

Reasons To Rejoice Colossians 1:12-14

Intro: Are you a thankful person? – Do you find it easy to think of reasons to rejoice – Is your heart prone to worship / easy to enter in

A) Many of the men here – Probably a little more thankful right now for your wife – been away at the retreat – **Playing Mr. MOM**

B) John Henry Jowett, a British preacher of an earlier generation, said this about **Gratitude** "*Gratitude is a vaccine, an antitoxin, and an antiseptic.*" What did he mean? He meant that gratitude, like a vaccine, can prevent the invasion of a disgruntled, discouraged spirit. Like an antitoxin, gratitude can prevent the affects of the poisons of cynicism, criticalness, and grumbling. Like an antiseptic, a spirit of gratitude can soothe and heal the most troubled spirit.

C) **It is true that a grateful heart can go a long way** – It can have a huge effect on our outlook on life and our interaction with others
1) On the tombstone of her husband's grave, a Southern mountain woman had chiseled in rough and uneven letters this epitaph: "**He always appreciated.**"

D) What a way to be remembered – **He always appreciated** – he was always grateful – always thankful –
1) I bet she loved that man very much!!!!

E) **A life that is lacking gratitude can have the opposite affect { Listen to Jowett's insights on this**

Life without thankfulness is devoid of love and passion. Hope without thankfulness is lacking in fine perception. Faith without thankfulness lacks strength and fortitude. Every virtue divorced from thankfulness is maimed and limps along the spiritual road.

F) Well I hope that you are a person of Gratitude – that you can easily find reasons to rejoice - In our text today – Paul gives us several
1) Last time we began looking at Paul Prayer here in Ch. 1 v.9-11 **Read**

**Paul's prayer for these people divides nicely into 2 parts –
1st part v.9-11 is his request for them – we looked at that last time**

A) Paul prayed: *that they would be filled, or totally controlled by the knowledge of God's will for their lives, in all wisdom & Spiritual understanding,*

B) *that they would walk in a manner that was worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him in all things,*

1) *that they would grow in their knowledge of God, AND that they would be continuously filled with the strength and power of God's might, so that they could endure with joy, tough situations and difficult people.*

C) **that is a great prayer**, that's a prayer that is right on target, great way to pray for your husband / wife / roommate / best friend / kids

This is one of the things I love about Paul's prayers: They look forward, never backward,

A) His focus was **always on what they could become in Christ as opposed to what they had messed up in the flesh.**

B) Paul was **way more concerned about their spiritual potential, then he was about the circumstances of life,**

1) or their sin nature that kept dragging them down, or Satan's schemes

C) **Not that Paul discounted these things, he didn't at all, it's just that when Paul prayed over them,**

1) See he knew that the cure for all of these things was not **fixing or repairing** the past,
2) but **firmly grabbing a hold of the future that was theirs in Christ.**

D) So Paul began with these request asking God to grow these people in these particular areas – but Paul didn't stop there –

1) After the request he breaks out into thanksgiving for these people.

E) That is what we want to consider today: Some reasons to Rejoice that Paul points out here **Rd v.12-14**

What we have in this statement is one of the best descriptions of salvation that you will find in the Bible.

A) Paul is essentially saying, “this is what salvation is/this is how it happens

B) He starts with the fact concerning how God had qualified them to be partakers of the Kingdom.

1) The word “**Qualified**” here is a very interesting word, it is only used twice in the New Testament

C) It is used here and in 2 Cor 3:6 where Paul is talking about us being qualified to minister to those around us by the Spirit.

D) The Greek word for qualified means - **means to authorize, to make sufficient, to empower.**

1) We are familiar with the term as it relates to be approved for a house or car loan or being approved to play on the team / approved for a college.

What Paul is saying here is that God has given His stamp of approval, His authorization, for the Believer to be in the Kingdom.

A) You have been accepted in the BELOVED – you are qualified to be a part of the family of GOD !!!!

B) But notice **to emphasis here is on this being a work of God, it is God and God alone who has qualified you for the Kingdom.**

C) It is the opposite of being accepted for **the college, or approved for the house loan or car loan /**

1) IN those things the emphasis is on your academic achievements or your Credit & bill paying History

D) You are qualified based on your performance over a long period of time but here the **emphasis is on God’s performance – what he did for you.**

1) When you were spiritually bankrupt / when your moral performance fell way below the grade – God’s Standard of perfection { He sent his Son !!!

What this points out to us once again is the difference between every other religious system and Christianity.

A) Every other religious system tries to give you the tools, or the path, or the techniques that will enable you to qualify yourself for the Kingdom.

B) But the bottom line is this, **you can’t do it**, I don’t care how many doors you knock on / trips to Mecca you take / hrs of Meditation you do

1) **you are not going to get it done.**

C) **The beauty of Christianity is that God says, “what you can’t do for yourself, I will do for you, I will qualify you for the Kingdom, I will provide the salvation that is necessary to get you in”**

Not only has God qualified us for the kingdom, but He has also qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

A) What this means is that **not only is God going to get us to heaven, but we are going to be fully funded once we get there,**

B) We are going to have all of the resources that we need to fully enjoy it.

1) God has by grace **qualified** the unqualified to share in the inheritance.

C) One of my favorite place in all the world to go to is the Island of Maui – I love it there . **So peaceful relaxing and beautiful –**

1) But a sad fact is that many of the people who live year round on the Island don’t really enjoy the blessing of it.

D) The reason is it is so expensive to live there that many of them live more in a survival mode than a living mode

1) **They work two & sometimes three jobs, & they still can’t afford a house, or to go out to the good restaurants, like the tourist get to do.**

E) They live there, but they don't have the resources to really enjoy it.

