

PURPOSE 2 FOR PAUL'S PRAISE—GOD'S WORK THROUGH HIS SON!

INTRODUCTION: I'm going to start out this morning seeing how **smart** you are. I have in my hand a children's "activity book" entitled "Dot-to-Dot." Although most of us have not worked on one of these in quite some time, most of us (I think)—would still know **what to do**. If not, **ask Gracelyn!**

--If the page has **numbers** on it, what is the **first** thing you do? Look for the number 1!

--Once you find the **number 1**, what is the **next thing** you do? Look for the number 2!

--But...what if the page has **letters** on it?

--If the page has **letters** on it, what is the **first** thing you do? Look for the letter "A"!

--Once you find the **letter "A,"** what is the **next** thing you do? Look for the letter "B"!

--Those are the **easy** questions, now for the more **difficult** ones.

What is the **purpose** behind connecting the dots? What is the **goal**? It depends on **who** you ask, right?

--The goal of the **parents** is for children to learn their **numbers**...and **letters**...and how to **draw straight** lines!

--But the goal of **the child** is to see the "picture" that is revealed after the dots are all connected—provided they do it correctly!

And the goal of seeing the "Big Picture" best describes what we need to **keep in mind** as we study the Bible—especially, it seems to me—the book of Colossians! But there is **one major break-down** in this analogy and it is this: the "dots" that the **children connect** aren't all **that special** in-and-of themselves.

--I do not recall any of my children "oohing and awing" over the **individual letters or numbers** as they were connecting the dots. Imagine the conversation! "Oh, Daddy, isn't this the most beautiful letter "A" that you've ever seen? And look at this letter "B"! Isn't it just the greatest letter "B" in the whole world?"

--After a day of that, I can't help but think that the "dot-to-dot" book would mysteriously disappear during the night when that child was sleeping!

On the flip side, the dots **we get to connect** in God's Word **are beautiful** in and of themselves! In fact, many compare what God's Word says **about salvation to a diamond**. Each facet—each face—of a diamond is beautiful, but taken as a whole they are even **more beautiful!** And that is what we have here in Colossians 1—especially in the verses we are going to look at this morning!

Please take your Bibles and turn once again to Colossians 1; follow along as I read vss 9-14.

"Big Picture," here is what we've looked at so far.

--Chapter 1—verses 1-14—make up the **introduction** of Paul's letter.

--In vss 1-2, we have the greeting.

--In vss 3-8, we have "Purpose 1 for Paul's Praise—God's Work Through His Word."

--In vss 9-12a—the verses we looked at last week—we saw "The Priority of Paul's Prayer."

What did Paul pray for? What did Paul **ask God to do** on their behalf?

He wanted them to be filled **with knowing**—by first-hand experience—the **will of God** so that they would **do the will** of God with the end result of **living a life** that was **pleasing to God**.

And then—to make sure they didn't "miss it"—God used Paul to **spell out** what a life that pleases God looks like! It is characterized by **doing good works**...and increasing in **knowing God through a relationship** with Him...and being **strengthened by His might** so we can joyfully go through difficulties...and by having an attitude of gratitude—**giving thanks unto** the Father.

And that brings us to the second half of verse 12—through vs 14—where we see "Purpose 2 for Paul's Praise—God's Work Through His Son!"

Why—according to verse 12—did Paul give thanks unto the Father? Because the Father "hath made us meet to be partakers of the saints in light." What does that mean? It means **salvation**, right?

But vs 13 and vs 14 also refer to aspects of salvation. **So how** do these verses **relate** to one another? I see it like this: **In verse 12**, Paul gives thanks to the Father for our salvation—and explains what **salvation means**; in **verses 13-14** Paul elaborates on **how** our salvation was brought about; **the manner** of it.

1. The meaning of salvation—making us qualified for heaven

Back again to **vs 12**: “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:”

--Some of you might be wondering, “where does the word ‘qualified’ come from in this verse?”

