

Colossians 1:21–23

“The Past, Present, and Future of our Reconciliation in God the Son”

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***How is Christ exalted in our lives as the redeeming God-Man? Pastor leads his family in today’s “Hopewell @Home” passage. Colossians 1:21–23 prepares us for the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord’s Day. In these three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that Jesus is exalted in the past of our reconciliation by ending the enmity toward Him in our hearts and minds, and in the present of our reconciliation by our love for Him and pursuit of holiness, and in the future of our reconciliation by bringing us to final glory—ever and always by faith and hope in Him.***

### Thursday, October 14, 2021 ▫ Read Colossians 1:21–23

*Questions from the Scripture text: About whom does the apostle now speak (v21)? What was their previous status toward God? In the mind? How did they come to be alienated and enemies in the mind? What has God now done to them? In what have they been reconciled (v22)? What three conditions result from this reconciliation? Whose sight assesses this holiness, blamelessness, and being above reproach? In what must they continue, in order to be thus sanctified (v23)? What two conditions does this faith produce? From what does this faith keep believers from moving away? To whom does the apostle say this gospel has preached? Who is a minister (servant) of this gospel?*

The apostle has been proclaiming Christ as the everlasting God in both creation (v15–17) and redemption (v18–20). Now he returns to the point that triggered this glorious excursus: that in Christ, God has given us redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. As he comes back to this point, he reminds us that since there is one Creator and Redeemer, the one and same gospel of His redemption is preached throughout all of the creation under heaven (v23). This is the gospel of which Paul is a minister. Now, he summarizes for them the past, present, and future of that redemption.

**The past of believers’ redemption.** We begin life as foreigners (alienated) toward Christ in our hearts/minds (v21). This is a very serious condition, because He has an everlasting kingdom, and only His citizens are blessed forever. But even worse than being foreigners is the fact that in our minds, and the wicked works that proceeded from them, we were enemies of this King. But how has the eternal Son dealt with His enemies whom He was determined to have as subjects? By taking to Himself a flesh and blood body in which to die for them (v22). When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son (cf. Rom 5:10a)!

**The present of believers’ redemption.** There is an emphasis at the end of v21 on how it is “now” that the Colossians have been reconciled. This is familiar to the glorious “now” in Romans 8:1, which emphasizes how now, already, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Here the point is the status and the experience of believers.

Now, already, we have peace with God through the blood of His cross (v20). Now, already, we enjoy the fact that the enmity is killed, and we are sure that God is for us. And by the change of heart/mind He has given us, we are for that God Who is for us. We define holiness, blamelessness, and reproach according to what He sees them to be (v22). And we are trusting in Him to be the One who works to make us holy, blameless, and above reproach in His own sight. This is the glorious present of our redemption: God is for us, and by His grace, we are for God.

**The future of believers’ redemption.** Believers are sure to come to this state of blessedness. Why is this so sure? It comes in the same way that they came to Christ, and the same way they have proceeded with Christ: by faith and hope in Christ. There is not some next level of Christianity in which we must begin to produce our own life or goodness. From initial conversion to standing blameless before Him on the last day, it is all by believing in Him (v23a), by hoping in Him (v23b), by being steadfastly grounded upon Him as our foundation. Just as there is no other gospel for any creature anywhere (v23c), so also there is no other mechanism for the Christian life but faith in Christ Jesus.

Christ’s death the past of our redemption. Reconciliation in Christ the present of our redemption. And faith in Christ the guarantee of standing blameless before Christ as the future of our redemption. What a glorious redemption we have in our God and Savior, Jesus Christ!

How have the past, present, and future of your redemption glorified Christ? Knowing that this is the point of where you are in your experience of His redemption, how ought you to pursue living and growing as a Christian?

*Sample prayer: Our God, we praise You for bringing us into the kingdom of the Son of Your love! We were foreigners and enemies, but You have demonstrated Your love by His dying for us, His enemies. Forgive us for when our own love grows cold, or our faith wanes, and stir us back up unto Yourself in Christ, in Whose Name we ask it, AMEN!*

Suggested songs: ARP23B “The Lord’s My Shepherd” or TPH340 “There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood”

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**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)**

Colossians 1:21 through 23. These are God's words and you who wants were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works yet. Now, he is reconciled in the body of his flesh, through death, to present you, holy and blameless and above reproach in his sight. If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and they're not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you heard, which was breached every creature under heaven of which I pull became a minister.

