***Bible Doctrine and Heavenly Rewards

Colossians 1:21-23

COL-183***

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2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

1 Corinthians 2:9-10: "Just as it is written, things which eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God revealed them through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God."

1 Corinthians 2:14: "But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for their foolishness to him. He cannot understand them because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things. Yet, he himself is appraised by no man. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ."

This morning we continue in our study of Colossians 1:21-23 – "Reconciliation of the Colossians," segment number 28.

American society today is being strongly influenced by people who want biblical sin to be acceptable conduct. Thus, there is to be no shame. There is to be no inhibition. There is to be no disapproval. There is to be no condemnation. And there is to be no rejection of anybody's lifestyle.

This past week, we heard about the decision of the New York courts, which declared illegal the refusal of the Boy Scouts of America to permit homosexuals as scout masters. Here's a practice which God says is an abomination. And the Hebrew word for this means the turning of the stomach of God. Yet, the state of New Jersey, in its highest echelons of legal authority, says, "No, you cannot keep an organization from putting up as a role model somebody that is characterized by what the Bible calls an abominable act that has upon it the judgment of God, and ultimately the kiss of death.

The role model of integrity, which is so important to the scouting program, is thus undermined by a society that says, "We want sin to be normative, and acceptable, and not frowned upon. There is a court case which is also coming up, relative to the Boy Scouts of America, where, many years ago, two Cub Scouts refused to take the oath of honor to God, and therefore the cub mother dismissed them. They went to court, and they were forced to reinstate those boys in the program, contrary to the policies and rules and aspirations of the Boy Scouts. They have gone up through the program and have achieved the Eagle rank. The Scouts refused to grant it to them because they are atheists, and that is not in conformity to the program in the outlook of the Boy Scouts of America. This case will now be decided. These boys do not believe in God. They do not, therefore, promise to honor Him.

This, of course (belief in God, and honoring God) is the foundation of all manhood – of all that is noble in character. It is known as integrity. Anybody who will not honor God by obedience by recognition of His existence, and then honoring His moral code by recognition of His authority, the Bible, is no man. He is a twit. He is a wimp. He is nothing. Yet he, under Satan's influence in a society, is made to think that that's where manhood lies.

So, we will see what happens to this – that as a private organization is being denied the privacy of association to govern themselves. And that's happening in the United States. It is being denied by government authority in order to force acceptance of a biblical evil in society, no matter how loathsome it may be, and how dangerous it is: "I don't believe in God. He isn't there. He doesn't exist." That is a loathsome and dangerous attitude. And the Bible says that anybody who holds it is a fool.

Homosexuality is a hotbed of disease, let alone complete undermining of manhood. Is it worse than other moral sins? No. Anybody who is characterized as a way of life by sexual immoral immorality of any kind is no man. He is a lowlife. And only society says, "We want to exalt them, and give them some dignity.

Loyalty to God is frowned upon in the United States. Now, where in the Constitution do you suppose that privacy of association, of private organizations to govern themselves, is being denied in the United States? This is just the opposite of what the Constitution was written to protect and preserve. But when the courts have looked the other way, and have snubbed the Constitution for so long, now there is no turning back. We are headed for the antichrist's world, and every effort will be made to make evil, and what the Bible calls sin, acceptable in American society. Loyalty to God, the Creator, and to His revealed will in Scripture is being punished, therefore, by human authorities – human authorities who are destined to spend their eternity in the lake of fire.

How could this happen to God's client nation of this age, the United States? We are a nation that is governed, and whose opinion-makers are moved by Satan, the all-time great loser of history. Why would people want to follow a loser like Satan, with all the condemnation that is before him?

Since the 1960s, opinion-makers have promoted him, and they have rejected biblical authority. Therefore, they have rejected biblical moral standards. Therefore, they have ridiculed any connection between societal well-being and the personal character of barnyard morality of those who are in charge. How could that have happened? The personal barnyard morality does not make any difference, we are told, in the wellbeing of society. It makes enormous difference in a person's own well-being, let alone the well-being of all of society.

Who is the cause of this conflict? It's those fundamentalist Christian-right people. They have a code of honor – these extreme right fundamentalists. They're causing the problems in our society, because they won't accept evil as the normative.

