

Text – Col 2:11-15

¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Title: Buried and Raised With Him

Introduction (750)

Today we celebrate and remember the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. He is risen! He is risen indeed!

It is good and right to remember this event in history, but how is this different from other significant events in history? What about ANZAC day, Waitangi Day, the first moon landing or other events we could remember? Why is this different? Why does the resurrection of Jesus Christ stand out so much from all other events in history?

Well today we will see just how different the resurrection is from all other events in history. We will see that the resurrection is not something you simply contemplate and are inspired by.

No, we will see that it is an event we can actively share in. And in sharing in the resurrection of Jesus your life can be and will be transformed.

In today's study we will see how we share in Christ's victory over the grave and the implications of that. We will see what it means to be buried and raised with Christ even though none of us were present on that glorious day 2000 years ago.

The title of this study is called Buried and Raised with Christ, and this is really the main theme of the passage. We have been buried and raised with Christ and in that we have been bestowed abundant blessings.

To help us work through the text I have broken the passage into three parts.

The first section is titled **From Death to Life** where we will see the mind-blowing reality of being united in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The second part is titled **from Death to Forgiveness** where we will see that one of the implications of being raised to life with Jesus is how we have been forgiven and our record has been wiped clean.

And finally the third part is has been titled **from Death to Victory**, where we will see how Jesus has triumphed over Satan and his demons and we have nothing to fear from this old enemy when we are in Christ.

So today, the passage of God's word will show us how, when we are united in the death and resurrection of Jesus, we go:

1. from death to life,
2. form death to forgiveness and,
3. from death to victory.

Part 1 -From Death to Life v11-12 (1300)

Exposition (teach)

So let us begin with our first section "From Death to Life". let's take a closer look at verses 11 and 12. Please read them with me again.

¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

First off, why is Paul talking about circumcision? Why is he even bringing this up? To answer that, let's remind ourselves the meaning of circumcision. Circumcision was a sign to show that the Jews were the chosen people of God, right? It was a clearcut distinction between those who were God's people and those who were not.

And it was also a means of entering the Jewish religion. If you were not born in a Jewish family but wanted to be a part of God's people, then you would be circumcised as part of the initiation process. So in a real basic way, circumcision was firstly a sign of being part of the people of God and secondly it was a gateway to be accepted as one of God's people.

Now Paul had heard that there were teachers in Colossi spreading false doctrines. These false teachers were convincing Christians that if they wanted a real spiritual experience and to be free from sin then they should start by being circumcised. ~~Man, aren't we glad Paul addressed that false teaching early!~~ But instead of picking apart these false doctrines, Paul proclaims the glorious truth of Christ and the gospel. In these few verses the focus is on the initial stages of the Christian life. The initiation process if you like. Circumcision was used in old-testament times, these false teachers wanted to bring it back

because they believed this was the real way into God's family, but the actual initiation into God's family is far more life changing and empowering than what these false teachers were promising about circumcision.

In verse 11 Paul points out two things about this real initiation.

Firstly it is spiritual. Notice in the start of verse 11. "¹¹*In Him you were also circumcised with the **circumcision made without hands**.* This initiation is not a product of human effort in the physical world. It is not the end goal of a spiritual quest or the reward of achieving a spiritual standard. No pilgrimages or memorizations needed, and certainly not a ceremonial knife. It is an act of Jesus on the human heart. That is why Paul calls it the Circumcision of Christ. It is Christ's work of accepting those who believe in him.

Secondly, in the initiation provided by Christ, Christ completely removes the power of sin. The circumcision of Christ involves *putting off the body of the sins of the flesh*. That is, sin no longer reigns in our life after Jesus has initiated us. False teaching and other religions often says that you need to harm or mutilate your body to fight your sinful desires. Be it with minimal food or strenuous work or harsh disciplines. But none of these human methods deal with the root of the problem. Without Christ, humans are controlled by their sinful nature. Sin is like a king which reigns in our heart. And no amount of discipline can change that. But in Christ, sin has been removed as king and Jesus is now king of our hearts.

In verse 12 Paul continues to explain this initiation we have experienced in Christ by showing a parallel between two glorious truths. He shows the parallel between the death and resurrection OF Christ and your death and resurrection IN Christ. [repeat]

At the start of verse 12 Paul says “Buried with Him in Baptism”. We share in the death of Christ. When we are in Christ, our old self has been condemned and put to death. The spiritual reality that baptism represents is the old man being put to death. And the act of baptism is a perfect image of this union with the death of Christ.