So for the reading of God's inspired and inerrant art way back in verse 13 and diverse 13 into verse 14. God or the apostle had talked about God transferring us or conveying us into the kingdom of the son of his love and that's how the Lord Jesus was described to the son of his love.

The one who with the father, and the spirit as lived and reigned in mutual adoration and mutual affection. The love that is in God for all eternity, from all eternity. And he said the son of his love in him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, and now he returns to you that and you who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked yet, now he has reconciled in the body of his flesh through death.

And so there's this amazing truth that this entire section of Colossians chapter 1 is rejoicing over and that is that the eternal sun God, the sun. The second person of the Trinity now has flashed and blood flesh, in which we are reconciled, or through which we are reconciled in the verses 21 and 22.

Especially in our passage this morning and blood through which we were redeemed through which we were purchased by means of the forgiveness of sins. Back in verse 14 now between that that verse 14 and verse 21, which we are in today, if we were just to read it it would just take a few seconds.

Probably not even a minute, but for us, it's been several weeks of study. Why? Because versus 15 through 20 are so full of Jesus being God. And the Lord displaying that, his son is, God in creation, and the Lord displaying that, his son is God in redemption. And in the church, the Lord making us to dwell upon the Lord Jesus as God as the one in whom all the fullness dwells.

So, there's no provision and anyone else. And the one in whom alone, there is reconciliation for anyone anywhere. And so there's no provision anywhere else. There's no reconciliation anywhere else. So that brings us back to the thought or the reality of our redemption, being in the sun of his love, and then versus 21 to 23, which we have before is this morning.

He thinks that he brings us to think about our past, our present, and our future, the past, from which we were reading our present as those who have been redeemed and what the Lord is doing in our lives now, and our future, as those, whose redemption will be complete.

And the means by which, sorry the means by which Lord brings us to that completion. So if you believe in Jesus, that glorious, but your past is something horrible because even if you are part of the church and you had his mark on you as set apart to him, as holy yet, until you come to faith in Jesus Christ, in your heart, in your mind, in your actions, you are a foreigner, a stranger to Jesus, and even words to the stranger and enemy.

So he's writing to the Colossians, he's called them Saints. There wouldn't be a lot of about covenant children those who actually began as part of the church in Colossae, but what is true for all of them is you who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works.

And that's something that if you, if you aren't trusting in Christ and loving him, and living for him is still true today, which would be a horrible thing. And as what we pray for you to be delivered from. That's why we give instruction, that's why we give discipline. Because these are the means by which the God who saves you.

Through Christ, who saves you in Christ, brings you to repentance and faith as through the means of grace, family worship every day in the whole and public worship and the Lord's day. And those other things that has told us to do that, we who trust in him to do the work, do it.

Because if he doesn't give you a new heart and in your mind, then you will be strangers and enemies of him in your heart forever. But the one who has put his sign on your head, the one who has made you part of his church, he promises that he does.

This redeeming work by the means that we attend that we are attending upon even now. As I tried to explain to you his word and we've asked his holy spirit to help us that we would believe if we are believers already. And we read this about our paths, we rejoice, we say, look how much God loved me.

God, demonstrated his own love for us. And this while we were still sinners Christ died for us and not just how much God loved me then. But how much you must love me now? Later in Romans 5, if while we were his enemies, we were justified through the blood of Jesus Christ.

How much more now that we have been reconciled. Does God, love us. And shall we yet be saved, shall the rest of our redemption. Be completed. And so here in verse 21 and part of 22 there and in Romans, 5 and even in the daughters of Jerusalem, we've not for me and you see the love of Jesus for his enemies and Luke 23 and in father, forgive them for they know not what they do and they see the love of Jesus for his enemies when we look at the past of what we were apart from and before God's grace converted us, brought us to repentance brought us to faith.

We see how glorious the saving love and saving power saving grace, mercy of God, has been towards us. So that's our past. You who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works yet. Now he is reconciled in the body of his flesh through death. That's the present.

