Good News for Easter 4.12.09

11 In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.
Colossians 2:13-15 ESV

Quick Review as Foundation:
Circumcision: Strange to us, normal to them. Part of their spiritual conversation.
Circumcision of Christ: About their hearts, not their bodies.
Baptism: Not water baptism but being identified with Christ.
The identification is so strong through our union with Christ that in a similar way that God raised Jesus from the dead, God has raised us from the dead (spiritually).

P: Jesus' physical resurrection makes our spiritual resurrection possible.

Our Response: Praise God for it or wrestle with it. *What is my response?*

"And you who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh" Building on his previous ideas from v. 11-12. Description of our spiritual condition before we turn from sin and begin to follow Jesus.

"God made alive together with him" Points back to v. 11-12. Current spiritual reality
"having forgiven us all our trespasses" Action with ongoing implications.

"by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands" Unclear on the exact meaning. Likely, like an I.O.U. for indebtedness to God. Most likely the demands of God's Law that shows we are sinners. Jesus paid it in full.
"This he set aside, nailing it to the cross." Unclear, could be a reference to parchment that was nailed to the cross when someone was crucified indicating their crimes. Symbolic meaning indicating the finality and fullness of Jesus' payment for sin.

P: If we have been made alive together with Christ, God has <u>fully</u> and <u>finally</u> forgiven <u>all</u> of our sins.

<u>The Good News for Us:</u>

1. Jesus died the death we should have died for our sins—<u>all</u> of them.
    a. We *can* be made alive with Christ by turning from our sins and trusting Jesus. There is no sin too wicked to be forgiven.

Have my sins been forgiven because of Jesus death on my behalf? Am I overwhelmed with gratitude?

2. There is *"no condemnation"* for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:1)
    a. We have "no past" with God.

Am I allowing something from "my past" to ruin "my present" with God?

3. There is no need to fear.
    a. Death? Man? Money? Losing our jobs?
    b. Those things matter but what is Ultimate? Our sins are forgiven!

Am I using the Gospel against my fear?

4. Jesus also lived the life we should have lived—He fulfilled God's Law.
    a. He provides us an example for how God wants us to live.
    b. He offers us the power we need to follow that example.

Am I depending upon Jesus to follow His example or am I just "trying hard" to obey God and follow Jesus in my own strength?

"He disarmed the rulers and authorities" Rendered ultimately powerless.
"and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him." Imagery of a humiliating Roman procession. Profound, powerful image.

P: Jesus decisively defeated the devil and his demons through the cross.

<u>The Good News for Us:</u>

1. The devil and his demons could not stop God's plan for salvation.
2. Though we battle against them, Jesus has ultimately already won the war.
3. We need to be aware of our spiritual enemies but not afraid of them.

Do I have the right, balanced perspective on the spiritual war that we are engaged in? Do I see Christ as the ultimate Victor?

The Gospel is Our Good News for Easter and Every Day.

Works Consulted: *Expositor's Commentary, Life Application Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, ESV Study Bible, Messages by Darrin Patrick, John Piper, Tim Keller, AT Robertson's Word Pictures, NIV Application Bible*