--The word “meet”—in the phrase “hath made us meet”—means “to enable, to make sufficient, to render fit, **to qualify**.” (Strong’s Lexicon in Biblehub.com). The only other place the Greek word is used is in **II Cor 3:6** “Who also hath made us **able** [fit, sufficient, qualified] ministers of the new testament [covenant]...”

A. The One who qualifies

Who—according to verse 12—is **the One** that makes us qualified? The One Paul is **giving thanks to**—which is **obviously the Father!** And because **it’s obvious**, we are not going to spend a lot of time on it!

But...I do want to quickly point out a couple of things.

1) First, since the **Father** is the One who qualifies us, it means that we **cannot qualify ourselves!** The verse **doesn’t say** “we qualified **ourselves**”—and it doesn’t say the Father “**helped us**” become qualified.

It says the Father is the One who qualified us—**period!**

2) Second, the **verb tense**. Look again at the phrase, “**hath made us** meet to be partakers...”

--“**Hath**” is the same as “**has**,” right? “Has made us meet [qualified]” happened **when?** In **the past**, right?

--It **doesn’t** say, “**might** make us meet [qualified]” (**future** tense)—and it **doesn’t** say, “**is making us** meet [qualified]” (**present** tense). “Has qualified us” is **past** tense—meaning it has already happened!

Why am I making such a big deal about this? Because it points to the truth that I **can know**—right now, without a shadow of doubt—that **I am on my way** to heaven! How/why? Because God **has qualified** me!

Next, let’s consider... B. The ones who are made qualified

--**Who** has the Father made qualified? **Everyone**, right? **No**; he is **saying it** to the people **he is writing to!**

--**Who** is Paul writing to? **Vs 2**: “To **the saints** [God’s set apart ones; His children] & faithful **brethren** in Christ”

--Vs 4. “Since we **heard of your faith** in Christ Jesus...”

--Paul is **not writing** to everyone—he is telling **born-again, blood-bought believers** that God has qualified **them** for entrance into heaven. **When**—past tense—**did** God qualify them?

--When **they received Jesus** as their personal Lord and Savior!

John 1:12 “But as many as **received Him** [Jesus], to them gave He power [the authority, the right] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His [Jesus’] name:

I John 5:12 “He that **hath the Son** hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

--What about **you?** Have **you received** the Son? **Do you have**—do you possess—Jesus?

If you don’t **have** the Son, you are **not qualified** for heaven! And if you die **disqualified** from heaven, you will **suffer the same fate** as the rich man in Luke 16! Jesus says in **Luke 16:22b-23** “...the rich man also died, and was buried; ²³ **And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments...**”

Please don’t miss this! God is the **only One** who can make us fit for heaven—and He only does that for those who **come to Him through His Son!** **John 14:6** “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: **no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**”

Now let’s think about...C. The blessings of being made qualified

What are the blessings of being made qualified by the Father? An obvious one is that we get to go to heaven!

But notice how Paul **describes** it here in vs 12.

1) “**...partakers of the inheritance**”

“Partaker” comes from the Greek word “meh-REES” which means “part, portion, or share.”

It is used **five** times in the Greek NT and the other **four** times it is translated “**part**.” Strong’s Lexicon in Biblehub.com states: “The Greek word ‘meris’ refers to a **part or portion of something** that is divided or shared. It can denote a **physical** portion, such as a piece of land or food, or a **metaphorical** share, such as a role or responsibility. In the New Testament, ‘meris’ is often used to describe the **portion or inheritance** that believers have in Christ.”

So because God has qualified us, we are a partaker—a sharer—of **the inheritance**.

Some suggest this picture parallels **the entering of God’s people** into the Promised Land. The land would be divided between the tribes—and individual families within those tribes would get a portion of the land.

What will be our heavenly lot—**our portion**—that we have been given a share of? Too much to cover in a sub-point of a sermon! But here’s just a sampling:

a) It is a prepared place. John 14:2 “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. **I go to prepare a place** for you.”

b) It is a perfect place. We talked about that on Resurrection Sunday, didn’t we? Revelation 21:4 “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

c) It is a perpetual (never ending) place. 1 Peter 1:4 “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that **fadeth not away**, reserved in heaven for you,”

But the verse doesn’t end with “partakers of the inheritance,” does it? Notice how it ends:

2) “...of the saints in light:” Without getting too technical, commentators are divided as to whether or not “light” is referring to **the saints**—or if it is referring to our **future inheritance**.

