

## Colossians 1:18-23

### Announcements:

- Big thanks to Ryan and worship team
- The mission team is still in the DR. **(photo)** They get home Tuesday. Keep praying!
- Church update on a couple items after the message today. **Stick around...**

Please open to **Colossians Chapter 1** (Need a Bible? Raise your hand...)

- Last time: **Part 1** = **combating gnosticism** (spirit/matter/emanations) - **EPIC Jesus!**
- **Image of invisible, firstborn** (**prototokos** (highest rank)
  - **Nicholas of Myra** (**image - Arius slap**) (**Santa Clause!**)),
- **All** = seven times in six verses (by/through/before/unto). **He = Christ.**
- **Creator** (heaven/earth, seen/unseen, angelic hierarchy). **Telescopes to Microscopes.**
- **Susatiner** - holds all together (if one element is off...)

### Message Title: Supremely Sufficient (PART 2)

- **Creator of ALL** (verses 15-17)
- **Head of the CHURCH** (verses 18-20)
- **Redeemer of YOU** (verses 21-23)

This time: Picking up at **"Head of the Church"** (3 scopes: broad to narrow...)

- **Outer space... to personal space!**

### Head of the CHURCH (verses 18-20)

Verse 18 is where we left off last week. *Quick recap...*

#### **V. 18 - He is the head of the body, the church**

- **Fronted for emphasis,**
  - **"Tacos, I could eat every day. Salad? Not so much..."**
  - **"Fear is the path to the darkside..."** (Yoda)
  - **He = "He Himself,"** meaning **"He and no other!"** (**It's all about Christ**)
- The church is a **body** (family, kingdom, vineyard, flock, building, bride) **Rom. 12 = One body!**
- **Head (kephale)** = **source/origin** or **leader/ruler** = **Both are true with Christ! (no one else!)**

#### **V. 18 - Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead**

- **Prototokos** - "status as **highest in rank** or authority, **dealing with quality, not quantity...**"
- Christ was **not the first person to rise from the dead**, but He was the **first to rise and NEVER DIE AGAIN**. And in doing so, **"He is the firstborn among many brethren"** (Romans 8:29)
  - **Because he rose, we will also rise!**
  - **Christ has supremacy over death itself!**

#### **V. 18 - That in all things He may have the preeminence.**

- **In how many things? All. In everything.**
- **Preeminence (proteuo)** = **To hold first place.** He holds **"first place in everything!"**
  - He is **not a lesser god**, or **a ripple farther down the line.** **He is God.**

- **Image - Leonadro Davinci's - The Last Supper Painting** **hands of Christ are empty!**
  - **"Nothing,"** Da Vinci explained, **"must distract from the figure of Christ."**

Okay, now we're caught up...

#### V. 19 - For it **pleased the Father**

- **Matthew 3:17, 17:5** - "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"
  - **V. 19 - "It was the Father's good pleasure" (NASB)**
- **Eudokeo:** (eu = well/good + dokeo = think/seem). Lit: *what seems good and right!*
- **The Father** finds it **good and right**. **Pleasing approval**. But **what is it** that is good...?

#### V. 19 - **All the fullness** should **dwell in Him**

- This is the language of: **Completeness. Totality.**
- **Fullness (pleroma)** = "The entirety. completely filled." "Fully loaded ship (sailors/freight)"
- And **ALL the fullness** means completely, *without exception*.
- **Theological nuclear bomb:** Paul is *not saying Christ just has SOME* qualities of God nature, NO, He's saying the **TOTALITY of God's essence** dwells in the *person of Jesus*.
- This is an **intentional attack towards the gnostics**. Christ is *not lessor or part of*. **HE IS!**
- **Chris is the highest God**. There is no other. *Psalm 57:11 - "Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!"*
- And **all the fulness of God** is stated to **"dwell in Him."** *In Who...?* **Jesus Christ our Lord!**
- **Dwell (Katoikeo)** = The idea is to **take up permanent residence**. This is *not a temporary dwelling (like the tabernacle, or temple (temporary locations...))*.
- **Present tense** - Christ *now and continues to dwell in bodily form* (more on this in a moment...)
- **Once again, In Him** is **fronted for emphasis, Chris and no other!**
  - ...**gobbling up** (good timing?) **all the previous truths:** *the image of God, eternally preexistent, supreme over all creation, creator, sustainer, Head of the Church, first in all things, and containing the fullness of God's dwelling among us.*
- This passage calls us to **radical contentment in Christ alone**. If **all the fullness of God dwells in Him**, what could possibly be missing? (*Mysticism? Legalism? Asceticism?*)

And, because *Jesus is the fullness of God*, He is **able to do what no mere man could do...**

#### V. 20 - And **by Him** to **reconcile all things**

- **By/Through Him (Dia Autos)** - **fronted AGAIN**, *Through Christ and no other (agent/means)*
- **Reconcile (apokatalasso)** = "to bring back to a former state of harmony" ("apo" adds "emphasis" - *not just simply fixed* but intensive. **Fully mend**). **Through Christ, and Christ alone**, what was **broken is restored**. (*all the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put humpty back together again...*) **but Christ can, and will!**
- **The fullness of God, in Christ, will fully restore!** (more in a moment... *talking about aliens* :)
- **To Himself** - **starts with God & returns to God** (*Parable of the Forgiving Father! (Luke 15)*)
- And **how many things** does it say are *being reconciled back to Him?* **ALL THINGS** (*ta panta!*)
  - **This is the story of the Bible!** **God calling everyone back to Himself!** (*Missio Dei*)

Paul makes sure to cover his bases... (when he says **"all"**)

#### V. 20 - Whether things **on earth or in heaven**

- **Earth (ge)** = The physical realm. Land, Ground. Touch and feel (trees and toads...)

- **Heaven (ouranos)** = the expanse “up and out there” (stars, angles, etc...)
- Do you ever ponder, that **because of the fall**, **all of the created universe** is **cursed and out of harmony with God**? Everything is **out of joint**, and Christ has come to **set it right!**
- **Romans 8:19-22, NLT** - “Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. **Against its will, all creation was subjected to God’s curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day** when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.” - this is **not just symbolism or hyperbole... (groans)**
- **Christ will reconcile ALL things (creation too) back to Himself. From Garden to Garden...** Everything will get **properly fixed and put back together!**

\*\*\***Though this is all true, a clarifier is needed.**

- **I am saying** that **all things will be reconciled** to Christ in the end.
- **I am NOT saying** that **all things will be justified** in the end.
- This is an **important and big difference**, lest we teach the **heresy of universalism**.
- **Universalism** - “all people will ultimately be reconciled to God and saved, either in this life or after death... including those who die in unbelief or rebellion—such that hell, if it exists, is remedial and temporary rather than eternal.” - **Heresy!**
- That is **not what I am saying** and that is **not what Paul is saying**.
- There is **a sense in which all things will be reconciled back to God**, *through Christ*.
  - *One day, all people (earth) & angels (heaven) will be dealt with (Great White Throne).*
  - *One day, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Christ is Lord.*
    - *Some in worship... some in judgment...*
  - *One day, our moaning, aching world will be re-created into a new heavens / new earth.*
- **In that sense, all things are being reconciled back to God.**
- But **salvation only comes to those who know the next part** of the verses ahead...

#### V. 20 - Having **made peace** through the **blood of His cross**

- This is **the means through** which reconciliation is made. **And it’s shocking!**
- The **way to peace is through punishment**. (**Cross = BRUTAL Roman crucifixion (explain)**)
  - A **tool for criminals and capital punishment**. **Blasphemous! Foolish! Exactly...**
  - **This is what it costs, friends. Free, but not cheap. The price of our sin. Heavy.**
- Our peace is found through **the blood of His Cross**. The cross is **Christ’s and no one else’s. That’s why He came**. He **did not have to come**, but He **made a way where there was no way**.
- It’s not just **His cross**, but **more importantly** even, **His blood**. This call back to **OT sacrifices!**
  - **Leviticus 17:11** - “**For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul**” - **Christ is the final, perfect, complete atonement!**
  - **Hebrews 9:22, NLT** - “In fact, according to the law of Moses, nearly everything was purified with blood. **For without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness.**”
  - **Because of God’s holiness, justice must be satisfied. Propitiation. Atonement.**
  - **Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)** - **Oct 1-2, 2025**. (sprinkle blood on **mercy seat**)
  - **This had to be repeated every year**. (Jews now?) Christ, however, **entered the true heavenly sanctuary with His own blood, achieving eternal reconciliation once for all.**

- **Had Christ NOT come as God in the flesh** and paid the price with **His blood**, we would **not be forgiven...** But instead, *not only have we been forgiven*, more specifically, **given peace**.
- **Having Made Peace (eirenopoeio) = Harmony!** (greek = cessation or absence of war...)
  - **Aorist Active**. God did it in the past; **It's done!**
  - **There's no longer a barrier... The veil has been torn... Hallelujah!**
  - **The OT picture** is: **Shalom (sh-l-m) = completeness, wholeness, no schism or fracture.**

**This is what Christ has done for his church**. He has **made peace through the blood of His cross**.

- **All things will be reconciled**, but **not all things will experience** the **peace of the cross**.
- **Only those that respond... (have you been reconciled? Have you responded?)**

**Scope narrows...** Notice beginning in verse 21, all the direct **YOU** language...

### **Redeemer of YOU (verses 21-23)**

#### **V. 21 - And you**

- Here you see the shift from **Cosmic to Personal**: After **6 straight verses** of **grandiose galactic theology**, Paul suddenly makes it **very personal**: **"And YOU..."**
- This **isn't just ABSTRACT doctrine** about **Christ's supremacy over creation**, **lofty in the clouds**. This is about **YOU. YOUR condition & YOUR transformation**. **Rubber meets the road**.

#### **V. 21 - Who once were...**

- The **text is now calling us out** - **The Gospel confronts!**
- **Calling us out...** for who we **"formerly used to be."** **BC days**: ...any of those in the room?
  - **Present participle = ongoing state...**

#### **Three-Fold Picture: (Bold section)**

- **(1) Status: "Alienated"** (separation)
- **(2) Mindset: "Hostile"** (opposition)
- **(3) Behavior: "Wicked"** (rebellion)

**\*\*\*Leave up on screen for a moment\*\*\***

- Much of **modern christianity today**, wants to **skip the diagnoses** and **jump to the cure**.
- **There must be bad news before there can be good news** (*what you've been rescued from!*)

#### **V. 21 - Alienated** (not **aliens** like you thought :)

- **Alienated - Apallotrio** = Estranged. Excluded. **Shut out from intimacy and fellowship**.
  - **Perfect passive participle** = something that *happened to all men in the past* and **remains to be the case...** (**In Adam - Romans 5**)
- **\*Picture all of humanity being unclean outside the city walls... Cut off from inheritance.**
  - **= Separation**

#### **V. 21 - And enemies in your mind** - sounds harsh? Yet horribly true...

- **Enemies - Echthros** = Hateful. **Hostile** opposition.
- **In your MIND - Dianoia** = Understanding. Ways of *thinking, feeling, and desiring*.
  - Our **worldview was anti-God**. **Look around today, it still is!** (the world is **who we were**)

- There was a time when we did not have any use or need for God.
- We did not take Him into account.
- We did not consider him important or look to him for our life.
- We started and ended our days without any regard for Him.
- We did what we wanted, what felt good, our ways, our thinking.
  - or viewed Him as a killer of fun (as I did)
  - Realize it or not... you were against God. (and so was I...)
- Romans 8:5-7 - "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. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot."
- **= Opposition**

And of course, wrong thinking leads to wrong doing...

V. 21 - (as expressed) by (your) **wicked works**

- **Wicked** - **Poneros** = Diseased/blind. Full of sorrow/pain. Evil, wicked, bad... of a bad nature.
  - You were actively harmful and hurtful to yourself and others. (and so was I...)
- **Works** - **Ergon** = acts, deeds, things done. (living)
  - The preposition **"in" (en)** pictures our former alienated state as in the sphere of evil. It's the very air we breathed...
- Psalm 1 - walking, standing, sitting. Hattah, Pesha, Avon.
  - **= Rebellion**

The point of these three descriptors of our "BC" days = total depravity

- You were not just a little off track, with a few minor flaws. You were completely evil in your thinking and doing and excluded from God's holiness and presence. Outcasted by sin ... (all)
- Don't soften your past. Excuse it or rationalize it. Don't say, "I wasn't that bad."
  - The more clearly you know what you were saved FROM, the more deeply you'll appreciate what you were saved TO (the more compassion you'll have on others!)
  - Those people who are lost in the world. That's you and I but not for the grace of God.

Here's who you were...

Ephesians 2:1-3 - "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked... carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath..." - that still you?

And the Gospel message just stops there.... **NO IT DOES NOT!**

V. 21 (NKJV) / V. 22 (all others) - Yet now **He has reconciled (YOU)**

- This is the **HINGE POINT** of the Gospel message. The **Turning Point!** (to borrow a term)
- The glorious **"Yet Now!"** - some of the **best language ever.** We were broken. but Christ did something about our brokenness. He provided **a way of escape.** **A means of salvation.**
- **God's answer** to **Alienation is Reconciliation.** He has brought us back from the pit!
- **Has reconciled you** = **aorist tense.** It is a done deal. The price has already been paid.
  - It's not an idea, theory, or maybe, potentially, if you're lucky. No... It is finished.
  - **Christ has done the work.**
- The same intense word in verse 20 about **cosmic reconciliation.** **Now applied personally!**

- **The great exchange**. **YOU**. **Hospitality for friendship**. (2 Cor. 5:21)
- He died for us **"while we were yet sinners"** and **"when we were enemies"** (Rom. 5:8, 10).

