



Living Free

Colossians 1:13-14

Sermon given on March 25, 2016

Calvary Chapel French Valley

Good Friday Service

@ FRM

Pastor Rick Lancaster

LIVING FREE

Colossians 1:13-14

Greeting

- Turn in the Bible to **Matthew 27**
- If you would like to follow along and need a Bible they are on the tables around the room
- If they are not, raise your hand and one of the guys will bring you one
- The page number of the text we are looking is up on the screen
- One of the ways we describe the United States of America is ‘The land of the free!’
- In this country we enjoy freedoms that are unknown in other places around the world
- We are truly blessed to live in the United States
- Of course, the US is not perfect
- There are many things we would like to change about this country
- But then that is one of the freedoms we have, to be a force of change
- But tonight, we gather together to talk about a freedom that is the greatest freedom of all
- It has nothing to do with this country
- It has nothing to do with our money, possessions, careers, or any other practical thing – not even our religion
- And it is not something that we can’t get on our own – it has to be given to us
- And the good news is that it has been given to us
- And if we can figure out how to live in this freedom that has been given to us, then we can be the freest people on the planet
- **Pray!**

Teaching

- **Living Free**
- The Friday before Easter is called Good Friday
- In other places and in other times it goes by other names

- It remembers an event that took place on a Friday afternoon almost two thousand years ago
 - The crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ
 - And it is this death that sets us free
 - If you have not grown up in the church, like I didn't, that sounds strange
 - How can the death of Jesus make us free – make us the freest people on earth?
 - First I am going to read the account of His death, then I will share with you how His death sets us free, and then I will close with thoughts on how to live in that freedom
 - So if you have your Bible open – we are in the gospel of Matthew, one of the four parallel accounts of Jesus' life
 - A little background before I start reading
 - It is early Friday morning – the previous evening Jesus and the disciples were in the Garden of Gethsemane when Judas brought some men to arrest Jesus
 - Jesus was then falsely accused by the Jewish religious leaders
 - In the morning they brought Jesus to the Romans – to have Jesus condemned to death
 - After a number of conversations, the Roman governor Pilate agrees to execute Jesus
 - Let's pick up the account in verse 33
 - **Matthew 27:33-54**
 - Jesus died on that Friday afternoon, and before the sun set, He was in a tomb
 - On Sunday we are going to celebrate the truth that He did not stay in that tomb – that God raised Jesus from the dead
 - The resurrection is the heart of the gospel message
 - And it is the message of hope for the whole world
 - Turn in your Bible to **Colossians 1**
 - But tonight, we are here to talk about what His death means to us
 - About how the death of Jesus Christ can set us free
 - Free to live the life that Jesus promised us **John 10:10b**
- I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.**

- The apostle Paul talked about that freedom
- **Colossians 1:13-14**
- The word ‘delivered’ means ‘to free from harm or evil’ = to rescue
- In these two verses Paul describes three ways we are freed
- Freed to live an abundant life
- In verse 14 Paul says ‘we have redemption through His blood’
- It was the blood that Jesus shed when He died that redeemed us
- Redemption is an important topic in the Bible
- The Bible teaches that God is holy, He is perfect in all ways
- He created this universe to operate according to His holiness
- And most of the universe does that
- But mankind was created by God with the ability and freedom to choose between living according to God’s holiness or according to how they want to live
- When we reject God’s way and choose to follow our own way, God calls it sin
- And sin has a way of enslaving us
- The Bible says there is only one way to be delivered from the slavery of sin **John 14:6**

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

- To be delivered, I must turn away from my way and turn to Jesus
- Paul says in our text that, ‘we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins’
- The forgiveness of sins is the key to freedom in this life
- The first way we are freed – **The Penalty for Sin**
- We are freed from the penalty of our sins **Romans 6:23**

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- The penalty for sin is spiritual death
- The only payment that was high enough, perfect enough was the blood of God’s own Son, Jesus
- All of the pain, suffering and evil in this world is because of sin
- If there was no sin in this world, the world would be perfect – the Garden of Eden
- The second way we are freed – **The Presence of Sin**

