

A Step of Faith

Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online

- Devotional: a short worship service.
- Sermon: a religious discourse in public usually by a member of the clergy as a part of a worship service.

A devotional is a bite size portion to chew on as compared to the full meal of a sermon spelling everything out. It is something to meditate upon to enhance the relationship with the one to whom devotion is being shown, in this case, Christ Jesus.

Colossians 2:11-15 ESV

In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him.

- Along with salvation and the act of baptism:
 - Spiritual circumcision (vs 11)
 - Buried with Christ (vs 12)

- Raised with Christ to new life (vs 12)
- By trusting the power of God (vs 12)
- Cut away the sinful nature (vss 11,13)
- Made alive with Christ (vs 13)
- All sins forgiven (vs 13)
- Cancelled the record of all charges (vs 14)
- Disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities (vs 15)
- 9 items = Finality and Fruitfulness.

The topic here is, being alive in Christ. What is the context of the previous verses? Remember, we are reading one part of a letter that Paul wrote to a group of believers, the Ekklesia at Colossae.

Chapter One

- Paul identifies that this letter comes from himself.
 - He also extends greetings from Timothy.
- Paul gives thanksgiving and prayer for the believers in Colossae.
 - Those believers, like us, had not met him.
- In verse 12 Paul shares their qualification as believers.
 - Qualified by the Father who called them to salvation.

Colossians 1:12 ESV

*giving thanks to **the Father, who has qualified you** to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.*

- In verses 13 and 14, Paul mentions deliverance, transference, and forgiveness.
 - Deliverance from the kingdom of darkness.
 - Transferred into the kingdom of light.

- Having been redeemed: forgiven for their sins.

Colossians 1:13-14 ESV

He has delivered 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.

- Paul then speaks of the preeminence of Christ.
 - His superiority and excellency.
- There is a lot of information in verses 15 through 23 that demand their own devotional.
 - The Son's pre-creation existence and role.
 - His function in creation, then and now.
 - His headship over the body of believers.
 - The fullness of God in Him.
 - His work of reconciliation.
- In verses 21 through 23, Paul sums up the idea of reconciliation for those who continue in faith, holding onto the hope of the gospel message.
 - From alienated and hostile in mind to Almighty God.
 - To being reconciled in Christ.
 - In order to be presented as holy and blameless to the Father.
 - For those who continue in the faith.

Colossians 1:21-23 ESV

*And you, who once were **alienated and hostile in mind**, doing evil deeds, **He has now reconciled** in His body of flesh by His death, **in order to present you holy and blameless** and above reproach before Him, **if indeed you***

continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

- Paul finishes chapter 1 by explaining his ministry to the body of believers.
 - His sufferings and afflictions.
 - His being a minister and a steward of the gospel.
 - The mystery, now revealed to the saints.
 - “this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

- Chapter 2 begins with Paul mentioning that those in Colossae and Laodicea have not met him.
 - Paul’s struggle is to encourage them, uniting them in love.
 - He wants them to mature in Christ with understanding and knowledge of God’s mystery:
 - “which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”
 - He seeks to prevent the deception of the new believers that would lead them astray.

Paul then enters into the area of our concern for this devotional; our being alive in Christ.

- Paul reiterates that he is writing to believers, those who have surrendered to Christ Jesus, following Him.
 - Those who have been taught about the faith.
 - Those who were taught how to walk in the faith.
 - Those who ought to be living in an attitude of thanksgiving.

Colossians 2:6-7 ESV

*Therefore, as **you received Christ Jesus** the Lord, **so walk in Him**, rooted and **built up in Him and established in the faith**, just as you were taught, **abounding in thanksgiving**.*

- Paul then cautions the believers in verse 8 to not be taken captive in deceit.
 - By philosophy.
 - By deception or lies.
 - By traditions of man.
 - By elemental spirits, or by elementary principles of the world.
 - By anything or anyone that is not according to Christ.
- In verses 9 and 10 Paul tells us of the deity and authority of God.
 - The whole fullness of deity dwells bodily in Christ.
 - Believers have been filled in Christ.
 - Christ is the head of all rule and authority.

It is in this understanding of Christ being the fullness of God, with all authority, as the Redeemer, forgiving our sin, that Paul expresses the ideas we consider here. We will look at 9 points, looking at this as a new beginning as we are transferred from the kingdom of darkness and defeat into the kingdom of light and victory.