When you were baptised and your head was beneath the water there was no way to take a breath, no way to sustain life. In the same way in a grave, when someone is buried, there is no way to sustain life. That is where your old sinful nature resides. In the grave and in the grave to remain. Jesus died and was buried. In the same way our old nature died and was buried IN Christ.

So, our sinful nature is put to death now that we are IN Christ, but that is not all. Jesus did not remain in the grave! He is resurrected. He is risen. We know that to be a historic fact. The gospel accounts clearly explain the events. He did not remain in the tomb despite all the efforts of the religious leaders and the romans. On the third day He rose from the dead and appeared to multiple people. He lives now and is seated at the right hand of the Father. And that alone gives us confidence and zeal to follow Him with all our lives.

But not only did Jesus rise from the dead, here we are told that we share in this resurrection. Somehow, when we are IN Christ, we are raise with Him.

Friends this is a truth that boggles the mind! Not only did He come back to life after being brutally executed but we can share in this new life. We have been raised with Him. After our old self was put to death, God raised us and gave us a new heart, a new nature. A new nature which is able to love him and be shaped into full submission to Jesus. A new heart which is not controlled by sin but able to resist sin. God’s power was mightily displayed on that day of resurrection

and that power is displayed in a similar way every time a person is saved from their sins and united with Christ.

[Application \(exhort, rebuke, reprove, encourage\)](#)

The burial and resurrection of Christ changes everything about our lives. Your sinful nature has been put to death in the same way that Jesus was put to death. Do you realize that? You may wonder sometimes if this is really the case. Maybe you feel like sin has a real grasp over you and you struggle to resist temptations.

But if you are indeed a Christian, remember that your sinful self was buried with Christ. Do you believe that Jesus died? That he physically gave up his last breath? That he was buried and placed in a tomb? Well, that is what happened to your sinful nature too. Your old self was put to death and buried with Christ. That sinful old nature is gone and never to be seen again.

But maybe you understand that your sinful nature was buried with Christ. But then you struggle to believe that you were raised with him. Maybe you feel like your life is not as free from sin as you would like?

But this is exactly what this passage is trying to explain to you. Are you convinced that Jesus rose from the dead? Let your knowledge of the historical fact of Jesus's resurrection bring you confidence of your new life in Christ.

Your confidence in your new life will only be as strong as your conviction that Jesus rose from the dead. Dwell on the fact that Jesus is no longer in the grave. His body was restored after being brutally beaten. Giving up his spirit was not the last thing Jesus did. He is alive and you share in that life.

Yes, your heart was spiritually dead, but it has been brought back to life just like Jesus was brought back to life.

If you are not convinced of Jesus's resurrection, than it is only normal that you have little confidence that you have been changed. Due to limited time, we can't look at the historic facts and elements that prove beyond any doubt that Jesus physically rose from the dead. But if you have questions on the historic validity of the resurrection, come talk to me afterwards or talk with pastor Nick. I assure you that the more you look into facts of the resurrection, the more you will be convinced of it's accuracy.

What else would convince you or reassure you that you are in fact changed and one of God's people? Maybe you wish to see an act of God's power to convince you that you are really one of God's people, that you have actually been accepted. Some proof you can hold on to.

But do you realise that in the burial and resurrection of Christ you get to not only know, but also experience the ultimate display of God's power. Let me explain.

What is one of the greatest displays of God's power in history? Now we agree that the Bible is full of events which display God's power. And I admit it would be awesome to see the red sea split or the sun stand still, but I think you will agree with me that raising a man from the dead, for that man never to die again is a different sort of power.

Jesus was raised and did not die again. There is no doubt that this awe-inspiring miracle happened. That is a display of God's power in its own right.

But realise this. The same miracle happened when you were saved. When you trusted Jesus as your saviour, you died with him and you were also raised with him, never to die again. You will never fall under the dominion of sin again. Never to be spiritually dead again. Yes, our body will die, but our souls will never die again and like Jesus

before us we will abide in the presence of the almighty God forever. In the same way that He came back to life, your soul has been restored to life. If you are a Christian you know this display of God's power personally. Don't minimize it by the passing of time or the fact that you share this miracle with other Christians. God has worked powerfully in your life when he brought you back to life. You were dead spiritually but in Christ you have been buried and raised with him.

