

Lesson 9

**February 21-27*

NEXT WEEK – Complete in Christ

Reconciliation *and* Hope

Sabbath Afternoon

Read for This Week's Study: *Col. 1:21-29,*

Eph. 5:27, Eph. 3:17, Rom. 8:18, Eph. 1:7-

10, Eph. 3:3-6, Prov. 14:12.

Memory Text: "For he hath made him to be sin

for us, who knew no sin; that we might be

made the righteousness of God in him" (2

Corinthians 5:21).

P

Paul continues the theme of reconciliation, which was so vividly highlighted in Colossians 1:20 (see Lesson 8, Thursday). There he described its cosmic scope, while what follows it becomes personal and individual. Through His death on the cross, Jesus has accomplished reconciliation for everyone and everything, especially human beings, who were alienated from the life of God through sin, but now, through Jesus, have been reconciled by Him by faith.

The process of individual reconciliation is unpacked in this week's passage. As with the cosmic sphere, it happens through the death of Christ. On the individual level, the cross, far from being a passive symbol, becomes an active reality, with God's love transforming people as

they hear the gospel and receive Christ Himself,
the hope of glory.

Paul also talks about “the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations” (Col. 1:26, NKJV). What is this mystery, and what all does it envision—for the individual and for the universe? How does this “mystery” relate to the gospel that Paul has so passionately proclaimed?

**Study this week’s lesson to prepare for
Sabbath, February 28.*

Sunday

February 22

Reconciled From Wicked Works

Read Colossians 1:21, 22. What is Paul alluding to with his reference to alienation and being enemies? And what is the expected end result of Christ's death (*see also Eph. 5:27*)?

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight:"

Colossians 1:21-22 KJV

Paul has always painted a dark picture of humanity, at least humanity apart from the righteousness of Christ. And who today, almost two thousand years later, could argue with that sentiment? Someone once said that the one Christian doctrine that doesn't need to be taken on faith is the sinfulness of humanity.

However, since the entrance of sin, God has taken the initiative to reconcile us, as bad as we are, to Himself. That is, from the start, God has worked to solve the problem of sin, even if the solution could be found only in His own death on the cross.

In Eden, He called out to Adam, His masterpiece of creation, "Where are you?" (Gen. 3:9, NKJV). And today, He continues to seek His one lost sheep-us. He seeks us out one by one. He has a perfect plan to reach us, applying the embryonic gospel promise of Genesis 3:15, putting enmity between us and Satan.

Sometimes the gospel is made so complicated and theoretical that it has little practical meaning for twenty-first-century living. But it's really quite simple and straightforward.

The gospel has three parts:

First, WE ARE SINNERS IN FULL OUT REBELLION AGAINST GOD AND because THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH

AND we are helpless to save ourselves, Jesus came and died for our sins. (See Rom. 5:6-8.)

Second, by accepting His death as ours ~~through faith, repentance, and baptism,~~ we are justified and set free from the condemnation of sin AND THE SPOTLESS RECORD OF CHRIST'S PERFECT LIFE AND PENALTY SATISFYING SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH IS GIFT TO US BY HIS GRACE THROUGH FAITH. (See Rom. 5:9-11; Rom. 6:6, 7.)

Third, the life we live now is the result of being united with Christ, AND BY experiencing His re-creating power, BELIEF PRODUCES THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT and His living His life in us. (See 2 Cor. 5:17-21, Gal. 2:20.)

These are not necessarily separate steps or events. They can happen all at once, as soon as we are ready to accept Jesus into our lives. And they can be renewed every day as we give ourselves to Him each morning. Regardless of how each one of us has experienced the saving work

of Christ in our lives, the foundation rests
always upon the PERFECT LIFE AND PENALTY
SATISFYING SUBSTITUTIONARY death of Jesus. To
that we must always return.

GRACE TO ALL - TITUS 2:11

FAITH TO ALL - RO. 12:3

DRAWS ALL - JOHN 12:32

LOVE FOR ALL - JOHN 3:16

DIED FOR ALL - HEB. 2:9

LIFE TO ALL - ACTS 17:28

SAVIOR OF ALL - 1 TIM. 4:10

RANSOM FOR ALL - 1 TIM. 2:5

ADVOCATE FOR ALL - 1 JOHN 2:1, 2

**When you look at yourself, your character,
and your innermost being, what does the sight
tell you about your need of the cross?**