



Know Your Salvation

Colossians 2:11-15

1. You were circumcised (verse 11).
2. You were raised from the dead (verse 12).
3. You were made alive (verse 13).
4. Jesus removed all accusers (verse 14).
5. Jesus conquered all demonic rulers (verse 15).

As we begin our exposition this morning in verse 11, I want you to notice that it begins with the word, "and," which means that it is a continuation of the thought previously written down. For that reason, I regretted stopping last week's exposition at verse 10, as Paul's thought continues in verse 11. So, to catch the context, let's have a little review.

My message last week covered verses 8-10. I entitled my message, "Don't Be Taken Captive," as that is the main command in verse 8. Temptations are all around us to drift from the centrality of Jesus Christ in all of our lives. Paul instructed those in Colossae not to be captivated by any other philosophy or system of thought that would take them away from the truth of Christ. In verses 9-10, we looked at several reasons why we ought not to be captivated by any other theory of salvation.

1. Because Jesus has all Deity (verse 9).
2. Because Jesus has all Sufficiency (verse 10a).
3. Because Jesus has all Authority (verse 10b).

Verses 11-15 give a fourth reason why it is that we ought not to be captivated by any other philosophy, rather than the truth as it is found in Christ. The simple reason is this:

4. Jesus has all Transforming Power (verses 11-15).

Consider the text.

Colossians 2:11-15

And in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

The argument of these verses are simple. Jesus has so transformed you, that you ought not to be captivated by any other philosophy. Nothing else can change you as much as Jesus has. Nothing else can come close to giving you the benefits that Jesus gives. Last week, I illustrated each of these reasons with a little story.

1. **Because Jesus has all Deity (verse 9).** I talked about having a very expensive Rolex watch. You aren't interested in a common Timex watch that a jeweler wants to sell you. Jesus is such a high quality Savior, that you cannot do any better than Him.
2. **Because Jesus has all Sufficiency (verse 10a).** Perhaps you remember the illustration of a cup filled to the brim with water. A waiter at a restaurant cannot fill it up any more than it has been filled. Jesus has likewise so filled you up that you are complete in Him.
3. **Because Jesus has all Authority (verse 10b).** I gave the illustration of you counseling Condoleezza Rice on what she should do regarding the present crisis in the Middle East. But, she doesn't take orders from you. So also, Jesus doesn't take His orders from anyone! He is the highest authority in the universe.
4. **Because Jesus has all Transforming Power (verses 11-15).** I want to illustrate this fourth reason as well. Suppose that you have just spent the last six months remodeling your kitchen. It was a huge project. You took out a wall to increase the space in the kitchen. You enlarged your sink area. You increased your countertops. You increased your cupboard space. You got a new refrigerator, stove, and microwave oven. It is all freshly painted to the color of your choice. The kitchen now looks and functions very nicely for you. And now, suppose that you invite a friend over to your house. Upon stepping into the kitchen, your friend looks around a bit and says, "You know, I think that you should remodel your kitchen. Paint it a different color. Get a different faucet. Move your refrigerator. Then, your kitchen would be really nice." What would you say to your friend? "Are you crazy?" You just remodeled your kitchen completely to your satisfaction. There is nothing more that you feel should be done to your kitchen. It is just the way that you want it. You just finished remodeling it! You don't have

any desire of wanting to remodel at this time. There is no need for any other change to be made.

This is exactly the argument that Paul gives. Through faith in Christ, your life has been entirely transformed! Every part of your life has been gutted. Every part of your life has been purified. You have been completely cleansed from your sins in Christ. Why would you ever be captivated by any other philosophy or empty deception (verse 8)? That's where the flow verses 11-15 fit into Paul's logic. Since "Jesus has all Transforming Power," you have no need to look to any other source to change your life. There is no other philosophy or tradition of men that will ever make you and your life any better than it has been made with Christ. By faith in Jesus Christ, your life has been entirely transformed.