Have you ever realized that the Bible is on the extreme right? That's why the Bible is hated. It is part of the extreme right. Those who today scoff at God's moral laws, as do unbelievers, are going to face some very horrifying times in that seven-year tribulation period. We reviewed that last Sunday. After the rapture, when the church is taken out, all of the fundamentalist Christian-right people, who follow that Bible, which is extreme-right, are going to be out of here. And their voice of caution will no longer be heard. Their votes will no longer be holding back evil in society. Their efforts will no longer be exposing what is happening, and where society is moving. Then it will be a runaway train. Hatred of God will then rage in the tribulation. There will be cursing against Him. There will be frustration because they cannot stop what He is doing. They will blaspheme Him. Humanity in the tribulation will discover that God's moral code is the way it is.

Oh yes, it's extremely right, because God is extremely right, and God is going to impose His way. You should not lose sight of the fact that we are moving very close. Paul said on one occasion: "Today, you are much closer to your ultimate salvation than the day in which you believed." Well, this is true of the whole body of Christ. We are much closer to the ultimate salvation of the rapture than ever before in the history of the church. But they're going to find in the tribulation that God's way is the way it is. But what's going to happen is that there will be a moral jungle, just as there was in Noah's day. It will be back in full force, and death will be everybody's daily companion. They will find in the tribulation that the wages of sin really is death. The future of these people will be in the lake of fire forever. And where then, will be all of today's high and mighty opinion-makers, the conduct-setters? What an amazing judgment of God!

So, it should not shock you to be listening to your TV, and saying, why would two young men, out with the drugs, and the whole stupid scene that is associated with that lowlife capacity, look you into the eye on the television and say, "Well, we saw this girl, and we thought it'd be fun to kill her, and she was kind of retarded. So, we were able to kill her easily: "She was an easy pick," one of them said. So, we did it, and they smiled, and they were joking about it. And they had a wonderful time. And men in law enforcement – one man who'd been in there for a score of years, said, "I've never seen anything like this. And I am shocked, in spite of all that I've seen, to hear this kind of jaded, cavalier attitude on the part of these two men."

Well, that is the ultimate, folks, of what you want to have acceptable to society. You don't condemn somebody. You don't condemn evil. You understand it, and you excuse it. There are reasons for these terrible things. The reason is the sin nature. And the reason is the rejection of God's authority. And the reason is the indifference toward the Word of God, the Scriptures.

Believers with God in heaven during the tribulation, in contrast to those on earth, will stand forever with him in holiness, free of all moral blemishes, and beyond moral reproach. This is their permanent and eternal condition. This is the result of the grace of God through God the Father; the grace of God the Father, through Jesus Christ His Son; and, the power of the Holy Spirit – amazing grace. So, you may take your choice: on the one side, amazing judgment of the tribulation; or, the amazing grace of those of us who will be in heaven.

**The Star Spangled Banner**

Our national anthem expresses the gratitude and the trust in God for national purpose and survival. And it is a splendid little microcosm of the way we were, and from whence we have come as a nation, and how we could have degenerated to where we are today. "The Star Spangled Banner" is the national anthem of the United States. Francis Scott Key, an American lawyer, and an amateur verse-writer, wrote the song during the War of 1812. The melody comes from "To Anacreon in Heaven." It was created by a composer, John Stafford Smith, of Britain, in the late 1700s. The United States Congress, officially, in 1931, made this, "The Star-Spangled Banner," the national anthem.

It was in August of 1814. The British forces were retreating from Washington, DC. On the way, they arrested an American civilian, William Beanes, of Maryland, and they held Beanes prisoner aboard a warship in Chesapeake Bay, near the mouth of the Potomac River. General John Mason, with the approval of President James Madison, was the United States official in charge of prisoner exchanges. So, he asked two Americans to communicate with the British, in an effort to have Beanes released. These Americans were Francis Scott Key, who was a personal friend of Beanes, and John S. Skinner, a government agent.

So, Key and Skinner went to Baltimore. There they boarded a United States flag-of-truce ship, which was used to conduct negotiations with the British. The flag-of-truce ship took Key and Skinner to the British warship, just as the vessel was preparing to bombard Fort McHenry, which stood near Baltimore's harbor. Fort McHenry was named after James McHenry of Maryland, who was one of the signers of the Constitution for Maryland. The British agreed to release Beanes, but they did not want the Americans to reveal that they were planning imminently to bombard Fort McHenry.

