

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY ~ WE FINISH OUR LOOK AT THE NEXT SECTION OF COLOSSIANS, ~ 1:21-23.

▶▶ As we noted last week, ~ in this brief paragraph, ~ Paul is reminding each believer ~ of our own personal reconciliation to God.

▷▷ He reviews for us ~ our own personal ~ spiritual experience and situation.

RECALL FROM LAST WEEK, ~ IN VERSE 21 PAUL BEGAN HIS REVIEW ~ WITH WHAT OUR spiritual condition, ~ or status, ~ was ~ prior to salvation.

▶▶ We were ~ separated from God ~ and ~ were hostile toward him in thought and attitude.

▷▷ And our hostility toward him ~ was shown ~ or proven ~ by ~ our evil behavior.

↳↳ This was our status prior to being saved. ~~ A very bleak status, ~ to say the least.

PAUL THEN MOVES ON ~ & DISCUSSES OUR RECONCILIATION TO GOD ~ in vv. 22 & 23 ~ which we'll look at today.

▶▶ And this is how he breaks it down.

▷▷ The fact ~ of recon., ~ verse 22a. ~~ but now you have been reconciled. ~~ New status.

↳↳ The means ~ of recon., ~ verse 22b. ~~ by [Jesus'] physical body through death.

→→ The result ~ of recon., ~ vs. 22c. ~~ holy and blameless and above reproach before him.

↳↳ And the evidence ~ of recon, ~ vs. 23. ~~ if indeed you remain in the faith, established and steadfast and not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that you heard. 📖 1/13

THE FACT OF RECONCILIATION. ~ ~ VERSE 22a (LEB). ⇔⇔ BUT NOW YOU HAVE been reconciled. ⇔⇔ i.e., ~ reconciled to God.

▶▶ The emphasis of reconciliation ~ is that ~ of making peace with God.

▶▶ Human beings ~ are estranged from God.

▷▷ And through reconciliation ~ are brought into communion with God.

▶▶ Sin ~ had created a barrier ~ between man and God ~ and rendered humanity hostile toward God, ~ as Genesis 3 so sadly relates.

▶▶ Through Christ ~ that barrier was removed.

▶▶ Reconciliation ~ may thus be defined as ~ "God removing the barrier of sin, ~ producing peace, ~ and enabling humanity to be saved."

NOW, ~ AS WE NOTED AT VERSE 20, ~ IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND ~ that reconciliation ~ is not ~ not equivalent ~ to salvation.

▶▶ Recall ~ that reconciliation has both ~ an objective ~ and a subjective ~ aspect.

▶▶ The objective aspect of reconciliation ~ is that in which humans ~ are reconciled to God prior to faith ~ and are rendered savable.

▶▶ But reconciliation ~ does not ~ eliminate the need for individuals ~ to respond in faith to this work of God.

▶▶ The subjective aspect of reconciliation ~ is that in which people ~ are reconciled to God ~ when they believe.

▷▷ IOW, ~ people must accept ~ the reconciliation that God has offered. 📖 2/13

IT IS ALSO EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND ~ THAT WE DID NOT ~ AND could not ~ reconcile ourselves to God.

▶▶ Due to our total depravity, ~ the people of this world cannot remove the barrier between ourselves and God.

▶▶ So ~ a loving, ~ merciful God ~ sent his Son ~ to remove it for us ~ through his sacrificial death on the cross.

MY . . . , ~ IT IS A FACT ~ THAT WE HAVE BEEN RECONCILED TO GOD.

▶▶ Paul also states the fact of our reconciliation in [Rom. 5:1](#).

▷▷ Therefore, ~ since we have been justified by faith, ~ we have peace with God ~ through our Lord Jesus Christ.

▶▶ My . . . , ~ having peace with God ~ means ~ 77

▷▷ there is no more hostility between us and God, ~ no sin blocking our relationship with him.

▶▶ More than that, ~ a harmonious relationship ~ has been established between God and us.

