

“Once Alienated, Now Reconciled”

Sermon Notes

- **If you too have faith in the preeminent Christ Jesus (1:4-20), then recall to mind the chapters of your own story of salvation:**

(1) Your past: Enemy of God (21)

(2) Your present: Friend of God (22a)

(3) Your future prospects: Sanctified before God (22b)

(4) Your path forward: Persevere in gospel faith (23)

Community Group Study Questions

For the Week of Oct 17th - 23rd

Introduction: For reflection

Looking back, what do you recall about that season of life when you first started trusting in Jesus? We often ask people to give their “testimony”, looking back to a specific day or season. What is helpful about sharing these sorts of testimonies? What might be unhelpful about testimonies that look backwards in time? What would be different if we asked people to tell testimonies of God’s present work in their lives?

Context

In Col 1:21-23, what can we learn about Paul and Timothy as persons? What can we learn about the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae?

Col 1:15-20 is a glorious description of the person of Christ - the preeminent one over the first creation and the new creation. Col 1:13-14 and 1:21-23 are like bookends, each describing the work of Christ. What themes carry throughout this whole section?

Observation

The flow of this passage uses connecting words (e.g. and, but, in order to, if indeed) and adverbs (e.g. once, now) to mark a logical flow of thought that unfolds a story in time. (Hint: there is one past, two present, and one future). What is Paul telling us about God’s metanarrative of redemptive history?

What is the main point? What supporting points does Paul address?

Meaning

What do we learn about our triune God - Father, Son and Spirit?

Many see reference here to Jesus’ activity as the great High Priest, beginning back in verse 20. What warrant is there for this? How does it fit into the broader biblical narrative of Jesus as High Priest (e.g. Hebrews 5-10)? How does Colossians parallel with Ephesians, especially Ephesians 1:4; 2:18-22; 3:14-21?

What does Paul say about being enemies of God in Ephesians 2:1-3?

What does Paul write elsewhere about reconciliation? Consider 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Ephesians 2:13-17 and Romans 5:1-6:11.

How do you understand warnings like Col 1:23, in light of the warnings we see in Hebrews (2:1-4; 3:7-4:13; 5:11-6:12; 10:26-30; 12:15-17)? In light of Philippians 1:6 and John 10:27-29?

How would you summarize Paul’s words in Col 1:21-23 in one main sentence or idea?

Application

What new things (or reminders) does this passage teach you about God's work of redemption and reconciliation?

How does this passage impact your heart desires and affections?

In what ways is your heart internally tempted to shift from the hope of the gospel? What external things happening around and to you seem to shift you from being stable and firm in the gospel?

How can you continue in faith in the gospel today?