



## Part 4

June 20, 2010  
Pastor Chris Lawson

# SWORN ENEMIES

This weekend in worship we celebrate Father's Day and continue our study of Colossians by looking at 1:19-23. You may have heard it said, *Make your peace with God*. That is both an interesting and incorrect statement, for the Bible says our human efforts to reconcile with God fail.<sup>1</sup> Today we will look at how Jesus makes peace with God on our behalf. It's the amazing truth of the Gospel.

Beginning this week we will offer *Questions For Further Study* for your use during the week. These will be available at the Welcome Center, at [www.reynoldachurch.org](http://www.reynoldachurch.org), and in the sermon manuscripts.

Blessings,  
Pastor Chris

## COLOSSIANS CHAPTER ONE (English Standard Version)

**C**<sup>19</sup> For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,<sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.<sup>21</sup> And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds,<sup>22</sup> 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,<sup>23</sup> 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.

Let us pray.

*Lord, thank you for this good day. Thank you that your Gospel is revealed to us and that today we see once again the amazing work of what Jesus did for us on the cross. Help us to be reminded in a fresh way of that truth.*

*In Jesus' name we pray, AMEN*

### Today's Scriptures

**Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 59:2; 64:6; 65:17; 66:22; Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; Luke 8:8; John 8:31; 15:1-11; Romans 1:25; 3:10, 23; 5:10; 7:7; 8:1, 7, 19-21; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19; Ephesians 2:12; 4:17-18; Colossians 1:19-23; 1 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 9:15; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-5**

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10

*You may have heard it said, 'Make your peace with God.'*

*That is both an interesting and incorrect statement,*

*for the Bible says*

*our human efforts to reconcile with God fail.*

It was a beautiful Spring morning in 1992. The air was ripe with the promise of possibilities and hope. A young seventh grade boy, who would one day be called Pastor, was just coming into his own and discovering his own identity. Walking proudly down the hallway the young man was adorned with his best clothes, hoping to draw the attention of any and all unsuspecting young girls.

And then it happened; her name was Ginny. Their eyes met down the hall and his face filled with a smile. And so, in the way that only a seventh grader could, he strutted right up to Ginny.

Ginny was one of the prettiest girls in the whole school, and he was both stunned and elated that she was paying attention to him. Lost in his excitement, he didn't notice the students who were watching the uptake, or his friend Kenny, who had eased himself up next to him, until Kenny leaned over and whispered in his ear,

*That's Michael's girl.*

He had failed to realize that this was the girlfriend of the scariest seventh grader in all of North Carolina!

Word then got back to Michael that the certain seventh grader was talking to his girlfriend, and Michael called him out and said,

*After lunch today we'll meet on the playground.*

So for the remainder of that morning, that certain seventh grader feared what was certainly his impending death. You see, that certain seventh grader was waiting for the day when God would bless him physically and he would grow muscles – a day he still eagerly awaits – but Michael had muscles in the fifth grade. This particular seventh grader also longed for the day he could grow a full

beard. He still eagerly awaits that day, but Michael was shaving in the fifth grade.

And so the fateful lunch came and passed and everybody gathered on the playground.

That certain seventh grader's eyes locked with the eyes of Michael as they circled each other, seeing who would make the first move. Like moths to a flame, everyone in the schoolyard gathered around, and then someone started the fateful chant:

*Fight, fight, fight, fight, fight.*

Punches were ready to be thrown, and at that point my plan was to take the first punch and go down like a flower. It didn't matter if it hurt; I was going to lose and it was going to be over.

But THEN, Kenny said aloud the best two words I had ever heard: *Teacher's coming!* And the once-attracted moths fled for the hills.

Kenny saved me! But as Michael the bully began to back up and break eye contact with me, he pointed his finger in my face and said,

*We are sworn enemies.*

Interesting declaration from a seventh grader, *We are sworn enemies*. What he meant was, *I make an oath this day: We will never be friends*. It turned out he was wrong. About the tenth grade we realized that Ginny wasn't that good of a catch and we made up. But that day, before all of our friends, Michael made it known that we were enemies for life.

