

## The Aim of Reconciliation Colossians 1:21-23

INTRO: The aim of reconciliation is personal holiness. God did not redeem us, reconcile us, make peace with us (vs 20) so we could go on as though we were rebels. Through the blood of the cross of Christ, peace has been made (vs 20). Kenneth Wuest said: "Our Lord by His death on the cross bound together again a holy God and sinful man who placed his faith in the Saviour" (Vol 1 188).

### I. VS 21, THE NECESSITY OF RECONCILIATION

- A. Reconciliation is necessary because people, by nature, are rebellious. J. Vernon McGee said something that I think is so good concerning this: "God did not wait until we promised to scrub our faces, put on Sunday clothes, and go to Sunday School before He agreed to do this work of reconciliation. It was while you and I were in rebellion against Him, while we were doing wicked works that He reconciled us to Himself" (342).
- B. In speaking to the Colossians, Paul says: "And you. . ." Paul is reminding them of how great a blessing, how great a gift we have in being reconciled to God through the blood of Jesus Christ. Here he speaks to them of the wonderful change that had taken place in their lives (II Cor 5:17).
- C. Who they had once been is pointed out by Paul:
  - 1. "Alienated" is the Greek word *appalotrioo* meaning "estranged, cut off, separated."
    - a. Before they're reconciliation, the Colossians were completely separated from God.
    - b. The meaning of alienated is defined in Ephesians 2:12-13. By moral condition, unbelievers are alienated from God.
    - c. Before reconciliation, the Colossians were separated from the life of God and from His fellowship. Ephesians 2:3 says that all men are "by nature the children of wrath," unless they receive the reconciliation provided in Christ Jesus.
  - 2. "Enemies in your mind." This is mental alienation from God.
    - a. "Enemies" is the Greek word *ecthros* meaning "hostile, hating."
    - b. Lost people have minds that are alienated from God.

This explains the antagonism that many so called intellectuals have toward God, why they are intemperate of the truth of the Gospel.

- c. By their hateful attitudes, unbelievers show that they are mentally alienated from God.
3. “By wicked deeds.” Unbelievers hate God; they resent His holy principles and thumb their noses at His commands. They, “loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved” (Jn 3:19-20).
- a. The problem with sinners is not ignorance; it is a willful love for sin and hatred for light (Rm 1:19-24). In Romans 1:18, we see that they, “...hold the truth in unrighteousness.” The Greek word for “hold” means to “hold back, to suppress.” Sinners do not want the truth.
  - b. Sin is the problem; it is the cause of man’s alienation from God. Isaiah 59:2 says: “Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”
  - c. Since sin is the problem, then it is sin that must be dealt with before God and man can be reconciled.
- D. “Now hath he reconciled.” To be reconciled means to be brought back to a right relationship with God— no longer alienated, separated, and hostile enemies of God.
1. “He.” They did not and we cannot reconcile ourselves to God. God takes the initiative in love and grace.
    - a. When we were “without strength” and could do nothing for ourselves, “Christ died for the ungodly” (Rm 5:6).
    - b. Romans 5:8 says: “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” “When we were hostile enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son” (Rm 5:10).
  2. “Reconciled.” How marvelous, how wonderful, “reconciled to God by the death of His Son. . . .” The death of Christ on the cross, the shedding of His blood, has reconciled believers to God (Vs 20).

## II. VS 22, THE OBJECTIVE OF RECONCILIATION

- A. "In the body of his flesh" declares that Christ suffered in a real body, not just appearing to do so as the Gnostics claimed.
1. The physical body of Christ was nailed to the cross.
  2. I Peter 2:24 says concerning Christ: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."
- B. "To present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight." This is the objective of reconciliation, holiness (Eph 1:4). "God's ultimate goal in reconciliation is to present His elect holy and pure before Him" (MacArthur 65). This was the desire of Paul for the church at Corinth where he says: "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Cor 11:2).
1. "Holy." Greek word is *hagios*: "to be separated from sin and set apart to God."
    - a. Positionally, God sees Christians as holy (II Cor 5:21).
    - b. Christians should live Godly lives here on earth. I Peter 1:15-16 says: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."
  2. "Unblameable" means "free from accusation."
    - a. Satan is the accuser of the brethren, but Christ is their advocate (I Jn 2:1).
    - b. By the merits of Christ, believers are free from every charge (Rm 8:33-34).
    - c. Accusations can be made against us, but none of these will ever change our relationship of Sonship with God (Rm 8:35,37-39).
  3. "Unreprouvable." This means we have been cleared of all guilt. This goes beyond "unblameable." We are declared righteous in His sight, justified. We are seen as clothed with the very righteousness of Christ.
  4. We need to become in practice what we are in reality before God (Isa 61:10).

## III. VS 23, THE PROOF OF RECONCILIATION

- A. Kenneth Wuest says: "The word 'if' here is not *ean*, an unfulfilled,

hypothetical, condition used with the subjunctive mode, presenting the possibility of a future realization, but *ei* with the indicative. . . .[showing that] continuance in the gospel as it was preached by Paul would show that the person was saved and thus would be presented holy, without blemish, and unchargeable before God” (Vol 1, 189).

- B. How do we know that we are true believers? Perseverance proves Divine preservation. The New Hampshire Declaration of Faith Article XI says: “We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end, that their persevering attachment to Christ is the mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors, that a special Providence watches over their welfare: and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.”
- C. Because we have a firm foundation, we are saved and secure (I Cor 3;11). We do not always do what we should, but true believers will not deny the Gospel and the power of Christ to save. “I know who I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (II Tim 1:12).
- D. We need to be reminded that there are scores of people who are trusting in their works to get them to heaven, but it is not that way. Friends, religion and ritual will not save (Mt 7:22-23).

CONCLUSION: The blessings of reconciliation are beyond measure.

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June 28, 2009