Therefore, they held the Americans on the flag-of-truce ship, at the rear of the British fleet, until after the battle ended. The bombardment started on Tuesday, September the 13th, 1814. It continued all day and almost all night. Key and his friends knew that Fort McHenry had very little defense. The prisoners paced the deck all night. When dawn came, they saw the American flag still flying over the walls of the fort. If you ever visit the American history section of the Smithsonian Institute, you will see this very flag that flew that day hanging on the wall. The flag is 50 feet long. . . . It's an enormous flag.

So, they saw it flying over the walls of the fort, as dawn came up. Key was deeply moved. He pulled a letter from his pocket, and started writing verses. Later that day, the British released the Americans, and Key returned to Baltimore. There he finished revising his song. A few days after the bombardment, Key's poem, titled "Defense of Fort McHenry," was printed on handbills and distributed in Boston. A note on a handbill said that the poem should be sung to the tune of "To Anacreon in Heaven." Americans knew the melody, which had been used for a popular political song named "Adams and Liberty," and many other patriotic songs. Key himself had used the melody in an earlier song that he had written.

By November 1814, the song had been published in Baltimore under the name "The Star-Spangled Banner:" This is the way we were:

O! say can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the Rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O! say does that star-spangled banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream,
'Tis the star-spangled banner, O! long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

And where is that band who so valiantly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion,
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave,
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave,
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Francis Scott Key was quite a literary man. He wrote many poems. In 1857, these were published as poems of the late Francis Scott Key, Esquire. He was a religious man. He was a Christian. He was an extreme rightist. He wrote a hymn, "Lord with Glowing Heart, I praise Thee."

So, here's Francis Scott Key, standing on that flag-of-truce ship, for prisoner exchange, seeing what is happening in the bombardment of Fort McHenry. And there he stands before God, praising Him for the nation that He is bringing into being and preserving – a nation that will trust in Him. And because there was a people who trusted Him, this nation came into being.

So he wrote the last verse of The Star-Spangled Banner. We like to have our children in the academy learn this verse. This is often not known, and yet it tells it all – the way we were. And what a gross contrast it is with the way we are.

O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand,
Between their loved home and the war's desolation,
Blest with victory and peace, may the heaven rescued land,
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto-"In God is our Trust;"
And the star-spangled Banner in triumph shall wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Today, the land of the free and the home of the brave, in contrast to that noble expression of its national anthem, seeks to make the worst of sins normative, and seeks to separate personal character from one's influence upon society, family, and others, around about.

In Colossians 1:23, the apostle Paul stops to remind the Colossians why all the wonderful things, that he has told about them in verse 22, are absolutely going to happen. In verse 22, he told them that they would stand in heaven's throne room, before the Almighty Holy Creator God, and they would be absolutely holy, and absolute righteousness, totally justified for their moral guilt. They would stand there, blameless, without any blemish upon them. They would stand, blameless, without a blemish. And they would be beyond any reproach. They could never again be threatened with the lake of fire.

In verse 23, he says, "I'm going to tell you what it's going to be for sure. You and I take that in stride. You must remember that Christianity has been so corrupted that many Christians do not believe that once you enter the family of God, you're securely in it. They think you lose it overnight. They do not understand what verse 22 has promised. And then they don't understand verse 23, which tells them why that promise will be kept. There can be no question about it.

First of all: "If indeed you continue." This word "if" looks like this in the Greek Bible: "ei." And, as you know, there are four kinds of "ifs" in the Greek Bible. This one is first-class condition. Therefore, you may translate this as "since," because first-class condition tells you something that is true. It presents a reality. This is not like "if" an English gives us: well, maybe it isn't; and, maybe it is. Now, it's true that you have an "if," which is third-class condition, such as in 1 John 1:9: "If you confess your sins." That one says, "Maybe you will;" and, "Maybe you won't." But whichever you decide, the results will be according. Then it goes on and tells you what the consequences will be. There's a second class condition. It says, "if" too. And that one means that it's not true: "if," but it isn't true of you, and it goes on. Then there's a fourth one, which is something else – a possibility.

