

COLOSSIANS 1:21-29

*Paul now will tell us the act of reconciliation whereby God, through Christ's accomplishments, gives mankind (who are at odds with Him, or even the lost person) peace with God.

*The Colossians had been Gentile sinners and desperately needed to be reconciled. The Lord Jesus Christ, in His wonderful grace, had taken the initiative to do this.

Colossians 1:21 - And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

1. Before one's conversion it says "And you, that were sometime alienated". This tells of a person's mental attitude from God, as well as their moral status.
2. "Alienated" means they were foreigners, or strangers, being shut out from fellowship with God. This includes us!
 - a. We were alienated personally because of our sin.

Ephesians 2:1 - And you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Ephesians 2:3 - Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.
 - b. We were alienated dispensationally because of being Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:11-12 - Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; Eph. 2:12 That at that time ye 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:
 - c. We were alienated by being separated from the life of God.

Ephesians 4:18 - Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:
3. They become enemies of God by wicked works in the mind. Some of these wicked works are found in Galatians 5:19-21 - *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Gal. 5:20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Gal. 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*
4. Having a mind opposite and against God, eventually works its way out in one's behavior. There is an alienation in the heart and mind of man.

Romans 1:21 - Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

God now has given them hope to change their status by reconciliation.

Colossians 1:22 - In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprou-able in his sight:

1. This is the method of reconciliation that God used to take us out of Adam (our alienated position) and place us in our new reconciled position.
2. That expression "body of his flesh" simply means that Jesus Christ effectively reconciled the sin of man by dying on the cross in a real human body. Not as a spirit being, which the Gnostics claimed Christ was.
3. "to present you holy" means we are found living separated lives unto God, having demonstrated God's way of holiness and being accepted.

Romans 12:1 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

4. "and unblameable" means without blemish. We are to be found living clean, without blemishes or stains upon our lives.

Ephesians 5:3 - But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

5. "and unreprouable in his sight" means we are to be found free of accusations or charges against the way we have lived. This truth was very important to Paul. He desired for his converts to be brought to a full maturity, so they could be presented acceptable and approved of God eventually at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

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;

1. Now Apostle Paul adds one of the "if" passages to the children of God. If they were to be commended in Christ's sight one day, they needed to demonstrate their Christ-like life.

Romans 12:2 - And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

2. Here we see an element regarding their salvation: If they believed the Gospel; If they stood upon the truth of the Gospel; If they were truly saved - then they would continue to be steadfast to the faith.

I Corinthians 15:1-2 - Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 1Cor. 15:2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3. Paul tells them to never be removed from faith in the Gospel of Grace - but to be grounded (having been built upon the true foundation). Settled means for the believer to be firmly seated and established in the faith.
4. Paul was concerned that some would leave the faith by Satan's work through false teachers giving false hope to anyone. Paul's gospel of grace gave hope of salvation, a hope of having an inheritance, and a hope of a future glory in Christ with rewards.
5. "whereof I Paul am made a minister" refers to Paul's revelation that he received from Christ Himself - made a minister of the Gospel of Grace.

Galatians 1:11-12 - But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. Gal. 1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

6. Paul's Grace Gospel for this present Body of Christ Church is totally dependent on the basis of Christ's work alone - plus nothing else. Here in this context, some of Paul's converts had turned from this truth and gone back to the rituals of the Law. Back to the Kingdom gospel, with promises and its signs, gifts, baptisms, etc.

*The last 6 verses of this Chapter describe Paul's ministry for Christ.

