

## Message #6

## Colossians 1:19-23

In Colossians 1:19 we learn that it was God the Father's good pleasure and idea to have all the fullness of God dwell in Jesus Christ.

The word "dwell" literally means to inhabit something. It means to completely settle in something and inhabit it (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, pp. 241-242).

This word means that something literally lives or indwells in something. Now what lives or indwells Jesus Christ is "all fullness" of God.

The words literally read "all the fullness" (pan to plhrwma). **So Jesus Christ completely fills up in totality the specific fullness of everything that pleases and satisfies God the Father.** He is the complete and ultimate fulfillment of everything that pleases God the Father.

There are two specific, critical areas of fullness in the context that are clearly seen:

**(Area #1)** - It was God the Father's good pleasure to have all fullness of Deity dwell in Jesus Christ.

**(Area #2)** - It was God the Father's good pleasure to have all fullness of Salvation dwell in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is fully God and the full package of salvation that can save a sinner dwells in Him. It does not dwell in us. It does not dwell in religion. It does not dwell in man's works. It does not dwell in man's traditions or rituals. It does not dwell in the O.T. Law. The full package of salvation dwells in Jesus Christ!

Now let's just think about this. It pleases God the Father to have His Son actually have the fullness and totality of all deity and have the fullness of all salvation in Him.

That is what pleases God. If you think you can save yourself from your sins, you cannot possibly please God.

Now what Paul wants to communicate to these Colossians is this:

**JESUS CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY A SINNER MAY BE RECONCILED TO GOD AND FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY THAT GUARANTEES ONE WILL END UP IN HEAVEN.**

Paul did not want these Colossians fuzzy about what gives them peace with God. It is Jesus Christ.

It pleases God the Father to have everything fulfilling to be found in Jesus Christ. Salvation is found in Jesus Christ. Abundant life is found in Jesus Christ and it pleases God the Father to have it that way.

No one can have a relationship with God without Jesus Christ in his or her life. No one can be at peace with God and no one can please God.

**Now it is clear from this context that the primary theological matter that Paul wants to discuss is the matter of “reconciliation.” He uses the word in verses 20 and 22.** It has pleased God the Father to have everything concerning reconciliation found totally, completely and only in Jesus Christ.

Reconciliation is not justification in which one is declared righteous.

Reconciliation is not redemption in which the price for salvation is fully paid.

Reconciliation is not adoption in which a sinner is made a son.

Reconciliation is not forgiveness in which the sin debt is paid and eliminated.

Reconciliation needs to be clearly and carefully understood because it pleases God the Father to grasp this doctrine as it relates to Jesus Christ.

We would like to ask and answer six questions:

**QUESTION #1 – What is reconciliation? 1:20, 22**

The word that is used here in Colossians (apokatallassw) is the most intense form of the word that is used. **It is a word that means to change completely (*Ibid.*, p. 51). The word literally means to change something from what it was to something completely different.**

**Now reconciliation always assumes that there is an estrangement or alienation in the relationship.**

For example, in I Corinthians 7:10-11 the challenge to a wife who has left her husband is to be reconciled to him.

In II Corinthians 5:19, we learn that we are to have a ministry that proclaims that people may be reconciled to God. So, in both cases the relationship needs to be changed from hostility to harmony.

So to have a ministry of reconciliation, we must inform people there is a big estrangement and alienation in your relationship with God that only Jesus Christ can mend.

When it comes to salvation, this concept of reconciliation means that we are all sinners who are alienated from God and our relationship needs to be changed from hostility to harmony, from enmity to amity.

Paul's point in Colossians is that God is pleased with the fact that reconciliation is only found in the cross work of Jesus Christ.

Dr. C. I. Scofield said there are two phases of reconciliation:

- 1) The sinful world was changed and made savable by the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.
- 2) The sinful person is changed and actually saved by the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

**What reconciliation actually means is that the relationship with God has been completely changed from hostility to harmony.**

**QUESTION #2 – Who actually needs to be reconciled to God? II Cor. 5:19**

Paul said in II Corinthians 5:19, “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.”

The answer to the question, who needs to be reconciled to God, is **everyone in the world**.

The truth is everything needs to be reconciled to God because Paul says in Romans all creation groans because of the curse of sin (Rom. 8:22).

The fact is we are living in a sin cursed world and we are living with sin cursed people and everything and everyone needs to be reconciled to God.

**QUESTION #3 – What makes reconciliation possible? Col. 1:20, 22**

**Reconciliation is only possible through the cross work of Jesus Christ.** We will only have peace with God when we have Jesus Christ in our life. **It has pleased God the Father to have Jesus Christ as the only means of reconciliation.**

**Verse 20** is very specific that reconciliation is only possible because of the shed blood of Jesus Christ and **verse 22** makes it clear that only His death in His body is what may give reconciliation with God.

