Sermon for Lifeway Church Theme: Purpose

Set Apart

All of us have a set of the most basic needs.

It is like we have a hole in our hearts that need to be filled. Nothing in the world meets these most basic needs.

We need to feel safe.

We need to feel value and purpose.

We need to have connection.

We need to give and receive love.

Of course, all of these things are found in Christ.

I gave a midweek for Lifeway 1-1/2 years ago on being in Christ.

What is the word or phrase used most often to describe a saved person in the New Testament?

Christian? Redeemed? Saved? Disciple? Born again? Forgiven?

No! It is In Christ.

In Christ, In Him, In the Lord 164 times in Paul alone.

Philippians2:1 **Encouragement** in Christ.

Coll 1:13-14 Redeemed in Christ

Gal 3:26 C**hildren of God** in Christ.

You have been redeemed. You have been bought back. Dictionary: “To gain or regain possession of something in exchange for payment.”

Colossians 2:10 **fullness** of God in Christ

Ephesians 1:3 **every spiritual blessing in Christ**

Ephesians 1:4, 11 **chosen** “For he has chosen us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”

1 Corinthians 15:22 we are made alive in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:21 Made righteous in Christ.

Romans 6:23 have eternal life in Christ Jesus

Romans 8:38-39 **secure love of God** in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17 a new creation in Christ. “If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. Behold, the old has gone, the new has come.

Romans 8:1 no condemnation in Christ. “Therefore, there is now **no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**.

How and when do we come into Christ? Galatians 3:26 All of you were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

But this morning I want to talk about just one aspect of what we have in Christ, which is we have value in Christ. We have purpose in Christ.

Three points:

1. We are set apart in Christ.

2. We are holy in Christ.

3. We are transformed in Christ.

1. Set apart Romans 1:1-2 Paul: Set apart for the gospel.

The Greek word is *aphorizo* to set apart, separate. Having a special purpose.

This is something we so desperately need.

Illlustration: That doctor I lived with in Colorado. I hate vacations. When I stop working I realize my life is meaningless.

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

We were set apart. For what? To declare the praises of Him who set us apart.

2. In Christ we are made holy.

To all God’s holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi… (Philippians 1:1)

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people… (1 Corinthians 1:2)

Both holy and sanctified are the Greek word hagios

The word holy is found nearly two hundred times in the New Testament. Sanctified 14 times. The Greek word translated as holy or sanctified is *hagios*, which means holy, consecrated (in other words acceptable for worship of God)

Without holiness no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14)

If you are in Christ, you are a saint. You are special.

Turn to the person next to you and greet them. Good to meet you Saint Carlos. My pleasure Saint Claire.

In Christ you are set apart by the God of Heaven to worship him. You are his special one.

The world treats holiness as a thing of no value. In fact, they consider it a thing of negative worth—something they would pay to be rid of. Yet, without holiness, no one will see God. I want to see God! Surely you do as well. If we will see God at all, it will only be because he has made us holy, and we are made holy in Christ.

Holiness is not something people talk about much at work. Do you want to be holy?

OK. In Christ we are set apart. We are a royal priesthood. We are holy, sanctified.

But sanctified for what?

Set apart for what?

3. In Christ we are transformed.

2 Cor 3:7-18

2 Cor 3:7-11

The old covenant is “the ministry that brought death.”

Why? Romans 7:13 It made sin utterly sinful.

It made us realize what great trouble we were in.

It brought about ceremonial cleanness.

But, it was glorious.

What does glorious/glory mean.

English: magnificent, wonderful, worthy of great praise.

Hebrew: Shining forth—emitting great light

And Moses’ ministry was truly glorious!!!! Literally!!!

He had to wear a veil.

When the temple was consecrated the priests came running out because of the glory of the Lord. (1 Kings 8:10 the glory of the Lord filled the temple)

But the ministry of Christ—the New Covenant is far more glorious.

v. 9 It brings righteousness.

v. 11 It lasts.

2 Cor 3:12-18

v. 12 Because we have this hope, we are very bold.

What hope? The hope of glorification. The hope of a glorification like that of Moses, only greater.

Q: Would you say that you are very bold?

v. 14, 16 In Christ the veil is removed!!!! In Christ you can finally see.

Q: Can you remember when God removed the veil?

v. 16 This happens when we receive the Holy Spirit at baptism

Here is the main passage for tonight—the real take-home lesson:

2 Cor 3:16 Having the veil removed is not the goal. The goal is spiritual transformation. The goal is convergence. The goal is glorification!!!

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate/reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory.

It is both. We contemplate, then we reflect, then we contemplate, then we reflect, then we contemplate, then we reflect.

Q: Is this happening in your life?

What is the key: Contemplating!!!

Get the vision: Transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory.

The goal of the Christian life is not just salvation. It is Transformation

So, let us contemplate so that we can reflect.

2 Cor 4:1-2 Transformed for what? For “this ministry.”

We commend our selves to every person’s conscience.

In Christ we are set apart.

In Christ we are holy/sanctified.

In Christ the veil is removed.

In Christ we are transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory.