

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

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

—*Kingdomtide*—part of *Pentecost season*—celebrates the Church's growth in the world before Christ's 2nd Advent. The power of the Holy Spirit, poured out at Pentecost, *fills* and *energizes* believers, so that Christ's Gospel will spread and Christ's Kingdom will grow.

—Jesus told Pilate, “My kingdom is **not of this world**.” As Kingdom people, *neither are we!* We have a new birth “*from on high*,” with Jesus living inside us. *But that's just the beginning!* The Holy Spirit empowers us to live out our indwelling King's life in this world. It answers the Lord's Prayer—“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”—*Kingdom people* doing *God's will* through *Kingdom living*.

--**HOM.idea**. What's *different* about *Kingdom people* that can attract others to our King? According to our **text**, Christians are...

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

- A. Thanksgiving Day is popular, but Kingdom people celebrate it all year long. [Our central celebration is the “Eucharist” (lit., *thanksgiving*).]
- B. Gratitude improves the immune system! (We *feel* healthier and *live* longer, when we're grateful! [Few people live to be 100, but those I've met all seemed to have one character trait in common: an *attitude of gratitude*].)
- C. Spoken gratitude has a refreshing effect! (It *clears the air*, by overcoming a gripe-full atmosphere with a gracious, grateful one.)

TRANS: Thanksgiving always has an *object*. For us, it's what God has done, is doing, and will do through Jesus, His Son. *Also, we are...*

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

- A. What qualifies us for an “*inheritance ... in the kingdom of light*”?
 1. God is into *quality control!* [American industry didn't invented it! *God*

did!] (Heaven's quality is *holiness*, and we must be holy to get there— **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. Our best “effort” in “holiness” is to yield to Christ within, as we are led by the Spirit to say “**No**” to our *will* and “**Yes**” to God’s.)
- B. Being *different* means being “saints” [lit. “*holy ones*”], separate from the world, while living in it. (How does this translate practically?)
1. Holy people shun unholy activities—Titus 2:11-14 [BTW, *great words for meditating on before starting a new day!*], 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.
 2. BUT how can we stay focused on our spiritual inheritance while living in this mundane, material 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. Attachment to the world makes it difficult to be different from it! (But, beyond *our salvation*, Christ’s Cross gave us a new kind of freedom— **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: This is *transforming!* In our *union* with Jesus, He applies not only *His death* to *our old life*, but *His resurrection* to *our new life*. We start living *in the world*, but not *of the world*. *We become...*

III. People of Another Realm— **v.13**, “[God] *rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves*”

- A. We can see this present world isn’t our true home [TV & Internet tell us daily about people who need to be “rescued ... from...darkness”].
- B. What does this rescue “from... darkness” involve? It means....*
 1. *Trading worldly viewpoints for divine vision (Satan *enslaves and controls people through spiritual 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 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 more to others!*”
 - c. “*Me first!*” **for** “*JOY = Jesus, 1st; Others, 2nd; and You last...*”
3. How do we trade worldly ways for Christ-like ways? (We have to hold up each area of our lives to the life and light of Christ.)
 - a. *Light on the life of Christ* comes by reading the 4 Gospels.
 - b. The *life of His light* is felt in quiet times of “*listening prayer*,” where we ask, “*What are we doing today, Lord?*” ... then obey.

TRANS: We are *Kingdom people* who have been “rescued” from “*the dominion of darkness*.” *That’s something to shout about!* We were slaves to a deceiver. Now we are servants of the King of kings. We were sinners, blinded through the deception of sin, **but now we are...**

IV. People Whom God Has Forgiven— **v.14**, “*we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins*”

- A. It cost God dearly to redeem us and make us into different people!
 1. We remember this fact by meeting together, by prayer, by Bible reading, by Christian fellowship, and especially by taking Holy Communion [doing it as Jesus asked us to, “in remembrance of Me”].
 2. Redeemed people make a difference by reaching out. (If the price of redemption is paid, why not let everyone else know about it?)
- B. The special earmark of our redemption is “*the forgiveness of sins*”
 1. By truly experiencing God’s “forgiveness,” we become *people of forgiveness*—willing to forgive the sins of others against us.
 2. The ability to forgive others is a *quality in Christ* that makes us, as *Kingdom people*, different!— “Father forgive them, for they don’t know what they’re doing.” (Without His attitude, *alive and displayed in us*, the seed of Christ’s Gospel may fall on *dry, stony ground*.)

CONCLUSION:

—Some may say they’re satisfied with the “*same old same old*” and don’t want “*anything different*.” Others realize that “*the dominion*” of the “*same old*” has failed them. They’re seeking a new life, *different life*. God wants them to see a clear testimony in us that true **Christians are a different kind of people from a different Kingdom**. When they do, they’ll surely want to experience the *difference* that Kingdom living makes. Let’s be Kingdom people, always staying close to our King, so we’re always ready to introduce them to our King.