- In our text, ‘delivered us...and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love’
- This is a promise for our future – though it is spoken in the past tense
- This is the promise of heaven
- Someday we will be ushered into the presence of God because all our sins have been forgiven by the shed blood of Christ
- And because there can be no sin in God’s presence – we will be freed from the very presence of sin forever **Psalm 16:11**

You will show me the path of life; in Your presence *is* fullness of joy; at Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

- The third and final way we are freed – **The Power of Sin**
- In our text, ‘He has delivered us from the power of darkness’
- We are never truly free until we are free from the power of sin in our lives
- And the only way to be free is through the blood of Jesus
- The freedom we can experience comes in three areas of our lives
- First area of freedom – **Our Past**
- Everyone has things in their past – mistakes, poor choices - sins
- We don’t have to be prisoners to our past **1 John 1:9**

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

- When Jesus died on the cross, His shed blood washed away all the sins of anyone who would believe in Him
- Some might tell you that you need to forgive yourself
- To be free of our past – **Receive Christ’s Forgiveness**
- That will cut the anchor of guilt in your life, and make you free from the sins of your past
- Christ’s forgiveness breaks the power of sin and guilt over your past
- Second area of freedom – **Our Present**
- Because of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross for us, we are no longer slaves to sin
- We now have the power within us to say no to sin
- When we receive Christ we are spiritually connected to His death on the cross **Romans 6:6-7**

...our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.

- To be free in our present – **Walk in Christ’s Forgiveness**
- Daily remind yourself that Christ died to set you free from sin
- Third area of freedom – **Our Future**
- If you are a Christian – someone who has accepted that Jesus died for their sins – God has promised an amazing future in heaven with Him forever
- And if we truly believe that, it should have an impact upon how we live this life
- Our future has two parts – the second part is in heaven with God
- The first part is the rest of our life on this earth
- The second part is amazing, awesome, radical
- The first part, for some, is not something they are looking forward to
- And that is because they are in bondage today to something from their past
- The scars of hurts, suffering, or abuse are always before their eyes
- And all they can see is, more of the same for the future
- Well I have good news for you, Jesus came to set you free
- But to be free you have to do the hardest thing there is to do in this life
- Especially if those hurts are fresh or ongoing
- Jesus freed you with His blood – the forgiveness of sins
- He freed you from the power of sin
- But to be totally free – to live a radically blessed life – you need to **Give Christ’s Forgiveness**
- When we receive Christ’s forgiveness – the chains that bind us to our sins are broken
- When we give Christ’s forgiveness to others – the chains that bind us to the sins of others are broken

To have freedom in the future, we have to do something in the present about our past.

- Receive Christ’s forgiveness, walk in Christ’s forgiveness, and give Christ’s forgiveness
- Do those things regularly, and you will be living free, no matter what the circumstances of your life might be
- And your life will be an amazing testimony to the power of God through the shed blood of His Son Jesus Christ

Invitation

- **Living Free**

- Today, you can begin the process of changing your future
- If you would, please bow your heads and close your eyes
- Would like you to think about the things you have heard today
- God wants you to do more than just think about them – He wants you to respond
- I am going to give you a chance right now to respond to God in a very simple way
- If you are here and there are things in your past that you need to deal with – that you need God to forgive you
- You need to receive Christ's forgiveness
- If you have never received Christ as your Savior, then the penalty for your sins is yours to pay – and you can't
- If you are sensing that you need to accept that Jesus died for your sins, raise your hand up so I can see it and pray for you
- Respond to God by simply raising your hand

- **Pray sinner's prayer**

- If you are here and you know there is sin that still has a hold on you, whether it was in the past, or it stills holds you now
- Jesus wants to free you from the power of that sin
- If you want to be free from that sin, raise your hand and let me pray for you
- If you want to walk in Christ's forgiveness – raise your hand

- **Pray for Repentance**

- And finally, if you are here and you are having a hard time forgiving someone
- Jesus died so that you would be freed from whatever they did to you
- Because of His shed blood you have the power to forgive and be free
- If you need God's help in forgiving someone or something, raise your hand and I will pray for you
- You don't have to live even one more day carrying the burden of someone else's sin
- Ask God to set you free – raise your hand

- **Pray for Strength to Forgive**

- **In Jesus' name – Amen!**

- Jesus sacrificed His life so that we can live free
- We are going to partake of Communion to remember His sacrifice
- **Communion**