

May 14, 2006 by Steve Brandon



## Thankful for Salvation

### Colossians 1:12-14

1. He qualified us (verse 12).
2. He rescued us (verse 13).
3. He transferred us (verse 13).
4. He redeemed us (verse 14).
5. He forgave us (verse 14).

A few months ago, I went on a missions trip to a foreign land. It was a great trip. Shortly before I left, my wife gave me one instruction. She said, "Steve, when you are considering the purchase of any gifts for me, I would really appreciate it if you would purchase some jewelry for me." Now, in all of our years of marriage, I have never purchased any jewelry for her. Perhaps it's a guy thing. Perhaps it's simply that I'm not too much into jewelry. In fact, come to think about it, the only jewelry that I have ever purchased was her engagement ring (and this, I did with much help from my sister). And so, it was a bit of a learning experience for me, as I stepped into a jewelry store and began to search for something that would be especially appropriate for my wonderful wife. As I stepped into the store, I was surrounded by many different stones and ornaments and rocks. As I spoke with the owner of the store, he showed me several different things that he had. I told him that I would like something that was natively produced. As he showed me various different things that I could purchase, I focused my attention upon a certain type of stone, called aquamarine. One thing that I especially liked about this particular stone was the way in which it sparkled as you looked at it from various angles. The stone itself was clear. As you handled it and moved it about, light would reflect through it and come upon your eyes with a dazzling brilliance. But, should you look at it from the right angle, a beautiful aqua tint could be seen in this stone. I suppose this is why the stone received its name, aquamarine. Personally, I found it to be very pretty, and most appropriate for my wife to wear. And so, I purchased it and brought it home for my wife.

As I reflected upon our text this morning (Colossians 1:12-14), I thought of how it is like the piece of jewelry that I purchased for my wife. As you look at it from various different angles, different colors sparkle throughout the stone. It's the same stone, but it looks a bit different whenever you look at it from different angles. So also I our text this morning. Only, our text this morning isn't look at the colors that shine through a precious stone. Rather, our text this morning is looking at our salvation that is explained in various ways. In fact, in verses 12-14, we will see five descriptions of our salvation in Christ.

#### Colossians 1:12-14

[Joyously] giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. 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.

Perhaps you see these five facets of our salvation. (1) He qualified us; (2) He rescued us; (3) He transferred us; (4) He redeemed us; and (5) He forgave us. These will be my five points this morning. We will look at how God qualified us (verse 12), rescued us (verse 13), transferred us (verse 13), redeemed us (verse 14), and forgave us (verse 14). With each of these points, we will gaze a bit into this jewel of salvation, seeing it from different angles, and allow its glory to seep deep into our hearts. But, before we get to them, I want to set the context of this passage first, because it is there that we get the main application of my entire message.

Paul wrote this letter to the Colossians because of a report that he heard from Epaphras, who had initially shared the gospel to those in Colossae (verse 7). There were people in that city who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ (verse 3). Paul was thrilled with hearing such news and couldn't help, but to write this letter to them. In verses 3-8, Paul gave thanks to God for them and told them of how often he had prayed for them. In verses 9-14, we have the substance of his prayers for them. In verse 9, he wrote, "For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding." Paul's prayer for the Colossian believers is for a fullness of understanding. He pleaded with God that they would be filled with knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. But, it didn't merely stop with the mind. Paul prayed to God that the believers in Colossae would be transformed because of their knowledge. He wanted their knowledge to be applied knowledge. He pointed out four areas of application in which a pleasing walk before the Lord would manifest itself:

1. Bearing fruit, (which is simply producing something with their life.)
2. Increasing in the knowledge of God, (which is having a passion to know God more and more and more.)
3. Being strengthened by God (which is simply experiencing the power of God in their daily living).
4. Giving thanks to the Father (which is an expression of gratefulness for all that God has done for them).