But it's important that that when he says "if" here, he means "since." And then to be sure you understand, he adds the word "indeed, which is the Greek word "ge," which reinforces this "if." So, this means: "absolutely, beyond a doubt – this is not just a possibility, and there is no touch of uncertainty. So, he adds this word "ge:" "'Ge' (absolutely, since it is certain), you will continue." The Greek word is "epimeno." "Meno" means "remain." "Epi" makes it mean: "really remain." That little prefix "epi" there makes it more certain and emphatic. This means "to persist in." You are going to adhere to something. You're going to abide in something. And what is it? The Colossians are going to continue in their saved condition which has been secured for them by their faith in Christ. They believed the gospel. Therefore, this will be the case.

This word for "continue," "epimeno," is in the present tense, which means in the Greek language: it will always be the case. It's going to continue. There is no getting lost again. You can't find that from the English Bible. But now you know it. All those dumb relatives of yours are going to look at this "if," and maybe you will change your mind, or maybe you'll sin too much, so you'll drop out of salvation. Yet, now you know that "if" means "since:" you are going to continue in your trust in Christ, and in your status of salvation of holiness, blamelessness, and without reproach. And then to be sure, your dumb relatives won't know that "indeed" ("ge") pops back to the first word and says, "And I really mean it." And Who is speaking here? It's not some human being. This is the Word of God. This is God Himself who is declaring this. Paul is simply the channel of information.

"If indeed you continue." This is active voice. This word "continue" means that this is their personal experience. False teachers have been telling them, "If you don't follow our extra information that we have, that Paul doesn't have, you won't continue on your way to heaven." It's a statement of fact. All that God has done is secure. Salvation is entirely of Him, without any human being. What this word connotes is an active perseverance. You're not just floating along. You are actively involved. And this is qualified you for the promises of verse 22 to be realized.

**Pay Attention to Bible Doctrine**

In 1 Timothy 4:16, Paul says, "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching. Persevere in these things. For as you do this, you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you." Is it important for you to know exactly what the Bible teaches, and not what you guess it teaches, or what most people believe in teaches, or what your relatives tell you it teaches?" Yes, it does. Paul says, "Pay close attention to yourself, Timothy, to what you teach people. And persevere in those things that you teach that are true. For as you do this, you will ensure salvation, both for yourself, and for those who are here. And that salvation is not only the salvation that takes you to heaven, but it's the saving of your life, so that you don't live like a dog and waste your life, and so that you don't live like a self-centered, self-oriented creature as a Christian, and waste your life. Pay attention, Timothy, to the doctrine of the Word of God. That's where it's at.

OK. Now, how many churches you think, around town this morning, are zeroing in and paying attention to the deep things of the Word of God, and lining up (outlining to people what Scripture really says in its depth? Connecting God's mind with the mind of man is what it's all about. And people are sitting there. They're listening to one-line zingers, and having a lot of fun, and getting a lot of enjoyment. And then they go home, and they ooze over one another after the service. But What God thinks is not in their mind, because nobody put it in there. Doctrine is where it's at.

So Paul says, "If indeed, as it is the case, you continue, which you will, in the faith: you will continue in the 'pistis.'" This is with the word "the" – "the faith." The reference here is to something believed. It is not their believing per se. It is that they believe something, namely the gospel of the grace of God. Now, the false teachers have said that is not enough. That's what all the false teachers, for a lot of you, and your relations in your family relations are faced with – that your faith in God and grace salvation: that's not enough. That's only one step. The whole Roman Catholic system is built upon that. It is not by faith alone. It's by faith in Christ alone, plus the good works. And they subtly express it to leave the door open for good works.

Paul says, "The reason you're going to stand; the reason you're not going to abandon your salvation; and, the reason you will realize the promises of verse 22, is because of the faith: the doctrine of grace salvation – the faith as a body of truth. And you will continue in this faith, firmly established. The Greek word for "firmly" is "themelioo." This word indicates going on, on a basis (a foundation) that has been established. There is a foundation for salvation that is true. There is a foundation which is false. Satan has a false foundation. It will not hold you. It will not hold the structure of your life. There is a true foundation for salvation, and that one will carry you. What is that foundation?

We find it in 1 Corinthians 3:10-11. Paul says, "According to the grace of God, which was given to me as a wise master builder, I laid a foundation. That's what I did when I was among you. I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. Other people have followed me into the ministry there in Corinth. They're teaching the Word of God. But I laid the foundation. Let each man be careful how he builds upon his foundation."

