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And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled... Colossians 1:21

Paul just wrote about the reconciliation and peace which is found through the blood of Christ's cross. Now equating that to what occurred in the lives of those at Colossae (and thus us!), he says, "And you." He uses this phrase to demonstrate that what he just said applies directly to them and what occurred between God and them because of Christ. They "once were alienated." This thought is similar to that of Ephesians 2:12 where he wrote that they "were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise."

Those in Colossae, and indeed all who have not yet come to Christ, are in this state. They are alienated from the good that God offers through Christ Jesus. And not only alienated, but "enemies in your mind by wicked works." The Greek reads "in wicked works." In the performing of wicked works, alienation from God, and the state of enmity, is realized. This is the "power of darkness" which he spoke of in verse 13. The devil holds sway over the world, and all who are not in Christ are bound under his power. However, through the blood of Christ's cross, these things are defeated. As he says, "...yet now He has reconciled."

The enmity between God and man is ended, the alienation no longer exists, and a state of reconciliation is realized. This is the power of the blood of Christ. All things are made new for those who reach out in faith and receive the gift of God which is found in the work of the Lord Jesus.

Life application: Paul takes it as an axiom that all people are alienated from God until they come to Him through Christ. This is something we need to consider as we interact with others. They are either in Christ, and thus reconciled to God, or they are alienated from Him. If we can just remember this simple truth, and then gear our hearts towards the fact that Christ died on a cross to end this alienation, then maybe we will make evangelizing others a greater priority. What prompted God to do what He did through Jesus should be what prompts us to act in the same manner. Let us display the love of

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God towards the lost, endeavoring to change hearts and minds for the purpose of reconciliation and salvation.

...in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight— Colossians 1:22

Paul's words of this verse place a stress on the literal, human body of Christ Jesus. His words here expand on the thought of being reconciled from the previous verse. This was accomplished "in the body of His flesh." Atonement could not come through God who is Spirit, nor could it come through an angelic being which also has no physical body. Rather, it had to come through a human. However, not any human could do. As humanity is infected with sin, this needed to be a sinless human, or no atonement could have taken place.

It is for this reason that Paul has already carefully and precisely described the deity of Christ. In so doing, the humanity is clearly revealed as pure, holy, and capable of redeeming man. As He is fully God, He inherited no sin from a human father. As He is fully man, He is capable and qualified to atone for man's sin. It is through this unique "body of His flesh" that the necessary atonement can be obtained, but still it had to come "through death." The Bible instructs us that without the shedding of blood, there can be no atonement for sin. In the Greek, there is an article before "death," and so it reads, "through the death," or "through His death" (the article is masculine).

Again, Paul stresses the humanity of Jesus with the article. He really lived, and He really died, proving that He was Man with a human body. It is through this part of His nature, His humanity, that atonement was realized. Paul then shows that this was done in order "to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight." The "His" of these words is speaking of God. The human aspect of Christ died in order for man to be acceptable before the divine aspect of Christ in God. And thus, the work is sufficient to please the Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In Christ, we are deemed as "holy," and thus we are positively set apart as acceptable to God because of Christ. In Christ, we are deemed as "blameless." The word indicates "without blemish." Because of Christ, we will be presented to God as bearing no sin. Sin comes through law, and in Christ the law is annulled. Sin cannot be imputed where law is ended. Therefore, we will be without spot or blemish, and considered pure and undefiled by sin because of Christ. And in Christ, we will be considered "above reproach." The word speaks of legal charges used against someone in a court of law. No charges will stand against us as we are brought into the presence of God. The decree "not guilty" will be proclaimed over us because of our standing in Christ who is "not guilty" before His Father.

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Life application: Because of the work of Christ, we are free from guilt, and we are reckoned as righteous before God. Paul asks in Romans, “Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? *It is* God who justifies.” Take time today to ponder your standing in Christ, and show your gratefulness to God for what He has done. Give praise, glory, and honor to Him for freeing us from what would otherwise be eternal condemnation.

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