AND HERE IS SOMETHING ~ THAT SHOULD ALWAYS AMAZE US, ~ I.E., ~ THE BLOOD-bought people of God.

▶▶ We were ~ in open rebellion against, ~ enemies of, ~ and hostile toward ~ God ~ in our unsaved state.

▶▶ But even in the face of all of this, ~ God carried through the work of reconciliation.

▶▶ He is the One ~ who took the initiative in his mercy, ~ love, ~ and grace ~ to carry through the work of reconciliation. 77 3/13

▶▶ The word reconciliation ~ comes from the Greek word that means ~ "to effect a change, ~ to reconcile."

▶▶ God is the one ~ who initiated this change or reconciliation.

▷▷ He moved ~ to reconcile sinful humanity to Himself

▶▶ We know from what Paul tells us in Eph., ~ ¶¶

▷▷ God is so rich in mercy, ~ and he loved us so much, ~ that even though we were dead in our trespasses, ~ he made us alive together with Christ.

▷▷ By grace we have been saved.

▶▶ Jesus died for us ~ when we were still weak, ~ ungodly, ~ and could do nothing for selves.

▷▷ He died for us ~ while we were still sinners ~ and while we were his enemies.

THE FACT OF RECONCILIATION. ~~ VERSE 22a. ~~ BUT NOW YOU HAVE BEEN reconciled.

▶▶ Notice the past tense here.

▶▶ This was ~ a finished ~ and full ~ act. ~~ Paul does not say, ~ "But now you have been ~ partially ~ reconciled."

▶▶ Nothing is left ~ that might be added to Jesus' work.

▷▷ Everything ~ that was necessary for our redemption and reconciliation ~ was accomplished ~ through Christ's work on our behalf. ⇔⇔ Jesus paid it all.

▶▶ The just punishment for humankind's sins was endured by Jesus and exhausted. ¶¶ 4/13

▶▶ The result is ~ that there remains ~ no obstacle ~ in the way of a person having peace and a relationship with God.

▶▶ All may come to the Father through Jesus, ~ be reconciled to him ~ and be at peace with him now and for eternity.

▶▶ All people need to do ~ is accept the reconciliation that Jesus has achieved.

THE FACT OF RECONCILIATION. ~~ VERSE 22a. ~~ BUT NOW YOU HAVE BEEN reconciled.

PAUL CONTINUES HIS REVIEW OF OUR SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE AND SITUATION ~ by restating the means of reconciliation. ~~ Verse 22b (LEB).

BY HIS PHYSICAL BODY THROUGH DEATH.

▶▶ Recall from our look at [verse 20](#), ~ God chose to send his Son ~ for the designated purpose ~ of reconciling all creation, ~~ and in particular fallen humanity, ~ to himself.

▶▶ Because Jesus is God, ~ He was able to do ~ what no mere man could ever do: ~~ reconcile lost sinners to the Father.

▶▶ And the means by which this reconciliation was accomplished ~ was Christ's substitutionary death on the cross.

AGAIN, ~ IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND, ~ BECAUSE IT SEEMS TO BE under attack today, ~ that Jesus' death on the cross ~ was a substitutionary sacrifice.

▶▶ Jesus substituted himself in our place.

▷▷ [Is. 53:4-5](#) again. ~~ ⁴ Surely he has borne our griefs ~ and carried our sorrows; ~~ yet we esteemed him stricken, ~ smitten by God, ~ and afflicted. ~~ ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions; ~~ he was crushed for our iniquities; ~~ upon him ~ was the chastisement that brought us peace, ~~ and with his wounds ~ we are healed. **↯↯ 5/13**

▶▶ Jesus' substitutionary sacrifice ~ satisfied God 's righteous demands ~ by paying in full ~ the penalty for sin.

NOTICE ~ THAT PAUL GOES OUT OF HIS WAY IN VERSE 22b ~ ¶¶

▶▶ to mention ~ that it was by Jesus' physical body through death ~ that he effected reconciliation.

▶▶ No doubt ~ the language Paul used ~ was designed deliberately ~ to counteract the false teachers that were threatening this church.

▶▶ Their philosophy ~ that all matter is evil ~ ¶¶

▷▷ led them ~ to deny the Incarnation ~ and ~ to teach that Jesus ~ did not have a real human body.

▶▶ But that was heresy. ~ The eternal Son of God had come ~ in the flesh, ~¶¶

▷▷ had lived a sinless life on earth ~ in the flesh, ~¶¶

→→ and in the flesh ~ had offered Himself on the cross ~ as an offering for sin.

▶▶ As Peter writes, ~ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree. ~ 1 Pet. 2:24.

NOW, ~ COMING BACK FOR A MOMENT ~ TO THIS HERESY OF DENYING THE humanity of Jesus.

▶▶ This is called Docetism, ~ which is not really around today. ⇔⇔ But the point here is this. ⇔⇔ And this is relevant at all times.

▶▶ Any teaching ~ that denies either ~ the humanity ~ or ~ the deity ~ of Jesus ~ ¶¶

▷▷ or any aspect of his work, ~ such as his substitutionary atonement, ~ is a false teaching ~ and ~ must be exposed and rejected. ¶¶ 6/13

IN VERSE 22c (LEB), ~ PAUL NOTES THE RESULT OF JESUS' RECONCILING WORK.

AS A RESULT OF JESUS' WORK OF RECONCILIATION ~ THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN HIM ~ have a new status.

▶▶ to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.

▶▶ Paul was not speaking here ~ about the believer's progressive sanctification, ~ but about his or her status in Christ. ⇨⇨ More on Progressive Sanctification in a moment.

▶▶ I.e., ~ in God's sight, ~ believers are ~ holy ~ and blameless ~ and above reproach."

RECALL FROM OUR STUDY OF PHILIPPIANS, ~ WE DISCUSSED SANCTIFICATION.

▶▶ We noted that ~ sanctification ~ is God's work ~ in causing us ~ to progressively become more and more like Jesus.

▶▶ More specifically, ~ that is progressive sanctification.

▶▶ And ~ as we said there, ~ God's work in us is ongoing, ~ long-term, ~ and will be completed.

WHAT PAUL HAS IN VIEW HERE IN VERSE 22c ~ HOWEVER, ~ IS OUR POSITIONAL sanctification, ~ or our justification.

▶▶ When one puts their faith in Jesus Christ, ~ instantly, ~ at that very moment ~ ∩∩

▷▷ they become ~ "holy and blameless and above reproach" ~ in God's sight.

↪↪ This is what we are ~ in reality before God.

▶▶ And Jesus' work of reconciliation ~ makes us this way. ∩∩ 7/13

MY . . . , ~ RIGHT NOW, ~ WHEN THE FATHER LOOKS AT US, ~ HE DOESN'T SEE US ~ in our prior status.

▶▶ He sees us clothed in the righteousness of his beloved Son.

▶▶ We talked about much of this in Philipians. ~ And we should never stop talking about it.

▶▶ "those whom he justified ~ he also glorified, ~ Paul writes in Romans. ⇨⇨ Past tense. ~ Yes.

▷▷ And very important to understand. ~ In the Father's eyes, ~ we are already glorified.

▷▷ Tapestry

▶▶ When the Father looks at us, ~ he sees his ~ glorified, ~ beloved children, ~ who are clothed in the righteousness of his beloved Son.

▶▶ My fellow believers, ~ every morning ~ let's look into the mirror ~ and remind ourselves of this.

▷▷ And then ~ let's live out our day accordingly.

▷▷ Eph. 4:1. ~ I therefore, ~ a prisoner for the Lord, ~ urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.

▷▷ I.e., ~ as a result of all that God has done for and given us, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ this great salvation and its accompanying blessings that Paul spelled out in the first three chapters of Eph., ~ ¶¶

→→ Paul urges us ~ to apply ~ or display ~ this truth by living in a way that brings honor and glory to God. ¶¶ 8/13

A QUICK NOTE HERE IN PASSING ~ REGARDING PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION.

