



# THE SCROLLS

Helping one another mature so we can impact our world for Christ

**What Has God Done for Us**

For the week of July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005

### Beliefs

- Trinity
- Salvation by Grace
- Authority of Bible
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- Stewardship

### Practices

- Worship
- Prayer
- Bible Study
- Single-mindedness
- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving My Time
- Giving My Money
- Giving My Faith
- Giving My Life

### Virtues

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness/Goodness
- ? Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-Control
- Hope
- Humility
- Forgiveness

## Learning to Fly

Have you ever learned to fly (without an aircraft)? No human has ever done so. We lack two things: the right equipment (arms make for lousy wings) and an innate instinct. The barn swallows that are nesting above the front door of our home are quite a different story. About a month ago, Momma Swallow gave birth to a batch of chicks. In the days that followed our family watched the drama unfold. For a few days very little happened. Then suddenly, we came home one night to find one of the babies sitting on our front door threshold. We chose to enter the house through the garage but wondered whether the little chick would survive the night away from the nest (it was obviously still unable to fly). The next day, the chick was beginning to flutter its way around our yard. And a day later we saw it up on our roof. It had learned to fly! Its God-given innate instinct took hold.

When it comes to living the life God has for us in Christ, ordinary human instinct just doesn't cut it. It will, in fact, take us in the wrong direction. But something does happen when we become His through faith in Jesus. He gives us a **new instinct** that we must learn to live by. This is what Paul is praying for in Colossians 1. He is asking God to give us a deep sense of who Christ is, who we are as his children, and how we are to live. This rebirth may happen in a moment, but the process of learning to "fly" in Christ takes a lifetime.

## Monday – Paul Gets Busy

Please read Colossians 1:9-14.

1. Paul is writing this letter from prison. Instead of feeling hopeless and helpless, Paul gets busy in his efforts to help the Colossian believers. What does he do for them? Why is this remarkable?
2. In your own words, what is Paul requesting of God in this prayer?

**Text Insight** – *“The link with the opening thanksgiving (for this reason) should not be overlooked. It is because of what God has already done that Paul can pray with confidence for what God will do.”* Tom Wright – *Colossians and Philemon*

3. As you consider the **text insight**, what has God already done?
4. What did Paul have the confidence that God will do?

## Tuesday – Inheritance

*“But the treasure we have in heaven is also something very much available to us now. We can and should draw upon it as needed, for it is nothing less than God himself and the wonderful society of his kingdom even now interwoven in my life.”*

Dallas Willard – *The Divine Conspiracy*

Please read Colossians 1:12-14 and Ephesians 2:11-13.

1. What do you think about when you hear the word “inheritance”? In what context do you normally hear this word used?
2. What does Paul tell us about our inheritance in Colossians 1:12?
3. In Ephesians 2:11-13, Paul describes our condition apart from Christ. What was our condition?
4. How has our situation changed because of Christ and his work of redemption and forgiveness?

**Closing Prayer** – *Father, we confess that we do not fully understand how bad off we were before we met your Son Jesus. We know we were lost and without hope but we struggle to understand the full extent of our “lostness”. In the same way, we do not understand how glorious the inheritance is that you have given us as your children. Help us to understand. Help us to see. And then move us to deep gratitude for this amazing thing you have done for us. Amen.*

## Wednesday – Rescued!

*“... we have all been delivered, as if by one of those SWAT teams that snatch a victim out of a dangerous situation. So the Lord Jesus has ‘rescued us from the dominion of darkness,’ from increasing uncertainty about life and from groping after futile goals.”* Ray Stedman – (sermon)

Please read Colossians 1:12-14.

1. Have you ever been rescued or known someone who was rescued? What was it like?
2. What does this passage say about the rescue that Christ carried out on our behalf?
3. What were we rescued from? What were we rescued into?

**ØDigging Deeper** – Paul says we were rescued from a “dominion of darkness” and into a kingdom of love. What difference does that make for your day today/tomorrow? What can you do to take advantage of the resources of love and light that are ours in Christ?

