

**HCC English Service – October 13, 2020**  
**Colossians 1:21-23**

**Introduction**

- Who do you need to be reconciled to? What happened that broke your relationship with that person? Were you the one that wronged the other party or were you the one who was wronged? What if you were asked to make amends with that person right now? How would you feel? Would it be true if I say that there is some sort of hesitancy on your part to want to make things right with that person? Reconciling with someone is probably one of the harder things that we go through. I think especially for us Asians; we avoid conflict, we tend to sweep things under the rug. As we probably know already, sweeping things under the rug doesn't really repair the relationship.
- When it comes to our relationship with God, as Christian, being reconciled back to God should change the way we interact with God. It should change the way we believe God views us. Knowing that we've been reconciled should deepen our relationship with God. Reconciliation goes way beyond repairing the relationship. We all either have been reconciled to God already or need to be reconciled right now.
- Our need to be reconciled to God can only come through the work of Christ. Two weeks ago, when we started the Colossian series, we talked about feeling spiritually inadequate. For the Colossians, they were told that they needed to add to Jesus in order to obtain salvation. They were told that their faith was not good enough, so they needed to more. Last week Pastor Jason talked about how Paul argued for us to look to the Supremacy of Christ to battle Spiritual inadequacy. Paul now follows up Colossians 1:15-20 encouraging us to look towards the work of Christ to battle spiritual inadequacy. He wants us to look the work of Christ, specifically, reconciling us back to God. Through today's passage, we'll see how reconciliation does more than just repair a broken relationship.
  - We have a broken relationship with God in need of reconciliation
  - We have a restored relationship with God through reconciliation
  - We have an unwavering relationship with God grounded in reconciliation

**A broken relationship with God in need of reconciliation**

- Here, Paul turns to the Christians and addresses who they are. He just finished talking about the Supremacy of Christ and then, now, addresses the depravity of Man. He says, "And you, who once were..." More specifically, he talks about a Christians past. He talks about where they come from. Paul is always reminding his readers who they were before Christ. Even in Ephesians, he says, "Therefore, remember that at one time you gentiles...remember that you were at that time separated..."
- He's pointing to our past and using our past to make a point. He's making the point that you and I have no way of reconciling our relationship with God. You and I have a broken relationship, in fact, we're the ones who breaks this relationship...It is only through Christ who has supremacy that we can we reconciled. Not only does Christ have supremacy, we're the ones who broke this relationship with God. We're the ones who turned. We're the ones who are the blame. So, this is who we were before being reconciled to God. Alienated, hostile in mind, and doing evil things.
- Many times, I like to ask youth, "What is sin?" What do you think are the most common answers I hear? "It is doing something bad." "Sin is doing something God doesn't like."

What comes up in your mind when I ask, “What is sin?” Then I ask a follow-up question, “What does sin do to you?” The most common answer I get is probably: “It separates you from God.” What we need to see here is that We’re separated because you’re an enemy of God. But sometimes we make light of what sin is. Many times, we think of sin as something that deserves a slap on the wrist and then we’re free to go. “oh, it’s just something God doesn’t like...It’s a little disobedience. We’re bad but not that bad.

- Let’s say I had a basketball goal up here and I picked someone to come shoot 10 shots. Let’s say they make 8 out of 10. We treat coming to God like this. We believe that we’re not that bad. We make 8/10 of shots. We’re just not that bad. When in reality, we’re not even shooting at the right goal. We’re not facing the right way. What Paul is saying here is that we’re on the other team. The other week, my friend texted me and asked if I wanted a Chris Paul Jersey. It’s one of those authentic jerseys. The letters and numbers are stitched on. It had this little gold patch that said 2 times NBA champs. You want to take a guess how much this jersey was? Authentic jersey, regular price \$200+. It was \$5. Why? Because Chris Paul isn’t on the Rockets anymore. He’s on the other team. He’s essentially an enemy to the Rockets. Or let’s look at Westbrook. 4 months ago..he was an enemy to the Rockets. He was not helping us to get a championship. But now...he’s on our side.
- That’s the same with us before Christ we were alienated, doing evil deeds. We’re hostile towards God. We’re enemies of God. In our sin, we will never want to seek out God. We should be careful when we say there are seekers. We’re implying that an enemy of God wants something to do with God. In our sin, we have a need for reconciliation. Reconciliation and Restoration will never be based upon what you and I do. Not by our actions because our intentions will always have fault in them. As we’ve been talking about the past two weeks, it’s not Jesus + \_\_\_\_\_. It’s not Jesus + your 50% that saves you. It’s not even Jesus + 90% faith that saves you. It’s either Jesus or your 90%...one or the other. Even in your 90%, your batting for the wrong team. You’re 100% against who God is. Without Christ, your will, your desires, your purpose all opposes the glory of God. You’re an enemy of God. Christianity is not about being a moral person. It’s about being a reconciled person. So, we have a need for reconciliation...but how does reconciliation happen?

