

(Anno Domini, abbreviated AD or A.D. expressly complies with Isaiah 61:2 & Luke 4:19, i.e. "To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." (Isaiah 61:2)



Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross

13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. (Col 2:13-17)

There are so many truths of enormous profundity in Colossians that it must be considered in snippets, rather than whole cloth, in a devotional format. Even so, the depths are not fathomed sufficiently, and I pray that the reader will peruse this book to find those glittering gems of truth that this writer fails to mention.

The very first verse of today's devotion begins with an earth-shattering truth to those who either are novices to the Word, or who show not interest at all in the eternal disposition of their souls. "***And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.***" A good student of literary analysis will immediately observe points of great magnitude in this simple verse. Remember how densely compressed and briefly stated the Word of God relates such enormous truths? It is the mark of exceptional literary style – and none performs it nearly so manifestly as does the Holy Bible. Look at what this verse tells us (and confirmed in other biblical records):

1) All are dead except those who know the Lord. You may say, but, friend, I am much alive! Really? If you do not know Christ, you are dead in trespasses and sin. You are a walking zombie in bondage to the Prince of the Air. "***And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.***" (Eph 2:1)

We are all born to a dying race at birth. Something must change to make us

alive. We must forsake the disease of Adam (which is sin) and be made alive in Christ. The dead know nothing at all. Just as Lazarus, four days in a stone-cold tomb, knew nothing of the great commotion without his tomb when Christ approached, neither does the sinner until drawn by that same voice echoed by the Holy Ghost – “Sinner, Come Forth!” Paul describes the condition in such simple terms in Ephesians that I will defer to his more excellent description: *“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”* (Eph 2:4-10) Of course, grace is nothing that can be attributed to any good work or attitude on our own behalf – it is freely given!

2) Though we were dead in trespasses and sins, Christ has quickened us (made us alive). We did not come to our dead senses and make ourselves alive – it was all of Christ’s doing. Christ has made us alive in Himself! *“(you) hath he quickened together with him.”* (Himself) Yes, the wages of sin is death, but we are made alive in the resurrected Lord. The Lord we follow leads us to take our cross as He took His own; to die to self as He died for us; and to rise from the dead to newness of life as He did from the Tomb on the Third Day. *“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”* (Romans 6:23)

3) *“(Christ) having forgiven you all trespasses.”* The Lord is not a piece-meal Lord. He is all Yea, or all Nay. If He forgives, He forgives to the uttermost. He has promised to place our sins so far from us as the East is from the West. Compute THAT navigation distance, if you have the time. *“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”* (Psalms 103:12) *“He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”* (Micah 7:19) If God has removed our trespasses against Him so far a distance, why, pray tell, do we remember every single offense, once forgiven, of a friend who offends us anew?

*“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”* Many interpret these ordinances, written by hand, to be the Moral Law as revealed in the Ten Commandments. I do not believe it refers to those august Laws laid down by God, for we are yet bound by them, though written in our hearts and not on Tables of Stone. I believe the ordinances referred to are those written by men (Moses) for the sake of order and justice in old Israel. The greater Law of God upon which those Ten Commandments hang is that of Love – the kind of Love demonstrated in the cross itself. The vertical beam is the greatest – the Love we bear for God which must be all-consuming. The second is a corollary of the first – to love our neighbors (His Creatures) as our selves. Certainly, the Ten Commandments were not nailed to the cross. But the justice which impinges upon our persons in to sentence us to death for the abrogation of even one of those Commandments is, indeed, nailed to the cross by the love, grace, and mercy of God.

Rome, in cahoots with the Jewish rulers, believed they finally dispensed with Christ once He was nailed to the cross. Were they ever WRONG! *“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”*

The Roman Governor placed a roman guard on the tomb to insure that Jesus remained buried. That, my friend, did not work! Christ defeated the secular power by His death and resurrection. By the same, He defeated the religious power of the Jewish rulers; and by that same power, he defeated, once and for all, the Prince of the Power of the Air – Satan himself! All three were spectacularly humiliated by the resurrection of Christ!

*“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.”* I try to follow the biblical food laws as much as possible. I do not do so out of a feeling of spiritual obligation, but out of an interest for my own personal health. I believe certain foods the Bible labels as unclean (carnivorous animals and fish) to be unhealthy. I condemn no one for eating whatever they please, but I abide by my personal preference. You would be surprised how often I am criticized for “trying to abide by the letter of the law” as if the law commanded me to eat pork and catfish! It is a waste of man’s time to make such judgments, and it is a waste of God’s time in observing such foolishness. We in the Anglican Communion take wine representing the blood of Christ in Holy Communion. How many Baptists will go miles around the literal Word of God to prove Jesus turned water into grape juice! If Saturday is the Sabbath for some Christians and Jews, so be it. If Sunday is the Sabbath for others, so be it. I believe they both miss the mark, for every day is a Rest (Sabbath Day) to the saved of God - if it is Christ who works in them and not themselves.

*“Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”* You might be surprised to know that there are millions of Christians who are ecstatic at the proposition that the Jews may soon rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem and resume animal sacrifices. Are they happy to see the sacrifice of the Lord so demeaned as to see the blood of goats and oxen are better than that shed at Calvary? How can one appreciate the Passover sacrifice of Christ if they are ignorant of the first Passover in old Egypt? The first Passover lamb was a shadow of the Lamb of God to be sacrificed precisely at the time of the Temple sacrifice of the lamb at Passover. How could any fourth grader miss that comprehension? How could we miss knowing that the Law was given to teach us that we are of no worth in keeping the Law of God? We needed a Savior – and we got One. How could anyone place a greater significance on one day of rest (a Sabbath) and that eternal rest (Sabbath) we have in Christ?

Finally, in conclusion of this devotion, allow me to admit the Holy Bible is full of mysteries no ten-horned pulpit dandy may understand. I am one who will readily admit to those mysteries. I do not know all God has in mind for us to know, sooner or later. But I do believe God’s Word is like a beautiful bud-rose slowly unfolding to reveal greater and greater beauty with observation. Each of us should be about the business of our Father in reading and understanding as much of this glorious Word as the Holy Spirit will reveal to our mortal minds.