**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

**Sermon**

***Power of The Resurrected Life - Now***

**Colossians 1:5 - 11**

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July 17th, In the Year of Our Lord - (Anno Domini A.D.) 2022

(Unless otherwise noted, NAS is quoted – New American Standard Bible)

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Key Passage in Colossians – verse 2:8

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Today, this sermon is about the superiority of God’s Gospel Truth as compared to any other life-plan choices. Many people buy self-help books seeking direction and answers to life’s most sought-after questions. The T.V. and internet offer a lifetime of consuming false hopes and empty promises. Religious leaders often present a path to God that never ends and is exclusively through them and their methods. When we look at the Incarnation and God’s message taught by Jesus, He bypassed all manmade religious formulas centered on works and material accomplishments. He also bypassed the Law of Moses which was never intended to justify a person to God (Hebrews 10). Jesus went straight to the starting point for us to gain His objective of gaining peace with God (Matthew 5) in the Sermon of the Mount with a call to be *poor in spirit* (humble) as the first Beatitude.

 Jesus. . . was perceived to be a new Messiah, and, to many Jews, a new political messianic leader who they falsely perceived to have come forward to save the Jews from the Romans and deliver the people from their oppressors just as Moses did who led the Hebrew people from Egypt’s bondage. However, in contrast, Jesus, as the prophesied Messiah, announced God’s will in Luke 4:16-21 (when He read from Isaiah 61:1,2a; 42:7).

 18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, 19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."

Preach the Gospel

Proclaim Release to Captives

Recovery Sight to the Blind

Set Free Oppressed

Proclaim Favorable Year of the Lord.

With the Spirit of the Lord upon Jesus, He announced this mission in the synagogue at Nazareth where He grew-up. Can you imagine. . . a man who had lived in the area for about thirty years. . . who everyone knew. . . stands in his home synagogue and announces He is the long-anticipated Jewish Messiah? What a shock. Some of the Nazarenes said, “*Is this not Joseph’s son*?”

This declaration in Luke 4 is in contrast to a Davidic leader who would militarily defeat the Romans. The Disciples themselves had a hard time seeing the real mission of Jesus. We see this in their statements.

**Acts 1:6** So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"

In keeping with Jesus’ Messianic mission proclaimed in Luke 4, Paul delivers to the Colossians the mission of Jesus which is for people to obtain the knowledge of God’s will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding (Col. 1:9). What was the knowledge of God’s will? Jesus proclaimed God’s will in the synagogue in Nazareth: Preach the Gospel, Proclaim Release to Captives, Recovery Sight to the Blind, Set Free Oppressed, Proclaim Favorable Year of the Lord. These are individual applications not to address the oppressors of the Jews, that is the Romans.

**Colossians 1:5b The word of truth, the gospel**

6 which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing,

even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth;

7 just as you learned it from Epaphras,

our beloved fellow bond-servant,

who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,

8 and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

9 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,

**The will of God at work in a person enables a person to live at peace in this fallen environment. . . regardless if a person’s nation is occupied or not or if a person is rich, poor, slave or free.**

**The Gospel’s Transformative Power**

We start today in Colossians 1:5. . . “The word of truth, the gospel”. Within the Gospel of Truth is the *transformative power* which for the faithful person. . .brings triumph within the individual over this fallen world with evil in operation. To counter this evil, God came in the Incarnation to complete His mission at the Cross with the atoning one-time sacrifice in payment of all mankind’s sin. In addition, He brought with Him the Word of Truth, the Gospel, of how to be a human being as God has planned in the midst of the fallen world. This is the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding that we can call *transformative power.*

***Transformative power* is the knowledge of God’s will which brings spiritual wisdom and understanding.**

**The Cross’ Transformative Power**

The Cross. . . is evil’s “backfired” doomsday event? Why? Because evil planned, banked-on, salivated over God’s would-be demise. The Cross without the Resurrection, the empty tomb, is just another Roman execution of a would-be revolutionary. Instead, the Resurrection triumphed over the arrogant power of Satan. The empty tomb is a void in Satan’s plan that cannot be filled.

The one way to prove the Resurrection is not true. . . is to produce the body of Jesus Christ. The arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus Christ was one of the most watched, overseen and reported events of its era. The most powerful temporal authorities of Rome and Judah planned and guarded over Jesus’ Cross and tomb. When the tomb was reported to be empty. . . all the Romans and Jews had to do was to produce one body. Instead, they bribed the guards and publicized a fabricated story chronicled in Matthew 28. But, despite all the state power they had, they could not produce Jesus’ body. Dissenters can say what they want, but after two thousand years. . . Jesus’ deceased body has never been produced.

In fact, what we have are eyewitnesses to a live body that walked, talked and ate with people. Historians agree that the culturally improbable testimony of the women and the male disciples who interacted with Jesus experienced something that transformed their lives. After their report, they defied Roman and Jewish authorities and preached in the name of Jesus. They became martyrs. . . taking with them to eternity the Truth of the Resurrection and the transformative power of the Cross and the empty tomb.

**The power of the Cross is the power to live by the Cross.**

Believers are called to live a **Resurrected life**. What is a Resurrected life? It is the power of the Cross fulfilling God’s plan for your life.

 **Resurrected Life = Transformed Life**

**Ephesians. 2:4-10**

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

**Colossians 1:9-11** is filled with details for the Christian life.

**9** 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,

 **10** so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

**11** strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

 These details are in accordance with God’s intent for each person. Paul provides such a list to his friends in Colossae that are an outline for the Christian life.

**Therefore, Believers are to:**

1. Live a life worthy of the Lord.
2. Live lives pleasing to God.
3. Increase their knowledge of God.
4. Produce good works.

This is only possible because Believers avail themselves to be empowered with God’s might being strengthened with all power that leads to a steadfastness, patience and joy. (See also Galatians 5:22-26) Paul writes. . .

**Romans 1:16-17**

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

 17 **For in it** the **righteousness of God** is **revealed** from **faith to faith;** as it is written,

"BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

Gospel = Power of God producing salvation

In the Gospel. . . is God’s righteousness

**Righteousness –** Defined in Merriam Webster:

acting in accord with divine or moral law

free from guilt or sin

morally right or justifiable, a righteous decision

The life-changing benefit of being a Christian is obtaining the desire and the ability to live the *transformative life.* . . to live a righteous life. This starts with humility. . . poor in spirit (Matthew 5). Living the Christian life. . . that is, living the teachings of Jesus which are not a burden.

**1 John 5:2-5**

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith.

5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Therefore, Believers develop a steadfastness and patience that only can be attributed to God at work in them. These victorious life principles fill the Believer’s life with joy. We give thanks to God the Father for making it possible for our elevation over evil to peace with God and our neighbor. And, with our elevation, we receive an inheritance to be with all the saints (Believers) in God’s heavenly Light. **AMEN**