### **A restored relationship with God through reconciliation**

- In verse 22, we read that through reconciliation, we are presented “Holy and blameless, and above reproach.” Paul says, “we once were alienated, had a hostile mind, and did evil deeds” and now we’re the complete opposite of that...”Holy, blameless, above reproach”. Everything that kept us away from God has now disappeared. We were once apart from God and now we’re set apart FOR God. We were once hostile towards God and now we’re innocent before God. We once acted out against God and now there is nothing that God can bring against you. Holy. Blameless. Above reproach.
- The text says, we are being presented like this. Look...See this person here: Blameless. Now how can this be? How does this happen? How does the death of Jesus Christ make us Holy, blameless, above reproach? I mean think about your life...Is it anywhere near this? As a believer, are you anywhere close to being blameless? You might be blameless in your actions, but your heart is a mess. One way or another, you fall short...constantly. So how can we be presented as described here?
- Through the death of Jesus Christ, two things happened. A Theological term: Double Imputation. I talked about this back in January if you remember. The first thing that

happened is that our sins were placed onto Christ on the cross, but a second thing happened that completes the picture of the Gospel...We receive Christ's Righteousness. We're presented as Christ. The Supremacy of Christ, Him being preeminent is because He is holy, blameless, above reproach. You are being presented as Christ.

- I like to listen to rap, specifically, I enjoy listening to artist like Trip Lee, Andy Mineo, Lecrae. Not his newest album, but the one before that called "All things work together" (ref. Romans 8:28), Lecrae wrote a few songs dealing with racial reconciliation. In one of Lecrae's songs (Facts), he plays a clip from a message from Pastor Leonce Crump. In that clip Pastor Crump said, "Reconciliation requires defrauded parties to be made whole, not just apologizing for the offense."
- Think back to the beginning of this message. When you thought about needing to be reconciled with someone...were you the one that was wronged? What would reconciliation look like for you in that scenario? Maybe there was some payback that needed to happen. Maybe conversations need to happen, and someone needs to apologize. But at the end of the day, I think in any scenario of reconciliation, the person who was hurt needs to be healed. The person offended has some sort of pain to work through. Trust is lost.
- I want us to see one thing about the gospel. Not only were we the ones who made the offense...we're the ones doing evil deeds and hostile in mind towards God...we're the ones who were made whole. In reconciliation, the one who was offended, the one who was defrauded pursued to make whole the one who broke the relationship. It shouldn't make sense that through reconciliation, we are now presented as holy, blameless, and above reproach. We have been made whole in Christ. We are presented as Christ. Through this reconciliation, through being made whole...we are now back in relationship with God. Our relationship has been restored. And here's the thing...you won't ever be out of this relationship ever. I say this because of our last point.

### **An unwavering relationship with God grounded in reconciliation**

- Let's read the last part of verse 22. We're presented holy, blameless, an above reproach...but there are two words at the end of that sentence...We are being presented before Him. So, there is this picture of you standing before God here. So when God sees you...He sees you as holy, blameless, and above reproach.
- What follows after in the text is where it can be a bit confusing because Paul uses the word "if." At first glance it makes us think that Paul is stating all this in conditional terms. You might read it as...you will be presented as holy and blameless IF you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast
- So there are three things we need to remember or look at: 1) Context...Paul is arguing for salvation can come through Christ and Christ alone. Not Christ + \_\_\_\_\_. Not Christ + your faith. 2) Paul also says, "He has now reconciled"...it's done. Past. Not will reconcile. 3) Paul uses a phrase in the Greek, **ie ge**, translated "if indeed," which is not supposed to bring up doubt but rather bring up assurance. Paul is saying, you will surely remain stable and steadfast, and not shifting from the hope of the gospel. Our faith will remain unwavering, not because our faith is so great, but because the object of our faith. When Paul mentions "not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard", it is the same idea in the story of Matthew 7 of the two builders who built on the sand or rock. The house that stood because of its foundation. Again, it's about the object of your faith rather than the size of

your faith...because if we're honest with ourselves, our faith is at best shaky...otherwise we'd stop sinning.

- Let's play this out for a bit. So, we see that we are being presented before God. God is looking at you in your life. Imagine Him on His throne. He's watching you in your life. He sees EVERYTHING. Everything. Sees your thoughts. The motivation of your heart. He sees the things you look at. He sees that hate inside your heart. What is the response of the father toward you now? Chandler: "God is not in love with a future version of you"...I think this is true because He has full acceptance of you now, with all your messed up-ness, but only on the basis of being presented with Christ's righteousness.
- In the moments of failure, where is your faith? It must not waver from your faith in Christ...because Christ has a hold of you, there's nothing else you can and should hold onto. What would you respond to God in these moments when He sees everything about you? Because if you return to a Jesus + your 80%...you know you will not pass. Boast in Christ and Christ's righteousness alone.

### **Conclusion**

- Reconciliation does way more than just restoring your relationship with God. It's the ground that you stand on. Through reconciliation, the only thing you can boast is the Work of Christ on the Cross alone. You have nothing else to boast in. Definitely not in your hostile mind and evil deeds...But in Christ alone. Christ alone has supremacy and in Christ's work alone can we find reconciliation.
- For those of you who are not in Christ, I plead with you to see where you stand with God. You stand against God as an enemy, a rebel to His Glory. But I also plead with you to see what God has done through His Son. He is after a restored relationship with you. He wants to reconcile you back to Himself through His sacrifice.
- For us in Christ, know that you are reconciled, and your relationship won't be broken ever again. Never. Know how God sees you in this moment. In this moment with all your ugliness, He looks at you with delight because of you are in Christ. Christ is the only thing you can boast in. Christ will keep you stable and steadfast in your faith because He is our sure hope.