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Colossians Transcriptions
140316

The Great Translation of the Soul

Colossians 1:13 *“He rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son [or the kingdom of the Son of His love], in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”*

Verse 13 is one of a few places in the New Testament that, in my view, summarize the gospel in a single verse. There are a few verses like this... verses that say so much with so few words. Like Galatians 2:20, “I’ve been crucified with Christ and it’s no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.” And then there’s Colossians 3 where Paul says “You have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” Another one is John 14:20 where Jesus says, “I am in the Father, you are in me and I am in you.” That’s the gospel right there, summed up in a few words.

Colossians 1:13 is another one of these verses. I think about this verse and quote it a lot because I feel like it says so much in such a short sentence. It seems like it just keeps getting bigger and bigger in my heart. It means more and more all the time.

You know how this works. You read a word in the bible and the first thing always do is supply your own understanding to that word. That’s how it starts. Maybe you hear a definition or read a definition, but either way it’s your own understanding. Even if someone tells you what a word means, you still are the creator of what that phrase or definition means in your heart! That’s how we approach the bible.

Then, when light begins to dawn in your heart, something absolutely opposite begins to happen. What’s that? The seeing of Christ, in one way or another, begins to define the word. You see something of God's definition, reality, substance. And this always removes, destroys, and crushes what you thought that word meant. It does this because no matter what you thought it meant—even if your definition doesn't change with respect to the words you use—the thing that you were thinking, seeing, desiring, wanting, etc. behind those words is now totally different.

It's hard to describe this, but it always happens. You always come with a bag full of ideas and concepts, all of which come from the wrong mind, and the light always cuts open your bag, drops everything out of it, and tries to fill it up with a far greater reality.

I'm talking about words like kingdom, or darkness, or love—there are so many words in just this one sentence! I feel like the Lord constantly cuts away the things that I brought to that word, and little by little He's replacing it with something that has always been true in Christ.

So anyway, this verse started to get bigger in my heart when I began to understand that **the gospel is about coming out of something and coming into something else**. I don't think that's a common understanding or view of the gospel in the church today. I think that you could say that as Christians we're generally pretty unaware of what we're coming out of and also pretty ignorant of what we're coming into. We don't really know that we've left anything, except maybe a lifestyle—going to bars, using bad language, etc. And we don't really know we've come into something, except maybe a church building or belief system or a different set of behaviors.

However, once you have eyes to see, you start to see the same pattern everywhere in Scripture. You see it when God was dealing with His people in types and shadows, using natural pictures of coming spiritual realities. And then, when you get to the New Testament you see it declared not exactly in this same way, in so many different, clear descriptions. Like when Paul says in Ephesians 2 “when we were dead in sin and trespasses, He made us alive together with Christ, raised us up...”

Here are few more verses from the Old Testament to consider:

Genesis 15:7, speaking to Abraham, “And the Lord God said, I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land, to possess it.” God defines Himself as ‘the One who brought you out to bring you in.’

Deuteronomy 6:23, He says, “He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers.”

Leviticus 25:38 “I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan, to be your God.”

In these stories you see that God is identifying Himself, or desiring that they understand Him to be, the One who brought them out of something and brought them into something else. That is the story of the Exodus. That is the story of Abraham. That's the story of Lot; of Ruth; of Rebekah. That's the story! That's the gospel!

Again, I feel like in the church today we are largely ignorant of this and the reason is simple. It's because you can't see it. You can't see it with a natural mind. You can't see it with natural eyes. You can't even understand it when it's being described with spiritual words, until the light begins to shine in your heart and you start to see in that light both what you've come out of and what you've come in to. This is something you can only see in His light.

Remember we talked a couple weeks ago about the inheritance of "the saints in light", and how everything that God gives you is something that's real, but it's real for you in the light? It's not accessible outside of that light. It's not knowable outside of His own light. In His light, you see light, but apart from that light you are a light unto yourself. And the light that you are unto yourself is what Jesus called "darkness." If the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

There's a different kind of light, a kind of light that shows all other lights to be darkness. That's the light that begins to work in your heart and begins to show you this great transition. T. Austin Sparks calls it the great transition from one humanity to another. (He doesn't mean there are two kinds of Adam, he means a transition from the corporate body of Adam to the corporate body of Christ.)

Until light dawns in the heart, if you start talking about change or being translated out of one thing to another, even to a believer, it's going to be very unfamiliar. You ask them what changed when they got saved, and they'll try to answer that question describing a change of external, natural things. "I stopped hanging out with these bums I used to hang out with and I started reading the bible. That's what changed." Or "I stopped dropping all these four-letter words, and I started to pray more."

