion—our rescue.

1 Samuel 17:35, “I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it [the lamb] from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him.” What a great story! The Lord rescues us that way.

The Role of Father and Son

If you go back to Colossians 1:13, the “He” in the verse is the Father. The Father rescues us. Now in Galatians, the same kind of thought, but it is not exactly the same. In Galatians 1:4, it says, speaking of the Lord Jesus, “Who gave Himself for our sins so that *He* might rescue us from this present evil age.” Did you all notice the difference between the two verses?

So that He might rescue us from this present evil age. Well then, who rescues us? Of course, the answer is not either one or the other. Back to Galatians, the last part of that verse says, “According to the will of our God and Father.” The Father’s will, and the Son gave His life so that God could come in and rescue us.

It even says in Colossians 1:14, "In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." So, we all know this: the basis of our rescue is the blood of the Lord Jesus. But you know, our Father had to come in with great violence to rescue our souls. That is the emphasis here in Colossians.

Ongoing Rescue

The Lord is our rescuer. The Lord continues to rescue us. It is not a one-time rescue. Salvation is one time. Yes, you are rescued, but He continues to rescue us. The Lord's prayer, that phrase, "But deliver us from evil," uses the same word that is used here for rescue. So, we pray to our Father, "Deliver us from evil." Rescue me from evil. That is a continuing prayer that we have before our Father.

This was said today in worship: Romans 7:24. "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" That is the same word, rescue. II Timothy 4:18: "The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom." The Lord will rescue me. In II Peter 2:9 it says, "Then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation."

So the Lord's heart of rescue is not just to take us out from the dominion of Satan; He also wants to rescue us, as was shared this morning, from ourselves, from our old life, and from any type of the enemy trying to assert his authority in our lives. We are continually rescued by the Lord.

The enemy is not happy that we are in the kingdom of the beloved Son. And he is always trying to recapture you, as it were. And the Lord is always our rescuer. How many times in your life, brothers and sisters, have you known the rescuing power of the Lord? You know the Lord, you love Him, but you have gotten into something that is too strong for you to get out of. And you cry out to the Lord, "Lord, rescue me." The Lord has a heart to continue to rescue us. It is not just a one-time thing. Praise the Lord for that.

Listen to these words in Psalms. See, the saints of old knew the rescuing power of God. Psalm 6:4 says, "Return, O LORD, rescue my soul; Save me because of Your lovingkindness." Psalm 18:19 says, "He rescued me, because He delighted in me." The Lord loves us and He will rescue us because He delights us.

Psalm 34:17 says, "The righteous cry, and the LORD hears and rescues them from all their troubles." Now you young people, I heard in Sunday school class many times that you face a test, and you are a little nervous about it, and you pray to the Lord. There is no trouble too small or too large that the Lord does not want to come in and rescue you. The Lord hears you, and the Lord rescues.

This is a wonderful fact, a wonderful experience to know the Lord's rescue power. Psalm 34:4, "I sought the LORD, and He heard me, And rescued me from all my fears." And this one I especially like. It took a lot of courage for this guy to write this. Psalm 40:13 says, "Be pleased, LORD, to rescue me; Hurry LORD, and help me." Lord, You are too slow. I need help. Hurry, hurry, hurry. Help me, rescue me.

The Transfer to the Kingdom of the Beloved Son

So, praise the Lord. He is still our rescuer. He rescues us. But He does not rescue us to bring us out and then leave us alone; that is not His heart. What does He do next? He rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.

That word “transfer” is a high-tech word because it has the word “meta” in it. It is meta something else. Change, to change locations. I did not know “meta” meant change, but it is a good change. The idea is to change from one country to another. To take you from here, this country, and take you out of that country and place you into another country, to remove you from one place to another. To remove you from one authority, from the authority of the first country, the first dominion, and place you under the authority of another. And that authority is the Lord Jesus as King of His kingdom. So, you have been transferred. You did not get a work visa to go work, or a temporary visa. It is not a temporary thing. You have been totally transferred to another kingdom. You are under the authority of another King and no longer under the authority of the dominion of darkness.

