

Your Relationship With Love

Colossians 1:20-23

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Colossians 1:20-23 “²⁰And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. ²¹And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled ²²In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: ²³If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;”

Real Christianity is not about religion but being called into a relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Christianity is Christ, and knowing and loving God.

Paganism and all the religions of the world have been about appeasing a dreadful deity in offering up sacrifices and rituals to earn salvation and forgiveness. People believe that if they have been good enough and have done enough that their religion will get them into Heaven.

God has no use for religion and what we may try to do for Him. What could we possibly ever do for God or give to God that would even have any meaning to Him? What God is interested in is you and me. In His love for us He desires that we would come to know Him and enjoy Him forever.

There is a problem – it is a huge problem that only God could solve on His own. God is love but He also is holy, righteous and just. We all have sinned and have offended God in our rebellion against Him and in our failure to trust Him in what is good for us. Sin has separated us from God, destroying our relationship with Him in the Garden. The consequence of sin in the justice of God is death and divine wrath from a holy God. God did not turn on us for He loved us and created us in His own image, but we turned on Him. Our sin of pride and questioning the goodness of God and our twisted desire to be above God was a declaration of war against Him. The evil heart of man under Satan’s

authority became a battlefield against God, and we became the enemies of God in our minds.

The impossibility of a relationship between good and evil, between sinful man and a holy God could only be initiated and resolved by God if He chose to do so. It would be in a rescue operation by God in His grace and mercy and in His plan of salvation. God would have to devise a means to restore us out of our sin, bringing us back into perfect righteousness and satisfying the requirements of His perfect justice.

God would do this for us on His own in reconciling us unto Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ. This reconciliation is God in His love bringing us back into a relationship with Himself by His grace at the cost of His only Begotten Son.

Reconciliation is not what we can do for God, for we can do nothing in ourselves, but it is completely and totally what God would do for us in His righteousness.

Romans 5:8-11 “⁸ But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”

This is what set reconciliation into motion on man’s behalf. Christ loved us when we were unlovable and unattractive in our sin. Before we start attacking God for His wrath against sin let’s remember He did it all for us through the blood of His own Son.

“⁹ Much more then being now justified (righteous) by His blood, we shall be saved (saved from what?) from wrath through Him.”

Jesus took the wrath of God for us to propitiate a holy God to satisfy His just requirements of His broken Law.

Propitiation means to satisfy, to appease God’s wrath against sin and for justice to be done. The only way we can appreciate our relationship with God and His love for us is to know what our sin deserved! It is to know what we were saved from! The wrath of God: Christ took it for us. The point was made under the Law of the O.T. The wrath of the Lord is mentioned 580 times! Christ took it for those who would be saved by faith.

The judgment of God against sin and the guilty sinner is not some obscure doctrine in the O.T. that is to be shoved into the closet in shame. Under the O.T. Law that every one of us had broken in rebellion against a holy God, it was clear through this attribute of God and His hate for sin that apart from salvation the wrath of God is what we all deserved. It

is the denial of this truth and our silence of preaching on it in a politically correct culture that has given a lost world an indifference toward any real heartfelt desire to be saved. Apart from this truth of God what are we being “saved” from? Why be reconciled to God when people don’t think they have done anything wrong and there are no consequences?

Salvation can only mean anything to us when we understand what we have been saved from.

Reconciliation and a restored relationship with God can only be possible in sin being punished and His justice being upheld.

Jesus took the wrath of God for us! Is that love? This isn’t a vicious and barbaric pagan deity who must be pacified in His contempt for man, but a wonderful, gracious, loving God Who stood in for us all so we would not be condemned.

“¹⁰ for if, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God (brought back into a relationship) by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by His life.”

His death for us at the cross brought about our relationship with Him and His righteousness became ours in His resurrection. (II Corinthians 5:21)

Romans 5:11 “And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have received reconciliation”.

God in His love sent Christ to bring man joy and peace. What is it that we have been given by God that the lost world doesn’t have? It is: God calls us friends and family.

I John 2:1,2

In the attributes of God His love and His holiness must be in harmony with each other. God loves us but also His holiness demands judgment upon sin and justice to be served. He is a just Judge – God rewards righteousness but must also judge sin.

The question is: How can God be just and justify sinners at the same time?

