Jesus the Reconciler
Colossians 1:19-23 (NKJV)

- We have been studying Colossians Chapter One.
- It’s here that Paul gave us the theme for this book.
- Verse eighteen the Pre–eminence of Christ.
- He is pre–eminent over creation, both in heaven and earth, and the universe. He created it and sustains it. The church, he died for it, paying the price for it, and will one day fully redeem it in heaven.
- You can say as He did in Revelations seven, Jesus is the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega, and the Beginning and the End.
- He had the first word and will have the last word.
- Today we continue to look at Jesus being pre-eminent.
- Specifically in His reconciliation of all things to Himself.
- Let’s read verse nineteen through twenty-three and get our bearings.

Vs. 19 – “For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell…”

- There are two words here that I want to point out, “All fullness,” simply means that he was totally and fully God.

All Fullness (Greek): the sum total of all divine powers and attributes.

- He was not an angel with a few powers of the godhead, He possessed them all.
- And then let me point out a third word here, “Dwell…”

Dwell: means to be at home permanently.

- The power of God was not something that Jesus possessed temporarily, but permanently.
- When He became flesh, He may not have chosen to access His power at any given time, but he didn’t ever lose his power.
- He was at all times fully God and fully man while He was here on earth.
- In knowing this about the Son, it helps us understand the next section of verses where Paul brought up reconciliation.
- Notice…
Vs. 20 – “...and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”

- Because Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, He is able to do what no other man could do, what no government, king, angel, or religion could ever do.
- Jesus alone has the ability to bring reconciliation to a world that is lost and in sin.

Reconciliation (Greek): something that was far off is now brought near; something that departed or separated is now something that is reversed.

- Now it’s important that we understand God was not the One who needed to reconcile with us, we needed to reconcile with Him.
- He did nothing to separate or to move away from us, we were the ones who sinned in Adam.
- Adam bombed in the garden and sinned against God, he was man’s best representative, and now we are all at war with God from birth.
- All you have to do is look at our works outside of Christ, and you can see how much we are at war with God.
- And so there is this great need within man to be reconciled with God.

In most cases reconciliation happens when two people get right with each other, they apologize for their sin and then healing begins. We see this on the sports field, when you foul someone, eventually you apologize and then you’re reconciled. We see this in marriages, when someone has sinned against the other, when the sinner humbles themselves and seeks forgiveness, and then there is the opportunity to get right with one another. No blood is shed, right? Throughout scripture we find that something had to die for reconciliation to happen, blood had to be shed. In the Old Testament it was the sacrifices, when a sacrifice was offered and blood would be shed, then reconciliation could happen. But the problem was that it was never fully sufficient, man would sin again and a sacrifice would have to be offered again. It was not made to be sufficient, not fully, not totally, because it was a shadow of things to come. That being the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, His blood was shed; His body was bruised to bring reconciliation. He did what the sacrifices could never do, He brought total and complete reconciliation.
This particular use of the word reconcile has with it the word fully, or totally.

It’s another great word to describe what Jesus has done for us.

We are not stuck in our sin, without hope in our sin, forever lost and distant from God in our sin.

We can be brought near, our place and position can be reversed.

It’s His blood that satisfied the father.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us…

“…without shedding of blood there is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22 (NKJV)

And so, what did Jesus do?

"For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Matthew 26:28 (NKJV)

He shed His blood, and it’s for anyone who would believe and receive.

That’s how the blood is applied.

"To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43 (NKJV)

We read in John’s gospel…

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name…” John 1:12 (NKJV)

The blood has been shed and has atoned for our sin.

But it must be applied, that’s where our part of the reconciliation happens.

When I was in Minnesota, I lived there for two winters; I was a youth pastor in a church. Most of the students who made their way to the youth ministry came from other churches. I would end our bible studies with an invitation, just like I do here, and every week hands would go up, and kids would give their lives to Christ. I had a student come up to me afterwards and say to me, hey that time that you have at the end, where you have us raise our hands and receive Christ, I grew up in a church where they didn’t do that. I asked him, do you believe in Christ? He said, “Yes,” have you received Christ? He said, “no, I don’t believe I ever have, it’s not something I ever had an opportunity to do.”
• The blood must be applied, and it’s applied when you and I receive Christ, we receive the blood of reconciliation.
• Now in the next verse Paul takes us back and reminded us of our past and what it looked like, prior to coming to Christ.
• It’s always good to be reminded where we came from.