--Are saints—God’s children—supposed to **walk** in the light? Yes; they are! **Ephesians 5:8** “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye **light** in the Lord: walk as children of **light**:”

--Is the place of our inheritance a **place** of light? Yes; it is! **Revelation 21:23** “And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did **lighten** it, and the Lamb is the **light** thereof.”

Salvation, then—in a nutshell—is God making us qualified to have an inheritance **from** Him—and **with** Him—in a **place of never-ending perfection**. No wonder **Paul wrote** to the Philippians: “I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Phil 1:23)!

Next, let’s consider... **2. The manner in which we obtain salvation**

God the Father is the One who makes us meet/fit/qualified for the inheritance of the saints—meaning salvation. But **how** does God make us qualified? In verses 13-14, Paul **explains how** God has qualified the Colossians—and us—to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

First... A. By delivering us from the power of darkness

Vs 13a “Who **hath** delivered us...” Once again, notice it is in the **past** tense. It doesn’t say “**might** deliver us”—and it doesn’t say “**is currently** delivering us.” God has—**already; in the past**—delivered us. It’s a done deal!

And all God’s people ought to say, “Amen!”

Deliver means “to rescue; to snatch up.” What are we **rescued from**? The **power** of darkness!

Darkness, of course, is not a reference to **physical** light. **The sun** will set tonight—and it will get dark!

“Darkness” in the Bible is often used to **symbolize sin**—and that’s how it is being used here.

So in what sense have we already been delivered from the “**power**” of sin? We **know from experience** that we still have the pull of sin **inside** of us—and Satan **pulling on us** from the outside!

The English word “power” comes primarily from **two Greek words**: “doo'-nam-is” and “ex-oo-see'-ah.” “**Doo'nam-is**” means “force, might, strength;” “**ex-oo-see'-ah**” means “authority, jurisdiction, right to rule.”

Not surprisingly, the word used here is “ex-oo-see'-ah.” God has not yet delivered us from the **force or strength** of sin—but He has delivered us from the **jurisdiction** of Satan’s kingdom!

In **John 8:44**, Jesus said “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.” But once we are rescued from Satan’s kingdom, he is **no longer our father**—and we are no longer **under his authority!** And since we have been **delivered** from Satan’s kingdom, we **shouldn’t live** like those who are still in it!

So we become qualified for salvation by being delivered from Satan’s kingdom.

Second, God qualifies us for heaven... B. By translating us into the kingdom of His dear Son

It should not be surprising to learn that “translate” in this verse does not refer to **rewriting words** from one language into another! We know just from the context that it means **to transfer**; to **remove from** one place and **put into** another place.

Once again—and I’m probably starting to “sound like a broken record”—it is in **the past tense**. God has already—in **the past**—**transferred us** to the kingdom of His dear Son. **When** did He do that? When we received Christ for ourselves! And once again, this reinforces the truth that **we can know now** we are heaven-bound. We have a “know-so” salvation—not a “hope-so” or “we’ll find out” kind of salvation!

Two more quick thoughts before we move on.

1) If you are a child of God, **you are in a new kingdom**—and you have a **new King!** Do you **submit to Jesus** as your King? Do you strive to **obey and please** the One who is **King of kings**—and **Lord of lords**?

2) Second, notice how Paul **refers to** Jesus: “His [God’s] **dear Son**.” “Dear” comes from the Greek word “ah-GAH-pay”—which many of you know means “love.” The kingdom belongs to the One who is **loved by** God.

Remember what God said about Jesus on the mount of transfiguration? Mt 17:5b “This is my **beloved Son**, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.”

What about you? Do you **love** the One who **died for you**—and **gave Himself** for you? Peter says of Jesus in **I Peter 2:7** “Unto you therefore which believe He is **precious**.” Is Jesus precious **to you**?