Part 2 - From Death to Forgiveness v 13-14 (1000) Exposition (teach)

Now a few other things happen when we are initiated into the family of God. Our old self was buried with him and we were raised with Him, but then what? This brings us to our second section of our study, From Death to Forgiveness.

Read with me verses 13 and 14 again as Paul further expands on the glories of Christ and the gospel.

¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Paul painfully reminds us here why we were dead spiritually. When Jesus saved us we were not captured victims, innocently awaiting our murder at the hands of some evil. No, we were criminals. We were sinners who deserved the death penalty. We were criminals wilfully disobeying God, wreaking havoc on his earth, plotting evil plans and living to please ourselves no matter the consequence. The nature of our crimes before God will be different for all of us. You know what yours are. But the seriousness of the crime is the same. The Bible

clearly explains that to commit a crime against the Holy and Perfect God deserves death. And so death row is where we were.

It is only normal that we were outside any covenant with God. That is what the phrase "*and the uncircumcision of your flesh*" in verse 13 is getting at.

So before Christ saved us, we were convicted criminals on death row outside any covenant relationship with God.

But in Christ, God made us alive. We just saw in the previous verses how we share in His resurrection. And in bringing us back to life he does another thing.

He forgives us and wipes our record clean. God not only goes out of his way to perform a miracle in our lives, but he also chooses to forgive our crimes against Him. If those crimes were still on our record, we would be headed straight back to death row as soon as we took our first new breath. But God takes our list of crimes, our list of sins and wipes them clean.

In the time of Paul, writing was done on papyri [papy-ri] but this paper was scarce, and sometimes the redundant papyri would be wiped clean ready for reuse. This is the image given here. Our sins are not just barred as invalid, but they are wiped away and our life are ready to be used to serve our lord and king as if we had never broken any of his laws.

But God did not just turn a blind eye to your crimes against him. He is not like an unjust judge which lets an offence slide every now and then. He is perfect in justice and will see justice done. And in the end of verse 14 we are reminded of the great cost and the great work which secured our clean slate and our restored relationship with God. It is the work of Jesus on the Cross which restores us with God.

When Jesus was crucified, what inscription was nailed above him? What was the accusation against him that Pilate had written up? The plaque said “Jesus, King of the Jews” right? But is this the crime that Jesus was dying for? No this was a mockery.

The fact is that no plaque could have been big enough to list all the crimes Jesus was dying for. Murder, adultery, lying, idolatry, drunkenness, laziness, anger, jealousy, anxiety... The list could go on and on because the list really belongs to you and to me. We know how long it is and how dirty and vile it is. That was the real crimes Jesus was being put to death for. They were not Jesus’s actions. He lived in total obedience to God, but he chose to assume that list as his own and die in our place.

[Application \(exhort, encourage, rebuke, reprove\)](#)

So ponder that this morning. Don’t be too quick to forget where you came from or the cost to get you where you are. Let that reality redouble your thankfulness and worship of God.

You were dead in your trespasses and Christ raised you to life. God forgave you because Jesus paid for your sins. Your sins have been wiped clean. Your slate is clean.

How will you fill it now? No more sins will be written on it but will it remain blank? Or will it be filled with an active life of obedience? Let the first and recurring theme on your slate be one of rejoicing and praising the God who raised you up and forgave you. All glory goes to him and him alone.

And if you are listening to all this this morning and you are not a Christian, know that the invitation to be part of God’s people and God’s blessings is warmly extended to you. Jesus Christ extends the invitation to come, believe on him and you will be saved. And all the things we have been speaking about will be true for you too. You too

can be buried and raised with him. You too can be raised to life and forgiven of your crimes against God, and you too can live with the confidence of eternal life. Eternal life with the king of the universe.

Let this also be a reminder of the extraordinary spiritual experience we have all experienced when Christ saved us. There are some false teachings today, like in Paul's day, that say that if you have enough faith or you pray enough or become privy to this special knowledge, you will gain a greater spiritual status and have a great spiritual experience.

This can be appealing for some of us. We feel the limitations of this body and we hope for something more. And that is normal because our souls long for heaven. But here Paul is reminding us that in Christ we already have an ultimate spiritual experience. We have been raised to life. We have been forgiven of our sins. We are accepted by God.

So do not look elsewhere for this. To look elsewhere is say that the work of Jesus was not sufficient. To look elsewhere is like looking for a car in a scrap metal yard after you have been given a brand-new Toyota Land Cruiser. You will find out sooner or later that nothing compares to Christ and the longer you take to realise that the more painful it will be.

