

The Powerful Working of God; Colossians 2:11-14

I. Faith

- A. *The* “state of believing on the basis of the reliability of the one trusted, trust, confidence” ¹
- B. We should trust the reliability of the “powerful working” of God
- C. But sometimes we doubt
 - 1. A lot of Christians are unsure of their salvation
 - 2. Paul begins this text by telling the christians in Colosse to be rooted in the faith
 - 3. He warns them, “see to it that no one takes you captive” (verse 8)
 - 4. Jesus is the “whole fullness of deity” (verse 9)
 - 5. We have been filled in Him
- D. And we have faith based on God’s powerful working

II. God Raised Him

- A. Paul is referencing Jesus’ resurrection and attributed it to God’s “powerful working”
- B. Matthew 27:57–61 (ESV); ⁵⁷ When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹ And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud ⁶⁰ and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. ⁶¹ Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.
 - 1. These two women were at the tomb — they witnessed the burial
 - 2. Matthew 28:1–6 (ESV); ¹ Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. ⁴ And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.
 - 3. These two women were at the tomb — they witnessed the resurrection
- C. There can be no doubt about the powerful working of God in Jesus’ resurrection

III. God Raised Us

- A. Circumcision of Christ
 - 1. Physical circumcision is a cutting away of flesh — it was a token for Israel from the time of Abraham to the end of the Mosaic Law
 - 2. Paul tells us that our (under Christ) circumcision is made without hands — it is not physical but spiritual
 - 3. Colossians 2:11 (ESV); In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,
 - 4. Romans 2:28–29 (ESV); ²⁸ For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. ²⁹ But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.
 - 5. What was a token for Israel becomes a centerpiece for Christianity
 - 6. The old self is cut away (like circumcision)
 - 7. We put off the old self and rise to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4)
- B. Just as God raised Jesus from the dead, God raises us as well (from spiritual death)

IV. Buried

¹ William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 818.

- A. Colossians 2:12 (ESV); having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.
- B. One who is dead must be buried!
 - 1. The powerful working of God is His ability to raise us from the dead — just as He did Christ (as witnessed by Mary Magdalene and the other Mary)
 - 2. If God said He would raise Christ — and did — then we can be certain that He can raise us — and did!
 - 3. Colossians 1:13–14 (ESV); ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
 - 4. One who has been buried and raised again has been spiritually circumcised — the old person is cut away, we are new
 - 5. We have been united in Jesus' death
 - 6. Romans 6:5 (ESV); For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.
- C. We must be buried to put off the old person!
- D. We must be buried to be circumcised!
- E. We must be buried to be raised!
- V. Alive!
 - A. Colossians 2:13–14 (ESV); ¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.
 - B. Instead of dead and alone we are alive together with Christ!
 - C. This spiritual circumcision, this baptism, this uniting with Jesus in his death makes us alive
 - D. Are you dead or alive?