

THE GREAT RECONCILIATION

Text: Colossians 1:19+23

*It pleased G to do two things: all
fulness dwell in Him (2) to reconcile
through all things unto Himself.*

INTRODUCTION: These verses read like a 20th century newspaper. They tell us two things: there is something wrong with the world, and there is something wrong with man. That is there something wrong with this whole universe is implied in the fact that it will be reconciled. That there is something wrong with man is seen by the words, "alienated and enemies." Man is an enemy of God. This means that he is deliberately and willfully opposed to God's will, in revolt against His authority. They are alienated from God--severed by sin from Him, estranged.

This is the attitude of man--hostility towards God. No thoughts are more unwelcome than ones about God. "They did not like to retain God in their minds." This attitude expresses itself in their actions--"wicked works."

The great paradox is that although God looks upon man as His enemy, yet He reconciles them to Himself. All God's work for us was done when we were His enemies. His love for us came from His own heart.

The ultimate problems in this world are not material or political but spiritual. It is the result of a wrong relationship with God. Thus it is not the philosophers and scientists who can lead this world to redemption and restore peace, but Christ only. As He is Creator and Sustainer, He is also the Great Reconciler. He has been endowed for this great task. All fullness dwells permanently in Him. Whatever is needed to save a fallen world, and restore harmony to the universe is treasured up in Him.

*He Reveals
He Rules
He Redeems
He Reconciles*

I. THE MEANING OF RECONCILIATION

"Having made peace," The need implies a prior alienation of man from God.

1. The word means, "to make something other than it was; a radical change is relationships. It is a new stage in personal relationships in which previous hostility of mind has been put away by some decisive act. It is the changed relations between God and man which are the result of the death and resurrection of Christ.

2. It is making Peace--the ending of War.

II. THE METHOD OF RECONCILIATION

"Through the blood of His cross." "In the body of his flesh through death."

1. It is provided by Grace. The wounded party sought the reconciliation. "Where art thou?" Adam should have gone to God and so should have you.

2. It springs from God's limitless love. Romans 8:32--
"Delivered Him up for us all." The cross is the proof that there is no length to which the love of God will refuse to go in order to win man. If the cross will not waken love and wonder in a man's heart, nothing will.

3. It was a violent and painful act. "Blood" represents a violent death, and the "body of His flesh through death" speaks of a painful, physical suffering.

4. The cross removes the cause of the alienation--sin. He who died on it possessed God's nature, the offended party, and man's nature, the offending party; and thus being qualified to mediate between them, His blood was poured out as a peace-offering. An amnesty was proclaimed by His death. All the hostility and sin that severed man from God was placed on Jesus and He took it away through His blood.

Eph. 2:15--"Having abolished in His flesh the enmity."

The sinful principle, the lower nature has its seat in the flesh, the tendency to sin. All thoughts and motives and desires which belong to the mere earthly existence are included in the flesh. In order to do battle with sin on its own ground Christ assumed a body of flesh--2 Cor. 5:21. By the destruction of His own flesh He destroyed the principle of flesh which involves the whole race in sin.

III. THE PURPOSE OF RECONCILIATION

"To present you holy and unblameable and und unproveable in his sight."

There is a continuous work reaching a definite consummation.

1. The purpose as to our character--"Holy and without blemish."
This is a sacrificial metaphor. Ill-of High Priest examining the sacrifice. We are dedicated to God, "a living sacrifice." We are to be an acceptable offering, free from blemish--that we might be able to stand the piercing gaze of Him whose scrutiny no defect can escape.

The love of God lays upon us the obligation to live a life worthy of that love.

2. The Purpose as to our Standing--"unproveable" Free from every charge against us. The accused person becomes unaccused. He was awarded not condemnation but freedom.

IV. THE PROVISION OF RECONCILIATION

Vs. 23--"IF"--There is an "if" clause in this contract. This is subject to a condition. All of this is ours provided we remain firmly founded and established in the faith. If the Bible taught the perserverence of the saints, it also taught that the saints are those who perservere. Continuance is the test of reality. Reconcilliation demands loyalty.

"Grounded"--placed on a foundation.

"Settled"--staying on the foundation.