



SERMON NOTES

US N^o. 134

Date: March 16th, 2014

Title: Alienation & Reconciliation

#3 in the Series on the Letter to the Colossians

1. Review of Col. 1:15-20

- a. Jesus is...
 - i. the “*eikon*” of God
 - ii. the “*firstborn*” over all Creation and is before all things
 - iii. the “*head*” of the Church
- b. Through Jesus...
 - i. “*all*” things were created
 - ii. the “*pleroma*” of God dwells
 - iii. “*all*” things continue to exist
 - iv. “*all*” things will be reconciled to God
 - v. “*shalom*” has been made available for us

2. What that means for those in Colosse, and us. (cf. Col. 1:21-23)

- a. v. 21 - *“And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled...”*
 - i. The Greek word “*apellotriomenous*” is literally “*transferred to another owner.*” This transfer of ownership, from God to Satan & self, affected us in both *mind* and *behavior*.
 - ii. BUT, they’re no longer alienated or enemies. The difference between a believer and a non-believer is more than just forgiveness; it’s also their standing in the eyes of God.
 - 1. Sin and sin nature makes us enemies from a holy God.
 - iii. Alienation y Reconciliation. Reconciliation is through the blood and cross of Christ; God sought and saved us. Gen. 3:9, “...*the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’*”
- b. v. 22 - *“...in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight...”*
 - i. Jesus was both God and Man at the same time. The Athanasian Creed (*circa 500AD*) states, “...*it is necessary to everlasting salvation that [one] also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the right faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man; God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man of the substance of his mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect man, of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting. Equal to the Father, as touching His godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching His manhood; who, although He is God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ; one, not by conversion of the godhead into flesh*

but by taking of the manhood into God; one altogether; not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person."

- ii. Salvation not only reconciles us with God, but is meant to make us holy, blameless, and above reproach. It's more than just "fire insurance." Phil. 1:6, "...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;"
- c. v. 23 - "...if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard..."
 - i. Perseverance of the saints.
 - ii. Scripture promises that nothing can separate us or snatch us from God.
 - 1. Jn. 10:28, "*And I give [My sheep] eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.*"
 - 2. Rom. 8:39, "*For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"
 - iii. "If the gospel teaches the final perseverance of the saints, it teaches at the same time that the saints are those who finally persevere – in Christ. Continuance is the test of reality." [Bruce]
 - 1. Heb. 6:4-8, "*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.*"
 - 2. Heb. 10:29, "*Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?*"
 - 3. Rom. 11:21-22, "*For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.*"
 - 4. Also consider: Mt. 12:31, Jn. 8:13, 31, Jn. 15:9-10, 1 Thess. 3:8, Heb. 2:1-3, Heb. 3:6, 13-14, Heb. 10:26, 38, Heb. 12:25, James 5:19-20
- 3. Paul's Service and Commission (cf. Col. 1:24-26)
 - a. v. 24 - "*I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,*"

- i. Paul's Roman imprisonment came about because he had maintained that the *"wall of partition"* between Jews and Gentiles was broken down, and that the gospel was to be preached indiscriminately to all mankind.
- ii. *"Afflictions"* is never used of Christ's suffering on the cross, thus Paul IS NOT attaching any atoning value to his own sufferings for the Church. Rather Paul is speaking more of the afflictions that Jesus went through during His ministry for the Church while on earth.
- iii. Paul did not suffer for himself in the way that an ascetic might, rather he suffered for the sake of the body of Christ.
- iv. Phil. 3:10, *"...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,"*
- v. Eph. 1:3, *"... the church which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all..."*
- b. v. 25 - *"of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God,"*
 - i. Paul was made a servant of God through the call and appointment of God; partnership
- c. v. 26 - *"the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints."*
 - i. *"Mystery"* is a truth that is made known by revelation and not by intuition; it can be known now, because it has been revealed to His saints.
 - ii. Rom. 16:25-27, *"Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith – to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen."*
 - iii. There are aspects of God's plan that were not originally made clear in the Old Testament. One of those aspects of the work of Jesus was the plan of the church, to make one body out of Jew and Gentile; taken from the root of David and grafted in.
- 4. The Mystery (cf. Col. 1:27)
 - a. v. 27 - *"To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."*
 - i. Both the wonder and glory of the abiding, indwelling Jesus in both Jew and Gentile was not fully revealed until the time of Jesus and the apostles.
 - ii. Christ in you, the hope of glory. It isn't our own hard work or devotion to God, or the power of our own spirituality. Instead, it is the abiding presence of Jesus: Christ in you.
 - iii. Temple Theology and the People of God
 - 1. Rom. 8:11, *"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."*
 - 2. 1 Cor. 3:16, *"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"*

5. Paul's Ministry & Labor (cf. Col. 1:28-29)

- a. v. 28 - *"Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."*
 - i. Paul preached Jesus – not his opinions, not entertaining anecdotes, etc. (cf. Acts 5:42, Acts 8:35, 2 Cor. 4:5)
 - ii. It is for every man and represented all wisdom.
 - iii. *"Warning"* can also translated as *"counseling."* The ancient Greek verb *"nouthetountes"* means, *"to impart understanding, and to lay on the mind or the heart."* The stress is on influencing not only the intellect, but also the will and disposition.
 - iv. *"The work of warning, or helping to impart understanding, was a passion for Paul in ministry (cf. Acts 20:31). It is also the job of church leaders (cf. 1 Thess. 5:12) and of the church body in general (cf. Col. 3:16), providing that they are able to admonish others (cf. Rom. 15:14)."* [D. Guzik]
 - v. Paul's ministry was about bringing every man to individual maturity in Christ. In contrast, the false teachers at Colosse *"believed the way of salvation to be so involved that it could be understood only by a select few who made up sort of a spiritual aristocracy."* [Vaughan]
- b. v. 29 - *"To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily."*
 - i. Paul's work was empowered by God's mighty strength. But God's strength in Paul's life didn't mean that he did nothing. He worked hard according to His working.
 - ii. *"The word 'struggling' [striving], whose root can mean 'to compete in the games', carries, as of then in Paul, the idea of athletic contest: Paul does not go about his work half-heartedly, hoping vaguely that grace will fill in the gaps which he is too lazy to work at himself."* [Wright]

6. Take-aways

- a. Jesus is and did;
- b. Alienation through sin and reconciliation through His blood and cross;
- c. Salvation is more than just *"fire insurance,"* it's about making us holy, blameless and above reproach;
- d. Perseverance of the saints;
- e. Power of the resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings.
- f. Minister by appointment.
- g. The *"mystery"* has been revealed by God to us.
- h. Christ in you, the hope of glory.
- i. Preach Jesus alone.
- j. Warning and teaching every man in all wisdom.
- k. Strive according to His working in you.
- l. The Temple & the People of God