1) That will not be the case in heaven, not only has God authorized your presence there, AND He has placed in your heavenly account, every **resource that you need to fully enjoy it.**

Peter refers to it as "an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pet. 1:4).

A) It will be ours forever. Hebrews 9:15 depicts it as an eternal inheritance.

B) That's what the future holds for the Believer, - A great reason to **REJOICE & have a thankful heart**

1) We have been qualified for the kingdom and the inheritance that goes along with it !!!!

C) Now A second cause for thanksgiving is our spiritual liberation. We have been delivered from the **DOMAIN OF DARKNESS**

1) The word **Delivered** is interesting – it means more than just being rescued it means to **"to draw to oneself,"**

D) God drew us out of Satan's kingdom **to Himself.**

See Before God saved us by His grace we were truly unqualified for our inheritance.

A) Several passages in Ephesians describe our helpless condition:

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. (2:1-3)

Remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of

promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (2:12)

C) Before our salvation, we were dominated by the evil world system; its wicked ruler, Satan; and our own fallen, sinful, human natures.

D) We were Christless, stateless, covenantless, hopeless, godless. Our minds were given to futility; our understanding was darkened.

E) We were cut off from the life of God, ignorant, hardhearted, callous, immoral, impure, and greedy.

1) The only thing we were qualified to receive from God was His wrath.

But he intervened on our behalf – He set in motion a plan to rescue us not only to set us free from Satan' Bondage – But draw to Himself

A) In the movie Shadowlands – CS Lewis – meets a woman by the name of Joy Davidman – Joy's life was in Shambles

B) She was married to a womanizing Alcoholic whom she felt compelled to Divorce – She sought refuge in England with her two sons

1) From Her ex - Husband lived back in the states

C) Joy was a brash American with a colorful past- she was of Jewish decent, but had drifted into atheism & communism

1) But eventually came to faith in Christ

C) Joy and Lewis struck up a friendship & although he was attracted to her mind – **{they shared a love of Poetry & literature }**

1) he felt no romantic stirrings toward her

D) Well this was during the cold war in 1956 & tensions were at their peak

The British Govt **revoked Joy's resident permit** because of her communist background –

1) She reluctantly prepared to head back to America which meant facing her ex husband and battles about the custody of the boys

That is when Lewis stepped in and proposed that he would marry Joy

A) **It would simply be a marriage of convenience –so she could stay in Eng And provide stability for her sons**

B) They would not live together as Husband and wife – **it was purely to satisfy the legal issues so she could stay in England**

1) He was seeking to rescue her from the darkness of her past & **an Abusive / alcoholic ex-husband** – But he wasn't interested in **drawing her to himself**

C) That all changed when she contracted terminal cancer – Lewis did not want her to **die alone in a hospital** so he decided to take her into his house and care for her :

D) Two unexpected things took place – Joy's cancer went into remission and Lewis fell madly in love with her!!! **He wrote this about her in his auto biography surprised by Joy**

Listen we like Joy – had terminal cancer – called sin – We like Joy had a hurtful past – left us in Bondage/ God rescued us – not just to set us free

A) **But because he loved us – and wanted us to be close to Him – Wanted us to have a relationship with Him !!!!**

B) We have been taken out of the Domain of darkness and conveyed or transferred into the Kingdom of light !!!!

1) **Transferred** means to remove or change. It is used in Acts 13:22 to speak of God's removing Saul from being king.

C) It was used in the ancient world to speak of the displacement of a **conquered people to another land.**

1) The verb speaks here of our total removal from the domain of satanic darkness to the glorious light of the kingdom of Christ.

If you ever want to get right down the essence of salvation, here it is, God has rescued us from Powers of Darkness, and translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love.

A) That's salvation, saved from darkness to light.

B) Now What **I want you to see here is that this is not something that will happen, it is something that has happened.**

1) The moment a person puts their faith in Jesus, **this process occurs,**

C) **We are rescued, saved, delivered, from the power of darkness,** and translated into the Kingdom of the Son of His love.

1) That is the wonderful story of God's salvation.

How was this all possible, how could God do this? By two specific things, the redemption through His blood & the forgiveness of sins.

A) **Redemption is a New Testament word that you have to understand, it means "to deliver by payment of a ransom"**

B) **The word was most often used in reference to a slave,** it was the price that was paid to buy someone out of slavery.

1) The idea being that **we were slaves to our own sin,** that is what was keeping us bound up in the dominion of Darkness.

C) **God was determined to pay the price that would buy us our freedom, what was the price, what was the ransom that was due?**

1) **Well the wages of sin is death, someone had to come and die the death that we deserved.**

D) **Someone had to come and bare the wrath and penalty that our sin deserved.**

1) That someone **was Jesus Christ,** the ransom was paid through His Blood on the Cross.

E) Because Jesus paid the ransom that our sin deserved, He can now offer us full and complete forgiveness for our sins.

The word that Paul uses here for “forgiveness” is a compound Greek Word that means “to send away”

A) That is what God is now able to do with our sins, He is able to separate them from us as far as the East is from the West,

B) He is able to bury them in the deepest sea & to remember them no more.

1) Church that’s is what God has done with your sins, they are history, they have been removed, they will never be an issue again.

C) This is why you are qualified for the Kingdom, this is why you are a partaker of inheritance of the saints in the light.

1) Because God made a way for you to be REDEEMED & WITH THAT REDEMPTION – COMES FORGIVENESS -