

The Hope and Supremacy of Gospel

THE READING OF GOD'S WORD

Colossians 1:21-23

And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 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, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Warm up

Thank you for joining us this morning. My name is Eric Mattie and I serve as one of the Elders.

While Pastor Dan is on Sabbatical, the Elder Council is preaching through the book of Colossians. I have a question for you

Are you dealing with a crisis of faith this morning?

- When I read this verse about “If indeed you continue in the faith stable and steadfast, not shifting” are you doubting that you will continue ? and you feel unstable and not steadfast and that you are shifting and even sinking in your faith?
- When I say the hope of the gospel.. do you even know what I’m referring to and what that hope is?

Well I’ve got good news for you. Because the Supremacy of Christ that we’ve been preaching about the last few weeks is about to become very personal.

Introduction

Let me give the :10 second context of where we are at.

These verses shift from the praising Hymn of Christ as cosmic reconciler of all things – to- the personal reconciler of the Colossian believers.

So there it is... ten second catch up.

Why does God reconcile people?

Because The peacemaking work of Christ on the cross and in His resurrection is best display in the men and women who hear the message of reconciliation and draw near in submission to its peace offering.

The Gospel is a peacemaking work and a hope inspiring message.

- It is why, when we have testimonies of people that come into a relationship with Christ, -- for the church it strengthens us give us hope in hearing what God has done and is doing in people's lives.

So for those who are having a crisis in your faith,
Those who are believing but unsure about trusting,
Those who are trusting but hindered in worshipping.
Those who are worshipping but not treasuring Christ.

I'm looking to share stabilizing and steadfast truth that will override your feelings. Because your feelings are real, but they are not necessarily true. And if we are going to anchor our hope in anything, it will be the Word of God.

God's word says:

Psalm 119:105

Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.

- For some who are traveling in that path of crises and doubt, you need God's word to light your path. That's my prayer today as we get into this...

Let's go.

In today's passage we are going to highlight the Hope and Supremacy of the Gospel. This passage is one big summary sentence of tremendous truth and encouragement. The bare bones of the sentence therefore are: *you . . . he reconciled . . . to present you . . . if you continue*. This one long sentence I am calling the Hope and Supremacy of the Gospel.

This one sentence also get to the heart of why Paul is writing this letter in the first place. And we will get to that in a few minutes.

Since three verses cover this sentence, we really have to ignore the verse break up man made all those years ago. The chapter and Verse breakup are never perfect. Helpful and well done at times but not perfect.

Let's start at the beginning. Let's start with the Hope of the Gospel...

The Gospel has hope

Let's look at the first one.

The Gospel has Hope because...

1. Peace is obtained for His Enemies

21 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death,

- Note: The “And you”. There is a shift in perspective for Paul as he personally addresses to the Colossian believers. Paul employs one of his favorite ways to turn a phrase by contrasting the word “once” with the word “now” He is reminding them of where they were personally at in saying “you who once were.”
 - They once were alienated- that is excluded and estranged from God and they didn’t care to have a relationship with God.
 - They once were hateful in there thinking about who God was- accusing and assuming wrong thoughts about God.
 - They once were being jerks, sinning in their action, living for themselves and their passion.

The Bible summarizes like this:

1st Ephesians 2:12 shows that alienated people have no hope are without God...

“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.”

- Just because you are in the doorways of a church, doesn’t mean you are automatically in the covenant relationship with God.
- You could be sitting in these chairs feeling hopeless right now. Why?... because you know that your relationship with God is estranged and you are unsure what to do.

Then Romans 8:7 shows that enemies of God are hostile in their mindset...

“For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.”

- Jonathan Edwards talks about man being God’s enemy and he said it well. But I’m going to summarize his thoughts like this:

Their enmity appears in their low and contemptuous judgments of God, their distaste for God’s perfect attributes including His love, mercy and omnipotence. It shows in their contrary wills and in hating what Lord wills. Their affections have a malicious account toward God. And in practice they are engaged in a warring against God and his commands. They have a very mean esteem of God.

James 4:4 describes it like this...

You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

- He's not talking about friendship with unbelieving worldly people.- We are to have friends and be a witness of God's grace and truth to them. He's talking about friendship to the lifestyles and living for the passions and goals of a sinful world.

PREACH:

For the Colossians That is who they once were. And for some of you this morning that is who **you** once were.

Some are openly hostile some are passive aggressive. Some are out right irreverent and do evil by living unto yourself. Others are quietly stubborn and do evil by living unto yourself (but maybe your not so bad of a guy or you are a sweet heart on the outside.

