

**Sermon or Lesson: Colossians 1:21-22** (NIV based)  
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Jesus - Switching Our Alienation To Reconciliation

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READ: Colossians 1:21-22, with vv.19-20 and v.23 for context

BACKGROUND:

- - Jesus is Jehovah God Himself, in fullness and in physical bodily form, which qualifies Him to "redeem" or buy "the forgiveness of sins" for humans through His suffering and death on the cross. (vv.19,14)
  - - Jesus has comprehensive supremacy "in everything", which includes: supremacy over all of creation, including how it was formed and how it is sustained; supremacy over all that exists in both the visible physical realm and the invisible spiritual realm; supremacy over all of the kinds and levels of authority that exist; supremacy over life, death, and resurrection from the dead; supremacy over the church; and supremacy over the way or means through which humans can be reconciled to God. (vv.15-20)
  - - Possessing all the fullness of God, Jesus accomplished the providing of the only way through which we humans can be reconciled to God. (vv.19-20)
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v.21 - READ

[Lesson Question: Discuss and formulate the dynamics that comprise this statement of reality in verse 21.]

SECTION POINT: In the natural sinful state that we humans are born into, all of us are alienated from God and officially are an enemy of His.

- - A doctrinal issue being brought up here is that by default, all humans are born alienated from God.
- - Furthermore, all humans are born enemies of God - officially.
- - The instigating reason for this hostile position between God and mankind is mankind commits evil thoughts and behaviors, which are in direct opposition to God's extreme and perfect holiness.
- - Judicially, all of us humans are born corrupted by sin and thereafter are guilty of transgressing God's laws, with no means in and of ourselves to uncorrupt and un-guilty ourselves.
- - And judicially, God requires, even demands, total absolute perfect sinlessness of every human for their entire life, which no human except Jesus has or can attain since Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. (Romans 5:12)
- - So, our natural propensity to engage in evil behaviors propels every one of us humans to be "alienated from God", to not be connected relationally with God.
- - Consequently, our natural sinfulness also renders us "passively or actively hostile" to God as His "enemies", which can be in any of the various forms such as "adversarial, hateful", antagonistic, oppositional, assaultive, distanced, indifferent, not compatible, obstructed, rejecting, unaware, and etc. (Strong's #2190)

- - Minimally, this natural hostility towards God occurs in our "mind", our thinking and personality, although usually it furthermore spews out and even gushes out of our mouth and it infuses our "behaviors".

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## v.22 - READ

[Lesson Question: Discuss and formulate the dynamics that comprise this statement of reality in verse 22, including in regard to the effects that are produced for persons who are reconciled.]

SECTION POINT: Through the torturous physical death of Christ, alienation from God is switched to reconciliation with God.

### **"But now he has reconciled you"**

- - "But now" is a time-related contrast, that at some point in time something has changed - specifically that for the Colossian believers their prior legal status of being enemies of God has now changed.

- - "Formerly" or "once you were" "alienated" and an "enemy" - a member of "the dominion of darkness", and proceeding towards being locked into eternal punishment for your sins. (v.21 NAS, v.13)

- - "But now he has reconciled you" - "rescued" you and "brought [you] into the kingdom of the Son", no longer "alienated from God" and no longer an "enemy" of God. (vv.22,13,21)

### **"by Christ's physical body through death"**

- - "Through the shedding of His blood" and "through the death of Christ's physical body" "on the cross", "redemption" is accomplished for "the forgiveness of sins", which results in being reconciled to God. (vv.20,22,14)

- - The death of Christ by crucifixion was an extremely excruciating and horrific death.

- - According to biblical accounts, Christ did not pass out and then die later, but rather He was conscious during the entire time up to the moment of death, which was the intention of the Roman designers of this kind of torturous execution.