Now there's nothing wrong with those things—they're probably very appropriate-- but that's not really the change that is supposed to be most real to you. Those might be some by-products of the great translation, of the true change —taking out of one and putting into another —but this shouldn't be the only change you know. The most real thing about Christianity to you should not be the outward by-products of salvation. The greatest reality should be the translation out of the dominion and kingdom of darkness, into an experience of the kingdom of

the Son who receives everything from His father. THIS should be progressively becoming more real to your heart.

So what have we left? What have we gone out of and what have we gone into? I like the way Paul says it here. He says, "He has delivered us from the power of darkness, the dominion of darkness or the kingdom of darkness."

What's the kingdom of darkness? A lot of times we don't really know what it is. We think of it as being bad... we think it probably involves demons and evil people and bad actions and ugly things, but what is the nature of it? What's the reality of the kingdom of darkness?

If I could try to summarize it in a few words, as far as I've seen, **the kingdom of darkness seems to me to have to do with the total lack, the total absence of spiritual light; a complete blindness to God's view of what is real. Like a present absence of light... A tangible lack of reality wherein the soul of man is governed by a nature... a particular seed.**

I don't think that when you think about the kingdom of God you should think about something external to the human soul. There may be a sense in which that is true as well... I don't know. I haven't seen anything about that. The natural mind thinks of it as an external thing, but the place where darkness actually creates an environment for the strong man, for the seed that is contrary to God, isn't an external location.

There's a place where darkness has established a dominion where anything goes because there is no light to know what's real. And in that darkness, any influence or deception makes total sense. There's a darkness where you can justify anything; you can rationalize anything. You can believe anything you want and no one can tell you it's not right, because your ideas are just as valid as their ideas in the complete absence of light.

There is a darkness where, by nature, you obey the law of sin and death. You do it to your own destruction and you don't even know why you do it! You call it your own free will. You think you're just doing what you want to do but you don't understand that something is governing your perspective, something is motivating what you want to do and why you want to do it. You live as a slave to a seed... to Satan... to sin... to the nature of sin and death.

So the dominion of darkness is exactly that – it's darkness. It's an environment that the enemy controls because there's absolutely no light shining there at all. It's Babylon. It is confusion and darkness. There are many words that the Bible uses to speak of this contrary kingdom, this

contrary government... Words like division, confusion, the enemy of the Seed, the serpent's seed.

Well what is the kingdom of God? The kingdom of God is very much the opposite. And again, these are weak words that I'm trying to use to share my small view, so please don't write what I say down and think that you've learned anything. You have to see these things and know them.

But if I were to try to describe what I think of the kingdom of God, I would say I think of an inward reign of life and light in the true power of God. I think of an inward reign, or government, of life and light. It's a kind of government or reign that causes the soul (wherever the light is shining) to align and become congruent with, the truth, the nature, the mind, the purpose of the One who is the light.

In the same way that the soul is in perfect alignment with the darkness when there is no light, in such a way that you don't even have to try to do bad things, because everything you do in the darkness is an expression of darkness... in that same way, light works in your soul. It gives you a view and an experience of the power, the mind, the nature, the light, the life, the purpose of Christ. And it grows in you with the spreading of that light.

As light touches these hostile territories in your soul, the uncircumcised Philistines and fortified high things that have risen up against the true knowledge of God, these fortresses and imaginations that are there... as light begins to touch those things, they are cut down and conformed to the truth.

The analogy I use often is where you're in a totally pitch dark room. You can live in that pitch dark room for twenty-five years, and come to be one hundred percent convinced of what you think is in there. **But when light comes, it doesn't change your opinion—it doesn't give you a new opinion, light just shows you what's real. Light removes opinions. Opinions are what you have when you don't have light. Let me just say it a little stronger than that. Beliefs are what you have when you don't have light. Without light, you have to believe something.**

But faith is so different than human belief. Faith is an inward light, a seeing that actually removes your beliefs. Faith actually kills your beliefs and it does that because it shows you, it shows your heart, what is real. And once you've seen what's real, you can walk by faith and not by sight. You can live in that light.

What I'm trying to say about the kingdom of God is that, when the heart begins to experience God's reign in light, it both presses upon your soul the reality of God's view, *and* it removes from your soul all the things that you think you know.

He has transferred us out of the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love. He's taking your soul out of the dominion of darkness where what reigns there is everything that is contrary to the light, and He has placed you down in a new life, light, power, realm, government.