Colossians 1:24 - Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

1. This verse confirms all of the physical suffering that Apostle Paul went through for the sake of the Grace Gospel. It is here that Paul is making the distinction that the church he is referring to is the Body of Christ.
2. This is saying that everything he has gone through is for the Body church and his gospel given to him from Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:24-28 - Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. 2Cor. 11:25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 2Cor. 11:26 *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; 2Cor. 11:27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 2Cor. 11:28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

3. Paul was suffering in his body for the sake of Christ's body. Paul was writing this letter from prison and had suffered for the saints as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:25 - Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

1. Paul repeats again "I am made a minister" from verse 23. There are two differences though in its usage: In verse 23, Paul was commissioned to preach the gospel. In verse 25, Paul was sent forth to teach the dispensation of God, which was given to him - the Mystery Grace message.
2. The word "dispensation" here means stewardship. It is defined as one having responsibilities of a household. Paul was administering to Gentile believers in Colosse and was responsible for dispensing God's grace for their salvation.
3. This is the reason we have to see there are two different programs in God's Word. God dealt differently with His people Israel in the Scriptures; whereas, Paul deals mainly with the Gentiles in all his letters. Just look at who is speaking and to whom they are speaking in the following verses.

Ephesians 3:1 - For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

Acts 2:22 - Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

4. This dispensation of God, given to Paul, was to "fulfil" the word of God. In other words, to complete or finish the Word of God.

Ephesians 3:2-3 - If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: Eph. 3:3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

Colossians 1:26 - *Even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

1. A "mystery" here is something that had not been revealed in the Old Testament, but is now revealed.

Deuteronomy 29:29a - The secret *things belong* unto the LORD our God:

2. So, what is the secret? It is the whole body of Pauline truths - how Christ's work on the Cross completed everything needed for one in the human race to be saved. God has done it all for us.

Ephesians 3:9 - And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

3. You do not find this secret revelation until you get it from the Apostle Paul. This whole revelation was kept secret.

Romans 16:25-26 - Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, Rom. 16:26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

4. Unfortunately, most of Christendom do not understand this new message because they avoid most of Paul's writings. They usually preach and teach out of the four gospels - which are to the people of Israel.

Colossians 1:27 -To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

1. In the previous verse 26, Paul told that the mystery was revealed to the believers in the Body Church. Now Paul wants to share that God wants us to know certain things concerning the Mystery.
2. We need to know what some of these things were in the Mystery!

- a. The mystery of Israel's blindness - The nation Israel has been temporarily set aside because of their blindness.

Romans 11:25 - For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

- b. The mystery of the Body of Christ - wherein all believers are members of the Body Church (Jew and Gentile).

Ephesians 3:6 - That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

- c. The mystery of Christ in us - the Lord Jesus Christ, being the Head of the Body, giving direction and life in all things.

Ephesians 1:22 - And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,

d. The mystery of godliness - "which is Christ in you, the hope of glory". We are no longer outside looking in on Israel's relationship with God. [But now], we Gentiles have our identity of being in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

3. Only in Paul's epistles are these mystery truths revealed, even though there are some other ones for our dispensation.

Colossians 1:28 - Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

1. Paul is saying that what he is preaching is always about Jesus Christ. Paul would not waste his time on politics or philosophies of men, but only sharing Christ to make every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Acts 16:17 - The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

2. Paul warned them that not obeying, believing, and standing for the Body mystery truth would lead to religious practices and confusion for mankind.

Acts 20:31 - Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

3. "teaching every man in all wisdom" - Paul was teaching this new revealed Body truth - the mystery.

Ephesians 1:8-9 - Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Eph. 1:9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

4. Paul sought to produce spiritual maturity and to establish the mystery truth within the heart of each believer.

5. When one discovers this Pauline mystery message, then Satan rears his ugly head and attacks the message and messenger. Satan uses two things to do this:

a. He keeps minds and eyes in the dark - keeping them in the traditions and practices of men. They will not even consider the mystery truths.

b. Satan keeps them in their pride. They will boast about their beliefs and what their denominations stand on.

6. The only way one can truly know what the Scriptures say is found in II Timothy 2:15 - *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Colossians 1:29 - Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

*Paul is giving us his own personal testimony of laboring in the Lord's work.

I Timothy 2:4 - Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.