How did God qualify us for the inheritance of heaven? He **delivered** us from the jurisdiction of Satan’s kingdom—and **transferred** us into the kingdom of His Son.

God also qualified us... C. By redeeming us through the blood of Christ

We see that in vs 14 “In whom we have **redemption** through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”

What is redemption? In its simplest form, it means “a release effected by payment of ransom.” The **release** is from the **penalty** of our sins; the **payment** made was the blood of Jesus.

But...redemption doesn’t **always mean that!** Look at **Romans 8:23** “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting** for the adoption, to wit, **the redemption** of our body.” So **redemption** in Romans 8:23 is something we are **waiting** for—and it is **not** freedom from the **penalty** of our sins! It is freedom from this **sin-cursed body**—and getting a body **like Christ’s glorious body** we are told in Philippians 3:21!

Look again at Colossians 1:14. What does **redemption** mean here? Paul tells us—in the last half of the verse! Look at the word “**even**.” What is **different** about it? It is **italicized**—meaning it **was added** and was **not in the original** Greek. So—if you read the verse without “even” in there—it says, “In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Redemption, then, equals “forgiveness of sins.”

A couple more things I want to point out in this verse, but I want to make sure we are tracking first.

--Middle of vs 12 “hath made us meet” (qualified) is **what** tense? **Past** tense!

--First part of vs 13 “Who hath delivered us” is **what** tense? **Past** tense!

--Middle of vs 13 “...and hath translated us” is **what** tense? **Past** tense!

--Now vs 14. This might get a little technical, but please bear with me! I promise you will be glad you did!

--Does the verse say “**has** redeemed”—**past** tense—like the previous verses? No; it doesn’t!

In fact, redemption **isn’t the verb**—it’s a **noun!** What is the **verb**? The verb is “**have**”—**present** tense! The “broken record” is broken—and you should be **extremely grateful** for that. Why? Because we need **continuous...daily...on-going** forgiveness of sins—not just a **one-time** forgiveness of sins **in the past!**

--Maybe this will help. Which would you rather have be true:

1) I **had** forgiveness of sins—**past** tense; or

2) I **currently have** right now—and **will continue to have**—forgiveness of sins!

No-brainer, isn’t it? I want **current and continual** forgiveness of sins become I am **currently a sinner** that continually sins! And that is what we have!

I John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son **cleanseth** (on-going; continuously) us from all sin.”

Aren't you glad **God doesn't** say to you, **I have forgiven** you in the past—but I'm **not going to forgive** you anymore! I sure am!

Why did Paul give thanks to the Father? Because God had made him—and all believers—qualified for entrance into heaven!

How did God make us qualified?

- By delivering us (past tense) from the power—the jurisdiction—of Satan's kingdom
- And transferring us (past tense) into the kingdom of His Son
- And continually forgiving us (present tense) based on Jesus shedding His blood for us.

What about **you**? Has God qualified **you**? I think it is important to realize that there is no “**third party**” in these verses.

--That means God has made **you qualified**—or you are **still disqualified**.

--It means you have been **delivered from** the jurisdiction of Satan's kingdom—and transferred into God's kingdom—or you are **still in Satan's kingdom**.

--And it means you are **currently having forgiveness** from God for your sins—or you are not forgiven and will die unforgiven.

There is no middle-ground; there is no in-between. You either have the Son—or you don't! It is that simple!

So what would God have us do in light of what we've heard this morning?

1. First—has **God** made you meet/fit/qualified for heaven? Everyone of us here in this auditorium—and listening on-line—are doing one of two things:

- 1) Trying to qualify ourselves for heaven
- 2) Trusting in God's gift to us—Jesus Christ—to qualify us for heaven.

Which is it with you?

2. Second, if you are indeed a child of God, are you **thankful** that you know that you have been made qualified—and have been delivered from Satan's kingdom and transferred into Jesus' kingdom? And are you thankful for continuous daily cleansing from sin?

3. Third—again, if you are a child of God—are you surrendering yourself to your King?