

Col. 1:9-14 (LD 31, Q/A 84) "A Transfer of Domains"

For the Children: Important keys are looked after carefully. We put them in a safe place, and worry if there is a danger that they might be lost or stolen. That is because they open things that are important to us – house doors, car doors, or money-boxes. The preaching of God's Word is even more important. It opens God's Kingdom to us. We should be careful to listen to His Word and remove anything that threatens to prevent us from receiving it. **Questions:** What are some things that could prevent us from listening to preaching? Why is preaching so important to God's children? What would be some signs that preaching is – or is not – important to you?

Introduction:

First Point: The Nature of the Transfer

- 1) **By the Son's Redemption:** Our transfer to God's Kingdom is on the ground of the Son's redeeming work (ss. 12-14) – an echo of Paul's Damascus Rd. encounter with Christ, as described in Acts 26:15-18. By His "ransom" ("redemption") – the payment of a price to buy us back from slavery – we have been re-located, much as ancient kings re-located various peoples within their territory
- 2) **By the Knowledge of His Will:** Our Great King uses means to make this transfer, especially the proclamation and preaching of His Word. This is especially so of the Gospel, for that is what saves the hearer and opens the Kingdom of God to him when God so works within him. There is an inseparable link between the Word-made-flesh and the written Word. His stewards use the preaching of His Word to usher His people into His presence. Hence, preaching must be Christ-centred if it is to function as this key of the Kingdom
- 3) **From Dark to Light:** This transfer is from the darkness of Satan's domain, with its blindness and slavery to Satan and sin, into the freedom and light of Truth and salvation. It is a permanent transfer
- 4) **Opening and Closing:** Not all who hear the Word preached respond rightly. Some remain in unbelief, both outside the church and within its membership. The main purpose of preaching is to open the Kingdom to those who believe – by declaring who Christ is and promising forgiveness and life to those who repent and turn to Christ for salvation. Those who believe that message are, in fact, saved. But there is a secondary purpose, to close the Kingdom to those who refuse to turn to Christ. Preaching further hardens their hearts and it also declares that they are under God's condemnation – a judgement the Lord accepts, since it originates with Him

Second Point: The Results of the Transfer

- 1) **Increasing Wisdom:** Once we know the freedom of God's Kingdom, our love of His Word should increase. Vss. 9-10 speak of a growing knowledge and wisdom. Our love of hearing the Word preached should grow accordingly
- 2) **Worthy Walking:** Preaching also promotes our sanctification, so we walk more and more in a manner worthy of the Lord – in a manner that suits His character. For preaching speaks of God's law and our motivation for obeying Him
- 3) **Patient Endurance:** Preaching also provides us with one of the key pieces of armour with which to resist the devil and persevere in the faith – with steadfastness and patience, relying upon His glorious might
- 4) **Joyous Thanksgiving:** By reminding us of our sin and of Christ's saving work, we are led by preaching to respond in joyful thanksgiving. The transfer from darkness to light should be a cause for great joy and gratitude. So should the reminder of our inheritance in Christ
- 5) **An Attitude to Preaching:** Such a vital key in opening God's Kingdom to us, should be approached with zeal in preparation, carefully listening and following up what we hear, We should be quick to remove any hindrances to receiving the preached Word

Conclusion: