

HOME CHURCH

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:

Colossians 1:21-23

1. When was the last time you were confused or wondering what the lyrics of a song or poem meant? Did you look up the meaning? If so, what did you learn?
2. Read verses 21-23, they might be titled "You Are Here." If the poem of 15-20 is like a map of the entire cosmos or the whole story of creation and redemption, then these verses indicate where the ordinary Christian is located on the map (NT Wright)."
3. Read verse 22. How do you respond to the idea that you are in God's presence "holy, blameless, and without any accusation"? What does this say about our Jesus-identity?
4. What are one or two ways in which your life is different since you changed from being alienated from God to being reconciled through Christ's death?
5. It's easy to *only* see the personal aspect of salvation. However, in these verses and Ephesians 2:16, this is a people (an ecclesial group) being reconciled. This is "Israel expanded" beyond the Jews, with Gentile sinners being brought in and now equal to Jews. Ephesians 2:14-22 reveals this as well. The church is central as this new people. Why do we tend to have a low view of the church, when Paul sees it as central to the Jesus-way?
6. If you do not feel you have experienced this reconciliation, what do you hope to find in verses 21-23?

PRAYER:

MAY 17, 2020

COLOSSIANS YOU ARE HERE

NT wright refers to this passage as a big "You are here!" sign. Here is where we find ourselves in relationship to the song lyrics from last week. Here is where he tells us what the artist meant when he sent the song to us. Join us to find out where you are (or could be)...

Colossians 1:21-23 (CEB Bible)

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and you were enemies with him in your minds, which was shown by your evil actions. ²² But now he has reconciled you by his physical body through death, to present you before God as a people who are holy, faultless, and without blame. ²³ But you need to remain well established and rooted in faith and not shift away from the hope given in the good news that you heard. This message has been preached throughout all creation under heaven. And I, Paul, became a servant of this good news.

OUTLINE (McKnight):

I. Introduction 1:1-2:5

C. Intercession 1:9-23

1. The Prayer 9-12

2. Digression on the Messiah's Work 1:13-23

a. The Redemption of the Messiah 1:13-14

b. The Preeminence of the Messiah 1:15-20

c. **The Reconciliation through the Messiah 1:21-23**

UPFRONT APPLICATIONS

LETTING THE WORD SPEAK

Colossians 1:21 Shift from cosmic reconciling work of Christ to impact on Colossian believers

Four Categories to describe their past before Jesus

1.

2.

3.

- In Paul's theology, there are several "enemies"
 - A cosmic death-dealing fight against God and God's people 1 Corinthians 15:25. Shows up as opposition to God and the people of God. (Romans 5:10; Philippians 3:18).
 - But here "in your minds"

4.

Colossians 1:22 *"But now...He has reconciled you"*

Reconciliation in Paul's thinking is:

- Cosmic, 2 Corinthians 5:19
- Ecclesial; Colossians 1:22, Ephesians 2:16 - the People of God - Israel expanded
- Individual-Personal; Romans 5:10, 1 Corinthians 5:18-20

The physical, the body of Jesus, was part of this, not simply an abstract or spiritual (only) act. "In Jesus' fleshly body the whole of humanity—Jews and Gentiles—is represented, dies, and can be raised into the resurrection body of eternity" (McKnight, 175).

Colossians 1:22b "holy in his sight" "without blemish" "free from accusation"

Colossians 1:23 *"If you continue..."*

Gift and grace entail a kind of reciprocity: "the gift is both given as a gift and summons the receiver of the gift into reciprocal responses of gratitude, faith, and obedience" (McKnight/Barclay, 178)

Colossians 1:23b The Gospel has gone universal + Paul is a servant of that Gospel

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Question & Response

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Restate and Apply It