

## Colossians 1: 14-2:6 Christ Is All We Need

**Key Thought:** Very few false religions dismiss Jesus; they just wish to dethrone Him (usually to put man in His place). They try to make Him one of many sources of spiritual knowledge, one of many ways to God.

The Gnostics taught that matter was evil, spirit was good. Therefore, to know God you had to rely on the secret knowledge imparted by a series of intermediaries, “emanations” from God. The goal was to use this secret knowledge to move from the physical to connection with the spiritual, and get closer to God. Man is in search of God. Man is doing the reconciling.

Paul will teach the opposite; Jesus is God in search of man. First, Paul will show that Christ is superior to all things so that all other sources of truth must be dismissed. Then, that Jesus is more than a superior spiritual being; He is God in human flesh. Finally, Why? In the incarnation Jesus has fully reconciled us to God by His sacrifice on the Cross. Paul will close this section with a discussion of his ministry, lest any think his being in prison is a valid reason to dismiss his message.

We are not chasing a mysterious God with the aid of lesser beings. We have been fully reconciled to God through Jesus, God who came in the flesh at the right time to save us.

If we believed this, how would it show in our lives?

### Col. 1: 15-18 Christ is The Head of All Things

- Firstborn: not indicating a place in the time-line of creation, rather the position. The firstborn is the pre-eminent one, the most important one, not the first one in time.
- Jesus is the exact representation and revelation (the meaning of *image*) of the invisible God. When you see Jesus, you see God.
- He has the pre-eminent position over *all* Creation (firstborn)
  - He created all things, both material and spiritual.
  - All things were created for Him.
  - Before there was anything, He was.
  - All things are held together by Him.
  - He is the head of the Church, the first man to receive a glorified body (firstborn from among the dead).
- So that in *everything* Christ is supreme.
  - Pretty much sums it up, Christ is Savior (verses 13 & 14), the head of all creation, and the head of the church.

### Col. 1: 19-20 Christ Is God, With a Body.

- *Fullness*: The sum total of all the divine attributes and power (a word the Gnostics used).
- *Dwell*: To be at home permanently.
- Put them together: Jesus’ divinity was something He always possessed. It was not given to Him later, as would be true if He were a created being.
- Further strengthened because it pleased God to do so. God would not give His divine attributes to a mere created being. This is an additional proof that Jesus is God.
- Reconciliation: Contrary to Gnostic teaching where men strive to move close to God by following some secret knowledge, God came to man to reconcile us to Him.
  - The reconciliation is total; it covers both the physical and spiritual realms, except those under the earth. They bow in Philippians but aren’t reconciled here.
- God stands at the foot of the Cross and says I have reconciled the world to Myself. He looks at each of us and asks if we will be reconciled to Him?
  - It took blood. An attribute of a physical body.

## Col. 1: 21-24 What This Reconciliation Means

- We were aliens because of our evil. He has reconciled us to be without blemish and free from accusation.
  - Without blemish (blameless): No defects whatsoever, Jesus removes all of sin's effects in me by taking them on Himself.
  - Free From Accusation: Satan can make no charge against me. It has all been taken care of.
- This was done with a physical body, contrary to the teaching that matter is evil.
- *IF* (verse 23): Better translated *Since*.

## Col. 1:24-2 Paul Explains His Ministry:

- Paul did not found this church directly, they did not know him personally:
  - His sufferings are not the result of something he did wrong. He suffers for the Church.
    - Implied: his teachings are not suspect because of a moral failure.
  - God charged him with giving the full messages to the Gentiles.
    - Note verse 21 above, formerly they were aliens. They are no longer.
- The message is that Christ is for the Gentiles as well. In Christ, the Gentiles receive the Hope of Salvation too.
- Paul's teaching is about Jesus, and no-one or no-thing else. In Him we have all we need.
  - Christ in You (verse 27).
  - In whom are hidden *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (verse 3).
- The goal of Paul's teaching:
  - Grow in maturity (*perfect*, verse 28).
  - Encouraged in heart, united in love.
  - Possess full knowledge, so that:
    - They know the Hope they have.
    - No-one will be deceived by slick arguments.

## Applications:

- Jesus still asks, "Who do people say I am?" (Mark 8:27). Who do you say Jesus is? Is your understanding of Jesus as big as Paul teaches here?
- Are you fully reconciled to God?
  - If not, what are you holding back?
  - If so, do you believe the promise of verse 22, that you will be delivered free from blemish and accusation? What are you holding on to?
- What in addition to Jesus are you relying on for salvation?