Paul continues from this theme of an extraordinary spiritual experiences to the theme of spiritual warfare, which brings us to the final section of today's study. **From Death to victory.**

Part 3 – From Death to Victory v15 (700)

When we are buried and raised with Christ there are also some very significant implications with regards to our opponent, Satan. Please read with me again verse 15.

¹⁵ *Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

Exposition (teach)

There is so much paradox in this sentence that it seems quite surprising. This sentence is saying that when Christ was crucified, when he was hanging on the cross in humiliation and agony, he in fact disarmed and triumphed over principalities and powers.

What are these principalities and powers? Well, here, principalities and powers are referring to Satan and his demons. So when Jesus was on the cross He disarmed Satan and triumphed over him and his demons.

At face value it was Jesus who was being made a spectacle of and there is no apparent triumph. But when we understand the spiritual nature of what was happening when Christ was crucified, we can understand that this was a massive blow to Satan and his demonic forces.

How is it that Satan was disarmed at the cross? We can see two ways Satan was disarmed. First at the cross, Jesus removed the grounds of Satan's accusations. Satan loves to accuse God's people and show how short they fall from God's standard, how guilty they should feel and how worthless they are. But at the cross Jesus took all of our sins, past, present and future, and so Satan has no grounds on which to accuse us.

The other weapon that Jesus striped from Satan at the cross was the fear of death. Fear of death looms over the heads of everyone, and we will go to great lengths to flee death, and we can live in despair and hopelessness. When Jesus died on the cross and after his resurrection he gave hope of eternal life. He made it possible for us to have life and life to the fullest.

So, Satan has been disarmed from his ability to accuse us, and he can no longer hold the fear of death to manipulate us.

And notice also that it is a public spectacle. Satan and his demons have been disarmed publicly. There is no need for special faith or special knowledge or special prayer to disarm Satan and his demons. This has already been done and done far better than any human could ever do.

Application (exhort, encourage, rebuke, reprove)

So do not loose heart, don't give up. When you see the wicked prospered and those striving for righteousness loose out, don't think that that is the end of the story.

Imagine what the disciples and demons would have thought during those three nights Jesus was in the Grave. But the story did not end there. And likewise, we know that all will receive the wage for their labour. For those out of Christ that will be death. For those in Christ that will be life eternal.

And also be encouraged in your own spiritual warfare. When you are tempted to sin, or fear creeps in or you feel the weight of guilt growing. These are all ploys of the enemy to discourage and discredit us. Satan and his demons are a foes yes, but they are disarmed foes.

They cannot use that sin that you committed earlier this morning to condemn you. Your sins have been dealt with on the cross. Jesus is risen and has forgiven your sins. So don't let the lies of Satan cause you to believe anything other than that. You have been buried with Christ and raised with him. Hold on to that as your defence against the devil, and he will flee from you.

And similarly if you are struggling with sin, do not think that you cannot fight it. Satan can influence you and leverage of the desires of your heart, but he cannot force you to sin. We know Satan and his

Demons are strong but Jesus has disarmed them, Jesus has triumphed over them and has publicly shown that they are defeated. He has risen from the grave!

So again, there is no secret knowledge which will help you overcome Satan. Jesus already has. And there is no secret knowledge which will help you fight sin in your life other than trusting in Christ. He has put to death our old sinful state. He has risen us to life. He has disarmed our enemy. In Christ there is real victory over sin, death and Satan.

Conclusion (750)

So, as we bring the study to a close, ponder these things. You have been buried and raised with Christ. You share in the most significant event that happened in history. When you believed in Jesus as your lord and saviour your old sinful nature was put to death and He raised you to a new life.

Do not look elsewhere to see God's mighty power. He acted powerfully to raise Jesus from the dead and He acts in the same power when he raised you from your spiritual death.

And this changes everything in our life.

We used to be apart from God but now we are part of God's people.

We used to feel ashamed but now we have confidence.

We used to be condemned but now we are forgiven.

We used to feel guilty but now we are at peace.

Sin used to be in control but now Jesus is in control.

We used to succumb but now we can resist temptation.

We used to fear death but now we look forward to death.

Satan used to be a mighty foe but now he is disarmed.

We used to be only able to serve ourselves but now we can serve God.

Our record used to be covered with evil but now it has been wiped clean.

We used to search for spiritual blessings but now we have found spiritual blessings.

In short we used to be dead but now we are alive. And all this because, **and only because**, we have been buried and raised with him.

Let us pray