## FULLY QUALIFIED

Today we return to Colossians chapter one. Over the past three weeks, we have continued to work our way through Paul's letter to the young church in Colossae. We completed all of the preliminary ground work of this book concerning the author,

Paul; his friend, Timothy; the characteristics of the city of Colossae; Paul's greeting and thanksgiving for the faith of the church; and a warning against a rising heresy within it.

Last week we learned about that heresy, that it concerned the very nature of Jesus, and we examined Paul's presentation of Jesus' qualifications, by which Paul dispelled any question or confusion about Jesus' nature and authority.

### **Jesus, Fully Human: Head of the Body**

Paul rejected that Jesus was more divine than human – a created emanation of God like an angel, yet lacking all of the characteristics of humanity – by affirming Jesus' earthly role as head of the church – the head of the body.

### **Fully God: Image of the Invisible God; Firstborn of All Creation; Creator of All Things**

Paul rejected that Jesus was more human than divine, as was the belief in Colossae. He affirmed Jesus' Deity by saying,

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 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.*

### **Rightful Heir To The Earth**

These controversies and incorrect teachings resonate throughout church history, as we saw in the fourth-century Arian controversy and the development of the Nicene Creed, and even today with the Jehovah's Witnesses visiting our doorsteps on Saturday mornings. Yet Paul made it abundantly clear that Jesus was fully God, fully man, and the Firstborn, rightful heir to the earth, which was created for Him and by Him to reveal God's glory to the universe.

## **RECONCILIATION**

Today we pick up where we left off in the first chapter of Colossians.

<sup>19</sup> *For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,* <sup>20</sup> *and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*

*We need to be reconciled to God,*

**AND**

*God needs to be reconciled*

*back to us.*

Here we find our theme for today – *reconciliation*. We see the word *reconcile* used in verse twenty and again, in the past tense, in verse twenty-one. This is a familiar word in our everyday vernacular. In courts, contracts, or consent agreements, two competing or antagonistic parties come to an understanding that brings them into a working relationship with each other that both parties can live with. That is reconciliation.

The implications in Scripture of reconciliation go far beyond some meager disagreement or war of words. Here in Colossians we find that it speaks to the very relationship we have with God, for we need to be reconciled to God AND God needs to be reconciled back to us. More on that in a moment, but first let's look at Paul's use of the word *reconcile*. The Greek word *katallassō*, (kat-al-las'-so), is the most commonly used word throughout Scripture for *reconcile*. Its literal meaning is to exchange one set of coins for another set of coins of equal value. We find this word in 2 Corinthians 5:18-19:

*All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself.* Katallassō.

And, in Romans 5:10 we read,

*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.*

Katallassō.

So we are beginning to get a glimpse of what happened in this exchange. God, by the death of His Son, exchanged Jesus' perfect life for our imperfect life.

Yet in Colossians Paul used a unique variation of this same word. Instead of *katallassō*, Paul chose to

*Our justification before God,  
meaning that we stand before God  
unblemished,  
is among the more astounding acts  
in history.*

*And because we stand justified,  
we are therefore  
reconciled with God.*

use the prepositional form, *apokatallassō*, (ap-ok-at-al-las'-so). In Greek grammar when a preposition is added to the beginning of a word it intensifies the meaning of the word. It might be helpful to see where Paul used a similar method.

In Romans 7:7, Paul seemed to be asking a rhetorical question, *What then shall we say? That the law is sin?* It would have been completely appropriate to respond with the simple Greek word, *mē*, (may), or *no*. Instead he answered with *me genoito*, or BY NO MEANS! This is Paul's emphatic way throughout all of his letters of responding to an idea that needed a strong rejection. Here he again used an intensified version of a simple word. He could have said *no*, but instead said ABSOLUTELY NOT!