My message this morning is essentially magnifying this fourth reason of why you ought not to be persuaded away to any other philosophy. I have entitled my message this morning: "Know Your Salvation." Because, when you know your salvation, you will not be tempted to be carried away by the empty deceptions of men. You will see what you have in Christ and will never give it up.

At this point, I must mention that my message this morning is only applicable to you if indeed you have been saved from your sin. If you have never repented of your sin and trusted in Jesus Christ, then this message is really not for you. If you are not in Christ Jesus and enjoying the benefits of His grace, almost everything of what I say this morning will be of no application to you. Indeed, you have a kitchen that needs remodeling. There is only one who can remodel it and make it perfect: the Lord Jesus Christ. And here is the good news: He is in the remodeling business!

Throughout history, Jesus Christ has been transforming people. By His power, the woman at the well was converted (John 4). She had been married to five different men. All five marriages didn't work out. When Jesus met her, she was living in sin with another man. But Jesus transformed her by His grace. Matthew, the tax collector was transformed by Jesus. He was "sitting in the tax collector's booth," extorting money from his kinsmen, when Jesus said to him, "Follow Me" (Matt. 9:9). He went on to be one of the twelve. He eventually wrote the gospel account that bears his name. Jesus transformed a criminal, who was dying upon the cross for his crimes. He simply asked Jesus to remember him when he entered into His kingdom (Luke 23:42). Jesus brought this thief into Paradise with him that very day (Luke 23:43). The Bible tells us of the wonderful conversion of Nebuchadnezzar, the proud king of Babylon (Dan. 4), who thought he had it all! The Bible tells us of the surprising conversion of Manasseh, the most wicked of all the kings of Judah (2 Chron. 33). Paul, who wrote this letter to the Colossians was "a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor" against the Lord and against His church (1 Tim. 1:13). He considered himself to be "the foremost of sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15). And yet, he was transformed by Jesus Christ.

Since then, stories abound of the power of God to transform lives. Augustine and John Newton are great examples of men in church history who have been utterly transformed from living wicked lives of selfishness to be some of the greatest saints the world has ever known. A modern day example is Chuck Colson. He was imprisoned for his activities during president Nixon's reign. Now, his ministry to prisoners is doing tremendous good for the kingdom. Growing up, I remember listening to a radio program called, "Unshackled." It's produced by the Pacific Garden Mission, which is a rescue mission, helping homeless people in Chicago. The program is a dramatized story of people who are wondrously converted from a life of drugs and alcohol and homelessness and other sinful living to a life that honors the Lord Jesus Christ. I still love listening to this show. I love hearing of the wonder working God that we serve and how He transforms lives, even today. There's something about hearing of the working of God in a life through the gospel that is wonderfully refreshing to our souls.

I trust that during my message this morning, you might rejoice in the greatness of the salvation you have in Christ. In fact, it's my prayer that you would come to "Know Your Salvation" in even a greater way as a result of my message this morning. My aim is to deepen your understanding of the salvation that you have in Jesus Christ. After my message this morning, we will be celebrating the Lord's Supper. And there's no better time to do so than after this message. It's going to focus upon what God has done for our souls in utterly changing them. But, if you no nothing about the transforming power of God in your life, I urge you to believe on Jesus. The blessings we receive by faith in him are incredible.

For my outline this morning, I'm simply going to pick out the major verbs in the passage. In a very real sense, all of these verbs are all talking about the same thing, but from a little different angle. They are talking about the transforming power of Christ in the life of a believer. The first comes in verse 11, ...

1. You were circumcised (verse 11).

Verse 11 reads, "and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." The LORD originally gave the sign of circumcision to Abraham. In Genesis 17, Moses records for us what God told Abraham, ...