Verse 11: For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Do you want to go to heaven? You have to do that on the basis of a certain foundation on which you must be firmly established. And that foundation is Jesus Christ. So, you just run through your mind all the religions and all the cults of the world today, which do not say that Jesus Christ is the only way to get into heaven. He is the foundation on which personal salvation must be structured, or you don't have it. Any other kind of religious approach to salvation, on any other foundation, will crumble. And you will find that you don't have a salvation at all.

The Colossians had a foundation. It was Jesus Christ. This word, "themelioo" is in the perfect tense. Now, here's something else that your dumb relatives, who have so much to say about religious things, don't know. This word happens to be in the Greek perfect tense. The Greek perfect tense tells us an enormous thing about what this word is telling us. You'll never see it in English. The Greek perfect tense is illustrated in this way. At a certain point in time, something begins, and then it goes on, and on, and on, and on, and it never ends. The Greek perfect tense means, at the point that you trusted in Christ for salvation, you laid this foundation. You firmly established yourself on the foundation of Jesus Christ. When you trusted in Christ as Savior, salvation took place, and it now goes on to the present time, and wherever you are, it goes on forever. What is that tense telling you? You can't be lost once you're saved. And it's passive voice. That's kind of interesting, isn't it? It's not only perfect, but it's passive. Passive tells us who does something. If that were active voice, it would be telling you that you have to do your salvation, and you have to do something to be saved, and you have to qualify yourself to be saved. Once the Holy Spirit says, "No, Paul, I want you to use the passive voice there, to express this, that means that somebody else has to do it for you, and you are the recipient. You are the passive recipient.

It is so simple. Now, look how smart you are over the sad, sorry people who are filling pews, and pouring out their money, and carrying on big programs, and feminizing their sons, and thinking that they're right in the swing of things. And all they are is miniature imitators of Satan's world system.

Here is a statement of faith. You are firmly established. You have a foundation on which to structure your life, relative to eternity. Furthermore, you have this foundation, which only God can give you, on faith in Christ. Then you are, furthermore, steadfast. This is the word "edraios." We can't understand what the Bible says except from what the words mean. And ultimately, the full meaning of the words have to go back beyond your translation, even with as good a translation as we do have in English. This word "edraios" means a condition of stability on the foundation. First you have the foundation firmly established, a ground for your salvation, then you have a stability personally on that foundation. The stability of your salvation means that it goes on. You persevere. You have a foundation, which is Jesus Christ, and upon that you build a tower of salvation. And because it's on the firm foundation, salvation can be built, and you will persevere. It's not going to be knocked over.

This word "edraios" is also used in 1 Corinthians 7:37: "But he, who stands firm in his heart (his mind), being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will (he has decided this in his own heart) to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well. This is in guidance of a father to his daughter – whether she should get married or not; or, whether he wants to hand her over from under his authority and care spiritually, to some man's authority and care spiritually. If the Father says, "I don't trust this guy. I don't think this guy is up to my daughter's spiritual level of capacity, I don't believe that this guy will lead my daughter into the things of God, and walk with the things of God. I don't want to let my daughter marry him. So, I'm going to say, "No, you can't have her." And he will stand firm. His foundation is Jesus Christ and the Word of God. And he has established a position of firmness, relative to how he's going to take care of his little girl.

It's also used in 1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord." Here it's the word "steadfast:" "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be edraios' (steadfast, stable, immovable), always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord, always going on, fulfilling your mission, using your spiritual gifts, steady as you go, and being stable. "Steadfast" means "stable." And God knows how we appreciate, and how we love, and how we esteem, Christians among us who are stable in their service. These are the people we can trust; the people who are going to be there to do the job; the people are going to be prepared for their ministries around here; and, the people who are going to be there, doing the work when it needs to be done. That's being steadfast. That's being stable.

While, on the other hand, we should appreciate and thank God for that, and even expressed that perhaps to them, it is proper that we should expect them to be that way. And we should expect ourselves to be just that reliable. That's the idea here. You built a foundation of Jesus Christ. Now build a reliable life on that foundation.

**Heavenly Rewards**

God's grace plus no works salvation is a permanent position on the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ. We're building a life of divine good works. So, this is that your life counts to be recognized with rewards in heaven. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. Put your fingers in your ears, because I know some of you perhaps don't like this particular passage of Scripture. I've had people tell me that they don't like my making an issue or these verses, but then I didn't write them: "For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now, on that foundation, firmly established, become steadfast in what you build of your life. Now, if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, and precious stones (that's divine good works), wood, hay, and straw (that's human good works produced by the sin nature), each man's work will become evident. For the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. The fire will be the evaluating judgment of the Lord Jesus Christ," at the Judgment Seat of Christ. He will not be fooled. He will know when your works have been the works of emotional disorientation and emotional domination. Or he will know that it has been the works produced by guidance of the Holy Spirit, to which you were responsive.

