c. Toward Paul. This is a lovely personal word by Paul. The thrill of the Gospel and the message of reconciliation is so wonderful that he records that he "became" a minister (word for deacon) of it. Would to God all would feel the impact of the Gospel in this personalized direction.

Conclusion

The salvation God has provided is wonderful. It tells about sin, the blood, forgiveness, holiness, and the personal involvement expected. What should we do with the truth so presented? Only this: believe it; receive it; live it; enjoy it; spread it! Will you? Amen.

NOTES:

THE EPISTLE OF COLOSSIANS

"Reconciled!"

Colossians 1:19-23

Introduction

1. Jesus Christ is the center of all God's relations with men. He is the pivot, the vortex, the apex of all things spiritual.

2. The reason Christ qualifies for this blessed position in the economy of God is that in Him "all fullness dwells" (v. 19). The word "fullness" means all the plenitude of Deity is in our Lord Jesus. The depths of eternal existence, righteousness, wisdom, power, holiness, goodness, truth and love are all in HIM! Glory to His thrice holy Name now and forever.

3. Being what He is, Christ Jesus effected reconciliation, one of the three aspects of His finished work (the others being propitiation and redemption). Five statements are made about this doctrine of reconciliation in the text. Look at them:-

1. ITS PROVISION vv. 20, 21.

Reconciliation includes two major areas of divine creation:-

a. All things, v. 20. Two descriptive phrases are added here:

1) Things in earth. This has reference to the removal of the curse from the earth.

2) Things in heaven. This speaks of the purification of the heavenly spheres (cf. Isa. 14:12-15; Heb. 9:23).

b. All people, v. 21. The world of men is described as being alienated and enemies in the mind.

The former means "strange or foreign" while the latter signifies "hostility." The areas in which these facets of separation from God
are the "mind" or "disposition" and in "evil works" or activities which are "injurious."

NOTE: The reconciliation here is not in any sense some kind of universalism. God has through Christ Jesus provided the working agreement or ground to terminate the dreadful condition caused by sin!

2. ITS FOUNDATION vv. 20, 22.
Two related phrases call forth the truth with clearness:

a. Body of His flesh. v. 22. The incarnation of Christ and the affirmation that this was required for reconciliation is made firm. No angels of mediation could perform what He did.

b. Death of His cross. vv. 20, 22. The blood of Christ speaks of His death. Without this, there would have been no reconciliation (Heb. 9:22). It was Christ's death which made the difference. As important as His teachings, life, and baptism are—it was His death and blood which wrought reconciliation. This is God's only foundation for bringing about peace.

3. ITS INTENTION v. 22.
The ultimate goal of reconciliation is stated here. Christ will some day present His own and then they shall be what is written (cf. Eph. 5:27).

a. Internally. The word "holy" is pertinent at this point. The idea of separation to God and characteristically godly is patent.

b. Externally. The word "without blemish" is touched on. The absence of censure is involved in this word.

c. Eternally. The word "unreprovable" is noted here and relates to the absence of an accusation.

What a thrill to read of the reasons which HE gives for ever effecting your reconciliation. Let's not water down God's purpose in this aspect of our salvation! Believe it and live like it.

4. ITS PROTECTION v. 23.
All need to be reminded constantly that a monergistic system is not that which is taught in the Word. God employs the human will to reach His objectives. Consider then how His work of reconciliation is protected:

a. Continuation. The construction in the original expects a firm continuing in the Lord. Where this is not found, one may question the actual origination of God's work in the life!

b. Firmness. "Grounded" means to be settled about the faith while "settled" means to be "seated" or "fixed."

c. Stability. The matter of not being "shifted" is inherent here. All of these phrases mark out that there is a persuasion and conviction in the pulse beat of those who are truly reconciled by our precious Lord.

5. ITS DIRECTION v. 23.

a. Toward the Colossians. "Ye have heard" specifies the Colossians directly. The personal pronouns throughout the text show that God personalizes His message.

b. Toward the world. Here is the universality of the message God has given. No one is to be left out. All are to hear of our blessed Lord. The missionary emphasis is always latent when the matters of the Gospel are considered.