And, here's how He did it...

- V. 22 - In the **body of His flesh** (His fleshly/physical body) - the **condescension of Christ** (Phil 2)
- **In the body** (en to soma) - **Real physical body**, not a metaphor. Or phantom possession.
  - **Of His flesh** (tes sarkos autou) - **Actual human flesh**. Not an illusion, avatar, or magic trick.
    - **Why so specific?** Paul is **calling this out for a reason**. **Gnostics - ripples, emanations**.
  - Later, the **Apostle John joins Paul** in refuting this heresy. **1 John 4:3** - "Every spirit that does not confess that **Jesus Christ has come in the flesh** is not of God."
  - **The incarnation!** - **The Word became flesh**. **Born of a virgin**. **Never sinned**. **Bodily substitution**.
    - **Hypostatic union!** (fully God, fully man.)

#### V. 22 - **Through death**

- **(dia tou thanatou)** **Born to die**. The Disciples struggled with this...! **No, Lord!**
- Like a **seed going into the ground and dies**, that **produces life (much grain)** (John. 12)
- **God the Son** (in whom all the fullness dwells), the **eternally blessed and glorious One**, took on **your flesh** (hunger, thirst, exhaustion), lived perfectly in **your place** (temptation, struggle), and died **your substitutionary death** (without spot/blemish) **Brutal. Death. Scouring. Cross**.
  - **1 Peter 2:24** - "[Christ] Himself **bore our sins in His own body on the tree**"
- **Don't just pass this by... the great price that was paid**. **He died, so you could live!**

#### **Communion last week** (Body and Blood) - **Eucharisteo**

And the Gospel message doesn't just stop there either...

- V. 22 - (in order to) present you... in His sight (before Him)
- The **Septuagint OT** idea of **presenting in God's sight** is that of **an acceptable sacrifice**.
  - **We were not acceptable before the Lord**. **Humanity's condition was terrible before Him**
  - But, in Christ, we are **not only brought out of the pit**, but even more, we are **accepted and honored!** **Not just escaping hell, not just sins forgiven, but true life transformation**.
    - The most important thing is **not how we look in the sight of others**, or **even in our own sight**, but how we look **in God's sight**. **Identity theft**. **Identity restoration**.

\*\*\*Just like earlier, we get a three fold picture, but much different!

#### **Three-Fold Picture:**

- (1) **"Holy"**
- (2) **"Blameless"**
- (3) **"Beyond Reproach"**

\*\*\*Leave up on screen for a moment\*\*\*

Yes, the Scriptures paint the **darkest picture possible** of **our condition apart from Christ**, but here they also give us the **highest picture possible** for **those found in Christ**. **To Present YOU (personal)**

#### V. 22 - **Holy**

- Hagios - separated and set apart. Consecrated. Saint. No longer ordinary...

#### V. 22 - Blameless

- Amomos (a = without + momos = spot, blemish, fault) (next time you have a pimple :)
- No longer blemished. Faultless. Spotless. Perfect picture of the Lamb of God. What grace that the same adjective would be used towards us that describes our sinless savior.

#### V. 22 - Above (beyond) reproach

- Anengkletos - Free from accusation. This is beyond blameless. It is "unaccusable"!
- Romans 8:33 - "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies!"
- Even though we live amongst a crooked and wicked generation, and the devil, the world, and our flesh will try to condemn (accuse) us... we are made straight.
- Rev. 12:10 - "Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, 'Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.'"
- In the end - Satan's accusations will not stand against the saints of the Most High.
  - Positionally (already), Practically (ongoing), and perfectly (ultimately).

Here's another way to summarize all of this...

1 Peter 2:9-10 - "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy."

God has done his part, we still have our part (Re-read verse 23... (breakdown next week))

- Not a soft commitment. You don't just add Jesus to your plate like He's a buffet item...
- It's a serious commitment. It's a lifelong commitment. Not emotional (soils). Not flippant.
- The Christian life isn't just "fire insurance" - it's full life transformation. Christ did the work

#### Closing

Creator of ALL - Cosmic grandeur

Head of the CHURCH - Body/family

Redeemer of YOU - Highly personal (no one else decides for you...)

- The same One who holds the galaxies in His hands, holds your life together!

Titus 3:3-7 - "For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

- Altar call for sure... Have you been reconciled back to God?

- Never submitted? Currently alienated in your hostile mind and wicked ways. But Christ died for you and lived perfectly in your place and purchased you with His own blood

Give clear G. O. S. P. E. L. invitation... Plead with the souls of men...

**PRAY.** Closing chorus or instrumental? (announce church update, coming up)

**\*\*\*BIG Church Update at End\*\*\***