We looked at each of these last week, but didn't elaborate much upon the fourth application: giving thanks. Verses 12-14 provide for us some fodder for giving thanks to the Father. All of what Paul says in these verses focus our attention upon our salvation in Christ. And so, this morning, my aim is clear. I want to present before you these five different aspects of our salvation, and I want for it to end in your giving

thanks to the Father. But even more than merely giving thanks, I want for you all to be joyously giving thanks to the Father for your salvation in Christ (as verse 11 says).

You know the difference between giving thanks and joyously giving thanks. I trust that you all have seen it. A child receives a Christmas gift on Christmas day and feels somewhat obligated to give thanks to the one giving the gift. Depending upon the gift, the thanks may be joyous thanksgiving. Or, the thanks might be given out of obligation. When the little boy receives the Thomas the Train Set, or the Lego set, or the Madden 2006 football game, or the ten-speed bicycle, there is a clearly joyous expression on his face. Often, the boy will say, "Thanks! Thanks! Thanks!" as he jumps up and down and takes the present off to go play with it. But, when the little boy receives a new pair of socks from grandma from his aunt Margaret, the response is not so convincing. With a compulsion, he will say, "Thanks, auntie."

I'm here to tell you this morning that as Paul describes the different facets of our salvation, God didn't give us socks! He gave us a Thomas the Train Set. He gave us a Lego set. He gave us a ten-speed bicycle. He gave us something that ought to thrill our souls! If you heart doesn't respond to my message this morning with a natural response of "joyous thanks to God," then one of several options are true. First, I may have failed in my preaching this morning I know of my own weaknesses in this area. As I continue on week by week preaching, I am entering this pulpit with more and more discouragement each week in my lack of ability to communicate clearly with you the truth of the word. It very well may be that you fail to respond this morning with joyous thanks because of my preaching. Second, it may be that your heart is dull to the things of God at this time. Perhaps there is some sin in your life that is causing the things of God to be less and less clear to you. If this is the case, it may not matter what I say, your heart isn't in a position to receive my message this morning.

A third reason why you may not be thankful after my message this morning is because you may not be a Christian. If you have never repented of your sin and trusted the Savior, it's no wonder that you don't give joyous thanks, because you haven't received these things. You may well be like the brother or sister who is merely looking on to a little boy receiving the toy that thrills his heart. You may well look around and see many people rejoicing in what they have received from the Lord. But, you don't have it. My prayer for you is that you might hear of these wonderful facets of our salvation and long to have them. Because, they can be yours, if you would simply repent of your sin and embrace the Savior today.

I long that Rock Valley Bible Church would be a thankful church, filled with thankful people. If there is anything that we should be thankful for, it should be for our salvation. And so, this morning as I preach, my aim is that we would see the wonders of our salvation and respond with joyous thanks to God. With that as a long introduction, let's get into our text. My first point is that ...

## 1. He qualified us (verse 12).

This comes in verse 12, "[joyously] giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light."

Before you enter college, you need to qualify by obtaining high enough grades, or high enough score on your ACT or SAT exams. Before entering medical school, you need to qualify by scoring well enough on your MCAT. Before receiving your diploma, you need to qualify by passing all of your classes. Before obtaining a job, you need to meet the qualifications of the employer. Before running in the state track meet, you need to qualify by running fast enough to meet the qualifying times. Before entering the stadium, you need to qualify to enter, by possessing a ticket. Obtaining the heavenly inheritance is no different. You need to have the proper qualifications to enter.

What are the qualifications? It's simple: you need to be like God. You need to be holy and pure like He is. You need to be sinless, like the holy angels. You need to walk your days upon the earth doing good (Acts 10:38). Jesus said it this way, "You are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

But, there's a problem, we have all been disqualified. It's not merely that we were unqualified, as if we never even had the opportunity to be qualified. Rather, it's that we have been disqualified. We were like the runner, who had a false start and was disqualified. We are like the runner who drifted over into the wrong lane and were disqualified. We were like the student who was caught cheating on our exam. We were like the potential employee who failed a drug test. Our sin has prevented us from meeting the qualification requirements on our own. Everyone of us have been born into sin. Everyone of us have sinned many times. None of us have the ability on our own to qualify to receive the heavenly inheritance. [\[1\]](#)