In a similar fashion, as a child, if I had gone to my father and said, *Dad, can I stay up all night and eat anything I want to and watch anything I want to on TV*, he would not have simply replied, *No*. He would have instead said, *Are you kidding me? NO-O-O*.

Back to Colossians 1:19-20. Paul had just established the credentials of Jesus as fully and solely sufficient to reconcile, because the Greeks and Hellenists in Colossae believed that Jesus was an

emanating spirit from God, but not God, and thus was not sufficient to reconcile; that reconciliation with God required Jesus plus something additional, such as supernatural knowledge or revelation, or worship of angels. Paul used the intensified version of *reconcile* because, unlike in Second Corinthians or Romans, he was fighting against the rising threat of this heresy. As a result, he spoke in a unique and emphatic manner right into the face of it, contending that Jesus, and Jesus alone, is sufficient for reconciliation, and thus for salvation.

## THE ORDER OF SALVATION

Reconciliation is very important in Christian theology. It is a part of the doctrine of salvation, or Soteriology, and within the doctrine of salvation there is a progression to our story of redemption, known as the Order of Salvation, or *Ordo Salutis* in the Latin. This order teaches that there are steps between birth and death that bring us into relationship with Jesus for eternity. I do not want to go into an enormous amount of detail here, but it seems important that we understand the landscape before we dig a little deeper.

If I were to group the many steps within the order of salvation into three primary parts, they would be the work, the response, and the rest or the remainder.

### The Work

Before the foundation of the world, God was, and He designed and created everything that exists to make known his glory and to reveal His Son. In giving us His Son, He revealed the way the world could be reconciled to Him. By the blood of Jesus we are able to be saved and thus justified, which means we get to stand blameless before God. I do not have to be accountable for all the junk I have done. Jesus took my sin and gave me His righteousness. Big truth: God did the work, not us.

### The Response

God has given us a new heart. We respond in faith and repent for our sins. We are then justified before God, meaning we stand without blame before Him.

*You were once distant, foreign, and alienated,  
but God has brought you near.*

### The Remainder

The rest of our life we continue to honor God by the power of the Spirit, until we join Jesus in glory for eternity, or until he returns.

Although each of these steps is a remarkable miracle, our justification before God, meaning that we stand before God unblemished, is among the more astounding acts in history. And because we stand justified, we are therefore reconciled with God.

Beginning in verse twenty we see four interesting features of our reconciliation: The design, the method, the purpose and the confirmation.

## THE DESIGN

<sup>20</sup> *and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven ...*

Did you catch that? God's design of reconciliation was to reconcile to Himself ALL THINGS, or *panta* in the Greek. This subject is so expansive that we could spend the remainder of the Summer looking at the ways God reconciles all things to Himself, but let me sketch out what I think this looks like.

### Reconciliation For Everything

*For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it [Adam], in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.<sup>2</sup>*

We have no idea how the implications of the fall have their tentacles in our world. When Adam sinned, sin entered into all of God's perfect creation through that one man – his sin was imputed, or assigned, not only to us, but to the whole creation. But the good news began with God's first promise of the Gospel as He spoke to the serpent: *He will bruise*

*your head and you will bruise his heel.<sup>3</sup>* God is going to crush Satan. And throughout Scripture the common theme is that God is going to reconcile to Himself *all things*, all of the fallen creation.

In the beginning all of creation was perfect, but Adam's sin has been like battery acid, slowly corroding the Earth and continually eating away at everything in the world. I think we miss all of the ways that sin has devastated the world we live in. God did not design this place to be like this. He never intended for flowers to die, for trees to fall in the forest or for vines to crawl up your flowers and crush them to death.

