

Colossians 1:20-23

God's Friends

Introduction:

The original apostles were sent out by Jesus to preach and teach the gospel from place to place. Apostleship was a unique office because it was those who were first called out of their occupation by Jesus Himself. They were handpicked. They literally followed Jesus throughout his earthly ministry. One special characteristic of an apostle was that they witnessed the resurrection of Christ from the dead. They were given extraordinary gifts of miracles and powers that were not known to Jesus' ordinary disciples.

Perhaps the most personal relationship the apostles had with Jesus was their **friendship**. Jesus in the upper room gave them a rather lengthy discourse which is recorded only by the apostle John. Jesus said to them: **“this is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this that one lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”**

I. God's Plan of Reconciliation – v.20a.

A. The meaning of reconcile – katallazo , meaning “position change” or “to bring back” Eph. 1:7; II Cor. 5:18

1. Husband and wife relationship – I Cor. 7:10,11
2. Reconciled through the cross – v.20; 2:10

B. God's Plan

1. In Creation, to reconcile – Rom. 8:20; Isa. 11:6-9; 60:19-20
2. God will make friends with the universe – Rom. 8:21; Rev. 21:1

II. The Means of Reconciliation – v.20b.

A. Not a universal redemption

1. The meaning of “blood” always speaks of “death” Rom. 5:10
2. Beware of relics treated as “holy” (Luther)

B. Aim in Reconciliation – v.22

1. So that we might be “holy and blameless”
2. Pure virgins – II Cor. 11:2; Jude 1:24
3. Holy – hagios means separate from sin, 1:2 “saints,” Eph. 5:26,27
4. Putting on the new self – 3:10

C. Evidence of Reconciliation – v.23

1. Continuing in the faith (perseverance) Matt. 7:22-23
2. Those lacking perseverance – Jude 1:3; I John 2:19
3. Perseverance of the saints is the true hallmark of reconciliation.
4. The parable of the soils – Luke 8:13

Finally:

1. *We must not fall into the heresy of the Gnostics and apostatize from the faith.*
2. *We must confess that Jesus came into the flesh to live a righteous life and die a substitutionary death – Turn To: I John 4:1-6*