Vs. 21 – “And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled…”

• Notice here the two ways he describes the non-believer…

1. We Were Alien’s to the Kingdom of God.

• We were not naturally born into the Kingdom of God, we were born in sin.

Alienated (Greek): estranged, separated, or cut off.

• Paul would say something similar in his letter to the church of Ephesus…

“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh--who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands--that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” Ephesians 2:11-12 (NKJV)

• We were strangers or aliens to the Kingdom of God, on the outside looking in.

2. Enemies in Our Minds Towards the Kingdom of God.

• The unbelieving mind has an attitude towards God and His holy standards.

I was talking to someone here in our fellowship the other day, she said she had worked at one of the local community colleges here in our area for 15 years, she said you could talk about anything but the Lord. You could talk about every evil under the sun, but if you brought up God, you might see your name on the chopping block, you might lose your job. She applied to one of the local Christian colleges and ended up getting the job, she mentioned how
blessed she was to be able to pray with her co-workers, it was totally and radically different.

- The fleshy mind is a sinful mind, and it’s a mind that wants nothing to do with God.

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” Romans 8:5-6 (NKJV)

“So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” Romans 8:8 (NKJV)

- Notice the difference between the two; the spiritually minded brings life and peace, the carnal and worldly mind brings death.
- It cannot please God; it’s at war with God.
- That’s the fruit, or as Paul puts it here in verse twenty-one our works were wicked…

I heard someone comment on one of our worship services, they said to me, “dude that worship set was sick, it was wicked sick.” I thought don’t go and advertise our worship team as wicked sick. Its funny how upside down we can be in our thinking, something good is bad. Remember that word in the eighties, that’s bad, that really meant good. Something that is wicked and sick is also good.

- Well not according to scripture.
- Wicked is used to describe the works of our flesh.
- Jesus gave us an illustration on this…

“You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.” Matthew 7:16-20 (NKJV)

- A good tree is one that is planted in a relationship with the Father that is going to produce good fruit.
- It happens naturally as they abide by faith.
- In the same way the bad fruit comes from the sinful mind, it may bear fruit, but the fruit is bad.
• Because it’s not connected to a source of good, but connected to a world that is under the sway of the enemy.

“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”  Ephesians 2:1-3(NKJV)

• Our minds, our hearts, and our work, the path that we were walking was contrary to God, and thus we were at war with God.
• It’s a great reminder of our past, but let us not forget, that was our past, Amen.
• Let’s go back and read and be reminded what Jesus did for us…

Vs. 20 – “…having made peace through the blood of His cross.”

Vs. 21 – “And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled…”

Vs. 22 – “…in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight…”

• You might underline these words in verse twenty-one, you who once, and then underline, yet now.
• In other words; you were once, that’s where you came from, that’s the ugly past.
• Yet now, because of Christ the ugliness is erased.
• Paul would say it this way in Ephesians…

“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers
and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God…” Ephesians 2:13-19 (NKJV)

- No longer strangers to the kingdom of God, but fellow citizens.
- Notice how He will present us when we get to our final destination…
- He reminds us, He will present us holy, blameless, and above reproach.

1. Holy: pure or consecrated.

2. Blameless: unblemished, without spot, without blame.


- In other words not only does He reconcile us, but He gives a makeover on top of it, no more blemishes, woohoo!
- That’s why he reminds us…

Vs. 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, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.”

- If you indeed continue in the faith, and have not moved away from the gospel which you heard.

Continue (Greek): persevere or abide.

- Abide and persevere in the faith, not works, don’t get this wrong. He is not saying, keep working and you’ll get there, that would undo all that he just said about the work of Christ and the cross.
- No, he reminds us to continue in the faith.
- Faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross, in His redemptive work of the cross.
- Don’t start trying to earn what has already been given, that’s a departure, continue in the faith, and be grounded in it. Be steadfast in your belief in it, and don’t let anyone move you away and you will bear the fruit of a believer.
- It really is the evidence that we are in the faith, when we continue in the faith, that’s a genuine faith.
- Then we finish, notice in speaking about the gospel of reconciliation, Paul reminds us all…
Vs. 23 – “… of which I Paul became a minister.”

- The word minister means servant, Paul became a servant of reconciliation, the one who had experienced reconciliation himself was now preaching it.
- And it’s not just for Paul, it’s for all who have been reconciled.

“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.” 2Corithians 5:18-20 (NKJV)

- Now that we have been reconciled we get to call the world around us to reconciliation, there is no greater ministry than to bring people to the cross where they can get right with the Father.