When you truly embrace that God is going to reconcile *all things* to Himself, you read in an entirely new light prophetic texts like Isaiah, Peter and Revelation about *new heavens* and a *new earth*,<sup>4</sup> about the old passing away and the new having come.<sup>5</sup>

Paul made this point about all things being reconciled because the original readers of this letter believed that body and spirit, or soul, were separate; that spirit or soul were holy, good; matter, created things, were evil. So he told them that not only is God going to redeem their souls, He is going to redeem their bodies; He is going to redeem all of creation. He will reconcile EVERYTHING back to Himself.

### Reconciliation For Aliens and Hostile Minds

Returning to Colossians chapter one:

<sup>21</sup> *And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, <sup>22</sup> he has now reconciled*

Paul used two interesting words here, *alienated* and *hostile*.

The first, *alienated*, means we were far off, or distant. Ephesians two explains:

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<sup>3</sup> Genesis 3:15

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-5

<sup>5</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:1-5

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<sup>2</sup> Romans 8:19-21

*The implications  
of the blood of Calvary's cross  
are cosmic,  
and so much deeper  
than we could ever understand.  
It redeems me. It redeems you.  
It redeems the universe.  
ALL of which was broken  
will be restored.*

<sup>12</sup> ... 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.

You were distant. Paul uses a geographical distinction in order for people to understand they were not in the land; they were outside the land, and God redeemed them and brought them in, made them His friends.

Once again he was demonstrating that Jesus is sufficient for salvation. You were alienated. You are no longer alienated. If anyone should have a question about whether Jesus is sufficient, tell them to look at you. You were once distant, foreign, and alienated, but God has brought you near.

*Hostile in mind.* What does this powerful, drastic word mean? In the totality of Scripture, it means that there are no innocent non-believers. We are hostile by our own choice. A few texts that help.

Romans 1:25

*... they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.*

Ephesians 4:17-18

*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.*

Isaiah 59:2

*but your iniquities – whose iniquities? **Your iniquities** – have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.*

Romans 8:7

*For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law.*

It is our fault; it is our rebellion; it is our rejection that has caused us to be separated from God.

#### The Provision of The Cross

The implications of the blood of Calvary's cross are cosmic, and so much deeper than we could ever understand.

One of the ways to consider Jesus' death and resurrection is as a ransom for us. We see in Scripture that Jesus died as a ransom for us,<sup>6</sup> that meant the soul was held in bondage by Satan and sin, and Jesus made a transaction by offering Himself as payment for them. And so Jesus' death on the cross was a ransom for many.

Yet I do not think this viewpoint goes far enough into the deeper meaning of Calvary's cross. Jesus' death accomplished far more than this.

The implications of Jesus' death on the cross and the powerful work of the blood He shed are radical. Some, including myself, consider Jesus' death and resurrection as a *substitutionary atonement*. I should have died, but Jesus substituted Himself for me and died in my place, AND the whole earth was broken and lost in sin's curse, the curse that invaded earth with the sin of one man, and it was reversed in Jesus.

It is a radical cosmic view of Jesus' work on the cross. It redeems me. It redeems you. It redeems the universe. ALL of which was broken will be restored.

Can we have one quick science lesson today? Not three like last week!

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<sup>6</sup> Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 9:15

*When God sees those of us who believe in Jesus,*

*He does not see us; He sees Jesus.*

*That is really good news, isn't it?*

*When He sees me, He doesn't see all the times I rejected Him,  
all the times I lied, all the times I served myself instead of Him –  
all the actions which fell short of the glory of God.*

*He sees Jesus, Who lives in me.*

An overly-simplified explanation of the law of entropy, or the second law of thermodynamics, is that since the beginning of creation everything – planets, stars, moons, people – has been emitting energy. Eventually the energy is depleted and the object or person ceases to exist. For example, when this happens to a star, it collapses on itself and creates a black hole. So, according to the physicists, everything will eventually consume its energy and burn away.

Unless something intervenes.

Our Scripture tells us that everything has a life span and eventually dies because of the cosmic effects of sin, BUT, the blood of Jesus reconciles all things. And so in the end, when Jesus' foot steps down on the Mount of Olives, we go to be with Him, and He will fully renew and return everything to its original created order. That is good news!