Consider these verses:

Matthew 12:29 - *Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man? Then he will plunder his house.*

Matthew 12:43 - *Jesus says a little more about this house... "When an unclean spirit goes out of a man he goes to dry places seeking rest and finds none. Then he says 'I will return to my house, from which I came,' and when he comes he finds it empty, swept and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself and they go and dwell there. And the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it be with this wicked generation."*

What is the house? *You're* the house. And what's the strong man? The strong man is the one who owns the house, who indwells the house, who possess the house, who decorates the house according to his own nature, who governs and fills it with his own stuff. And what's Christ doing? He's taking the house out of the possession of one strong man, binding the strong man, and moving into the house.

Now this is what Jesus was seeing when He was casting out demons from random Israelites. I think this was very apparent to His eyes because His eyes saw with true light. What was apparent? It was apparent that He was removing something that He was not then replacing with Himself, and so he described the condition that He was seeing. In other words, He knew that in that generation, even though He was going around from one person to another person--hundreds and thousands of people – casting out demons, He knew that unless He became the new indwelling resident or power in that house, that the last condition would be worse than the first. So He was warning that generation against this. And this is exactly what we need to understand, too.

I don't understand a whole lot about demons these days, but I think whether you're talking about specific demons or just the nature of sin, Adam, the seed of Satan, etc., the thing that God is trying to do in us is not just remove something and leave an empty house. Rather He seeks the increase of one dominion or kingdom to cause liberty and freedom from another.

And that's what our slavery has to do with. Again... what did we leave? What did we come into? You could say we left the dominion of darkness and we came into the kingdom of God, the Son of His love. You could say that we changed from a house controlled by one strong man to a house filled with another strong man.

We've LEFT something, and we need to understand this! We've left death. We've left separation from God. We've left darkness, we've left the inability to see what is real. We've left the world – at least in our soul. Our soul is very literally no longer of the world. Our soul was born of one creation and it was translated into another creation, another realm, another life. It literally was. That's why Jesus says you are no longer of this world. That's why Paul says you are citizens of heaven. That's why Scripture says you've been raised up and seated with Christ in the heavens. That's obviously not true about your skin and your bones and your natural eyeballs, but it is true of your soul.

We've left what we've called our lives. We've left that *kind* behind... Adam. There are so many ways to describe it, but I'm just trying to point out that this translation from one thing to another is much bigger than we've seen. That's why the entire Old Testament is showing types and shadows of it. And the entire New Testament is declaring it to be accomplished in Christ in Spirit and truth.

So what have we come INTO? We've come into a new life, a new covenant, that is to say a new relationship with God that's totally different than the old relationship. We've come to a new man. We've become 'slaves of righteousness.' We've come out of darkness into pure light—a light that man cannot approach. It's unapproachable light for man, and yet it's the light that comes to shine in your soul. Man can't get close to that light. There's a light that man always runs and hides from, and yet it's the light that shines in your heart to give you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. You've come into a spiritual land flowing with milk and honey, which speaks of true nourishment and joy.

When you're born of the Spirit, your soul is translated out of the one and into the other. For an unbeliever, the issue is that you're dead in sins and trespasses, and you need life. But for a Christian, for the believer, the primary issue is not that you lack life, it's that you lack LIGHT!

Going back to the thing Paul says in the beginning of Colossians, there's an inheritance for the saints *in light*. The light is what shows you the inheritance. I know I'm repeating myself, but this is so vital because without the light you cannot know "the things that have been freely given to you by God." So the limitation of our experience of this great translation corresponds to the limitation of spiritual sight. That's the key.

Now, in the absence of the light that shows you what is "now in Christ," we're forced to do two things. I think these two things are pillars of wrong theology in the body of Christ. **We're forced to say that the things described in the bible have not come, that they're future, and we're forced to say that they are natural. In other words, we naturalize or carnalize the things described in scripture, and we futurize them. I'm making up these words but they work. We misunderstand the time of them and we misunderstand the nature of them.**

Everything that God has given you is now real in Christ. He's not waiting to do another work besides the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus Christ. There's not another thing that needs to be done to accomplish the eternal purpose of God in Christ, Ephesians 3:12~ "The eternal purpose of God which He accomplished in Jesus Christ our Lord."

There is NOT another big cross coming—the cross part two or three. Everything that God has given you in His Son is now real in Christ. And the only thing that needs to happen for you to walk the width and the depth and the breadth and height of the love of God in Christ is for you to lift up your eyes and see and know and walk in, abide in, put down roots in, and bear the fruit of the land that God has put you in.

