



The Epistle of Paul to the Colossians

Christ in You, The Hope of Glory

Colossians 1:21-29 | The Holy, Unblameable, Unreprovable Body of Christ

COLOSSIANS 1:21-22 | THE ONCE ALIENATED, BUT NOW, THE HOLY BODY OF CHRIST

How were people saved before the cross? Obedience to conscience and God's covenants. There was no other way to have a chance of being resurrected to life one day in the future. Some may say that does not sound fair, but God revealed His plan for salvation all the way back in the Garden of Eden. He promised to send a rescuer who would redeem mankind from its sentence of death. God told Adam and Eve that if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would surely die. Satan countered God's warning by telling Eve, "You will not surely die!" From that point, the battle was on. Mankind could believe God, or they could believe Satan.

God made covenants (promises) with mankind; *do what is right and you will live*. Through dispensations (God's system of order), He expanded those promises to a specific group of people that He created, Israel. In order for anyone to have the hope of standing before God at the resurrection, mankind had to embrace Israel. Outside of Israel, there was no hope.

Paul makes this clear in Ephesians 2:12,

"Gentiles (the uncircumcised, non-Jew) in time past were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

In our passage today, Paul reinforces that and reminds the Colossians that the problem has been solved by the cross.

Verse 21 —

And you. In verses 12-14 Paul was speaking of himself and Timothy, now he addresses the entire *ekklesia* in Colossians. His point reinforces what he wrote to the Ephesians: *some of you at sometime were alienated and enemies in mind by wicked works*. Before Christ, they had no hope and were without God **yet now** the exalted Christ **has reconciled** them! To reconcile is to no longer be enemies. They now have a restored relationship with Christ and they are no longer lost.

Verse 22 —

This was accomplished **in the body of his flesh**, that means, on the cross! The cross was the answer. Jesus took the sins of those who were alienated and enemies, and placed those sins on Himself, and in return gave those who believe His righteousness. Some have called this The Great Exchange! Paul explained it in 2 Corinthians 5:21:

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Had Jesus Christ not gone to the cross, this could never have been possible. A final sacrifice had to be made by one who was without blame. Without the cross, all mankind would be lost.

The result of this *exchange* was the receipt of righteousness, but here Paul explains that righteousness further in that for all who believe, you are now **holy and unblameable, and unrepvable in his sight**. Notice the keywords **in his sight**. You and I still sin. We are sinful in our human nature, but in God's sight, we are holy.

Holy: *hagios* can also be translated as **holy one**, and can mean *saints or a most holy thing*.

Unblameable: *amomos*. The Greek word *momos*, means *blemish, blot, or disgrace*. Putting **a** in front changes the word to *without blemish, without blot, without disgrace*. In God's eyes, believers are unblameable.

Unrepvable: *anengklaytos*. Similarly to unblameable, the Greek word *egkaleo* (*kaleo = called*), therefore, *called into question*, and is negated by the **a**, therefore unable to be called into question!

That is how God sees you.

Verse 23 —

And why is this so? Unfortunately, the translators chose the words, "if ye continue" making it sound conditional. But this is not the clearest sense of that clause. It would be better **since you continue**. The clause is not based on the future; Paul doesn't mean *that something shall come to pass as long as something else is true; rather it means that something was if something else is true*. Therefore, **Since you continue in the faith grounded and settled**. Paul's point is that we have been reconciled—it is a fact that was accomplished on the cross through Christ's body of his flesh—his actual death.

If you are a child of God today (by grace through faith) you will continue in the faith grounded and settled. It will happen, it has to happen, because it was accomplished by Christ.

This is the good news of grace that Paul was sent to preach, he was **made a minister** (Greek: *diakonos* or, deacon).

Verse 24 —

Because of this truth, and because Paul was the one ministering to them, he could **rejoice in his sufferings for you**. In order to bring this truth to the lost, Paul suffered greatly. We likely underestimate what he went through to pronounce the gospel of grace. In 2 Corinthians 1:9, He calls it "**the sentence of death...**" But amazingly in 2 Corinthians 4:17, he says that it is only a "**light affliction.**"

From Paul's first meeting with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus he was told through the prophet Ananias that Jesus would show him "**how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.**" And suffer he did, consider 2 Corinthians 11:24-30. His physical suffering was not the only pain he felt. In 2 Corinthians 11:29 Paul is saying when another believer is weak, so am I, and when another is in sin, I too am hurt by it.

How was Paul able to have this attitude? He goes on in 2 Corinthians, "**While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.**" He will echo this sentiment in Colossian 3:2 when he tells them to "**Set your affection on the things above, not on things on the earth.**"

This is a great promise for us during these days of conflict in which we are now living. We can brood over them and wring our hands and say woe is me, things are out of control and there is no hope, or, we can look up and understand who we are in Christ and that our life is **hid in him**.

Paul endured all of this for the sake of the body, the *ekklesia*.

Verse 25 —

This was Paul's ministry in the new **dispensation of God**. The dispensation of grace was given to Paul and because of that, **God's word is fulfilled**. The word fulfilled is also translated in several places, **complete**. *Paul completed the Word of God*. Without Paul, we would never know the rest of the story of Christ. Because without Paul it would not have been revealed.

Verse 26 —

Paul calls the details revelation of the new dispensation God a **mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations**.

Verse 27 —

What was the **mystery**? It was that there would be one body; Gentiles would join the Jews, in Christ, and that would be the **hope of Glory**.

Verses 28,29 —

Paul tells them, that is why **we** (Timothy and I) **preach** so that every man can see and understand how to be **perfect in Christ Jesus**. That is why Paul **labors, strives, and works**. Not for himself, but for Christ **which worketh in him mightily**.