In His Book The Whole Armor of God, Iain Duguid says: "The gospel is not the pronouncement that God loves good people and that if you get your act together, he might just save you too."

The gospel starts with the hopeless news that you even in your best human effort and living, you are the enemy of God.

Duguid also says in that book: "Jesus entered this world to proclaim the good news of peace to those who were far away

In the avenue of relationships, there is no one farther than those who are categorized as enemies. And that is who we all once were!

Preaching point:

Now Peace that is obtained for his enemies is an astounding truth about reconciliation- But what makes this Reconciliation of the highest in quality is that Peace is Obtained for His Enemies..and they are now considered Friends!

Turn with me in your Bibles to 2 Samuel 9 This is the story on HowKing David treated His enemies family.

And David said, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

3 ..." Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet

6 And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. ...

7 And David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan,

9 Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson.

13 So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.

- David treated His enemies family as His own.
- I just stated a that Peace is obtained for his enemies and they are now Friends.
- Actually The Bible emphasizes that upon reconciliation and new birth we have a new family. Specifically a Father that is friendly. Loving not wrathful, protective, not overbearing. Friendly and not mean.

This is the highest in quality when it comes to a reconciling relationship.

Not only Peace with God. But now in the Family of God.

Let's go on

The Gospel has Hope Because...

2. Pardon is Offered to the Guilty.

"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,"

- Paul sets, for the Colossians, a larger and more eternal perspective as to why they are reconciled.
- God's work of reconciliation in Christ had as its goal to prepare and perfect the Colossians Believers in Christ.

Preach:

- Pardon that is offered to the Guilty gives all of us hope. Hope for a second chance. Hope for a new Life in Jesus.
- But what makes this aspect of reconciliation, again, of the highest quality and hope, that we all need, is that the Pardon that is Offered to the Guilty - when accepted- they are now Declared Blameless.
- That is high quality of pardon not just declaring not guilty but innocent, blameless above reproach and pure

Many of us struggle with that idea of being declared blameless and pure. Why?

Because Many of us take to guilt like a devoted servant, allowing it to command our every move.

You remember The Bible declares

Rom 3:23

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

- We are all human beings. Some us are wiser. Some of us are fools. Some of us are morally good and some of us are morally corrupt.
- But no matter where we are on the spectrum of morality. We all sin and fall short.

Preach:

But here’s radical thought: the only thing keeping us under our condemning sense of guilt is our choice to ignore the Pardon that is offered to the guilty. And to listen to the accuser Satan.

1 John 1:8, 9

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to **cleanse us** from all unrighteousness.

A. B. Simpson is reported to have said that the gospel “Tells rebellious men that God is reconciled, that justice is satisfied, that sin has been atoned for, that the judgment of the guilty may be revoked, the condemnation of the sinner cancelled, the curse of the Law blotted out, the gates of hell closed, the portals of heaven opened wide, the power of sin subdued, the guilty conscience healed, the broken heart comforted, the sorrow and misery of the Fall undone.”

- **Weary Christian... stand in the hope offered in the Gospel. Stand in the full standing you have in Christ being blameless, at peace and above reproach**

But that’s not all

The Gospel has Hope Because...

3. Persevering Grace accompanies those who Endure in the Faith.

v. 22, 23 “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, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, “

- Note: Paul sets up the picture of estrangement and alienation and enemies of God for a reason. Before their conversion the Colossians were consistently and persistently out of harmony with God. Living in idolatry and slaves to their sinful ways.
- But the emphasis of the sentence is not in who they once were. The emphasis of their past was to draw attention to God’s might act of reconciling them.
- The result of this emphasis ought to be a determination to continue in the faith fueled by a loving gratitude. And Paul has full confidence when he say “if, as I’m sure you will, you continue in the faith”
And that is the very central concern of Paul in his persuasive set up here-“Since God has done this mighty act of saving you.. hold out your hope in the gospel -Colossian believers- don’t be swayed by false teachers”
- And that’s my concern here this morning when I started out to ask are you in a crisis of faith.
- Many of us here today, have to fight voices of false teaching in our society and culture. It’s not just religious false teaching. Its life pursuit, goals and dreams Even for some , our family and or even our own hearts are the voices we have to fight in order to persevere in the Christian faith.

The Bible shows that there is a Persevering Grace. A Forever grace that empowers the Believers in Christ to stay and be kept in Christ.

The Bible says:

That the Salvation we enjoy by grace has an empowering grace for our wills to stay true to Christ. Christians who endure in faith, are empowered by God’s grace.

Lert me show you how that works:

Phillippians 2:12

“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,”

- The word work out - It is not a work to *become* saved.
- Rather it mean that we are to put forward effort by the Spirit of God living in us. The effort to obey God and resist sin and our flesh. The work to cultivate and draw near to

God in a relationship to enjoy. To strain in hardships in prayer and worship to drown out the voices of doubt.

- So When the temptation arises to snap at your spouse, or tear down a co worker remember God's call to be holy. He isn't indifferent to your sin. He doesn't make an exception **for** it. Instead, he gives you everything you need to **fight** it.
- Yet not I but Christ in me.

Through Scripture it is clear that our Triune God in the persons of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are working together at all times to sustain our salvation to the very end of time

- The Father plans our salvation to the end. Philippians 1:6 says "he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."
- The Son promises to carry out our salvation to the end: Hebrews 12:2 Says Jesus is the pioneer and perfecter " of our faith. Jesus doesn't start our faith to let us finish it. Jesus brings it to completion.
- The Spirit guarantees our salvation to the end. 2 Cor 1:22 says God "put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee" of what is to come.

God set his heart on you from eternity past. He made this choice knowing everything about you, past present and future. As a result nothing can change his choice to pour out his grace on you.

Not sin

Not your fears.

Not the darkness that gnaws at your heart that no one know about

Nothing in your future.

Nothing in your past.

Not in all creation.

Nothing at all can separate you from God's love.

God proved his love once and for all and nothing can change his determination to save you.

That is the promise of forever grace.

The title of my message is The Hope and Supremacy of the Gospel. And I've out line three reasons why the Gospel has hope.

Now in closing –let's look at why The Gospel is Supreme

The Gospel is Supreme because of Jesus Christ. Period.

This Good news of reconciliation and hope that bring peace, pardon and persevering power is accomplish through Christ.

"he [Jesus] has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death" Col 1:21

- Christ the second person of the triune God is the reason. He is supreme and he is God.
- All other salvation plans are inferior and ultimately fail. There is only one way to God. All other ways to get peace or pardon is inferior because they are incomplete.
- Gaming, walking , exercise, ... binging, spending and saving money- None of it saves you, or grants you ultimate peace or pardon.

Why?

Because... Jesus's life, death, and resurrection is what makes this Gospel supreme.

- It is Not the work of us- mere men taking the initiative to make an angry God friendly.
- Nor is it the idea that the kind Son changed the mind of the unkind Father in some kind of divine child abuse. That is not the gospel in fact it is anti-Christian and poly theistic – proposing we belief in two different gods. (from Knowing God pg 166).
- The shocking truth that we should never grow callous in hearing is not just the babe in the manger is God himself... But that also the person on the cross dying for our sins to be forgive and wrath to be satisfied and reconciliation possible for those who put their trust in His work—is God himself.
- It is God who saves with a loving intent.
- John Murray says “that God loved the objects of His wrath so much that he gave his own Son to make provision for the removal of this wrath...Making the children of wrath the children of God's good pleasure.”

That provision is thru Jesus...Jesus is the mediator between two parties whose relationship has been broken down.

- He makes a way when there is no way.
- He brings together where other efforts have failed.
- He obtains peace by satisfy the justified wrath of God for sinners who were still enemies

“but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

“For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.” Rom 5:10

Peace is obtained for His enemies and they are now His friends.

In this passage: The emphasis of their past was to draw attention to God's mighty act of reconciling them. It was to point and glorify the Son of God Jesus Christ. It was to highlight God's mighty saving act seen in the death and resurrection of his only Son. God proved his love for you once and for all through the cross of Jesus and the empty tomb.

Choose to remember Pardon that is offered to the guilty is secured in the Forever grace offered through Christ alone.

I'm calling you this morning: If you are not at peace with God. If you are realizing your need of forgiveness in light of God's standard and truth and if you have been trying to save yourself through good works and not trust in Jesus as Savior.

I'm calling for you to repent and believe.

Listen to this truth -- again from Ian Duguid

Duguid says (pg 59): "This peace was dramatically purchased through Jesus's death on the cross. There God treated the innocent One as guilty so that he could treat us, the guilty ones, as innocent. That is the very heartbeat of the gospel of peace...Through his death and resurrection, we are now God's friends, part of God's family. We are no longer rebels on the run from an angry deity but beloved children with a safe eternal home in heaven."

Rebels repent! Stop running and place your trust in Jesus.

Fellow Believers, repent as well.

Hear these truths be strengthened by this word this morning and keep running the race set before you. Set your heart on the final prize: the day in which Christ presents us His church to His Father, holy pure and blameless.

Let's pray.