Everything of the life is inside the seed of a plant, and yet the plant grows with its exposure to light; it bends to the light and it fights its way through the other weeds and plants to get light. It's not a coincidence that it happens to be the same way in the natural realm as it is in the spiritual realm. It's a divinely created pattern. Light causes the seed to come to full expression. Everything of life is bound up in that one little seed, and it's incredible need for light.

So, back to Colossians 1:13. The whole Christian experience has to do with coming out of one power, one dominion, and coming into another power, another dominion. And then you grow in the new and put off the old. Spiritual growth is the experience of the one power—the resurrected life of Jesus Christ given to your soul—it's the one power rising up in the soul and putting down another dominion, another kingdom, another power.

Maybe to you who are listening to this, maybe this is something you've heard us say so many times, or you've said it so many times, and now it seems obvious. But it's not obvious to so many! There are so many books and ideas and sermons that say something quite the opposite! Just turn on the radio and you'll hear hundreds of sermons that have to do with a version of Christian growth that has *nothing* to do with the inward rising up of one life and seed, the power of an indestructible life—the life of Christ— being formed in you by the revealing in the light, and thereby, a putting down, a crushing under its feet, and a bruising of the head of another seed that is displaced. The one Seed increasing and crowding the other seed out of the human soul. That's just not something you hear very much.

We usually hear that spiritual growth is these three things you should do for God, or these five bible verses you have to memorize and quote out loud... Or maybe these ministries you have to join... Or some kind of self-discipline that makes you more like Jesus... Or any of a dozen of ideas that have a form of godliness without power. What is the power? Is it the power of signs and wonders? No! Signs and wonders are just a type and shadow of the power of Christ's indestructible life! Do you understand what I just said?

External signs and wonders-- like when Jesus curses a fig tree and it withers from the roots up-- are a type and shadow of something greater! There's another tree that's supposed to wither up by the roots in your soul. Jesus walks on water and yes, that's amazing. But that's exactly what your soul is supposed to do right now—walk above the sea, fixing your eyes on Jesus to keep you from sinking into death.

Natural signs and wonders, (though real... and I totally believe in their reality throughout all history) are just the shadow. These are just the fringes of God's ways.

Job 26:13-14 "By His breath the heavens are cleared; His hand has pierced the fleeing serpent. "Behold, these are the fringes of His ways; And how faint a word we hear of Him!"

I like this verse. These external signs and wonders are supposed to point to something. These are the fringes of His ways, and they're supposed to point you to the greater inward reality. I say this to myself all the time, believe me I do, and I want to say it to everyone who's a believer: **In your heart, is Christianity an experience of the inward power of an indestructible life crushing the seed of the serpent in your soul and turning you into a vessel of righteousness, a vessel of honor, a vessel of the nature of Christ?**

In Genesis three, you see two different kinds of seed, and God describes how they're going to be at enmity with one another. The one seed bites the other seed's heel and then that seed crushes the first seed's head. That view has been on my heart recently. I find myself saying to myself—I really do all the time— “Lord, don't let Christianity be anything less than the power of one kingdom putting down the power of another in me.” And the key to that happening, or the way the Lord does that, is by revealing Jesus Christ in your soul as your life. “When He who is your life is revealed, then you're revealed together with Him where He is.”

There is a finished work, the reality that God has placed you in His Son. And then there is our experience of that finished work by being sanctified in the truth. That's what Jesus says-- sanctified in the truth-- which is experiencing the truth becoming that which separates you from all that is the lie.

Or you could say being washed in the water of the word. Again, it's that living word washing over you like the laver did in the tabernacle, washing all of the residue of the earth from off your hands and your feet. (That's also what Jesus did in John thirteen.)

Or you could say it like it says it in Hebrews— “the purifying of your conscience.” The blood of the old covenant wasn't able to purify the inner man, but the blood of Christ is able to do it. It sprinkles, it purifies the inward man.

Or you could say “the renewing of the spirit of your mind,” the way Paul says it in Ephesians 4:21.. What is that? Again, It's your soul catching up to what is a present reality now in Christ. Light showing you a finished work.

You could call it the truth making you free. Jesus says if you abide in my word, then you will be knowing the truth, and you'll know the truth and the truth will make you free. All of these speak of a the soul progressively knowing, experiencing, and being conformed to a perfect and finished work. This should be our expectation.

Peter says, “You have been regenerated unto a living expectation, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” That's an incredible verse! I want to say to myself and others, 'Is that something you're familiar with? Is Christianity to you a regeneration, a giving of new life that produces in you a living expectation because you've been made to partake in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? Is that real to you? If it's not, well then ok. Then accept that and start to deal with the Lord about why it's not real and what the problem is. I'll bet has to do with the lack of light.