Romans 3:24-26 answers this impossibility in the wisdom of God:

“²⁴ Being justified freely (declared righteous without any cost to the sinner) by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ²⁵ whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood...”

Christ took our place at the cross and paid the penalty for our sin at the purchase price of His blood and took the wrath of God for us. He satisfied the justice of God for us. There is no judgment to those who are in Christ Jesus. What must we do to be saved? Place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ for our salvation.

There is nothing more that God has ever done to prove His righteousness in that to save us Christ paid the ultimate price to maintain His own righteousness.

“²⁵ ...to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins through the forbearance of God. ²⁶ To declare I say at this time, His righteousness that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

We can only have a relationship with God in righteousness, and our righteousness is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

II Corinthians 5:17 “If any man be in Christ he is a new creation. Old things are passed away and all things become new.”

God has made us that new creation by reconciling with us and bringing us into a relationship with Himself. He has changed us from being His enemies and has given us a love for Him. We have been forgiven of our sins, given a new nature, a new attitude and a new heart.

The old things have passed away: our former life of a contempt for God and an evil heart that was hostile to Him.

Ephesians 2:1-7 “¹And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; ²Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ³Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, ⁵Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) ⁶And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: ⁷That in the ages to come

he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

Ephesians 2:13-16 “¹³But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; ¹⁵Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; ¹⁶And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:”

We now love God, have been given a hate for sin and a desire to please Him. We can draw near to God through Christ and have been given peace with God.

We know He is pleased with us through the sacrifice of His Son and have perfect acceptance with Him. (Romans 5:1,2)

We have the assurance and eternal security that there is no judgment to those who are in Christ Jesus. (I John 5:13)

Where do we go from here in our relationship with God? We have been given the ministry of reconciling others into a relationship with God.

II Corinthians 5:18-20 “¹⁸and all things are of God Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ...”

The “all things” is our new relationship with God, our reconciliation that God initiated with us on His own, not us with Him. God did all this in His love for us in spite of ourselves by stepping into our lives and engaging us. When we turned our backs on Him in our sin, God would not let us go. It was God in His grace that overtook us in the righteousness of Christ through His death for us at the cross and sought us out in a new relationship with Himself.

We can see this all through the Gospels.

Matthew 18:11-13 “¹¹For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. ¹²How think ye if a man have a hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? ¹³And if so be that he

find it, verily I say unto you he rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.”

It is the one, who is us, that God in His love brought to Himself.

Luke 15:10 “Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

Jesus said to His disciples, “that he must need to go through Samaria.” (John 4:4)
There was a woman at the well who was a sinner whom Christ came to save.

There was a tax collector who was despised by the people who had climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus pass by.

Luke 19:2-4 “and when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him and said unto him, Zaccheus make haste and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.”

Now that we are saved and have been called into a relationship with Him, what is it that we have been called to do?

We have been reconciled to God who are saved and God has “given to us the ministry of reconciliation”. (II Corinthians 5:18)

“¹⁹ to wit that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.”

All we that are saved have been called into the ministry of bringing others, through the Gospel, into a relationship with Christ.

“²⁰ now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us: we urge you in Christ’s place, be ye reconciled to God.”

What is an ambassador? In the Roman Empire there were Senatorial Provinces which were made up of people who were peaceful and not at war with Rome. Imperial Provinces were not peaceful but in rebellion. It was necessary for Rome to send ambassadors to Imperial Provinces to make sure that rebellion did not break out.

Rebellion in the world is against God.

God has placed us here as believers who have made peace with Him to be ambassadors to declare peace. We are called by God to persuade the lost in the love of God to come to Christ for salvation; to make peace with God by the cross. (Romans 5:1)

There are 5 key words in the N.T. to describe salvation:

1. *Justification* – the sinner stands before God guilty and condemned, but is declared righteous. (Romans 8:33)
2. *Redemption* – the sinner stands before God as a slave, but is granted his freedom. (Romans 6:18-22)
3. *Forgiveness* – the sinner stands before God as a debtor, but the debt is paid and forgotten. (Ephesians 1:7)
4. *Adoption* – the sinner stands before God as a stranger, but is made a son. (Ephesians 1:5)
5. **Reconciliation** – the sinner stands before God as an enemy, but becomes a friend. (II Corinthians 5:18-20)

Colossians 1:20 “and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His Son, through Him I say, whether things on earth or things in Heaven. And although you were formerly alienated (separated from God) and hostile (hateful) in mind, engaged in evil deeds,”

This is who we used to be! It was God Who changed all that and it was He alone Who brought us back into a relationship with Himself.