You are reconciled to God. He is for you, he's given you a new nature. He is declared you righteous. So now not only do you have the the external sign as part of his church that is on you and the name of a Christian, but you have the heart of a Christian and the mind of a Christian and the relationship in your soul with God.

That a Christian and if you have those things, then you are no longer hostile to his righteousness. As law is holiness, your hostile to your sin. The sin is still there, but you've been reconciled to God, which means now you've got a new enemy and you and your new friend who who has loved you and has loved you, that everlasting love.

But now he is brought you into loving him, you for his sake, want to be holy. And so that's the present of the Christian someone whose past was enmity against God, in our hearts, but now is friendship toward God in your heart. So that whenever you sin against him, it grieves you.

And whenever you have opportunity to serve him and obey him, it delights you and you are growing in those things, and he is making you holy in the body of his flesh, through death, to present you, holy and blameless and above reproach in his sight. So now you're defining what is good and right by what God says, is good and right, the holiness is what he says, holiness.

It's holiness in his sight. Blamelessness is blamelessness and his sight. Being above reproach is being a problem approach in his sight. No longer. Are we his enemies. The person who wants to define himself, what it means to be holier what it means to be. Righteous is an enemy of God, because part of God's rights, as as God is to define, what is good define?

What is righteous. Now, you have come to say not, I hate God's commandments or I don't want anything to do with God's commandments, but how I love your law? Oh Lord. And that the commandment is holy and righteous and good. The way the apostle describes the commandment in Romans 7, even while he's aiding his sin.

And so, that's our present, our past was enmity with God. Our present is having been justified having brought to faith, loving him, loving his law, wanting to be holy and our future is success in those things. If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you heard.

So our future, when we come into glory, when we are made blameless and holy, you know, how we get there, the same way that we came to be made friends toward God, to love him, with our heart, and through faith and hope there is not in the Christian life, a beginning by trusting, God, and depending upon him and living by faith and hope.

And then, after that some point, it, which we've been made good enough that we kind of take the training wheels off and don't depend upon God anymore or depend upon him, even a little bit less. No, if indeed you continue in the faith, independence upon him, grounded, in steadfast and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel.

So you never stop hoping you never stop. Resting upon him. You never come into a condition where you are less needy of it. That's just not true of genuine Christians, the ones who come to the end and are holy and blameless. And above approach in this site are ones who from beginning to end are, holy and blameless and above reproach by faith.

Walking by faith. As Romans one says, in the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed that is not just from faith, but for faith, or as some translations paraphrase fairly well by faith, from starts to finish. So if indeed you continue in faith in the faith, grounded, instead, fast and are not moved away, from the hope of the gospel, which you heard which was preached to every creature under heaven.

There's no other gospel for anyone else. This is the only gospel. This is the only way that enemies of God are made lovers of God and of which I Paul became a minister. It's the gospel that the apostle preaches in the Holy Spirit carried him along to, right? So that we could study it.

So there's our past, our present, and our future and all of that points, to dependence upon the Lord, Jesus Christ. God. The eternal son who now has flesh and blood by which we might be forgiven reconciled to God having redemption and peace, which we have already already. Now now verse 21, he has reconciled.

And then, let's pray her father in heaven. We thank you for setting before us as we look to you in Christ, our past present and future pray for any of my children. Who might not yet have trusted in Christ. Come to a place of loving you and loving to please.

You by the the means that you have appointed prayer that you would fulfill. The promises declared in your sign upon them and bring an end to the enmity. Make them love you. The way you have loved your elect from everlasting and will to ever lasting. We pray that you would make us continually to be amazed freshly and newly that how you loved us when we were in our hearts and our actions and enemies to you, help us to rejoice that having been brought to love you tomorrow.

That such a work has already been done in our hearts and that there were already declared righteous in Jesus, make us to live as those who rejoice over our current status with you and before you and make us to walk by faith and dependence upon you that we would rejoice that, you still love us that you continue to love us and continue to carry us and save us.

And we pray that you would bring us at last into glory in which our love for. You will have been perfected, our holiness will have been perfected. Thank you for this word that you gave to us this family on this day grant that your spirit would bless it to us for.

We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.