Genesis 17:10-14

This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a servant who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants. A servant who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

Many theories have been suggested to explain the reason why God initiated this particular sign to His people. Some have suggested that it was a demonstration of yielding the power of procreation to God. Others have suggested that this was for the purpose of hygiene. Others have suggested that this was to become a sort of "tribal mark" that would physically identify the Jewish people as different than other nations. The suggestion of a "rite of passage" has been made. Circumcision is what would mark the commitment of people into the covenant of Abraham. Some have viewed this as a form of vicarious human sacrifice, as a part of every male is cut off. Others have suggested that blood

was needed for any covenant. "The cutting of one's genital organ symbolized one's utter dependence upon and commitment to the will of Yahweh." ^[1] Determining exactly why God instituted this particular sign is ultimately impossible. However, it did mark the people of God as different. And it was a sign of commitment. And blood was shed. And until this day, the Jewish people have faithfully kept this sign as a constant practice throughout all their generations.

Here is the astonishing thing: Paul said to the (mostly) Gentile congregation in Colossae, "and in Him you were also circumcised." Obviously, this verse isn't talking about physical, literal circumcision, because it describes this circumcision at that which is "made without hands." Paul is talking here about the inward circumcision of the heart that the Old Testament writers often talked about. Moses talked about it. Jeremiah talked about it. Ezekiel talked about it.

Israel was pretty good about keeping the external form of the covenant. In fact, circumcision was such a regular practice for the Jews and so ingrained into their minds as the identifying mark of the people of God, that many of the early Jewish Christians believed that circumcision was necessary for salvation. It wasn't until the Jerusalem council (as recorded in Acts 15), that the apostles ultimately affirmed that "we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus" not through circumcision (Acts 15:11). Sadly, however, the people of Israel often failed to keep the covenant with their hearts. Moses exhorted the people of Israel to (in Deuteronomy 10:16), "Circumcise your heart." Jeremiah also exhorted, "Circumcise yourselves to the LORD and remove the foreskins of your heart" (Jer. 4:4). In other words, "Everything that circumcision might symbolize to you (a sign of commitment, a demonstration of loyalty to Jehovah, a symbol of cleanliness, a distinctiveness from those who don't follow God, and/or something solemn, sealed with blood), whatever it conjures up in your mind, so do in your heart."

As a result of their straying hearts, there were times that the Biblical writers would identify those who were "circumcised" and being "uncircumcised." Listen to Jeremiah's warning, "Behold, the days are coming that I will punish all who are circumcised and yet uncircumcised -- Egypt and Judah, and Edom and the sons of Ammon, and Moab and all those inhabiting the desert who clip the hair on their temples; for all the nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised of heart" (Jer. 9:25-26). From such passages, Paul could later say that "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which outwardly in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter" (Rom. 2:28-29).

When we return to Colossians, we discover that every believer in Jesus Christ, (male or female), is circumcised "with a circumcision made without hands" (Col. 2:11). It's not the work of a surgeon with a scalpel. It's not the work of a man. It's not the result of an animal that was sacrificed. It's not the work of a religious ritual. Nor is it the work of a special form of knowledge or a special act of righteousness. It's not the experience of a vision. **Circumcision is the work of God, who circumcises our hearts to serve Him.** It's the transformation of the inner man. It's a softening of our hearts. It's the changing of our desires from serving our flesh to serving our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30).

Notice that this circumcision here is complete. It's not just a little piece of skin. It involves our whole body. It involves the whole life. Paul writes that the circumcision of Christ includes "the removal of the body of the flesh." It's a picture of complete dedication to the LORD. It's what Moses promised, "the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live" (Deut. 30:6). It's a picture of entire transformation. It's a bit like other Biblical descriptions of salvation: being "born again" (John 3:3; 1 Peter 1:3); becoming a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17); or being "regenerated" (Titus 3:5).

This is what God does to us when we believe in the Savior: our hearts are circumcised. God gives us a soft heart that desires to follow after Him. God totally transforms the one who believes in Jesus. In Christ, your circumcision is complete! There is no greater transformation that you can experience. That's our salvation.

2. You were raised from the dead (verse 12).

Look down at verse 12, "having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." This verse is describing the nature of the circumcision made without hands. Again, it's pictured as a complete transformation. It's like a dead man coming alive.

