

Colossians - Chapter 1
“Christ's Cross Work - The Key to God's Plan”
Colossians 1:20-21

Verse 20

1. In verses 15-19, Paul dealt with the **Person** of Christ. In other words, Paul told us exactly **who** Jesus Christ is. Now, Paul will deal with the **work** of Christ. If Christ was not God in His Person, then His **work** was not sufficient.
2. In Paul's writings you will not find Paul emphasizing Christ's earthly life and ministry, but rather Paul goes straight to Christ's work on the cross. His work on the cross pertains directly to us today.
3. If two parties are at odds, they need to be reconciled. But the way of peace must be made before reconciliation can take place. Peace must be made or there is no reconciliation.
4. Here is the problem. Christ created “*all things*” in heaven and earth (vs. 16). What He created was good. But when Satan and mankind fell, sin entered God's creation, thereby corrupting it and sending into a tailspin. Ephesians 6:12; 1 John 5:19
 - The governmental structures of heaven and earth were created to glorify Jesus Christ, but right now they are both filled with Satan's policy of evil.
 - Creation was **good** - Genesis 1 (**Past**)
 - Creation is now **groaning** - Romans 8:22 (**Present**)
 - Creation will one day be **glory** - Revelation 21-22; Romans 8:22 (**Future**)
5. In order for the “*things*” in heaven and earth to glorify Jesus Christ, a plan of reconciliation had to be designed and implemented. The sin that fills the universe and the earth had to be dealt with, paid for, and purged with a final and complete sacrifice.
6. This is why Christ's work on the cross was absolutely essential. When Christ died on the cross, it was more than just Christ making it possible for **people** to be reconciled to God (although this is incredible, as we will see in the next verse).
 - Some teach that the redemption of man is the central theme of the Bible, but this is not true. The central theme of the Bible is the reconciliation of the governments of heaven and earth back under the headship of Jesus Christ.
 - The redemption of man is very important, but it is a subplot to God's overall purpose for the reconciliation of His entire creation.
7. Christ (on the cross) was defeating Satan and his angels, and thereby guaranteeing their eventual defeat and casting away to the Lake of Fire. The heavens and earth will be purged and restored, resulting in a new heaven and new earth for the saved to dwell in for all eternity.
 - Revelation 12:7-10 (heavens are purged)
 - Revelation 19:11-21 (the earth is purged)
 - Revelation 21:1-8 (new heaven and new earth with no sin or corruption)

8. At last, the governmental structures of heaven and earth will do what they were originally designed to do—glorify Jesus Christ.
9. It is Christ's finished work on the cross that ensures this. This is why Hebrews 2:14 proclaims that, through death, Christ destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Sin had to be fully paid for before peace and reconciliation were possible.
 - The word “*peace*” means “harmony.” Christ's atoning sacrifice for sin made it possible for the things in heaven and earth to be brought back into harmony with God. Hebrews 9:23-26
10. So why haven't “*all things*” been reconciled yet? Why are the heavens and earth still polluted by Satan's wickedness? The next verse holds the answer. Christ is extending an offer of grace and reconciliation to sinners. He is inviting them to be a part of this great cosmic plan to reconcile “*all things*” to Jesus Christ.
11. The provisions for peace have all been made, but the implementing of this great peace plan awaits fulfillment.

Verse 21

1. I love the first two words, “*And you...*” How exciting! Paul is saying, “**You** get to be a part of God's great plan to reconcile all things unto Christ.”
2. God invites man to participate in His great, cosmic, eternal plan. God's ultimate plan of reconciliation for His creation awaits fulfillment, but mankind can be reconciled to God right NOW! Notice Paul says, “...yet **now** hath he reconciled.”
3. What is even more amazing, it isn't as if God started out with great building materials. We were old earthen vessels that were alienated from God.
 - We were alienated personally because of our sin. Ephesians 2:1-3
 - We were alienated dispensationally because of our status as Gentiles. Ephesians 2:11-12
 - We were separated from God, with no hope, no covenants, and no promises.
4. But, God changed that. With the falling away of Israel, God changed the dispensational setting, and salvation has come to you and me based on the finished work of Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:13
5. Because of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, God now offers to us the forgiveness of our sins and the very resurrection life of Jesus Christ. When you are spiritually dead in your sins, the only thing that will help you is **life**.
 - Illustration: If a person is dead and lying in a coffin, all the education, makeup, and religion in the world isn't going to help him. The only thing that will help a dead man is life! This is what God gives to us the moment we trust Christ. Ephesians 2:4-6
6. God takes us out of the alienated position and places us in the reconciled position. On what basis does God do this? This brings us to the next verse...