

Colossians

“A Worthy Walk”

III. Main Teaching: 1:15-4:6

1: 13-2:3 **Walking in the Work of Christ**

1:15-20 Through creation

1:18-20

“Priceless Treasures from Worthless Junk”

I. Intro.

II. Vs. 18 Christ and His Church

III. Vs. 19 The Great I AM

IV. Vs. 20 One Way

I. Intro.

The incredible description of Jesus that Paul writes of in verses 15-20 have caused some to speculate that Paul was quoting from an early Christian hymn now lost except for what we have here. What we do know is that these words describe Jesus work in creation from two views:

1. Vs. 15-17 Describe Jesus’ work **material creation**: In heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers.
2. Vs. 18-20 Describe Jesus’ work in **recreating mankind**: Here we are taken to an even more amazing work that reveals Jesus’ creative ability making people a new creation in Him, a new humanity.

I’m impressed with Jesus’ work in creating but I’m even more amazed at His ability to recreate what mankind completely ruined. There is a song I used to sing when I was a baby Christian with the chorus that said:

*Heartaches, broken pieces
 Ruined lives are why You died on Calvary
 Your touch is what I long for
 You have given life to me*

II. Vs. 18 Christ and His Church

Vs. 18 The Church is not an **organization** it is an **organism**, something that is eternally new and never before seen. Every time a person becomes a New Creation the Church adds something never before seen as that person is a one of a kind masterpiece. I'm afraid that the majesty of Jesus' re-creative work isn't always what people see when they look at the church as they are apt to say the church is a:

- a. **Religious Country Club**: A group of folks that sole existence is for the enjoyment and benefit of its members.
- b. **Religious Cult**: A collection of emotional misfits who can't wait for the first bus off the planet.
- c. **Religious Kooks**: A bunch of self-righteous, money hungry, hypocritical thugs who act like they are better than everybody else.

But that is not what Jesus looks like and it's not what His recreation of humanity is supposed to look like. If that is what folks see than the Church has made the mistake of taking up the paint and brushes themselves! The first thing Paul does is tell us what the Church ought to look like as he says, "*And He (JESUS) is the head of the body, the Church...*" This description by Paul is very helpful as it has to do with likeness and proportion.

1. **Likeness**: No matter how you try to photo shop a person's head onto an animal it just doesn't look right. So when folks look at the body they should see a likeness to the head and if they don't they will have a misconception of what Jesus the head looks like.

2. **Proportion**: Since Paul is using this human analogy it is easy to understand how the Church ought to function as humans function. The Church, (like humans) have a head on top of our bodies which is the control center for the body. It is the head that runs the body and not the body that runs the head. I think some Churches have forgotten that they have a HEAD as they either look out of proportion, having a tiny little head, or have become altogether headless. No wonder folks look at the church weird!

Whether you are looking at a local church or the Western Evangelical Church as a whole this description by Paul of Jesus' connection as head to us, His body provides a visible depiction of health. If the church (the body) is spastic, lifeless, and partially dead then we know that part of it is out of touch with its head, Jesus. When we started this letter I shared the obvious that: "*We don't go to Church we **ARE** the church, body of Christ.*" Each individual needs to be directly connected to the Head, (Jesus) and not just on Sunday's but each and every day as we expect Jesus to guide us and direct every aspect of our lives. Where that takes places daily the (*the body receiving everything from its head, Jesus*) His body the church starts impacting society on every level. Paul also in verse 18 tells two more things:

1. **Who is the beginning**: Jesus is the beginning of the Church! He is the one we get our life, power, joy, love, and truth from. Because of Jesus the Church (you and I) are part of a new humanity that God has rebirthed upon this earth. In Matthew 13:45-46 Jesus spoke about the "*Pearl of Great Price*" and a lot of folks misinterpret this parable saying that the Lord is the "*pearl of great price*" and the unbeliever is to seek Jesus out and purchase Him so that they might possess Him.

But the right interpretation is not of the sinner seeking Jesus, but rather of Jesus seeking the sinner. A pearl, starts out as an irritated oyster! A grain of sand gets under the oyster's shell. It covers the irritating grain of sand with a beautiful nacre that hardens into a lustrous and gorgeous pearl. That is how the church was born. It emerges from the wounded side of Jesus. He covers over our sin and heals it, making it into a beautiful pearl of great value.

2. ***The firstborn from the dead***: The word “firstborn” is the same word as we saw in verse 15 which dealt not chronologically but in priority. So what Paul is saying is that Jesus ALONE possesses the resurrection life and He gives this life to each person who trusts on Him. That is what John said in 1 John 5:11 where we read “*And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.*” There is a sentence added here by Paul that gives understanding to why Jesus is the sole possessor of the resurrection as he adds “*that in all things, He may have preeminence.*” You see Jesus is the creator of the old and He is the creator of the new that means that there is nothing out side of His control and that means because He has granted us resurrection power over the old life. Because of Jesus we are overcomers, overcoming our former life that continually wants to drag us back into bondage and death.

III. Vs. 19 The Great I AM

Vs. 19 Having given Jesus’ re-creative work in humanity Paul is quick to again point out the reason for His ability to work, He’s God the Son! The word “*fullness*” in the Greek means “*The sum total of all the divine power and attributes*” and Paul will use this word 8 times in this short letter to describe Jesus. The word “ *dwell*” means “*to be at home*”

permanently". Noted Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest in his word studies on this passage says, *"this fullness was not something added to His Being that was not natural to Him, but it was part of His essential Being,... it was permanently part of His constitution."*

I can't state it more plainly than what one writer said: *"If Jesus is not God, then I do not have a Savior."* It is Jesus' exclusive claim of Deity that separates Him from every other religion. If you could have asked:

- Buddha... *"Are you the Son of Brahma?"* He would have said, *"You are still under a vale of illusion."*
- Socrates... *"Are you Zeus?"* He would have, *"Laughed at you!"*
- Mohammed... *"Are you Allah?"* He would have, *"Cut your head off!"*
- Moses... *"Are you God?"* He would have said, *"No, there is one greater than Me who is God the Son."*

But when they asked Jesus He said plainly and repeatedly **I AM!** He alone is "Immanuel" God with us!

IV. Vs. 20 One Way

Vs. 20 It is because Jesus is both God and man that he alone is able to *"reconcile all things to Himself."* In verse 21 we understand what He has reconciled to Himself as we are told *"you, who once were alienated and enemies in your own mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled..."* The word *"reconcile"* in the Greek means more than just salvation it means *"To remove all impediments to peace."* That's why Paul says in verse 20 *"whether things on earth or things in heaven..."* Jesus will one day remove the hostility evil has against the rightness of God, it hasn't happened yet but it will. One day evil will forever be subdued and will be forced to cease its rebellion against the goodness of God. God will no longer allow evil, injustice and suffering at this time they are allowed by God and although it is a mystery they are serving God's ultimate plan.

Dear ones a time will soon come where every hurt and heartache will be resolved, every tear will be wiped away, every pain will be relieved and all will live in peace. Isaiah the prophet describes this time in chapter 11 where he writes *“The wolf also shall dwell the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.”* It will be a time when *“every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.”* Friend that is where all of history is headed, we having nothing to fear Jesus is coming back! What has happened that will cause history to culminate into such bliss? Jesus *“has made peace through the blood of His cross.”* It was His sacrifice on the cross that will put everything right. Out of His death on that dirty, bloody, horrible means of death, His life flowed out onto all of creation that has caused the re-creation! Saint’s the *“Good news”* just keeps getting better!