

Living A Reconciled Life In Christ

Colossians 1:19-29

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Teaching Aim: To demonstrate it is God who initiates reconciliation with us, not we with God. To understand that without God's loving intervention, none of us would have chosen to be reconciled to Him. To realize that "suffering for Christ" is the calling for every believer in this life.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD'S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: Reconciliation God's way (Col. 1:19-23)

1. The Colossian heresy denied Christ's true deity and His true humanity. According to **verse 19**, what was Paul's response to these false teachings? What does Paul mean by the statement, "...in Him all the fullness should dwell"? (See Col. 2:9)
2. What is the meaning of the word "reconcile"? "Reconciliation"? (See Dictionary) Why is it so important for each of us to be reconciled to God? Why should we reconcile with others when needed? (See Matt. 5:23-24)
3. When Paul says "all things" were reconciled to the Father through Christ, does he mean everyone will be saved— "universalism" (vs. 20a)? Why or why not? (See Matt. 25:30,46) According to Paul, what is the only way for people to find peace with God (vs. 20b)? (See Rom. 5:1-2)
4. Why did Christ have to die on a cross rather than by some other means (vs. 20)? (See Gal. 3:13-14) Would stoning (*the Jewish method of execution*) have had the same effect on our salvation? Why or why not?
5. In what ways were the Colossian believers previously "alienated" from God as Gentiles (vs. 21)? (See Eph. 2:1-13) Did the offense requiring reconciliation come from man or from God? Explain your answer. Who was the offended party here? According to **verse 21**, who initiated our reconciliation? Is there somebody in your life that you need to initiate

reconciliation with? What is stopping you?

6. According to **verse 22**, how was reconciliation accomplished? (See **1 Pet. 2:24; Eph. 2:1-10**)
The Colossian heresy denied the true humanity of Jesus Christ, how does Paul counter these charges (**vs. 22**)? According to **verse 22b**, what was the purpose of the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ (*His death on the cross in our place*)? (See **Eph. 1:4-7; 2:15-16; 5:27; 1 Thess. 4:7**)

7. What does it mean for a person to be “above reproach” in God’s sight (**vs. 22b**)? What is the only way that a person can reach this special place? (See **Rom. 5:8-11; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 John 1:9; Psa. 103:11-12**)

8. Does **verse 23** imply that born again Christians really can lose their salvation? Why or why not? (See **John 3:16,36; 10:28-29; 1 John 5:13**) Is there such a thing as “temporary eternal life” or is it a contradiction of terms? What should the person do when they begin to question their faith? (See **2 Cor. 13:5-6**)

9. What does it mean to be “grounded and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel” (**vs. 23**)? The Greek word here for “moved” relates to earthquakes and Colosse was known for its earthquakes. Have you ever experienced an earthquake? What was it like? How is an earthquake a fitting illustration of standing firm in changing times? List some practical ways a person can become more grounded in the faith. In what way is the hope of the gospel different from the kind of hope found in a casino?

Part II: Suffering for Jesus according to the stewardship of God (Col. 1:24-25)

1. As Paul wrote this letter to the Colossians, he was under house arrest in Rome, awaiting trial with a Roman guard at his side. (See **Acts 28:16,30-31**) What are some of the sufferings Paul experienced as a result of sharing the Gospel to the Gentiles? (See **2 Cor. 11:22-31**) How could Paul be joyful even while in a state of suffering (**vs. 24**)? Why can you rejoice

today in your personal sufferings? (See Rom. 8:35-39; Jam. 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 2:17-21)

2. How can Paul, or any of us for that matter fill up in our *“flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ”* (vs. 24b)? Is Paul implying that the atonement of Christ was lacking in any way? If not, then what was lacking?

3. After the death of Christ, who did His enemies turn against in their hatred for Jesus? (See John 15:18-21) Paul filled up the afflictions of Christ by experiencing the suffering necessary to take the gospel to a lost and dying world. What should believers expect today as we take the gospel to the people of the world? (See Rom. 10:14-15; Phil. 1:29) Is it a good thing or a bad thing for believers to be persecuted for their faith?

4. As a “minister” of the gospel, Paul is seen as a servant of both God and the church. What special “stewardship” did God give to Paul and how was it related to the word of God (vs. 25)? What does Paul mean by saying he is called *“to present to you the word of God in its fullness”* (NIV)? How should this “stewardship” (*the call to present the word of God in its fullness*) apply to all Christian churches today?

Part III: Making known the riches of the glory of Christ (Col. 26-19)

1. What is a mystery (vs. 26)? (See Dictionary) Who is being referred to as “saints” in verse 26? How does the concept of “saints” relate to us today? What mystery is referred to according to Ephesians 3:1-7? What is the mystery referred to in Col. 1:26-27? Why is *“Christ in you”* (including Gentiles), such a radical teaching in Paul’s day? Should the Jews have known this? (See Isa. 49:6; 60:1-4; 62:1-2) What is *the hope of glory*? (See Tit. 2:11-14)

2. What was Paul’s motive in preaching according to verse 28? Today we hear a lot of the positive preaching from the word of God, but not too many negatives. Why does Paul encourage the Colossians (*and we too*) to share the negatives as well? To be “perfect” means to be “complete” or “mature” in your faith. List some practical ways that you can

grow towards spiritual maturity.

3. The word “striving” in **verse 29** is an athletic term and can mean “to agonize”. What are some ways that you “agonize” in your spiritual walk as you minister to others? According to **verse 29**, what is our source of power in accomplishing our ministries?
4. Are you striving (*agonizing*) to reach others for Christ, or are you just drifting along? If you find yourself just drifting along, what is keeping you from being totally committed to Christ? If you find yourself today needing to get right with God, why not take a few minutes and do so in prayer right now?

MINER’S CORNER – *Manna to live by!*

- * Although we have greatly offended God through our sin, incredibly it was God in His great love and mercy who initiated reconciliation with us.
- * The only way a person can have peace with God is through the cross of Jesus Christ.
- * The purpose of Christ’s death on the cross was to present you holy, blameless, and above reproach to God. You simply need to repent and receive the gift of eternal life.
- * Paul’s goal in sharing the whole counsel of God’s word is for every believer to grow to the fullness of Christian maturity.
- * Christians should rejoice when suffering for Christ, for great is their reward in heaven.