Standing Firm in Our New Authority

And ever since studying this, there have been several times when I have had to say, “Lord, You have rescued me and transferred me to Your kingdom and Your dominion. I am not under this force that seems to be coming against my soul.” I am out from under any authority of the enemy. And you are too, we all are. The enemy has no right to you because you have been taken out of his domain and put into the kingdom of the Beloved Son.

Many times, in your life, you need to stand on that. We have been praying for some people that it seems the domain of darkness has come over them somehow. And they are either I do not know, I am weak in this area, but it seems like it should not be. It seems like we have been placed under the dominion of the kingdom of the Beloved Son, and the other domain has no more authority over me.

Now, I know that brothers and sisters, through your flesh and that kind of thing, the enemy can gain control. But our stance should be, “Lord, I am in Your control, under Your domain.” And when it is almost like the hand of hell comes out and tries to grab you and pull you back into its domain, you know you have a right in the Lord Jesus to say, “No.”

I think you almost have to be charismatic about it, Pentecostal, and say, “No, in the name of Jesus you have no control over me. The blood of Jesus is over me, and you have no right to me. You have no right to my soul.” So, I have been practicing that and have really enjoyed standing in these simple facts, these things that we all know. But brothers and sisters, to stand in it, in prayer, in faith, is a wonderful thing.

Stranger To the World, Citizenship in Heaven

So removed are we from one kingdom to the next that we are now strangers and pilgrims in the old, present world. One of the verses that we read talked about the evil of the present world. We are now aliens and strangers to that world. It is quite interesting. In Ephesians, it talks about being aliens and strangers to the kingdom of God or to Christ. When you are in this dominion, you are alien to that dominion. When you are in the dominion of Christ, you are an alien to the other, so you are almost always a stranger, no matter what. We are aliens and strangers.

Ephesians 2:10: Now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints of the household of God.

Philippians 3:20: "For our citizenship is in heaven." Now, brothers and sisters, we know that our citizenship is in heaven. We belong to heaven; we belong to the kingdom of God. So, praise the Lord. We are aliens and strangers to the world.

Really? Are you a stranger? Does the world consider you a stranger? A strange person? If they do not, Roger, I point to myself, Am I a strange person? Well, yes, but not in the way you are thinking. Am I a stranger to the world? Do they consider me a stranger, like someone from another place? How would they know that, other than the life of Christ being so evident?

The kingdom of light shines through me so much that they say, "You are a stranger; you are from another place. Where are you from?" That kind of idea. Sometimes I think we, Roger, again, get too comfortable in a domain of darkness in the world that we lose ... well, we just become comfortable.

The other thing that I have to struggle with, because I love politics and that kind of thing, is that the things of this world can start grabbing your heart and pulling you down and under. Instead of being like a stranger to it, you become too familiar with it somehow. You understand what I am saying? You can almost sense when your heart is drifting away from the land of the Lord and your citizenship in heaven, and you are becoming a citizen of the earth again. We know the Lord does not want that; we are citizens of heaven. So may the Holy Spirit really help all of us to walk as strangers, as pilgrims in this land and not become tied to it. I watched football last night. The Bears were so rough and tough on Green Bay. You can get captured and captivated once again by the world. And the Lord does not want that; we are citizens of heaven.

The Contrast of Kingdoms

Let us go on. We have been transferred to the kingdom of the beloved Son. What a contrast between the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of Satan, and the kingdom of the beloved Son.

Now, the Holy Spirit could have said in this section that you were transferred to a heavenly kingdom, which we already know. Or you are transferred into the kingdom of

the Son. But He said you are transferred to the kingdom of the beloved Son, the Son upon whom His love rests, the Son in whom He takes great delight.

Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, His Father giving the kingdom to His Son and taking delight in His Son's ruling in His kingdom. It is almost as if the Father, after seating the Lord Jesus at His right hand and exalting Him, now looks at the rescued one who was in prison, with no way to get out, He takes him out of prison and then puts him into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

It is like He is saying to you and me, "I want you to enter not only into a new authority but also to a greater extent into the relationship I have with My Son, whom I love so much. I am bringing you into that." So, it is a kingdom of love, and we are brought into that kingdom of love. We are brought into that expression of love the Father has for the Son and the love the Father has for you and me.

It is so wonderful. The contrast is stark, is it not? Darkness and light, life and death, love and hate. But it is so wonderful that we are brought into the kingdom of His beloved Son.

Being Placed in Christ and Into His Church

Now we are going to consider not only this rescued one being taken out of the kingdom of darkness and put into the kingdom of the Beloved Son, but he has been placed into Christ Himself. He has been put into the church. In Colossians 1:15-20, the Holy Spirit, through Paul, breaks out in great worship of who the Son is. In that wonderful section, which is too much for me to even share, there is this one verse 18: "He is also head of the body, the church."

So, the Lord Jesus is declared as the King of His kingdom and also the head of His body, the church. We know from the rest of Colossians up to chapter three that we are placed into Christ and Christ is placed into us. So, think of it: this rescued one has been placed into the kingdom of the Beloved Son. But even more, he has been brought and placed into Christ, the King Himself.

And that is why in Colossians 3:1, we see that if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above. Now, how could that captive one even have thoughts toward the Lord? But God has done such a wonderful work that He has placed us in His Son, raised us up with Him so that we can now seek the things above, that we can seek the things of heaven. Our direction of life points toward heaven.

The Mystery of Union with Christ

I was just considering: how has the Lord done this? How has He placed this one into Himself? And how could I explain it? Well, I cannot, except I am just going to share three verses with you, and may the Holy Spirit help us.

Colossians 3:3: "For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God." Hidden with Christ—this Greek word is called "crypto." That is my second high-tech word

today. Meta, we are changed from one place to another. And crypto means hidden or concealed. And we are hidden, concealed in Christ. Now I guess crypto means it is a hidden currency or something. But we are hidden in Christ.

Romans 6:5: (I was so glad we went to Romans this morning.) “For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.”

This word “united” carries the idea of being planted together. It means being connected and joined together in union with Christ.

I Corinthians 1:30: “But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption.” But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus. This carries the idea in the Greek of being grafted into—connected, joined together, united.

The Transformation of the Rescued Ones

So, the wonderful fact is that we are united to Christ, hidden in Christ, and joined with Him to such a degree that when He died, we died. When He was buried, we were buried. When He rose again, we were raised. When He ascended to the throne, we were ascended. And when He was seated at the throne, we were seated. I cannot explain it, but it is true. In the Spirit, we are united with Christ to such a degree that we are united with all of His work. And you all know this; it is nothing new.

Ephesians 1:20 talks about the great power that works within us. “Which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.” Well, that is the Father speaking of raising the Lord and seating the Lord.

Ephesian 2:6 says, “And raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Our union with the Lord in this is so great that we were raised and seated with Christ in the heavenlies, and we have wonderful songs about it.

So again, you are rescued. You are in prison. The Father comes in, tears the prison apart to get you out. He places you in the kingdom of His beloved Son under a new authority. Then He places you in His Son, so that you, a wretched, poor soul, are now seated with Him in the heavenly places in Christ.

See the amazing difference from where you start to where you end up. But it is certainly not the end, because one day we are going to be with Him forever and ever. But this struck me so much—the journey on which the Lord has put us. We know all about it, but it is an amazing, astounding thing that God has done.

But not only is this rescued soul seated with Christ, he is also placed in the church. In the church, he is going to thrive. In the church, the Lord will deal with him and give him the life of the Lord to such a degree that he will become someone with whom the Lord can be pleased.

Adornment and Attributes of the Church

I want us to look at Colossians 3:12. This is the kind of church; the kind of body the Lord wants us to be so that these souls who have been rescued can come in and flourish. "So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of ..." And there is a list of things.

Romans 5:5: "And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

The love of God is spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. All of these things must be done by the Holy Spirit and shed abroad in our lives and in the church because of what the Lord Jesus has done.

Titus 2:10: "Adorn the doctrine of God our Savior."

Have you ever seen that phrase, "Adorn the doctrine of Christ?" "Adorn" is used in Peter when he was talking to the ladies of the church, advising them not to adorn themselves with beautiful things on the outside, but to adorn themselves on the inside.

But that adorning means to beautify. To adorn means to put on a garment to make yourself pretty, to make yourself beautiful. Now, men do not do that, thank goodness, but women do. That is not the point. The point is adorning. And then one commentator said. "These things are put off and put on through here." Are you taking a garments off and putting a garment on?

Verse 12: These things are the adornment of the heart that we put on, that are the beauty of Christ that beautifies the church. To some extent, this is the bride making herself ready.

"So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion." The church, all of us, should have a heart of compassion that we put on. We have seen today the great compassion of the Lord to rescue us. Do we have a heart, the same heart as our Lord Jesus to rescue, as our heavenly Father to rescue?

We should put on a heart of kindness. God's house should be full of kindness, one to another. To anyone who enters, we should have hearts of kindness. Put on a heart of humility; to be humble before each other, all of us humble before the Lord. There should be no arrogant souls here, all of us humble. No dominant personalities and no rushing over each other. Hearts of humility, and hearts of gentleness.

Most of these things I am saying, "Lord, if I do not put these on, it is not happening." Patience, put on a heart of patience. These are beauties of the Lord that He wants us to have.

Bearing with one another and forgiving each other. "Whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you." Even as I was meditating on this, I would say, "Man, Lord, that person is really..." And then He would bring this up. I would be complaining in my spirit, you know, just not in my spirit, but in

my soul and my flesh. I would be complaining about something, about some person, and the Lord really rebuked me. Put on all of these things and bear with one another and forgive. Forgive to the point that the person who bugs you, whom you have so many complaints about, never knows about it because you have already forgiven them.

Conclusion

“Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.” Verse 16: “Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you.”

So, brothers and sisters, we should all, in every assembly of the Lord, if these attributes, if these things of Christ are evident, that soul who was rescued is going to thrive, grow, and flourish, and that is the way the Lord wants it, I believe.

let us pray.

Lord, I want to thank You so much that You have rescued me. You have rescued all of us. Lord, You have placed us in Your Son's kingdom, You placed us in Your Son Himself. You have raised us up and seated us with Him, and You placed us in the church, a place where we can see the life of Christ evident and flowing among us. Lord, You have done a great thing for us. May we not take for granted the wonderful things You have done. Even as we praise and worship You, Lord, You have freed us from everything, and You have given us everything. Lord, I cannot help but think of that wonderful verse in Ephesians that says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” Surely, Lord, You have blessed us with every spiritual blessing. You blessed us in our precious Lord Jesus, and we bless You and thank You for it. In Your name, I pray. Amen.

<i>Freedom In Christ</i>	1
Introduction	1
The Captives and the Rescue	2
The Domain of Darkness	2
Definition of Rescue	3
The Role of Father and Son	3
Ongoing Rescue	4
The Transfer to the Kingdom of the Beloved Son	5
Standing Firm in Our New Authority	5
Stranger To the World, Citizenship in Heaven	6
The Contrast of Kingdoms	6
Being Placed in Christ and Into His Church	7
The Mystery of Union with Christ	7
The Transformation of the Rescued Ones	8
Adornment and Attributes of the Church	9
Conclusion	10

Speaker	Ogburn, Roger
Venue	Richmond, Virginia, US
Date	December 21 st , 2025
Link	https://christiantestimonyministry.com/item/freedom-in-christ
Bible	NASB95