

THE REDEEMED LIFE & THE RECONCILED LIFE
Colossians 1: 1-29

*1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
2 To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae:*

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, 5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, 6 which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and growing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, 7 just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf 8 and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. 11 May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. 13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

21 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

*24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, 25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, 26 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. 27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. *ESV**

THERE IS A LOT OF RELIGION without Christ. The best way that you can know if any congregation of people has the truth is how they represent Jesus Christ. Some so-called Christian groups can meet for worship and not honor Christ. Someone once said you can tell what a preacher is in love with because that is what he will talk about.

In this study of Colossians Paul warns the believers at Colossae about a heresy that came to be known as Gnosticism.

Greek: gnosis [knowledge] all matter is evil; therefore Jesus could not be a true man, i.e. evil, and also God.

Jesus is not just one in a long succession men used by God, He is God!

Whatever else a group may have to offer; if Christ is not preached as the only way to be saved, and that by grace through faith alone, they are not honoring Christ.

THE REDEEMED LIFE

1. THE SALUTATION 1:1-2

Paul uses his usual greeting and includes Timothy.

Timothy is with Paul. Paul chained to a Roman guard in a rented house at Rome.
{Acts 28:16, 30}

Paul had not been to Colossae but he writes to them as an apostle of Christ Jesus. There are believers in Colossae and as such there are certain characteristics or rather results of their redemption that must be evident in their lives.

2. THE RESULTS of REDEMPTION

a) Faith, Hope, and Love 1:3-6a

Faith, hope, and love are linked together in several of Paul's letters.
{Cf. Rom 5:2-5; 1 Cor 13:13; Gal 5:5-6; 1 Thess 1:3; 5:8}

Genuine faith must have an object.
For the Christian the Object of faith is Jesus Christ.

In the same manner, love is not some mushy feeling. Love acts!

Hope in the Bible is a firm expectation; not a doubtful wish.

The basis of faith, hope, and love is the Gospel.

b) Fruit-bearing 1:6b-8

A necessary result of believing in Christ is fruit-bearing.
How is fruit-bearing defined in the Bible?

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Epaphras is their faithful minister who has come to Rome to see Paul and has told Paul some things that encourage him. There is fruit!

c) Knowledge of God's Will 1:9

Paul prays that they will have the kind of knowledge that is not just superficial; i.e. not just facts about Jesus, but a comprehension of the will of God.

People who are filled with "spiritual wisdom and understanding" can discern the seductive nature of the wisdom of the world.

d) A Life That Pleases the Lord 1:10-12a

The believer's life must be characterized by an eagerness to "please Him in every way." Paul gives four principles that identify the believer who is living the transformed life:

- ~ bearing fruit
- ~ growing in the knowledge of God
- ~ being strengthened with all power, and
- ~ joyfully giving thanks to the Father.

We are not saved by our works; but works are the result, the fruit of redemption.

We cannot grow in the knowledge of God without applying the Scriptures.

dunamis is the Greek word for strength and power which produces endurance and patience.

Thanksgiving is the opposite of murmuring and complaining.

e) Inheritance in God's Kingdom 1:12b-13

The believers at Colossae, like all believers, have an inheritance.

What do you understand your inheritance to be?

f) Forgiveness of Sins 1:14

The pagan world understood the buying of the freedom of a slave, i.e. redemption. Believers are redeemed from the slavery of sin by the sacrifice of Christ for sin.

THE RECONCILED LIFE

MOST OF THE CULTS, such as Jehovah's Witness, Unification (Moonies), et al deny that Jesus of Nazareth is God. The Jehovah's Witness even corrupts the language of the Bible by using an incorrect translation of John 1:1.

The "Jesus" of the Mormon cult is not the Jesus of this Bible.

Colossians 1:19 and 2:9 simply do not permit any conclusion other than Jesus is very God. He is not some of God, or a god, He is God!

1. PAUL'S VIEW of CHRIST

a) The Creator of All Things 1:15-17

Again, the Jehovah's Witness try to dilute the clear Word of God by teaching that Jesus was the first creation of God and then Jesus created everything else. This passage will not permit such a twisting of Scripture.

God is Spirit (John 4:24) and cannot be seen by the human eye. In Christ, the Word (Logos, Logic, Wisdom, Communication) became flesh. He is of the same essence or being as God the Father, yet in condescension and humility He took a human form to honor the Law and thereby to redeem lost sinners.

Jesus is God in the strictest usage of the word.

Jesus is Creator of everything and He did not create Himself.

Jesus is the Uncreated Word.

Jesus sustains (holds together) the creation.

b) The Head of the Church 1:18-20

The only church that deserves to be called such is under the headship of Christ. This is more than just saying some words or naming your group as such, it demands the actual commitment and constant practice of submission to the headship of Christ.

How can the fullness of God be less than God?

c) The Reconciler of Sinners 1:21-23

The Colossian people, like all of us, were alienated from God. Sin is the thing that separates man from God. It is Christ that reconciles. In order for two people who are enemies to be reconciled, they must make peace. You and I were dead in trespasses and sins, how could we initiate a reconciliation?

2. PAUL'S VIEW of HIMSELF

a) A Sufferer with Christ 1:24

Paul wrote the Book of Philippians to tell how he could be full of joy while suffering harm and indignity. Here, he tells the church at Colossae the same thing. He is not asking for pity, he is telling of his joy.

b) A Revealer of Christ 1:25-27

A mystery as used here is not some "club secret" viz. Gnosticism, that only the few can know.

The mystery is, in fact, that which man has needed from the very beginning, the redemption from sin and guilt, is in Christ.

This mystery is an open secret.

The Gospel is preached.

Some hear, receive it, and are redeemed.

They have hope.

c) A Laborer for Christ 1:28-29

The Gospel is not just about Christ, the Gospel is Christ.

Salvation is a Person, Jesus Christ!

We have been blessed this morning to see the fruit of the Gospel in the baptism of our brother in Christ, Nicolas Harris.

Jim Gunn

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