Do not miss this. It is only the shed blood coming out of the body of Jesus Christ on the cross that can reconcile a sinner to God. No matter how far removed from God you are as a sinner, no matter who you are or what you have done, you may be reconciled in your relationship with God through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

You cannot be reconciled to God by your works or by religion. You cannot be reconciled to God by the O.T. law or the blood of animals. You cannot be reconciled to God by promising God you will try hard to be better. It has pleased God the Father to only reconcile sinners to Himself who trust in the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. The person who will by faith believe in Jesus Christ will be reconciled to God.

**QUESTION #4 – What makes reconciliation personal? Col. 1:4**

**Paul makes it clear as he began this book that what gave them a relationship with God was “faith in Christ Jesus.”**

The only way one may be personally reconciled to God is by faith in Jesus Christ (II Cor. 5:17-21).

Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, became sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

When a person invites Jesus Christ into his life, his relationship with God is completely changed and he is immediately reconciled into a harmonious relationship with God.

He is no longer a child of darkness, but a child of light. He is no longer an enemy of God, but a friend of God. He is no longer in enmity, but amity.

**QUESTION #5 – Why do we need to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ?  
Col. 1:21**

The Apostle Paul presents the case for the need of reconciliation. He wanted these Colossians very stable in their faith and deep in their understanding of this important doctrine.

Now these believers had been reconciled so what Paul does is to remind them of three pre-reconciliation realities:

**Pre-reconciliation Reality #1 - Before faith in Jesus Christ we were alienated from God. 1:21a**

This is the way it was. Before we believed on Jesus Christ, we were estranged and alienated from a relationship with God. We were not in and did not have a harmonious relationship with Him, no matter who we were, what we had or where we went.

**Pre-reconciliation Reality #2 - Before faith in Jesus Christ we were hostile in our minds. 1:21b**

No matter what you thought about yourself and God, this is the reality of it. Prior to faith in Jesus Christ, your mind and my mind were not in harmony with God’s word and way of thinking.

My thinking about sin has dramatically changed. Sin that I used to think was funny or fun, now makes me sick. Prior to faith in Jesus Christ, my mind was hostile to God and His word.

**Pre-reconciliation Reality #3** - Before faith in Jesus Christ we were evil in our works. **1:21c**

I want to remind us that this is being written by the Apostle Paul, who prior to faith in Jesus Christ described himself as a Hebrew of Hebrews who was blameless in the O.T. Law (Philippians 3:5-6). He came to see himself and his works accurately; they were filthy rags in the sight of God.

No one has to commit some major sin to have their works condemn them. Our works already condemn us if we do not believe on Jesus Christ.

**QUESTION #6** – Why would Jesus Christ reconcile us with God? **1:22**

Why bother with people like us? What possible reason would Christ have for wanting us to be reconciled in our relationship with God the Father?

This context makes it clear that Jesus Christ is fully God and was fully human with a real body. He had true humanity and true deity. Why did Jesus Christ take on the assignment of making it possible for us to be reconciled to God?

**Reason #1** - Jesus Christ desires to present you before God as holy. **1:22a**

The word “holy” (αγιους) refers to something separated as sacred and reverent to God (*Ibid.*, p. 5).

**Reason #2** - Jesus Christ desires to present you before God as blameless. **1:22b**

The word “blameless” (αμωμους) refers to something without any blemish (*Ibid.*, p. 56).

**Reason #3** - Jesus Christ desires to present you before God as beyond reproach. **1:22c**

The word “beyond reproach” (ανεγκητους) refers to something that is blameless and does not need to be called into account (*Ibid.*, p. 35).

Do you understand what Paul is saying here? The only way for a sinner to be presented holy, blameless and beyond reproach is to believe in Jesus Christ, who died and shed His blood to reconcile sinners to God.

Now the “if” clause of **verse 23** is connected to the infinitive “to present” in **verse 22**. It is a first class conditional “if” clause. **This specific clause assumes reality.**

Paul assumes this presentation is a reality that will occur for the believer in Jesus Christ who remains committed to the fact that faith in Jesus Christ is what gives him reconciliation with God.

In other words, one who stays steadfast and immovable in the faith system and gospel that believes everything we have in our relationship with God the Father comes through Jesus Christ the Son, and His sacrifice, will have this glorious presentation.

Understand this point and don't miss this point because your entire salvation is at stake—it is only Jesus Christ who can reconcile us in our relationship with God. His work is the only work the Father will accept.

So regardless of your sins, believe in Him and you will be forever saved.