- - Motivated by His love for us humans, God used this form of torturous physical death to punish Christ for the sins of all of the humans whom He rescues and reconciles to Himself. (John 3:16)

### **"to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation"**

- - This torturous punishment and death of Christ on the cross redeemed or bought perfect righteousness and sinlessness judicially for all of the humans whom He rescues and reconciles to Himself.

- - Now-redeemed humans continue to sin in this life, but nevertheless God regards them as "sacred, consecrated", and "holy in his sight" solely because of the redemption that Jesus the Son accomplished for them on the cross. (Strong's #0040)

- - This regard by God of sinful redeemed humans as being "holy in his sight" also extends to being "blameless" or "without blemish", and being "without charge, irrefragable", or "free from accusation". (Strong's #0299, #0410)

- - In effect, the perfect sinlessness and the perfect righteousness of Christ are credited to and applied to those sinful humans whom God "reconciles to Himself". (see Romans 3:20-25a, 4:6; Colossians 1:20)

- - Thus, "there is now no [more] condemnation", no more "alienation", no more "enemy" status for those humans whom God "reconciles to Himself", "presented" by Christ and through Christ, now "qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light". (Romans 8:1; Colossians 1:21,20,22,12)
  - - And within all of these dynamics surrounding Christ in this reconciliation process, His "supremacy... in everything" is even more apparent. (Colossians 1:18)
  - - Indeed, this reconciliation with God through the redemption by Christ is a priceless undeserved eternal blessing for those humans that get this applied to them. (Romans 5:1-2)
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QUESTION: What criteria does God use that determines which humans get reconciled to Him? (Colossians 1:22)

- - In the context of Colossians chapter 1, the Colossians whom Paul is writing to "were once alienated from God and were enemies" (v.21), "but now he has reconciled" them (v.22).
- - Paul reports that he has "heard of [their] faith in Christ Jesus" (v.4), which prompts him to call them "holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse" (v.2).
- - These Colossians learned this redemption and reconciliation information from Epaphras (v.7) and responded by placing their "faith in Christ Jesus" (v.4) for their "redemption, the forgiveness of [their] sins" (v.14) - individually and personally.

QUESTION: Is it possible to become un-reconciled or revoked-reconciled to God?

- - Paul is writing here to the Colossian believers, who at that time are alive to read this letter. In verse 22 is stated that God has "now" "reconciled [them] by Christ's physical body through death".
  - - The word "reconciled" in the Greek means "to reconcile fully". (Strong's #0604)
  - - So integrating these facts together, the assertion in this verse 22 is that God has already and fully reconciled each of us true believers to Himself while we are still alive in this life on the earth.
  - - Therefore, judicially the legal status of each of these persons switches or converts from being a member of "the dominion of darkness" to being a member of "the kingdom of the Son" while the person is alive in this life on the earth, specifically at the exact moment that person genuinely and correctly places his/her "faith in Christ Jesus". (vv.13,4)
  - - If God has judicially and legally and fully reconciled living believers to Himself to thereupon officially be members of the kingdom of His Son, then how can God un-reconcile any of them, which essentially declares that the sacrifice of His Son no longer is sufficient and applicable to achieve reconciliation for any believers that He previously fully-reconciled to Himself?
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**BIG IDEA:** Through the torturous physical death of Christ, God has provided a way for humans to be reconciled to Him, even though we humans are born automatically alienated from Him.

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## IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS:

- - Did you know that you were born an enemy of God, officially?
- - Do you have actual reconciliation with God?
- - The various verses of this study define that reconciliation with God can occur only through Christ Jesus (v.22), by placing "your faith in Christ Jesus" (v.4) that He redeemed (v.14) or suffered the penalty for your sins (v.14) through His physical death (v.22) and through the shedding of His blood on the cross (v.20), followed by His resurrection from the dead on the third day (v.18).
- - For those of you who may not have actual reconciliation with God, would you like to commit or recommit yourself in establishing your faith in Christ Jesus so that God will grant you reconciliation with Him, which includes you "inheriting" eternal life in heaven as a permanent member of "the kingdom of light" (v.12)? (PAUSE - give them a few moments to process this invitation.)
- - If you are ready, then you can pray these words to God, with sincerity: (PAUSE after each phrase (separated by a comma) to give them time to recite and understand what they are herein praying to God.)