▶▶ The process of spiritual growth ~ involves becoming in practice ~ what we are in reality before God.

PAUL NOTES THREE ASPECTS OF OUR NEW STATUS IN GOD'S SIGHT.

WE ARE HOLY. ⇨⇨ "HOLY" MEANS ~ "WITHOUT ANY SIN."

▶▶ Now, ~ be careful here.

▷▷ Paul is not denying the present reality of sin in our lives. ~~ Neither is he claiming ~ that we are now sinless in practice.

▷▷ Again, ~ this is our positional sanctification he's talking about, ~ not our progressive sanctification.

▶▶ Author of Heb. helps us here. ~~ Gives both sides of sanctification in [10:10 & 14](#). (NIV)

▷▷ And by that will, ~ we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all . . . For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

▶▶ Neither he nor Paul ~ are denying the present reality of our sinful struggle.

▷▷ What they are doing ~ is emphasizing the power and finality of Jesus' atoning death.

▷▷ IOW, ~ they are focusing on our present status before God. ⇨⇨ We are ~ holy in the eyes of God. ⇨⇨ **God sees believers ~ as holy as His Son.**

WE ARE BLAMELESS. ~~ THE SECOND ASPECT OF OUR NEW STATUS. **11 9/13**

▶▶ "blameless" means ~ "without blemish."

▶▶ The word is used in the New Testament to refer to Jesus ~ as the spotless Lamb of God.

▶▶ In reference to ourselves, ~ reconciliation gives us a blameless character.

WE ARE ABOVE REPROACH. ~~ THE THIRD ASPECT OF OUR NEW STATUS.

▶▶ The Greek word for "above reproach" ~ goes beyond blameless.

▷▷ It means ~ not only that we now have a blameless character, ~ but also ~ that no one can bring a charge against us.

▶▶ In Revelation, ~ John tells us ~ that Satan accuses us night and day before God.

▷▷ Being above reproach ~ means ~ that he cannot make any charges stick.

▶▶ Even more than that ~ look at what Paul says in [Rom. 8:33-34](#). (CSB)

▷▷³³ Who can bring an accusation against God's elect? ~~ God is the one who justifies. ~ [by the way, ~ is there a higher court in the universe? ~~ absolutely not] ~~ ¶¶

↳↳³⁴ Who is the one who condemns? ~~ Christ Jesus is the one who died, ~ but even more, ~ has been raised; ~~ he also is at the right hand of God and intercedes for us.

▶▶ And, ~ as we know, ~ earlier, ~ in [8:1](#), ~ Paul wrote, ~~ There is therefore now ~ no condemnation ~ for those who are in Christ Jesus.

▷▷ The point Paul is making here is that condemnation is, ~ in every sense, ~ out of the question ~ ¶¶

↳↳ for those ~ who have confessed with their mouth that Jesus is Lord ~ and believe in their heart that God raised him from the dead. ¶¶ 10/13

MY . . . , ~~ THIS IS OUR STATUS NOW. ~~ AMAZING, ~ ISN'T IT?

▶▶ Now think of all that we are now, ~ our present status, ~ which is permanent, ~ in contrast to our status prior to salvation.

IN VERSE 23, ~ PAUL PRESENTS THE EVIDENCE OF RECONCILIATION.

I.e., ~ THE EVIDENCE THAT CHRIST'S RECONCILING WORK HAS BEEN TRULY RECEIVED by the one who claims to believe.

▶▶ Jesus reconciled you, ~ Paul says to the Colossian believers, ~ to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ if indeed you remain in the faith, ~ established and steadfast and not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that you heard, ~ which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, ~ of which I, ~ Paul, ~ became a minister.

THE WORD "IF" ~ EVEN THOUGH IN THE GRK. TEXT HERE ~ shouldn't be misunderstood.

▶▶ This verse is not saying that believers ~ ¶¶

▷▷ will be presented holy and blameless and above reproach ~ if we remain faithful, ~ as if our eternal salvation depends on our performance.