1. Spiritual Circumcision – verse 11.
 - a. Not of the flesh.
 - b. Done by God.
 - c. Putting off the body of flesh.

Colossians 2:11 ESV

*In Him also you were **circumcised with a circumcision made without hands**, by **putting off the body of the flesh**, by the circumcision of Christ,*

2. Buried with Christ – verse 12.
 - a. This is accomplished through baptism.
 - b. It is not an act rooted in magic, sorcery, or anything like that.
 - c. It is a step of faith.
 - i. Perhaps a primary, significant step of faith.

Colossians 2:12a ESV

*having been **buried with Him in baptism**,*

3. Raised with Christ to new life – verse 12.
 - a. This is still in the act of baptism.
 - b. Baptism is a part of the mandate Christ gave His disciples as He sent them out to make disciples.
 - i. Why would it be any less a mandate for us?
 - ii. Why do we minimize it by not including it in the message of salvation and forgiveness for our sins?

Colossians 2:12b ESV

*in which **you were also raised with Him***

4. By trusting the power of God – verse 12.
 - a. Believing that God will do what He said He will do.
 - i. Giving those who believe eternal life.
 - ii. Giving those who believe the right to become children of God.
 - b. This is a step of faith in God and His power.

Colossians 2:12c ESV

*through **faith in the powerful working of God**, who raised Him from the dead.*

5. Cut away the sinful nature – verses 11 & 13.
 - a. In verse 11, we put off the body of the flesh.
 - b. In verse 13a, God took what was holding us in death and cut it out of us.

Colossians 2:13a ESV

*And **you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh,***

6. Made alive with Christ – verse 13.
 - a. This is our new life in Christ.

- i. Having been born again.
- b. Just as God raised Christ Jesus from death to life.

Colossians 2:13b ESV

*[and you,] God **made alive together with Him,***

- 7. All sins forgiven – verse 13.
 - a. How much was forgiven? **ALL!**
 - b. This is a clean slate for those who are a new creation.
 - i. **2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
 - c. Do we believe this? Not only in the mind, but in the heart and spirit as well.

Colossians 2:13c ESV

*having **forgiven us all our trespasses,***

- 8. Canceled the record of all charges – verse 14.
 - a. How many charges were canceled? **ALL!**
 - i. The record of our debt, incurred by our sin, is canceled.
 - b. The legal demands of the enemy against our past no longer exist.
 - c. They were nailed to the cross.
 - d. Our judge has set them aside, no longer to be held against us.

Colossians 2:14 ESV

by **canceling the record of debt** that stood against us with its legal demands. **This He set aside**, nailing it to the cross.

9. Disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities – verse 15.
 - a. Not only was the debt and the charges against us wiped away, but those with the power to use them against us were neutralized, being disarmed.
 - b. Not only were they disarmed, but they were also put to shame.
 - c. Christ triumphed over them by satisfying the legal claims that were against us through His sacrifice to pay our debt.
 - d. Christ paid our debt that we could not pay; a debt He did not owe.

Colossians 2:15 ESV

He **disarmed the rulers and authorities** and put them to open shame, by **triumphing over them** in Him.

Notice all of the past tense words in this passage about passing from death to life through the work of God, for His part, and the step of faith, for our part, through the act of baptism. This is obedience in being baptized, and being a doer of the Word, not a hearer only.

Colossians 2:11-15 ESV

*In Him also you **were circumcised** with a circumcision **made** without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having **been buried** with Him in baptism, in which you **were also raised** with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, who **raised Him** from the dead. And you, who **were dead** in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God **made alive** together with Him, **having forgiven** us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He **set aside**, nailing it to the cross. He **disarmed** the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, **by triumphing** over them in Him.*

Aside from what we have already discovered, as that upon which we ought to meditate, what are the takeaways?

- We need to focus on Jesus and His truth, that we be not deceived.
- We need to move this information from head knowledge, to heart truth.
- We need to walk in the victory and freedom that Christ Jesus won for us at the cross.
- We need to walk in obedience in love; including being baptized.
- We need to properly disciple others in this truth.
- We ought to study Scripture more thoroughly, searching out truth, rather than simply reading our bibles.