

The Sweet Fruit of Reconciliation

(Colossians 1:21-23)

Dr. Jim Cecy

Review of Colossians:

- The Impact of the Gospel (Colossians 1:1-8)
- The Marks of the Mature Christian (Colossians 1:9-14)
- The Portraits of the Magnificent Christ (Colossians 1:15-20)

Our Text Today:

Colossians 1:21-23 “And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach - if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.”

I. The Rotten Fruit of Unbelief (Colossians 1:21)

Colossians 1:21 “And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds...”

1 Timothy 1:15 “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.”

Reminder #1. We were alienated from God

Colossians 1:21 “And although you were formerly alienated . . .”

alienated = Greek: *apallotrio'ō* = completely separated

Psalms 51:5 “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”

Romans 5:12 “Therefore, just as through one man (i.e. Adam) sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...”

Ephesians 2:12 “...remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.”

John 8:44 “You are of your father the Devil...”

Ephesians 2:13 “But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

Reminder #2. We were hostile against God

Colossians 1:21 “And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind . . .”

hostile = Greek *echthros* = enemy

“Our thoughts made us enemies of God” (Colossians 1:21; Contemporary English Version)

James 4:4 “Whoever will be a friend of the world (i.e. the world’s twisted values) is the enemy of God”

Ephesians 4:18 “...being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart...”

Romans 8:7 “...the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.”

Reminder #3. We were engaged in evil deeds before God

Colossians 1:21 “And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds...”

Ephesians 2:3 “Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”

Colossians 3:5-10 “Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him...”

Isaiah 64:6 “For all of us have become like one who is unclean . . . And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment.”

“We are no longer a slave to sin.” (cf. Romans 6:5-6)

II. The Sweet Fruit of Reconciliation (Colossians 1:22-23)

Reminder #1 We enjoy a privileged position in Christ

Colossians 1:22 "...yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach..."

- We are privileged to be reconciled to God
- We are privileged to be holy, blameless and above reproach

Regarding Our Heavenly Position in Christ vs. Our Earthly Practice before Christ

Regarding Imputed Righteousness:

"He made Him who knew no sin (Christ) to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."
(2 Corinthians 5:21)

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Matthew 3:17)

- **In Christ we are "holy"** (Greek: *hagios* = consecrated, dedicated, separated)
Romans 6:13 "do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."
- **In Christ we are "blameless"** (Greek: *amomos* = without blemish) cf. Num. 6:14; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19)
Romans 12:1 "I appeal to you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to Him..."
- **In Christ we are "beyond reproach"** (Greek: *anegkletos* = free from accusation) cf. Rm. 8:33; Phil. 2:15; Rev. 12:10

"Christ in you, the hope of glory." Colossians 1:27

Jude 24-25 "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."

Reminder #2. Our position in Christ should affect our practice on earth

Colossians 1:21-23 "And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach - if indeed (since) you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister."

Colossians 3:1 "If (since) then you have been raised with Christ (i.e. positional truth); keep seeking the things above where Christ is (i.e. our practice).

Principle #1. Walk by faith — no matter what the challenge.

"...continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast..." (Colossians 1:23)

Principle #2. Never depart from the gospel — no matter what the temptation.

"...not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister." (Colossians 1:23)

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." (2 Corinthians 5:17-20)

Concluding Challenge:

Our Life Message . . .

Our Life Mission . . .

"We beg you on behalf of Christ...be reconciled to God." (2 Corinthians 5:20)

Prayer Requests:



Growth Group Homework

For the week of May 6, 2012

SERMON SERIES: COLOSSIANS

Message Title: *"The Sweet Fruit Of Reconciliation"*

Dr. Jim Cecy

May 6, 2012

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. This week we looked at Colossians 1:21-23. Pastor Jim said he could have titled the message: "Before and After - What My Life was Really Like as an Unbeliever... And What it is Like Now as a Christian." Share your "before and after" shot with the group. What was your life like as an unbeliever? And what is your life like now as a Christian?

2. Take a look at your sermon notes and reflect on this week's teaching. Was there a particular point or passage of Scripture that challenged you or caught your attention?

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DIGGING DEEPER

3. In Colossians 1:21, Paul wrote that before our conversion all of us were alienated from God, hostile towards Him, and engaged in evil deeds. Can you think of some ways Christ reached out to you when you were an unbeliever and you rejected Him?

4. The doctrine of “total depravity” means that *every part* of our being is affected by sin – our bodies, intellects, emotions, desires, motives, etc. How do the following verses describe our human depravity prior to being regenerated by the Holy Spirit?

- Ephesians 2:1-3
- 2 Corinthians 4:3-4
- Romans 3:10-18
- 1 Corinthians 2:14
- Romans 6:17-18

5. The amazing truth of the Gospel is that “*while we were enemies* we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son” (Rom 5:10). The Latin word for reconcile literally means “to call back into union.” It speaks of restoring a relationship between two estranged parties. Read the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32. What does this parable teach you about God’s character and the privilege of being reconciled to Him?

TAKING IT HOME

6. In the message, Pastor Jim encouraged us to “review our sinful pasts, so that we never entertain the idea that it might be nice to be back there.” Are you...
- entertaining the thought of going back to a particular sin? (Lk 9:62; Prov 26:11)
 - pressing forward to grow in your faith no matter what the cost? (Phil 3:12-14)
 - or coasting in your spiritual life and gradually losing steam? (Rev 3:15-20)
7. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20 says that God has committed to us the message of reconciliation. How are you doing as an ambassador of reconciliation? When was the last time you shared the gospel with someone?