### Those Who Need Reconciliation

We return to the initial question:

*Do we need to be reconciled to God, or, does God need to be reconciled to us?*

Now any time there is a hard question with two answers, I try to take both, because I like being right. And with this question, if you take both you are right. We have to be reconciled to God and God has to be reconciled to us. Let me show you how that works.

Scripture is clear that between us and God is a gulf we call sin. We cannot be in relationship to God because we have sinned and fallen short of the glory

of God,<sup>7</sup> thus we should have received death. So we are separated from God and that has to be reconciled. Something has to be done about that. I tried a lot and kept messing it up. But somebody better do something about that because I am over here dying.

On the other side, God is holy, and because God is holy He cannot tolerate sin. God's only response to sin is wrath. God is both merciful and just. So God's wrath has to be dealt with too.

So do we have to be reconciled with God or does God have to be reconciled to us? Yes. Our sin problem has to be dealt with and God's wrath problem has to be dealt with.

Here is the good news.

## THE METHOD

<sup>20</sup> *and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*

And the beginning of verse twenty-two:  
*in his body of flesh by his death.*

The best illustration I can use for this is that there are two rivers running downhill. One of them is our sin and one is God's wrath that has to be satisfied. They are running and there is nothing to stop them, until they get to the foot of Jesus' cross. There they start flowing with the blood of Jesus, and as the two

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<sup>7</sup> Romans 3:23

*There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ.*<sup>8</sup>

*As a believer,  
you can expect that you will live a life  
holy unto God,  
not because you have to –  
God is still going to love you;  
that is never in jeopardy –  
but because for the first time  
you have the ability to!*

rivers come together at the foot of the cross, our sin is dealt with and God's wrath is satisfied.

It is a remarkable thing that Jesus does. This reconciliation that He offers for our sin towards God and God's wrath towards us is something I do not think we will ever fully understand.

So we have the plan; we have the method; here is the purpose.

## THE PURPOSE

To what end were we reconciled?

<sup>22</sup> *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,*

When God sees those of us who believe in Jesus, He does not see us; He sees Jesus. That is really good news, isn't it? When He looks at me, He doesn't see me; He sees His only begotten Son. When He sees me, He doesn't see all the times I rejected Him, all the times I lied, all the times I served myself instead of Him – all the actions which fell short of the glory of God. He sees Jesus, Who lives in me.

We are blameless before Him because He sees Jesus. We are above reproach before Him, because He doesn't see our sin; He sees Jesus in us.

## THE CONFIRMATION

That is good news, but to what end? How do we know we have been reconciled?

As a believer, you can expect that you will live a life holy unto God, not because you have to – God is still going to love you; that is never in jeopardy – but for the first time in your life you have the ability to! Before Jesus, we could only serve ourselves. But now that we are Spirit-filled and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, we are not *obligated* to live a life holy unto God; we are *privileged* to do so. And for the first time we are able to.

And how do we know? What is the confirmation that what God has done in us is at work, that we have been set free, that we have been redeemed? Paul finishes with this:

<sup>23</sup> *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.*

Throughout Scripture Jesus shares with His disciples illustrations which convey to us that if we want to know if we are one of His people, we are to just continue doing what we are doing, because by the power of the Spirit we will continue to reflect His glory in the world.

This is the implication, for instance, of John fifteen,<sup>9</sup> where He teaches that He is the vine, and we, the branches of the Lord, abide in His word.

John 8:31 says, *If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.*

In Luke 8:8, the soil that God knew was right was the one that produced fruit.

Christians who have been reconciled press on. But here is the best news of all: It still does not have anything to do with you. By the power of the Spirit, once God gives you faith to receive Jesus as your Savior, He doesn't leave you there. He sends His Holy Spirit, who dwells in you so that He might work through you. Even when He gets you to the point where you no longer are going to die, He does not leave you by yourself. Instead He gives you

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<sup>8</sup> Romans 8:1

<sup>9</sup> John 15:1-11

*God is your Father. His goodness NEVER fails. His faithfulness NEVER ends.*

*And if God the Father is for you,*

*who could ever be against you?*

everything you will ever need to do everything He wants you to do in the world.

