

# THE PREEMINENCE OF CHRIST

## The Fullness of Deity Dwelling in Christ

### *Once Hostile in Mind, Now Reconciled to God*

Colossians 1: 21-23

**Introduction:** In verse thirteen we learned that we were rescued from the domain of darkness. Paul now returns to this theme and reminds us clearly what we have been delivered from and what we are delivered to. It is a very important lesson for us to heed!

#### I. Our Former Condition

*And you that were onetime alienated and hostile in mind, evil in deeds,*

- A. We need to be reminded occasionally of our former state lest we fall thoughtlessly into old ways. Paul reminds us of our former state:
  - 1. alienated from God—(*v.part.perf.pass.acc.masc.pl*)—a state caused by the fall
  - 2. hostile in mind—the natural state of unredeemed humanity resulting from the fall
  - 3. evil in deeds—behavior arising from the sinful state and hostile mind
- B. It is important that we not only understand the totality of our depravity, the damage to our moral compass, the baseness of our fallen nature, but that we understand that the fuel that fires the behavior of this condition is a fallen mind, a mind that hates God most of all and persists in blind and stubborn reason apart from revelation.

#### II. Reconciliation through His Fleshly Body

*But now He has reconciled in His body of the flesh (fleshly body) through death to present you holy and blameless and beyond reproach in the presence of Himself—*

- A. Paul lays emphasis here on the fleshly body of Jesus Christ that was the atoning sacrifice on the cross. He is beginning to land blows against the emerging Gnostic heresy that was influencing the Lycus Valley congregations.
- B. He has reconciled us in order to present us (unto Himself):
  - 1. holy—set apart unto God
  - 2. blameless—without blemish, having no flaws, wholly sanctified
  - 3. above reproach—have no accusation that will stand

#### III. Perseverance through Grace

*If indeed you are continuing in the faith with foundation well laid, steadfast and not shifting from the hope of the gospel you heard, the one preached in all creation under heaven, of which I, Paul, am a servant.*

- A. “...since if (*εἰ*) is followed by the pres. indic. and Paul is confident about the Colossian Christians’ present spiritual condition (2:5b), this condition is neither a hypothesis nor simply a hope but a condition Paul is confident or assumes will be fulfilled:” *If you continue, and I am confident that you will!* [Exegetical Guide to the Greek NT, Col&Phil Harris, p.54]
- B. Truly born again people persevere, yet the Bible, Old and New Testaments, are filled with warnings that must be taken seriously. There is danger along the path and many who only have been drawn emotionally to the Gospel will fall away while believers who fail to thrive may find their life here filled with misery and uselessness.
- C. The ingredients of a life that stays the course are:
  - 1. a solid foundation well laid in the truth of the Gospel
  - 2. a humble and rock solid conviction that will not budge from its truth
  - 3. through obedience and sound teaching, a steadfast refusal to give any ground at all as time goes by.

*And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—<sup>23</sup> if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.*

Colossians 1: 21-23  
(NASB)