## Thursday – Exodus

*“When Paul speaks of God rescuing people from one kingdom and giving them another, and of ‘redemption’ and ‘forgiveness’ as the central themes of that rescue operation, he has the Exodus from Egypt in mind. What God has done in Jesus, and is now doing for them, is the new Exodus, the great moment of setting the slaves free. To become a Christian is to leave the ‘Egypt’ of sin and travel gratefully towards the promised inheritance.”*

Tom Wright – *Paul for Everyone*

Please read Colossians 1:12-14 and Exodus 6:6-8, 12:25-27, and 14:29-31.

1. In what ways does Israel’s exodus from Egypt parallel ours out of the dominion of darkness?
2. Look carefully at the passage from Exodus 6. How is the yoke of sin we were under similar to Israel’s yoke of slavery under Egypt?
3. What does Exodus 6:7 tell you about God’s heart for his people?
4. In what ways is Israel’s Promised Land a metaphor for our inheritance in Christ?

## Friday – Spontaneous Gratitude

*“Spontaneous gratitude of this kind is a sign that they are coming to know and love the true God, as opposed to some imaginary one. Gods that people invent can’t compare with the true one when it comes to overflowing generosity.”* Tom Wright – *Paul for Everyone*

Please read Colossians 1:9-14.

1. Paul tells us that a God-rich life will result in great thankfulness for all that Christ has done. Why do you think that gratitude is such an essential part of our relationship with Christ?
2. Read Luke 7:36-50. What is there to learn about gratitude from this story?
3. What can we learn from this woman?
4. Have we been forgiven much, just as the woman has been forgiven much? If so, than why are we so often neglectful in our gratitude towards God?

## Saturday - Redemption

**re-demp-tion** - the purchase back of something that had been lost, by the payment of a ransom.

Please read Colossians 1:9-12 and Galatians 3:10-14.

1. What does an act of redemption involve?
2. What did our redemption involve? What kind of a price did Christ pay?
3. Take a few moments to list some of the things from which Christ redeemed you.
4. How is redemption related to forgiveness?

Book Recommendation: Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters by Tom Wright



### Homegroup Discussion

*This section is designed for Home Groups and Small Groups who would like to discuss the Scrolls together. Begin by reading Colossians 1:9-14 and Exodus 6:6-8.*

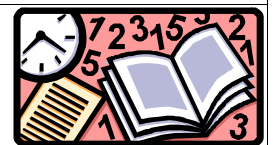
1. Have you ever been rescued or known someone who was rescued? What was it like?
2. What does this passage say about the rescue that Christ carried out on our behalf?

What were we rescued from? What were we rescued into?

3. Please read the two quotes found under Thursday’s and Friday’s sections.
4. In what ways does Israel’s exodus from Egypt parallel ours out of the dominion of darkness?
5. Look carefully at the passage from Exodus 6. How is the yoke of sin we were under similar to Israel’s yoke of slavery under Egypt?
6. What does Exodus 6:7 tell you about God’s heart for his people?
7. In what ways is Israel’s Promised Land a metaphor for our inheritance in Christ? Conclude your group time with a time of thanksgiving to God for all that he has done for us.

### Family Time with Kids

*Families can use these kid-friendly questions to help your children learn what you studied this week. Begin by reading Colossians 1:12-14.*



1. In verse 12 Paul says we qualify for an inheritance. What is an inheritance? What is the inheritance Paul talks about? How exactly did we qualify (hint in verse 14)? Do we qualify by all the good things we do? Why or why not?
2. Please look up the word *redemption*. What does it mean and who redeemed us?
3. Do you know...redemption and forgiveness go together (Ephesians 1:7 & Colossians 1:14)? We can not have forgiveness without redemption from Christ. Has it ever been hard for you to forgive someone? Give an example of when and why it was difficult. What’s amazing is that God overlooks all our sin (forgiveness) because of Christ’s redemption.

**ØDigging Deeper - When you’re having trouble forgiving someone, take a moment and think about how God forgave you. Then set an example for others by forgiving that person.**

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