↪↪ It doesn't. ~~ We are protected by the power of God

THE GREEK SENTENCE IS NOT AN EXPRESSION OF DOUBT ~ BUT ONE OF CONFIDENCE.

▶▶ The Greek grammar and Paul's confidence about the Colossian believers' spiritual condition, ~ which he speaks of in 2:5b, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ show this to be ~ not an uncertain prospect, ~ but a condition that Paul is confident or assumes will be fulfilled. ⇒⇒ Fully expected them to continue in the faith. ¶¶ 11/13

▶▶Trans. ~ "if you continue in the faith, ~ and I am confident that you will." ⇨⇨ Or ~ "if you continue in the faith, ~ and I am assuming" ~ "that you will."

AND IN PAUL'S STATEMENT, ~ ¶¶

▶▶we see the evidence that Christ's reconciling work has been truly received by the one who claims to believe.

▶▶I.e., ~ continuing in the faith ~ is the evidence ~ that we are truly reconciled to God.

▶▶One is not saved ~ by his own efforts to please God. ⇨⇨ Neither ~ is one kept secure ~ by human determination and perseverance.

▶▶But the saved person will persevere ~ because he has been made a new creation in Christ.

▷▷And the new life implanted by Christ ~ will be developed by the Holy Spirit and brought to completion.

▶▶The person ~ whose faith does not continue with appropriate evidences reveals ~ that he never had true saving faith at all.

▶▶John's words regarding false teachers ~ captures the point quite well here.

▷▷They went out from us, ~ but they did not belong to us; ~ for if they had belonged to us, ~ they would have remained with us. ~~ However, ~ they went out ~ so that it might be made clear ~ that none of them belongs to us. ~~ 1 Jn. 2:19 CSB)

ONE OF THE MOST SOBERING TRUTHS IN THE BIBLE ~ IS THAT NOT ALL WHO profess to be believers ~ are in fact ~ saved.

▶▶Our Lord warned, ~~ On that day ~ many will say to me, ~ 'Lord, ~ Lord, ~ did we not prophesy in your name, ~ and cast out demons in your name, ~ and do many mighty works in your name?' ~~ And then will I declare to them, ~~ 'I never knew you; ~~ depart from me, ~ you workers of lawlessness.' (Matt. 7) ¶¶ 12/13

PEOPLE GIVE EVIDENCE OF BEING TRULY RECONCILED ~ when they remain in the faith, ~ established and steadfast and not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that they heard.

▶▶The Bible repeatedly testifies ~ that those who are truly reconciled will continue in the faith.

▷▷Already read what John says. ~~ if they had belonged to us, ~ would have remained.

▷▷And in Jn. 8:31 (NET), ~ Then Jesus said to those Judeans who had believed him, ~ "If you continue to follow my teaching, ~ you are really my disciples."

CONCLUSION. ~~ BUT NOW YOU HAVE BEEN RECONCILED, ~ PAUL SAYS.

BUT NOT ONLY, ~ AND I'LL CLOSE WITH THIS, ~ NOT ONLY ~ IS RECONCILIATION A reality of life for believers.

▶▶It is also a message we are to share.

▶▶Believers have been commissioned ~ by our resurrected Lord ~ to proclaim ~ the message of reconciliation.

▶▶Paul writes in 2 Cor. 5:18-20a, ~ ¹⁸ All this is from God, ~ who through Christ ~ reconciled us to himself ~ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ~ ¹⁹ that is, ~ in Christ ~ God was reconciling the world to himself, ~ not counting their trespasses against them, ~ and entrusting to us ~ the message of reconciliation. ~ ^{20a} Therefore, ~ we are ambassadors for Christ, ~ God making his appeal through us.

▶▶Consequently, ~ we, ~ my . . . , ~~ are to implore people on behalf of Christ, ~ to be reconciled to God.

▶▶TPID, ~ we are to spread the good news ~ of what God has done through his Son ~ to those still lost and headed for a Christ-less eternity. ⇔⇔ LET'S PRAY 13/13