But, what does our text say? It says that "the Father ... has qualified us." Here is the glorious news of the gospel! Though we cannot qualify on our own, God has qualified us. In other words, God has done something that has given us permission to share in the inheritance. The idea here with this word is that God has made us eligible to enter. He scored high enough on the SAT. He ran fast enough to qualify for the state meet. He has the ticket to enter the stadium! And somehow, he transferred His qualification to us. How did He do this? He did it through His Son, Jesus Christ. When Jesus died upon the cross, He was making us sufficient to share with Him in the inheritance that the Father would give Him. It is completely undeserved on our part. It is completely unearned on our part. It is all of His doing. We simply need to believe in the gospel to receive it. We simply need to believe that Christ has done it all for us.

## 2. He rescued us (verse 13).

This comes in verse 13. Paul simply writes, "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness." Your translation may say that "He delivered us." The idea is the same. You were stranded in a mine, with the oxygen levels decreasing. You are in a burning building, trapped with a wall of flames all around you, with no way out of the blaze. You are behind enemy lines, having been taken captive, with no hope of escape. You had no chance of saving yourself. Your only hope was that others would come and help you. Your rescue depends upon the heroic actions of others, who are seeking to rescue you.

Please note that your troubles haven't come about merely because you happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Your troubles came about because of your own sin. Your perilous situation came about because of your own choices. You chose to submit yourself to the dark side. You loved your sin. You rejected your God. You were behind enemy lines. You were under the authority of the "world forces of

darkness" (Eph. 6:12). You were in real danger of perishing along with Satan and His angels into that fiery furnace (Matt. 25:41).

But, the good news is this: God is a rescuing God. He goes into fallen mines. He goes into burning building. He goes into enemy lines. He is the hero that saves souls out of the fire. Psalm 107 tells the story far better than I could ever tell it. The first three verses set the stage for the entire Psalm.

#### Psalm 107:1-3

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the adversary and gathered from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

The wording of Psalm 107 (and the application) are exactly the same as we have here in Colossians, chapter 1. It begins with a call to give thanks to the LORD, just as Colossians 1. It's not all that nations who are being summoned in this Psalm. It's the redeemed, just as in Colossians 1. It's those whom the Lord has saved from the hand of the adversary who ought to give thanks to Him! Colossians 1:13 says that we were rescued. We were in danger! But, God was gracious. Psalm 107 continues by giving the testimony of several different types of people who were in danger, but rescued by the mighty hand of God. We begin with the testimony of those who wandered in the wilderness.

#### Psalm 107:4-9

They wandered in the wilderness in a desert region; They did not find a way to an inhabited city. They were hungry and thirsty; Their soul fainted within them. Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble; He delivered them out of their distresses. He led them also by a straight way, to go to an inhabited city. Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness and for His wonders to the sons of men! For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good.

Notice the circumstances surrounding this episode. These people were wandering and in danger. They were hungry and thirsty. Then, out of desperation, they cried out to the LORD, who rescued them from their distress. The Psalmist then summons them to express their thankfulness to the LORD for His great lovingkindness toward them. Note also that this story may go beyond the physical difficulties being stranded in the desert, as the Psalms speaks about the LORD satisfying the souls of these people. In fact, all of the testimonies in Psalm 107 have metaphorical allusions. Consider the next testimony of those who were imprisoned.

#### Psalm 107:10-16

There were those who dwelt in darkness and in the shadow of death, prisoners in misery and chains, because they had rebelled against the words of God and spurned the counsel of the Most High. Therefore He humbled their heart with labor; They stumbled and there was none to help. Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble; He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death and broke their bands apart. Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness and for His wonders to the sons of men! For He has shattered gates of bronze and cut bars of iron asunder.

