

The MYSTERY

Hidden for Ages

Is Now REVEALED

A Study of the Book of Colossians

LESSON 7

This Week's Passage:
Colossians 1:20–22
New International Version (NIV)

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

Memory Verse: Colossians 1:16

¹⁵ The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ ***For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.***

Day One: Read Colossians 1.

1. Look again at verses 19–20. What does the beginning of verse 20 tell us God's purpose is for having "all his fullness dwell in [Christ]" (v. 19)?

Reconciliation

A simple definition of "reconciliation" is "the restoration of friendly relations"¹ between people who are in dispute. The reconciliation Paul talks about in today's passage, however, applies to much more than mere human relationships, and more even than the restoration of relationship between God and fallen humanity. Christ's sacrifice has cosmic significance: "Ultimately, the main point of Christ's death and resurrection is not simply the salvation of individual human beings, but the restoration of the universe to its original *shalom*, which has as its ultimate end the glorification of God, that He may be 'all in all.' (1 Corinthians 15:28)"²

2. What does "all things" (v. 20) include? (v. 20)
3. Why was there a need for "all things" to be reconciled to God? (Gen. 3; Is. 59:2; Eph. 2:1–3; Rom. 8:19–23)

Day Two: Read Colossians 1:20–22.

4. How has the reconciliation of “all things” been accomplished? (vv. 20, 22)
5. What are some ways Scripture describes the “peace” (v. 20) that Christ’s sacrifice has initiated for sinful people?
Rom. 5:2

Rom. 8:1

Eph. 2:13, 18

Commentator William Hendriksen elaborates on the meaning of the reconciliation of “all things”: “Through Christ and his cross the universe is...restored to its proper relationship to God [.... As] a reward for his obedience Christ was exalted to the Father’s right hand, from which position of authority and power he rules the entire universe in the interest of the church and to the glory of God.”³


Mt. 27:50–51a (Note: In the Old Testament, the curtain in the temple served to separate people from God.); Heb. 10:19–22 (📖* Exod. 26:30–34; Heb. 9:1–8)

6. Although many people scorn Christ’s work on the cross, those who accept it and submit their lives to God’s sovereign rule will be able to live at peace with God. This peace will be more fully realized at the consummation of time when Jesus returns again. What will Christ’s reconciling work look like at that time? (Ps. 46:10; Is. 11:6–9; Phil. 2:8–11; 2 Pet. 3:13)
7. From the following verses, list some of the reasons God acted to bring about reconciliation.
Jn. 3:16–17

Rom. 5:6–11


1 Cor. 15:20–28

Day Three: Read Colossians 1:21–22.

8. In verses 21 and 22, Paul gets practical with his readers and presents a picture of their lives before and after they received Christ as Savior and Lord.⁴
- What characterized the Colossians before they received Christ? (v. 21)
 - How did these characteristics manifest themselves day to day? (3:5b, 8–9; Eph. 4:18–19;  Rom. 1:18–32)

Day Four: Read Colossians 1:22.

“With joy of heart [Paul] now testifies that the Colossians...had become recipients of this marvelous gift of reconciliation, a reconciliation which for men whose hearts receive Christ has a far more beautiful and intimate meaning than it has for the world in general.”⁵

9. How did Christ’s physical death bring about our reconciliation with God? (Is. 53:5–6; Heb. 9:22; 1 Pet. 2:24;  Heb. 2:9–17)

10. God’s ultimate goal in reconciling to himself his one-time “enemies” (v. 21) applies just as much to you today as it did to the Colossians. Fill in the blanks below.

“to present you _____,
_____ and
_____” (v. 22).

- Take some time to meditate on God’s intent *for you* in light of the cosmic scope of Christ’s reconciling work. What does “this marvelous gift of reconciliation” mean to you?

“‘Yet now hath **he** reconciled’ – even in the face of rebellion and bitter hatred, **God** carried through the work of reconciliation. **He** took the initiative, without waiting for men to come halfway. It is **God** who acts in reconciliation; it is man who is reconciled.”⁶
(emphasis added)

- b. How does this affect the way you live day to day?
- c. What do you have to look forward to as one whom God declares “holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation” (v. 22)? (Rev. 21:1–5)

Day Five: Read Colossians 1:20–22.

11. We have been reconciled to God through Christ; what great privilege is now ours? (2 Cor. 5:17–20)
12. How would you explain this “message of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19b) to an unbelieving friend?

Pray that God would open up opportunities for you to share this good news of reconciliation and the hope that it offers.



A Closer Look

Using the supplied printout of Colossians, read again Colossians 1—4 and highlight ways believers respond to being reconciled to God. For example, “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him... (2:6)” or “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above... (3:1)” or “Devote yourselves to prayer... (4:2)”

*  Indicates verses for further study

¹ https://www.google.com/?client=safari&channel=mac_bm#channel=mac_bm&q=reconciliation

² <https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/trevinwax/2007/01/05/why-limited-and-unlimited-atonement-debates-miss-the-point/>

³ William Hendriksen, *Philippians, Colossians and Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), 82.

⁴ This idea of “before and after” was inspired by: Sam Storms, *The Hope of Glory: 100 Daily Meditations on Colossians* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007), 108.

⁵ Hendriksen, 83.

⁶ Everett F. Harrison, *Colossians: Christ All-Sufficient* (Chicago: Moody, 1971), 39.