Paul uses the imagery of baptism. The meaning of Greek word for "baptism" simply means "immerse." In extra-Biblical literature, it was used to describe such things as ships that have sunk to the bottom of the sea, garments that have been sunk in ink that would dye (or color) them, or a person who drowned. Figuratively, it is used to describe an army that has come and overwhelmed a city, a person who is overwhelmed with life (i.e. with faults or sicknesses), or a person who is washing. ^[2] These help give you an idea of what "baptism" means.

In this context, it is used to describe the act of Christian Baptism, where one who professes Christ is immersed completely in water and brought up again. That picture is full of symbolism. It pictures dying with Christ, in going under the water. It pictures raising up with Christ, in coming up from the water. It pictures forgiveness in Christ, as the water washes clean. The picture is a bit similar to that of the circumcision mentioned in verse 11. Just as the circumcision of verse 11 was a complete circumcision, so also is the baptism here a complete baptism -- completely dying, completely being raised from the dead. Again, it's talking about a complete transformation that takes place in our salvation.

I don't believe at all that Paul is communicating here that Christian Baptism is what saves you. The entire context of Colossians is speaking against this. Christ alone is sufficient for our salvation. It's in Him that we are made complete (according to verse 10). Only a few verses later (in verse 16), Paul will write against the trusting in Jewish festivals and feast days. It wouldn't make any sense for Paul to say that one type of religious ceremony is useless, while another one is useful, namely, Christian Baptism. So, it's not ultimately Christian Baptism that saves you. It's your faith in Christ that saves you. That's even what Paul describes here in verse 12, "you were also raised up with Him *through faith* in the working of God." What raises you from the dead isn't being lifted out of the waters of baptism by a pastor in a church baptistry. What raised you from the dead is the power of God through faith. When you believe in Jesus Christ it is as if you were actually raised from the dead.

Now, this is not to minimize baptism. If you are a professing believer in Christ, and have known of the transforming effect of Christ upon your life, you should be baptized. If you want to be baptized, please come and talk to me. The same point is made in verse 13.

3. You were made alive (verse 13).

Paul writes, "When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions."

I love this description of our salvation. It takes us from a helpless and hopeless state to a living and active state. It takes us from death to life. This is the great reality of Christianity that is true of no other world religion. When people believe in Jesus, their lives aren't merely renewed, they aren't simply changed, rather they are totally transformed! God doesn't make alive people even more alive. God doesn't make sick people well. God makes dead people alive. God is in the business of raising the dead. Again, this isn't a literal deadness. It's not like we have reached a point in our lives where we stopped breathing and our hearts stopped beating, only to be given CPR by the Lord. It is a spiritual deadness. In reality, our hearts were dead to the things of God, but God infused life into our souls. And the miracle of being raised from spiritual deadness is no less of a miracle than being raised from the dead physically.

Have you ever had the opportunity to speak with another person who doesn't believe in Christ? Have you tried to explain to someone the glorious mystery of the gospel, that simply by faith in Christ, all your sins can be forgiven? Have you ever experienced that person simply not understanding what you are saying? I remember a few weeks back talking to someone who thought herself to be quite religious. And yet, she was clearly living in sin with her boyfriend. I tried to explain to her how her sins could be completely forgiven. I tried to explain to her how she simply needed to believe in Jesus Christ and all her sins would be wiped away. Seemingly every time I said anything to her, she responded by telling me how religious she was and how much she did for the church. It's like she felt that she needed to earn her salvation.

You can try to explain and try to illustrate. But, somehow, these sorts of people just don't seem to get what you are saying. It's because their heart hasn't been circumcised by Jesus Christ. It's because they are still dead in their sins. It's because they know nothing of being made alive. They won't understand until the Lord opens their minds to comprehend the Scripture. Consider 1 Corinthians 2:14, "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned." Just as a corpse doesn't respond to your voice, so also will a natural man be spiritually unable to respond to the gospel of Christ. He cannot understand until the Lord opens his eyes and raises him from the spiritual dead.

