

51-01-03 The People of the Kingdom

gratitude, Kingdomtide, saints, darkness, light, forgiveness

Col 1:12-14

Christians are a different kind of people from a different Kingdom.

INTRODUCTION: (read **text...**)

--The season of Kingdomtide does not stand alone, but falls within the Pentecost season. Kingdomtide celebrates the growth of the Church in the world before Christ's Second Advent. Without the power of Pentecost filling and motivating Kingdom people, the Gospel doesn't spread nor does Christ's Kingdom grow.

--**title** : for Kingdom growth there must be something different about the people of the Kingdom. It's the power of the Holy Spirit in us that makes the Church able to testify that **HOM.idea**. What is it about Christians that our world wants or needs? According to our **text**, Christians are...

I. A People of Thanksgiving– v.12a, “*giving thanks to the Father*”

- A. For Christians, Thanksgiving Day is all year long [our main ritual celebration bears that name “Eucharist” (thanksgiving)].
- B. Gratitude is healthy (helps the immune system). People *feel better and live better* when they're grateful! [**Few people live to be 100**, but the ones I've met all seemed to have one character trait in common: gratitude.]
- C. The attitude of gratitude, when *verbalized*, has a refreshing effect... it creates a pleasant atmosphere where, so often, the sound is not *grateful* but “*gripe-full*.”

TRANS: Thanksgiving always has an object. For us the object of our gratitude is what God the Father has done for us, and will do for those who come to Christ. So, we are a grateful people, and we are...

II. A People with a Heavenly Destiny– v.12b, “*qualified ... to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light*”

- A. What makes us “*qualified*” for an “*inheritance ... in the kingdom of light*”?
 1. Going to Heaven requires qualification. [Quality Control isn't an idea original to American industry. God's always had that concept about who gets to spend eternity with Him.] Heaven is holy, and our qualification for entering there is holiness– Heb 12:14, **Make every effort** to live in

peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

2. The only “*effort*” for holiness humans can make as is to yield to God's work in us by the Holy Spirit (It takes *effort* to say “*No*” to our *own will* and say “*Yes*” to *God's will*, and it's by the power of the Holy Spirit that we can even make that *effort*.)
- B. Being different than the world means seeing ourselves as a “separate” (holy) people (How does being *people of God's Kingdom* [*saints*] translate practically?)
 1. If we are *saints* [*holy people*], we will shun *unholy* activities– Titus 2:11-14. For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “*No*” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. (*What an excellent passage to meditate on as we start each day!*)
 2. BUT how do we keep focused on our spiritual inheritance while we live in this mundane, physical world?– Col 3:1-3. Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.
- C. Being different from the world is difficult when we find ourselves still too attached to it... Our answer is in Christ's Cross– Gal 6:14. May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

TRANS: The Cross of Christ has transforming power! If you join yourself by faith to the crucified Christ, He takes you with Him through death to this world into a resurrection to a new life, a life to be lived *in* the world, but not *of* the world. We are a different people...

III. A People of Another Realm– v.13, “*brought ... into the kingdom of the Son he loves*”

- A. Sometimes we get reminders that this world, in its present shape, is not our true home [in the media or daily conversation we meet or hear about people who need to be “*rescued ... from...darkness*”].
- B. What does this rescue from darkness involve? It involves....
 1. Trading worldly blindness for divine vision (Satan controls people by blindness– 2 Cor 4:4, The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the

glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

2. Trading worldly falsehoods for a loyalty to truth. We trade...
 - a. “If I had that, I’d be happy?” for “Happiness is the Lord!”
 - b. “I deserve more for myself!” for “I can give others more!”
 - c. “Me first!” for “JOY = Jesus, 1st; Others, 2nd; and You last...”
3. Trading worldly ways for Christ-like ways (holding up each area of our life to the light of Christ) How do we do this?
 - a. **First**, get to know Jesus well in prayer (“listening prayer”), & in the 4 Gospels (seeing Christ from a variety of viewpoints).
 - b. **Then**, ask, “What would Jesus do?”

TRANS: As *Kingdom people*, we know the difference between what *the dominion of darkness* offered, and what we now have in *the kingdom of the Son he loves*, where we have become....

IV. A People Who Know God's Forgiveness— v.14, “we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins”

A. Our redemption was costly to God!

1. Redeemed people stay different by remembering this fact through meeting together, daily prayer, devotional reading, fellowship with believers, & esp. Holy Communion [“in remembrance of Me”].
2. Redeemed people are different when they reach out. (If the price of redemption has been paid, why not let everyone know about it?)

B. The special earmark of our redemption is “the forgiveness of sins”

1. How can you tell if a person is **unforgiven**? Those who haven't experienced forgiveness have a tough time forgiving others.
2. The foremost feature identifying Christians ought to be their ability to forgive others (Jesus is our example from the Cross itself: “Father forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.”
Without this testimony, we sow the Gospel on stony ground.

CONCLUSION:

–Some people are satisfied with the “*same old*” and don't want “*something different*.” Others realize that the “*same old*” hasn't worked. They're looking for something different that will change the way they live. Hopefully, they will see in us that **Christians are a different kind of people from a different Kingdom**, and they will want to be part of that kingdom, too.

Col 1:12-14 (NIV), giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. {13} For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, {14} in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Col 1:12-14 (NKJV), giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. {13} He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, {14} in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.