The pattern of this episode is similar to the previous one. We hear of those who were in great distress. In this case, it was clearly because of their own sin that their distresses came. In their difficulty, they cried to the LORD, who mercifully saved them from their troubles. Then, the Psalmist calls them to give thanks to the LORD for His great lovingkindness before them. This is exactly what Colossians 1 is calling do as well. Consider the third story of deliverance of those who were close to death.

#### Psalm 107:17-22

Fools, because of their rebellious way, and because of their iniquities, were afflicted. Their soul abhorred all kinds of food, and they drew near to the gates of death. 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. Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness and for His wonders to the sons of men! Let them also offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of His works with joyful singing.

Again, the story is the same. These people were in great distress. This time, it was through a disease that God brought upon them due to their sin. In their desperation, they cried to the LORD for help. He healed them and delivered them. Once again, these people were then called upon to give thanks to the LORD, who had been so gracious and kind to them. Notice also the striking parallel with our text in Colossians 1. In their giving of thanks, they were to do so with "joyful singing." In Colossians 1:12, Paul calls us to the "joyous" giving of thanks. Let's here of one last story, which comes in verses 23-32 of Psalm 107. It is the testimony of wayward sailors.

#### Psalm 107:23-32

Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business on great waters; They have seen the works of the LORD and His wonders in the deep. For He spoke and raised up a stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea. They rose up to the heavens, they went down to the depths; Their soul melted away in their misery. They reeled and staggered like a drunken man and were at their wits' end. Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble and He brought them out of their distresses. He caused the storm to be still, so that the waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad because they were quiet, so He guided them to their desired haven. Let them give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness and for His wonders to the sons of men! Let them extol Him also in the congregation of the people and praise Him at the seat of the elders.

By now, the pattern must be clear to you. Here we have those in physical danger in the swells of the ocean. They had reached the end of themselves. They had nowhere to turn. So, they turned to God, who was gracious to save them from the storm. In their gladness of being rescued, they were called upon to give thanks to the LORD for His lovingkindness toward them.

This is good news that we have a rescuing God! We have great reasons to give thanks unto Him! Not only has (1) He qualified us; not only has (2) He rescued us; but also, ...

## 3. He transferred us (verse 13).

Look once again at verse 13. We read that "He ... transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son."

Picture once again the miners trapped in the coal mine. Imagine the rescuers lifting them out of their darkness, setting them free. And now, imagine the president calling these miners to the White House. Not to congratulate them. Not to rejoice with them. But rather, to give them a new residence. He tells them, "I know that once you worked in darkness and were trapped and in need of rescue. Not only have I sent my men to rescue you, but I am giving you this house in which to live. You don't ever need to go back to your coal mining community, with its modest houses. From now on, you can stay here. From now on, you will live in my house with me."

That's what God has done with us. When God rescued us from the darkness of our sin (1 John 1:6), He didn't just let us go our merry way, that we might find ourselves in darkness once again. No, the text says that God "transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son." In Ephesians 5:8, Paul said, You were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord."

Those of us who believe and trust in Jesus have a new King. We have a new loyalty. We live in a new setting. We are in the kingdom of Christ. Jesus has moved us into His kingdom. He has transplanted us. He sent the moving vans. He loaded them up. He paid for the closing costs on our old house. He has purchased for us a new house. He is preparing a better one for us (John 14:2). This is why Paul can write to the Philippians, "our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). It is there that our loyalty lies. It is there that we live. Believers in Christ have immigrated into a new kingdom. We have transferred our citizenship. We are no longer under the authority of Satan. We are now residents of the loved Son of God.

I love the way that Peter describes this transfer. He said, "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Peter. 1:9-10). It is the sheer mercy of God that we have transferred kingdoms. Before we were transferred into this kingdom, we had absolutely no rights and privileges at all.

Before being transferred to His kingdom, we were "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" (Eph. 2:12). We had no claim whatsoever to the kingdom of Christ. We were apart from the community of Israel that God had promised to bless. God hadn't promised anything to us at all. As a result, we were without hope and without God. But God brought us from darkness to be His chosen nation for His own possession. In fact, He has now brought us in to be the recipients of the promises that had originally been given to Israel. We have now become God's people! This is such great news that Peter says that you should proclaim His excellencies (1 Pet. 1:9). One way to do this is through the giving of joyful thanks to God, as Colossians 1:12 instructs us to do.

We should thank God that ...

## 4. He redeemed us (verse 14).

Verse 14 begins with these words: "In whom we have redemption." We have redemption in the Son of God. The idea here is that God paid a price to get us. We didn't simply stroll into the kingdom and begin to enjoy all of its benefits. No, we had to be purchased with a price. The price was high! You don't get transferred from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of Christ without a high cost. Those who have adopted children into their own families know that a high price needs to be paid to adopt. It is no different for God, who purchased us.

Every single one of our sins needed to have a payment. In the Old Testament, the cost was the sacrifice of a lamb or of a goat, which all anticipated the one great sacrifice. At the cross of Calvary, Jesus Christ was the one great sacrifice, Who paid the redemption price with His own blood. Peter says it this way, "You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ" (1 Peter. 1:18-19).

We can read such a statement and easily miss the magnitude of what took place on the cross of Christ. When Jesus died upon the cross, he was paying for the sin of everyone who would ever believe upon Him. Do you have any idea of how many sins this was? I want for each of you to think about your own life. How many sins have you ever committed? A few? Many? A whole bunch?

I want for you now to review the law of God in your mind. God tells us to have no other Gods beside Him. God tells us not to take His name in vain. God tells us to honor our father and mother. God tells us not to steal or bear false witness against your neighbor. God tell us not to covet anything. Have you ever transgressed any of these things? How often? How many times?

And now, I want for you to consider what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount. He said that sin isn't merely something that you do with your body. Since God knows the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:12), a sin in the heart is just like a sin in the flesh. Jesus said that "everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mat. 5:27). Have you ever transgressed any of these things? How often? How many times?

And now, I want for you to think of the day of judgment. In the parable of the sheep and the goats, people were condemned for their sins of omission! They didn't feed the hungry (Matt. 26:42). They didn't give drink to the thirsty (Matt. 26:42). They didn't invite the stranger in (Matt. 26:43). They didn't clothe the naked (Matt. 26:43). They didn't visit the sick (Matt. 26:43). They didn't visit those who were in prison (Matt. 26:43). Are there things that you should have done, but simply didn't do? How often? How many times?

Finally, I want for you to consider the greatest commandment. Jesus said that the greatest commandment is that "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength (Mark 12:30). He said that the second is like it, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). Anytime you fail to love the Lord, your God supremely above all things, you have sinned. To love God, with 90% of your strength on any occasion is a sin. Anytime that you fail to love your neighbor as yourself, you have sinned. Have you ever transgressed the Lord in these ways? How often? How many times?

And now, let's try to count your sins. Let's just suppose that you sin only twice an hour that you are awake. (My suspicions are that such a judgment is quite conservative). Suppose you are awake for 15 hours each day. (Again, this is quite generous. It allows you to sleep each day for 9 hours). That's 30 sins every day. You multiply that by seven days in a week, and you come up with 210 sins every week. Assuming

only 4 weeks in a month, that puts you at 840 sins each month. With twelve months each year, you are up to 10,080 sins each year. At this rate, you sin more than one hundred thousand sins each decade of your life. There are people among us who have lived for more than 50 years. This puts the total number of your sins somewhere in the neighborhood of half a million (by the most conservative of estimates). [2]

Why did I do that? Am I trying to count your sins? No, I'm not. In fact, the actual counting of your sins is very difficult. Suppose you were walking to a place where you were planning on sinning. As you pondered your sin in your mind, how many actual sins would you commit. Would you sin with each step that you took to get to this place? Furthermore, in your sin, would it be only one sin? Or, would there be other sins committed as well? These types of questions are quite impossible to know. I'm not trying to quantify your sins. I'm simply attempting to show you the sheer magnitude of your sins before God. The sum of your sins may well be a bit larger than you think!