Think about the electromagnetic waves that are traveling through this room right now. There are dozens of radio stations that are floating through the air right now. There are several television channels also floating around. But, we cannot detect them. We need an antenna and some electronics to change the radio stations into sound, and to change the television stations into video. This is what Paul is saying here. He is saying that you were dead in your transgressions, dead in your uncircumcised, untransformed flesh, having no response to the truth of God. But, God gave you the antenna and the electronics to understand the message of the gospel. He illumined your heart. He made you alive together with Christ.

The sad reality is that we often fail to fully realize how alive to God we are! We still sin. We still lack faith! It's often distressing to our soul! But, the fact that it distresses us so much is the evidence that we have been changed. Paul expressed this struggle in Romans 7.

Romans 7:21-25

I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

Though Paul's desire is to live what he is (i.e. alive in Christ), he constantly knows of the struggle that he has with his sin.

4. Jesus removed all accusers (verse 14).

This is my favorite verse of this entire section. In reality, it's explaining what God does for us in the process of making us alive. He removes all of our accusers. Look at the end of verse 13, "having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross."

This is the greatest news of all news that exists in the universe! In Christ Jesus, all our transgressions are forgiven. All our transgressions are forgiven. All our transgressions are forgiven. Let it sink in! If you don't know why it's the greatest news, it's because you don't realize the debt that you owe to God for your sins! Most people in this world don't realize the debt that they owe to God because of their sins and the resulting consequences of taking this debt into eternity. Because, if they did, they would think about it. It would worry them. They would search and search and search for a way to get out of the debt.

Let me try to illustrate this. Suppose that you took out a student loan to help you pay for your tuition when you were in college. After you graduated, you thought that you had paid it off. In reality, however, you actually owed another \$10,000. But that was thirty years ago, when the interest rates were really high. And now, you owe the compounded interest on the loan for thirty years. Before you knew that you still had this loan to pay off, would you have given any thought to it? Of course not, because you don't even realize you have a debt. But, should you at once realize that you had this enormous debt to pay, surely, you would investigate it and seek to do whatever it took to clear it up. The same applies to your debt before God because of your sins. You have a debt that you own to God. Oh, it's not a financial debt. It's a debt that you owe because of your sin as a finite creature toward an infinite creator.

In verse 14, we see that Jesus “canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us;” I love the way in which other Bible translations translate these phrases. It helps to get an idea of what’s being talked about. The King James says that Jesus blotted out “the handwriting of ordinances that was against us.” The English Standard Version says that Jesus canceled “the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands.” The New International Version says that Jesus “canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us.”

Literally, the idea is that we have a hand-written note that records all of our sins. In the old wild-west, they used to put of “Wanted” posters. These posters would display a large picture of the criminal. Below the criminal would be his name and the crimes that he had done. That’s the sort of hand-written note that we are talking about here in verse 14. This note isn’t our friend. In fact, this note is against us. No, it’s more than that, it is “super-against” us. This note was a warrant for our arrest. This note was our death warrant. On the top of this note, it says, “Wanted” in the small print under this banner, it says, “dead or alive.”

So, just think about your sins, that you committed this past week. Perhaps you were angry with your spouse (Col. 3:8). Perhaps you said harsh words to your children (Col. 3:8). It may be that you were ornery with a neighbor because of his loud car stereo (Col. 3:8), or spoke unfairly about a fellow co-worker (Col. 3:8), or uttered some swear words (Col. 3:8) or lied about your activities in some way (Col. 3:9). Maybe, you failed to be compassionate with a co-worker (Col. 3:12) or weren’t kind with a telemarketer on the phone (Col. 3:12). Possibly, you were proud about a certain ability you possessed (Col. 3:12), or harsh with my words to the cashier at the store (Col. 3:12), or impatient with another Christian (Col. 3:12). Perhaps you failed to forgive your fellow Christian (Col. 3:13) or failed to love sacrificially (Col. 3:14). Were you anxious, rather than letting the peace of Christ rule your heart (Col. 3:15)? Did you fail to love my spouse (Col. 3:19). Perhaps you demanded too much of your children (Col. 3:21), or failed to obey my boss (Col. 3:22), having a poor attitude at work on Tuesday (Col. 3:22). Did you complained about the weather this week? Since God causes the weather (Psalm 135:7), any complaining about the weather is ultimately a complaint against Him.