God’s plan for the universe one day will be to bring all things out of darkness, sin and Satan’s power into a beautiful place of peace and righteousness. For those who are saved this will happen at the second coming of Christ and His reign in the Millennial Kingdom. (Romans 8:21-25; Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25; 24:23)

Colossians 1:20 ^{“20} ...having made peace through the blood of His cross... He has now reconciled you in the body of His flesh in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach”.

Holy means separated from sin, set apart unto God. God sees Christians in the righteousness of Christ as holy as His Son.

Blameless means a blameless character.

Beyond reproach means the Accuser of the brethren can bring no charge against the believer. (Revelation 12:10 Romans 8:33)

Colossians 1 :23 “²³If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;”

The evidence of our relationship with Christ is proved and seen in our perseverance in the faith. (Luke 8:13; John 8:31; John 2:19)

“Your relationship with love.”

Whenever we go with Jesus, following in His steps, we see Him establishing relationships with sinners who were the outcasts of His day.

Jesus was no respecter of people based on their social status of “the Who’s Who” of the rich and famous. Seldom are these kinds of people humble enough to see themselves as God sees them. They may think they have it all together in the world’s acceptance of them, but they really don’t. They don’t see a need for God; they’re doing just fine without Him. When we as believers talk of having a relationship with Christ, in their pride they think of Christianity as a religious crutch for the dysfunctional and the weak.

Because of the pride that is in the heart of man, for the most part it was the poor, the bruised, the broken and the beaten down who wanted a Heavenly Father, a friendship with Christ and to be part of the family of God.

Jesus was a friend of sinners. “The common people heard Him gladly.” He never rebuked them or degraded them as He did with the Scribes and Pharisees in their hypocrisy.

“They that are whole need not a physician but they that are sick.” He “came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” Obviously we are all sick and in need for the Master Physician, but the problem is in people thinking they are healthy and strong in themselves. The Church is the ER, a hospital for people to come to and be made well by Christ from our sin. I wonder about those “healthy churches” that have purposely attracted to themselves the wealthy, the sophisticated and the refined. Where are the

needy and the less fortunate being served who really would respond to the Gospel if we would “come off our high horses”?

God has called us into a relationship with the Heavenly Father. This is the family of God.

We have been invited to be a part of that through the New Birth.

God has called us into a friendship with Himself and we have been invited into that kind of relationship with Him.

John 15:13-15 “I call you not servants but friends.”

Lazarus, Mary and Martha were personal friends of Christ. He went to be with them in the last week of His life.

John 11

It was a friend of Christ who was sick that Jesus raised from the dead: Lazarus.

It was Mary, Martha and other women who were close to Christ and came first to the empty tomb to witness the great news of His resurrection.

Jesus had dinner at the home of Zaccheus, the tax collector, who invited his lost friends to hear Jesus and to get to know Him.

Jesus cast out “Legion”, a legion of demons from the tormented man who had been living among the tombs of the Gadarenes near Decapolis. When Jesus prepared to leave, the man asked to go with Him. Jesus told him to go into the city and tell them the great things God had done for him. When Jesus returned, the whole city came out to meet Him.

It was the woman at the well that Christ brought to salvation after she’d had five husbands. She went into the city and said “come see a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?” Many came out, heard Jesus preach and believed on Him.

It was Mary Magdalene, who was a sinner, who washed Jesus’ feet with her tears and did wipe them with her hair.

It was a blind man for whom Jesus spat on the ground and made clay of it, anointed his eyes and said “go, wash in the pool of Siloam”. When he did, he came out seeing. His testimony to the jealous enemies of Christ was “one thing I know that, whereas I was blind, now I see.” What did the religious leaders do? They cast him out of the synagogue.

It was at a wedding feast where Jesus turned the water into wine when He had enjoyed the company of His friends.

It is into a relationship that Christ has invited us: to be part of His Bride, the Church of the Living God, and to enjoy Him forever.

This is a friendship with God, a relationship with the common, everyday people of this world.

You are invited!

“Your Relationship With Love.”