**Colossians 2:6-15**

I. Introduction

A. How satisfied are you with Jesus?

B. Many of us have the experience of initially being satisfied with Jesus when we came to faith, but over the years we lose our sense of satisfaction and joy in him.

C. Faith tends to not be a static thing; you either cultivate it and it grows, or you ignore it and it decreases.

D. This section is about the “fullness” we have in Christ (v. 9). The Colossians were in danger of losing that sense of fullness and satisfaction they had originally found in Jesus

E. So Paul is encouraging to continue to live in him, just as they received him (v. 6-7)

F. He reminds us of 4 key gospel realities and encourages us to continue to live in them (we will look at #1 and #3)

1. The circumcision of our hearts (v. 11)

2. New life (v. 12-13)

3. The forgiveness of sins (v. 13-14)

4. Victory over our spiritual enemies (v. 15)

II. The forgiveness of sins: debt cancelation (v. 13-14)

A. The “written code” is an imagined document containing all our debts

1. Example: your credit card statement

a. It contains a list of “IOU’s” that you owe the credit card company.

b. Many people know what it feels like to live under the weight of deep financial debt.

2. So also we have a list of moral debts before God

a. “with its regulations”: this is most likely a list of all of God’s commandments.

b. Because we cannot obey these commandments, they become a list of our moral debt before God, payable only by death

c. God is a God of justice. He is like a perfect accountant who keeps track of everything.

d. Many people know what it feels like to live under the guilt and weight of this moral debt before a holy God

B. The gospel is that God “cancelled the written code and took it way (v. 14)

1. He did this by nailing this document to the cross

a. He placed on Jesus all our moral debt

1) In his life Jesus perfectly fulfilled God’s commands

2) In his death he paid for all our moral debt with God

3) This is how God can be true to his justice and still forgive us (how he can be both just and the one who justifies sinners: Ro 3:25)

b. So our debt is paid in full and we no longer owe God anything.

c. When we sin as Christians, we can appeal not only to God’s mercy but also to his justice because it would be unjust for him to make two different people pay for the same debt.

III. The circumcision of the heart (v. 11)

A. In OT God gave Jews physical circumcision as a sign of the covenant

B. Drawing on that analogy, Paul says that Christ has performed a spiritual circumcision on us

1. He has cut off/put off the “flesh”/sinful nature

a. The “flesh” is that heart posture of pride and self reliance

1. I’ll decide for myself what is right and wrong

2. I’ll look to myself to solve my problems and run my life

b. The flesh can take two tracks

1. The immoral track: resists God’s rules and lives however it wants

2. The moral track: resists God’s grace and tries to be good in its own power

c. The issue is Control

2. At conversion Christ circumcises that sinful nature

a. Other analogies: “makes us alive”, gives us new birth, removes our heart of stone and gives us a heart of flesh

b. Something in our hearts melts/softens as we see Christ die for our sins

3. We are given faith (the opposite of that prideful self-reliant posture).

Notice how Paul describes his own experience in Galatians 2:20

IV. How can we continue to live in what we have received? (v. 6-7)

A. Don’t go back to human effort in your relationship with God

1. While our salvation started as free gift of grace, over time it’s easy to start working for God’s approval again

2. Consider Romans 4:4-5

B. Don’t go back to trying to control your own life

1. While our salvation started as us surrendering control of our lives to Christ, over time it’s easy to start taking back control

2. On paper we may be surrendered, but practically we are control freaks

a. We try to control other people’s perceptions of us

b. We avoid situations where we feel out of control

c. When problems come, rather than going to God, we go into fix it mode

C. It’s hard to be satisfied with Jesus when we are busy trying to earn it or trying to control things

D. Consider Jesus’ invitation in Matthew 11: 28-30

**Discussion Questions**

1. How would you answer the opening question posed on Sunday: how satisfied are you with Jesus? Is your walk with Jesus and faith in Jesus something that is currently a very satisfying experience? Why or why not?

2. Consider the analogy of debt cancelation used by Paul to describe the forgiveness of sins. What stood out to you in that, or what did you come to appreciate in a new or deeper way?

3. Discuss together what was meant by the statement made on Sunday: when you sin as a Christian you don’t need to only appeal to God’s mercy for forgiveness; you can also appeal to his justice? How does that idea strike you?

4. Talk about how the “sinful nature” was defined on Sunday, including the idea that it can take both an “immoral track” and a “moral track.” And what does it actually mean to say that Christ has cut off that sinful nature? (v. 11)