Here's the point: Every one of your sins needed to be paid for upon the cross at Calvary. Now hear this: When Jesus died, He didn't merely die for the sins of one person. He died for the sins of a multitude that is so large that "no one could count them" (Rev. 7:9). And if you can't count the number of people that Christ redeemed, just try counting the number of sins that He purchased with His blood! The redemption price is overwhelming. I want for you to see the magnitude of the redemption. I trust that when you see the size of the redemption, it will stir you to the giving of thanks!

When you receive a small gift, you are a little thankful. But, when you receive a very large give, you are very, very thankful! At the beginning of my message, I told you of a piece of jewelry that I purchased for my wife. Certainly, she was thankful for the jewelry that I purchased for her. However, I purchased the stone, setting and chain for only \$40. Now, imagine that the stone was a diamond, rather than the aquamarine stone that I purchased. Such a stone would cost several thousand dollars. Her thankfulness for such a gift would have increased greatly (had she not wondered about how we will actually pay for such a diamond).

Jesus taught this same concept when he visited the home of a Pharisee. When he arrived, there was a woman in the city who was a notorious sinner. She came with some perfume and anointed his feet with the perfume. She was wetting His feet with her tears and wiping them with the hair of her head. She was kissing His feet continually. Such a thing caused the Pharisee to think less of Jesus, reasoning that if he were really a prophet, he would have known that such a woman was a sinner. Then Jesus told a parable. He said that there were two debtors. Each of them owned an amount that they were unable to pay back. One of them owed ten times the amount that the other one did. Graciously, their debts were forgiven. Then Jesus asked the Pharisee, "which of them will love him more?" (Luke 7:42). Of course the response is that the one who owed the bigger debt. Jesus said that such a response explains the actions of this woman. "Her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little" (Luke 7:47). So also with our redemption.

When you come to understand the size of the gift that Jesus gave to redeem us all, you cannot help, but to give great thanks and praise to God. Second Corinthians 9:15 says it about as well as any passage ever can: "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"

We should thank God that ...

## 5. He forgave us (verse 14).

We see this in the very last phrase of verse 14, "the forgiveness of sins." This really defines what the redemption is. When Jesus Christ redeemed us, He forgave our sins. The redemption has a focus upon the price that was paid. The forgiveness is the result. See, when Jesus paid the price for our sins, the sins were wiped away. The idea of forgiveness is the idea of "sending away."

Many of our children attend AWANA at Elim Baptist Church. To kick off the year, they had a balloon launch on the first day of the club. Everyone was outside with their helium balloons. When the commander told everyone to let them go, they were released into the air. A hundred (or so) balloons drifted up and flew away. This is the picture that the New Testament gives of sins being forgiven. They simply float out of sight.

God said, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12). You look as far as you can to the east. You look as far as you can to the west. Are sins are that far away from each other. When your sins are far removed from you, they no longer come and condemn you. Do you know what sort of blessing that is? David said, "How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven" (Psalm 32:1). Do you know what forgiveness is about? The burden has been lifted. You are no longer under condemnation.

I love the picture that John Bunyan used in picturing the sin of Christian. He walked about in tattered clothes with a big burden on his back. It was always weighing him down. When he fell into the Slough of Despond, the burden of sin made it especially difficult for him to get out of his despair. But, when he looked to the cross of Christ, his burden fell from his back and rolled into the tomb, never to be seen again.

Our response to such things ought to generate within us a stirring of joyful thanksgiving for the great grace that the Lord has shown in our lives.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on May 14, 2006 by Steve Brandon.  
For more information see [www.rvbc.cc](http://www.rvbc.cc).

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[1] I give credit for this nuance of difference between being disqualified and unqualified from Sam Storms, who included this thought in a daily devotional I read on [www.enjoyinggodministries.com](http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com).

[2] I took this illustration of the number of sins directly from J. C. Ryle's excellent book, *Old Paths*, pp. 153-154.