## SWORN ENEMIES

And so, it was then the Summer of 1992, and I went to church camp because everybody goes to church camp. That night, the Holy Spirit breathed life into my heart and I went forward and accepted Jesus as my Savior. Get this. Then I stood before the Father as His sworn enemy, because I had made an oath to serve myself, and I deserved God's wrath. But Jesus leaned over and whispered in His Father's ear,

*He's mine!*

When I should have died for my sin, Jesus leaned over to His father's ears and said, *I forgave Him! He has no stain!*

That's good news, that when we were completely alienated from the Father, Jesus came and died in our place. He set us free when we should have been killed.

Jesus, Who died in your place, leans over to His Dad and says, *He is mine!*

**T**oday on this Father's Day there are many of us who may need to, for the first time or once again, see God as our Father Who gave us what we did not deserve.

Maybe you grew up in a household where your father never said a kind thing to you. He only ridiculed you, cut you down, spoke curse over you instead of blessing.

Maybe you had a father who was never there, either he left physically or was just never emotionally available.

Maybe you had a father who hit you or abused you.

It is no mistake that when God decided to reveal Himself to humanity, He revealed Himself as Father

so those of us who have been so deeply rejected would have a place to find wholeness.

Maybe it is not your father. Maybe it is just men who took advantage of you, abused you, made you feel worthless, made you feel like you don't have dignity before God.

God is your Father. His goodness NEVER fails. His faithfulness NEVER ends. And if God the Father is for you, who could ever be against you?

So today, Father's Day, learn and embrace the love of your heavenly Father, maybe for the first time.

*God, it would be my prayer that You would rip off the scabs of our past pain; that You would reveal the wounds that have been so deep within us we did not even know they were there, so that the Spirit could begin to mend those wounds. Speak life into those wounds.*

*Many of us here today need to forgive our fathers for not being who God called them to be. Lord, help us to forgive them. Help us let go of that pain.*

*God, maybe we cannot trust men, whom God called to lead, but instead of using the authority You gave them to lead, abused, beat down, and spoke words of curse instead of blessing. Lord, let today be the day that that scab comes off of that calloused wound and You breathe your Spirit onto it to restore it by the power of the blood of Jesus. We have been carrying this wound too long. Lord, restore us today.*

*The old has gone; the new has come. In You we are a new creation.*

*Thank you, Lord. In Jesus' name we pray, AMEN.*

**W**e never want to end a service without giving you an opportunity to accept Jesus as your Savior. If you have never said, *Jesus, I want You to be Lord of my life*, let today be the day. Ask Him for forgiveness. Ask Him to be your Savior, and be forever changed.

As you leave here today, know that your church loves you, and God, your Father in heaven, loves you.

Let me send you out with a blessing,

May God the Father,  
Who spoke all of creation into existence,  
And Jesus the Christ, the Son of the Living God,  
Who died in your place for your sins,  
And the Holy Spirit,  
Who now lives in you so He might work through you,  
Be with you now and always.

And God's people said,  
AMEN!

## QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Today we examined Colossians 1:19-23 together. What does Paul say about our lives before Christ? What does Paul say about our lives after Christ?
2. How is Paul's view of unsaved people different/similar to the ideas often promoted in our culture? In the church? In the workplace?
3. How would your life look if you truly acknowledged wholeheartedly Jesus' preeminence in your life?
4. In v. 23 we read, *Continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard*. What do you think this means? What does *continue* mean? How can we be assured that we continue in our faith?
5. Write a prayer that you will pray throughout the week that reflects what you have learned about Jesus' role in the world. The prayer should reflect God's reconciling work in your life and your appreciation for Jesus' accomplished work.

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