

Colossians: Jesus Our All In All

Colossians 1:21-23

Colossians 1:21

(KJV) And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

(NIV) Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.

And so it was. The Colossian believers whom Paul is addressing here, and each of us who are born-again believers, used to oppose God. In our minds and hearts we were positioned in rebellion against our holy God. We did not and indeed could not call upon God as our very present help in times of trouble:

Psalm 46:1 To the chief Musician for the sons of Korah, A Song upon Alamoth.
God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

The Holy Spirit inside of you should grieve when you recall a time such as this when you were separated from God and could not call upon His mercy and grace and help in your storms of life. Paul wants the Colossian believers to recall and understand that their conversion, along with Paul's own, was a miraculous work of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, our before-and-after-Jesus testimony is powerful and irrefutable to a lost and blind world seeking more than canned religious rhetoric. Beloved, always be ready for those opportunities God provides to share your story:

1Peter 3:14-16

But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

*STUDY POINT: As a more in depth study, find passages in Scripture (other than Paul's) that tell the story of someone who experienced the salvation of Jesus. What are the parts of the process of salvation common to each of us?

Those dead in their transgressions will automatically seek first self and the system of this world. They cannot love God:

1John 2:15-17

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Those of us who love God, or rather have responded to His love through Jesus, will seek first

God's righteousness, and will be a part of His kingdom building in this world:

Matthew 6:33

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Great news here! When our minds and hearts are attuned to God and His will, He will take care of every detail of the rest of our lives - our every need will be provided for, and then some. Hallelujah!

So, how can we see our unsaved loved ones come to salvation in Jesus? We know this will never happen in the flesh, or by natural means:

Matthew 19:23-24

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

Rich people, or by extension self-sufficient people, have it good by earthly standards, but they have it bad by God's standards. However, where sin is concerned, we have all missed God's glorious standard and therefore deserve death.

Romans 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We have all been self-sufficient, God-resisting, and stubborn. We all need Jesus, just like the Colossian believers needed Him. When Epaphras presented the gospel to them, their spiritual eyes were opened to their sin and their immediate need for a Saviour, whom the Gospel also provided:

John 14:5-6

Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for opening my spiritual eyes so that I could see my need for a Saviour. I confess that I was alienated to your love, care, and provision because of my heart hardened by sin. Now I come to you for forgiveness and cleansing and washing through my belief in Your Word, and I embrace my new life in Jesus my Lord and Saviour. And God, even if I have fallen away from You because of my besetting sins, I ask for Your increasing grace as I seek to repent and receive Your forgiveness and cleansing afresh today. Hallelujah! Thank you Lord in Jesus' name. Amen.

Colossians 1:22

(KJV) *In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and and unproveable in his sight:*

(NIV) But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

Oh, the great divide! Jesus bridged this divide, this gap, between sinful humans and a holy God:

Romans 5:8

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Beloved, let us never forget the horrible price Jesus paid on the cross for our sins, in order to bridge the heretofore uncrossable gap between us and God. This bridge would require shed blood and death:

Hebrews 9:11-14

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

By His own blood.

Sin is severe and required the shedding of blood and death. On one hand it is brutal and difficult to remember the most intense suffering of Jesus on our behalf. On the other hand, we are in awe of God's revealed power and love through the cross, falling down to worship Him forever! Though we can't comprehend what kind of love would send Jesus to the cross, we can respond by giving Him our lives to redeem with His.

From Matthew Henry, we read this concerning the cruxifixction of Christ:

"Crucifixion was a death used only among the Romans; it was very terrible and miserable. A cross was laid on the ground, to which the hands and feet were nailed, it was then lifted up and fixed upright, so that the weight of the body hung on the nails, till the sufferer died in agony. Christ thus answered the type of the brazen serpent raised on a pole. Christ underwent all the misery and shame here related, that he might purchase for us everlasting life, and joy, and glory."

Tell the world! This is the good news, dear Christian. Regardless of the other gifts and assignments God may uniquely give to each of us, we all share in the the Great Commission, and stand under its call, anointed as we are in Jesus to fulfill it!

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

The world cries out against injustice, yet when it comes to sin the natural will does not submit to the ultimate justice of God. And mark this everyone - believer and non - God's judgment is coming:

2Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

The second half of Colossians 1:22 is a presentation through Jesus' blood of you and I before our holy God in heaven. Instead of us presenting ourselves before God based on our own merit and righteousness, it is Jesus presenting us:

holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: (Colossians 1:22b)

This is cause for worship, dear believer! Those in Christ Jesus will never be judged according to our behaviour and performance during our time on earth - religious or not.

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Have you ever been tempted to keep spiritual score of your sins and/or good works? If so, why do think you did this? What Scriptures will help you apply God's truth and grace to your walk with Him?

Paul emphasized to the Colossian believers who they were *before* knowing Jesus and *after* knowing Jesus. This, beloved is offensive and defensive spiritual warfare: standing firm in the truth of the Gospel and its power in our lives:

Philippians 1:27

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

For the Colossian Church, and indeed for all of us who follow Jesus, our identity in and with the Gospel is a sure safeguard against false teachers and teachings that tempt us to add or subtract from our faith. Paul wastes no teaching, but rather applies it for our protection *and* encouragement. Let's get these verses into our minds and hearts today!

I leave this verse then for your meditation today:

Colossians 1:23 *If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*

- Reverend Darren McClelland