Now, imagine that all of these transgressions were recorded and written down on a sheet of paper, and placed upon the desk of the judge of the universe. Upon the desk it sits, waiting for the judgment day to be taken off the desk and read in the presence of the world. After it’s read, you know that you will be justly condemned for your sins. In fact, any of those sins could send you to hell. That was only this past week. Imagine what a few years of that might bring. The list would get pretty long.

Now, I want for you to think of the cross of Christ. I’m sure that if you close your eyes, you can see him hanging there. But, perhaps you have never noticed the sheet of paper that was attached to the cross at Calvary, just beyond the outstretched arm of Jesus. As you zoom in with your mind to that sheet of paper, you might begin to recognize it. It’s the list of all the sins that you have every committed. At one point, it was sitting upon the desk of the judge of the universe, waiting to be used in the final judgment. But, it’s no longer on the desk. It is now attached to the cross. When you zoom in with your mind a bit closer, you see that it has a big stamp on it that says, “Paid in full!” Your list of sins that you committed in your life no longer sit upon the desk of the Almighty. Instead, your sins have been nailed to the cross and paid in full! That’s the wonderful truth of verse 14, “He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.” Do you realize this? Do you know this? Do you know your salvation?

I remember singing a song a long time ago that captures the essence of this truth.

He paid a debt, he did not owe,
I owed a debt I could not pay.
I needed someone to wash my sins away.
And now I sing a brand new song,
Amazing Grace all day long,
Christ Jesus paid the debt that I could never pay. [\[3\]](#)

Or, how about the song we sang this morning?

Holy God in love became,
Perfect Man to bear my blame.
On the cross He took my sin.
By His death I live again. [\[4\]](#)

That’s the reality of our salvation.

5. Jesus conquered all demonic rulers (verse 15).

This comes in verse 15. Paul writes, “When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.”

Perhaps it isn’t so obvious from an initial reading of the text, but Paul is certainly referring to the demonic “rulers and authorities.” It’s the same language the Paul used in Ephesians 6:12, “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.” The reality here is that Jesus conquered the demonic rulers of this universe, which means, that there is no physical or spiritual being in this universe that can accuse you before the throne of God. Satan himself is called “the accuser of the brethren” (Rev. 12:10). He and his army of rulers cannot accuse you in your salvation.

Since God has declared you to be forgiven of all your transgressions, (Col. 2:13). Since God has declared you to be forgiven of all your transgressions, nobody can object! When the judge of the universe takes the evidence that would convict you of being guilty and nails it to

the cross, nobody can say, "I object, your honor." It used to be that at many weddings, the one performing the wedding would ask a question of those present, "Is there any reason why this couple should not be married this day? Speak now, or forever hold your peace." When God said that of our sins, the mouths of the demons are shut, because Jesus triumphed over these demonic rulers.

When did Jesus do this? Peter gives us a hint in his first epistle, when he wrote the "Christ died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison" (1 Pet. 3:18-19). Those verses are probably describing the time in which Jesus gave His victory speech to the demons. "Did you think that you won when you nailed me to the cross? Actually, that was the victory!"

That's your salvation in Christ. Do you know it? Do you know it better than you did before? Has it stirred your heart afresh to love your Savior more than you ever did before?

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on July 30, 2006 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

[1] The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, Vol. 1, pp. 866-867 (article by Gary. E. Farley).

[2] Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. 1, p. 530 (article by Albrecht Oepke).

[3] Words written by Ellis J. Crum.

[4] Words written by Drew Jones.