"If any man's work which he has built upon it (the foundation of Jesus Christ) remains after God's judgment (after the Lord looks at it), he shall receive a reward. If your works are burned up under the under the fiery eyes of Jesus Christ evaluating it, you'll have a bunch of ashes. You will not have something that will remain. But if any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss. But he himself shall be saved just so as through fire. If the works remain, as they would be, if their gold, silver, or precious jewels, they'll not be affected by the flaming fires of God's judgment, and you will receive a reward for that. You live with it for all eternity. If it turns to ashes because it's human good (hay, wood, and stubble), then you'll have a pile of ashes, and it's not worth anything. There will be no reward.

Yet, you're going to go to heaven. Do you see the difference? Here, some of your idiot relatives, again, might take this passage and say, "You have to prove yourself worthy to have eternal life. Therefore, you have to live a moral life and do all these good things, these human good things to prove yourself worthy. No. He says, "These people with ashes for their lives are going to be saved, but it will be through the judgments of God. Because they have a basis of salvation, they will survive, but their works will bring them nothing.

So, what 1 Corinthians 1:23 is saying is: "With your foundation (the Lord Jesus Christ) established, and your structure (of salvation, and divine good service) immovable." . . . That is what you are going to have. The foundation of Satan's religions is the shifting sands of human viewpoint, and the evil of human good works. The structure of salvation built on that will collapse. That is when the great discovery is going to hit a lot of the religious people of our world – some of the mightiest and the biggest. The Lord pointed that out to us in Matthew 7:22-23: At that point in judgment of facing God, "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name; and, in your name, cast out demons; and, in your name, perform miracles?'" They did. Yep, they sure did. They called him "Lord, Lord, your master." They did cast demons out of people. They did perform miracles.

However, what was Jesus' response? "Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you, Depart from me – you who practice lawlessness.'" Jesus said, "My fiery judgment does is not deceived the way you were deceived. You called me 'Lord,' but your Lord was Satan. You were not a Christian. You thought you were a Christian, but you were serving him (Satan). You cast out demons. But that's because the devil did that for you. After all, demons are subject to him. I made you look good. You did perform miracles. After all, I'm the world's greatest miracle performer. I have great, superhuman power. Of course, I perform miracles through you. You were suckered because you thought miracles was a sign of God." That is their great discovery – and what a shock. People who have no foundation in Jesus Christ, and have no structure of stability to build upon it.

So, 1 Corinthians 2:23 says, "If (absolutely indeed), since you will continue without a shadow of a doubt in the faith (the doctrine of grace salvation through faith in Jesus Christ), you will be on a firm foundation, and you will be steadfast upon that foundation of grace salvation, you will not be moved away." The word "moved" looks like this: "metakineo." "Metakineo" means "to abandon the position held." This is kind of an interesting word. It's used only here in the whole New Testament – no place else. The Holy Spirit sometimes takes a word, and he says, "I'm going to use this word only once. I want to make a big point. And I don't want anybody to misunderstand it." He decided to use this word only once. This word means "to abandon a position which one held." The Colossians Christians were told they were not going to move away from the principle of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, and all of its benefits. The Colossians will not be dislodged by their false teachers from salvation through Christ alone, and they will, therefore, not be moved away from the reconciliation that has taken place on their behalf. The unsaved are spiritually unstable. They do not stand on the Word of Scripture.

So, the hope of salvation (the hope of the saint) is one of the great promises of the Word of God. And because that hope is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ, on a structure of salvation that is stable, verse 22 is going to be fulfilled.

Now, the extent and the details of the hope that they will not be moved away from is fraught with great significance. And we shall pick that up tonight.

God, our Heavenly Father, we thank You for this, Your word. We thank You for what You have revealed to us in the certainty of the salvation that You have provided for us. We are grateful to You that You have carried us from our position of helplessness, and our destiny for the lake of fire, and by Your grace, has given us a salvation is not dependent upon how good we are, but our perfect You are. For this, we thank you in Christ's name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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