***Dear God, I want to be reconciled to you. I know that my sins have alienated me from You, and consequently I have been an enemy of You, officially. But, now I firmly believe in Christ Jesus, that He paid the penalty for my sins, through His physical death on the cross, and that He rose from the dead on the third day. So through Christ Jesus, I ask that You forgive me of my sins, reconcile me to Yourself, and give me eternal life in heaven, as a permanent member of "the kingdom of light". Thank you. Amen.***

- - The Scriptures say in Acts 16:31 that if you "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ", "you will be saved".
  - - So if you have placed your faith in Christ Jesus, then from these verses God says He has reconciled you to Himself as a member of "the kingdom of light", which includes the inheritance of living with God in heaven eternally. (Colossians 1:12)
  - - For all of us who have this eternal saving reconciliation with God, we are to strive to live in a manner that pleases Him and accomplishes His purposes for each of us individually, personally, and corporately (v.10), which we will be studying in verse 23 during our next meeting.
  - - After having received this priceless undeserved reconciliation with God through placing your faith in Christ Jesus, have you been living in a manner that brings honor to God for granting you this reconciliation to Himself? Or instead, have you since been living in essentially the same previous manner that was characteristic of being alienated from God and being His enemy?
  - - In other words, have you been living in a manner that is characterized by "holiness" - being blameless, "without blemish", and "free from accusation" of sinfulness? (v.22)
  - - And does "thankfulness" to God for what He has done to reconcile you to Himself through Christ Jesus pervade all that you are and how you live your life? (vv.12,22)
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[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - If God designed and created us humans, and every human that has existed has readily sinned, and the first humans Adam and Eve quickly succumbed to the first sin they were exposed to, then God made us humans with a substantial innate ability to sin. In other words, God set up all humans to fail immediately and utterly and miserably. Is that fair or good or right of God to do this? Explain your answer. Hint: see Colossians 1:19-20,13-14; also Joshua 24:14-15.
  - - Why would God allow or cause the human race to continue perpetuating if every human is born alienated to Him, officially as His enemy? What does God want to occur or is trying to accomplish in this regard? Hint: see Colossians 1:22-23.
  - - From this intellectual pondering, what simple conclusion can we draw about life and why we humans are brought into existence in this kind of automatic judicial moral predicament? Answer: Life is one big test by God.
  - - Is this kind of test by God unique to the human race? Answer: No, the various classes of angels were tested, of which about one-third of the angels failed the test. (Revelation 12:3-4)
  - - Is there a way or means by which angels that have sinned can be reconciled to God? Answer: No, nothing, ever. The angels that have sinned are irrevocably eternally condemned. (Matthew 25:41 with Revelation 20:10) But, God has offered to extend to us sinful humans grace (undeserved favor) and mercy (forgiveness of sins) that He does not and will not extend to any sinful angels.
  - - As humans grow up and proceed through life not being reconciled to God, do we naturally realize and think, "God officially declares me an enemy of His."? If your answer is "No.", then what can you do to assist people in the world in realizing this adverse reality that they are in?
  - - Is it possible to be super-religious and super-devoted to God and yet in actuality still be His enemy officially and alienated from Him? Explain your answer, using support from Scripture verses that are properly interpreted. The correct answer is "Yes." - see vv.1,7,10 in John 3:1-21.
  - - The phrase "without blemish and free from accusation" (Colossians 1:22), what does this sound like in the Old Testament, and how does that relate to what is stated in the New Testament here that Christ has done through His physical body? Hint: see Leviticus 22:17-22.
  - - How would you answer a person who contends (along a popular line of thinking today) that God loves everybody and thereby He accepts everybody? Hint: see Colossians 1:21-23]
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