

Sermon Series: Colossians

Sermon Text: Colossians 1:15-23 The Preeminent Peacemaker

The Divine Son of God, who is preeminent over all things as Creator and Reconciler, died to make peace between God and His enemies who keep their faith and hope in Christ.

1) Who is the Peacemaker?

a) The Creator (1:15-17)

- i) “the image of the invisible God” (v. 15a)—the visible God; the only true revelation of God; distinction between Christ who “is” the image and Adam who was made “in” the image
- ii) “the firstborn of all creation” (v. 15b)—preeminence over all creation; heir of all things
- iii) Creation in, through, and for Christ (v. 16)
 - (1) in Christ—in the sphere of His Person; with reference to His character; so that creation conformed to His wisdom, righteousness, truth, goodness, beauty, etc.
 - (2) through Christ—through/by His power; Christ was the Agent of the Father
 - (3) for Christ—the purpose and goal of creation is the glory of Christ; He is the heir of all things
- iv) “all things” (v. 16)—literally everything that is not God; including spiritual powers that oppose God and His people
- v) “He is before all things” (v. 17a)—preexistent and preeminent
- vi) “in Him all things hold together” (v. 17b)—sustains everything in existence with reference to His character
- vii) The Peacemaker is not some third-party. He is the offended party. He is personally invested in the world and in the lives of those He reconciles.

b) The Reconciler (1:18-20)

- i) “He is the head of the body, the Church”—The Church, as Christ’s body, is the instrument through which He brings peace to the whole creation.
- ii) “the beginning”—the origin of first creation (cf. vv. 15-17)
- iii) “the firstborn from the dead”—the origin of New Creation
- iv) “that in everything He might be preeminent”—As the Lord of Creation/New Creation, Christ is first over the whole and over every part
- v) Reconciliation in, through, and for Christ (vv. 19-20)
- vi) “to reconcile for Him all things, whether on earth or in heaven”—cosmic reconciliation; peace for the whole of creation with God in Christ
- vii) The Peacemaker takes a body through whom He brings peace to the whole creation.

c) Application:

- i) The goodness of God’s creation from the excellence of Christ.
- ii) The groaning of God’s creation from the sin of Adam.
- iii) The goal of God’s creation for the glory of Christ.
- iv) The creation cannot experience this peace apart from humanity’s peace with God. So, the Church’s primary mission is to say to the world, on behalf of Christ, “be reconciled to God!” (2 Cor. 5:20). Thus, missions must be focused on the message of the cross.
- v) As the body of Christ we should be agents of peace all over this creation through our various vocations (for example: law and order; sanitation; building while conserving; economics; international diplomacy; defensive, just war).

2) How did He make peace?

- a) Incarnation (1:22a)
 - i) “In His body of flesh”
 - ii) True and full humanity subject to all the miseries of this fallen world.
- b) Crucifixion (1:20, 22a)
 - i) “making peace by the blood of His cross” (v. 20)
 - ii) “by His death” (v. 22a)
 - iii) Forgiveness of sin because Christ paid the debt for them (2:13-14)
 - iv) Disarming the powers that ruled us contrary to God’s glory and rule (2:15).
- c) Resurrection/Ascension (1:18, 22b)
 - i) “the firstborn from the dead” (v. 18)—resurrection
 - ii) “to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before Him” (v. 22b)—ascension
- d) **Application:**
 - i) The necessity of Christ as the only Mediator between God and man:
 - (1) Necessity of the incarnation:
 - (a) Mediator must be a man to pay man’s debt
 - (b) Mediator must be God to pay full debt
 - (2) Necessity of the crucifixion:
 - (a) Mediator must become accursed to bring blessing
 - (b) Mediator must become sin to bring righteousness
 - (3) Necessity of the resurrection/ascension:
 - (a) Mediator must have an indestructible life
 - (b) Mediator must represent us before God in life
 - ii) The sufficiency of Christ as the only Mediator between God and man: incarnation; crucifixion; resurrection/ascension.

3) Who are the ones brought to peace?

- a) God the Father (1:19)
 - i) “For in Him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell”
 - ii) “Fulness of God” is the subject of “pleased to dwell,” “to reconcile for Him,” and “making peace.” (vv. 19-20).
- b) God’s Enemies (1:21-23)—“alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds”
 - i) Who Continue in the Faith of Christ—“if indeed you continue in the faith” (v. 23a)
 - ii) Who Stay Steadfast in the Hope of Christ—“stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard” (v. 23b)
- c) God’s Creation—“the gospel . . . which has been proclaimed in all creation (or to every creature) under heaven” (v. 23c)
- d) **Application:**
 - i) Is your peace found in God? Are you trusting Christ as your Savior? Is your hope in the good news of New Creation in Christ?
 - ii) Are you a servant of the gospel of peace (v. 23)?

Doxology: To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (Rev. 1:5b-6)