

Reconciled; Colossians 1:21-23

I. Reconcile

- a. I reconcile my bank accounts every week
 - i. I want to make sure they balance with the bank
 - ii. I want to make sure there have been no unauthorized transactions
- b. The word (in the Greek) is solely a Christian word used only by Christian writers, so I don't think we can compare it to banking transactions
 - i. This Greek word is only used two other times in Scripture
 - ii. Colossians 1:19–20 (ESV) ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.
 - iii. Ephesians 2:15–16 (ESV) ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

II. Making Peace

- a. This term in Ephesians better expresses the meaning of Reconcile, to make peace between man and God
- b. Often times we use mediators to help us make peace (solve conflicts) between two people
 - i. They step in and listen to both sides
 - ii. They try to come up with a solution that benefits both sides
 - iii. Again, the human understanding of 'mediator' does not quite fit God's meaning
 - iv. 1 Timothy 2:5–6 (ESV) ⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.
 - v. Hebrews 9:14–15 (ESV) ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. ¹⁵ Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.
- c. There was definitely conflict between man and God from the very beginning in the Garden, so a mediator was needed
 - i. Colossians 1:21 (ESV) ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds,
 - ii. Ephesians 2:1–2 (ESV) ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

- iii. Ephesians 2:12 (ESV) ¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.
 - iv. Make no mistake, all sinned and separated themselves from God
 - v. Being a good person does not make us righteous or Holy
 - d. We need a mediator to make peace
- III. Holy and Blameless
 - a. Colossians 1:22 (ESV) ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,
 - b. Only through God's mediator (peacemaker) are we holy and blameless
 - c. Blameless, without defect or blemish (like sacrificial animals); without fault
 - i. Which of us can say we are without defect or fault?
 - ii. We all are intimately aware of our failings, whatever they may be
 - iii. "Above reproach" is a phrase that I would never use for myself
 - iv. But the peacemaker has reconciled our relationship with God by making us blameless
 - d. Holy, set apart for a divine purpose
 - i. That is another idea that I find hard to grasp; how could God want me to do anything for Him?
 - ii. Even so, our purpose is to lead others to Him through our living and our speaking
 - iii. Our divine purpose is to show Jesus to others (2 Timothy 2:2; Ephesians 2:10, Titus 2:11-3:1)
 - e. We have a reconciler that can make peace between us and God
- IV. Preeminence
 - a. Colossians 1:15–19 (ESV) ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
 - b. Image of the Invisible
 - i. When we think of an image, we think of a picture, or some kind of representation of the original item
 - ii. For example, the image of Washington on a quarter (or the image of Caesar on a Roman coin)
 - iii. But the Greek word use here brings across a different understanding
 - iv. It means that the image or symbol (Christ) brought with it (Him) the actual presence of God
 - v. John 1:14 (ESV) ¹⁴ And the Word (*Image*) became flesh (*present*) and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- vi. The Hebrew writer calls Jesus, 'the exact representation' of God (Hebrews 1:3)
- vii. John said that Jesus 'has made Him known' (John 1:18)
- viii. Christ shared the same substance as God and made God's character known to humankind
- ix. In Christ, the invisible God became visible
- x. I would think that this is why God forbid mankind to make images of Him
- xi. Exodus 20:4 (ESV) ⁴ "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.
- xii. God knew He would manifest Himself to humanity in the form of Jesus
- xiii. God also created us in His image
- c. Firstborn of all Creation
 - i. Firstborn does not mean the first baby a woman gives birth to
 - ii. Firstborn has a special meaning
 - 1. It is used 8 times in the new testament, and only once can we assume it to mean the first baby born to a woman – even then it is referring to Christ and may mean something else
 - 2. Luke 2:7 (ESV) ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.
 - 3. Every other time the word refers to a special relationship between Jesus and God
 - 4. God referred to David as the firstborn king in Psalm 87:29
 - 5. Psalm 89:27 (ESV) ²⁷ And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.
 - 6. But we know that David was not the first King of Israel, but he did enjoy special privilege and relationship with God
 - iii. Jesus is the Firstborn of all creation, not first in time, but first in kind
 - iv. "For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" Colossians 1:19
- d. This is why His sacrifice reconciled (made peace) us with God
- e. This is why His sacrifice makes us holy and blameless
- V. Steadfast
 - a. This is why we bear up under difficult circumstances
 - b. If we continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, we will be presented to God holy, blameless and above reproach