

**Colossians**  
**“A Worthy Walk”**  
**III. Main Teaching:** 1:15-4:6

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

1:21-23 Through the curse

**1:21-23**  
**“Blessed and nothing less”**

**I. Intro.**

**II. Vs. 21 The way we were**

**III. Vs. 22 The way we are**

**IV. Vs. 23a The way we stay that way**

**I. Intro.**

From verses 15-20 Paul’s focus was on Jesus as creator, first through the physical and material realm. Then Paul spoke of Jesus’ ability to recreate humanity thus His ability to create in the spiritual realm. But where does a person go to prove Jesus’ ability to recreate? In verses 21-23 Paul suggests the mirror! Pete Heron was a man who I met years ago. He had been an outlaw biker, heroin user and dealer, an ex-con from San Quentin. When I met Pete he was living in rundown bedroom of an abandoned house. Pete started coming to church and never left, with his West Virginia accent and a heart for those like himself he started a drug and alcohol ministry in the church I pastored, then he led worship. His driving record was so bad that it took 5 years for him to get a driver’s license and when he did he used the transportation to go to school and after 4 years he got his master degree in counseling. This wonderful reconciliation project of the Lord had a great line that he would use every time someone would ask him, “*Pete how are you doing?*” He would always answer no matter what was going on in his life, “*Blessed and*

*nothing less!*” Pete like the rest of us was proof of transformation and the re-creative power of Jesus Christ.

## II. Vs. 21 The way we were

Paul is speaking of the power of Christ to do three amazing things to broken people:

1. Vs. 21a **Arrested decay**: *“Once were alienated”*
2. Vs. 21b **Restored damage**: *“He has reconciled”*
3. Vs. 22b **Presented perfection**: *“To present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight.”*

I suppose looking out into fallen humanity with its rising crime rates and moral decay most would just settle for the “arrest of decay”, some may dream of restoration for the damage but I’m certain that very few would ever go so far as to believe that anything or anyone could ever take someone, who had been damaged to a place of perfection far beyond their best days. Yet that is the three fold claim of Paul with regards to Jesus! In fact Paul is making what is in practical purpose a “guarantee”. Looking at verse 23 it does come with an exemption clause to make sure that folks understand what Jesus can do is limited in a person actually being in a relationship with Christ. In other words no one can expect to see the results of Jesus’ work in their life if Jesus isn’t in their life! This process of transformation requires the Lord to take us through three stages:

1. Vs. 21-23a **Attaining a new attitude**
2. Vs. 23b-25a **Realizing the reality**
3. Vs. 26-29 **Mastering the Mystery**

Vs. 21 Notice the change in tone as Paul writes “and you” making this section personal not theoretical. At one time their attitude about God was reflected in the way they lived

their life by “*wicked works*”. Yet even in the face of bitter rebellion and hatred Jesus still went through with the work of reconciliation. He took the initiative and didn’t wait for mankind to meet Him ½ way. Griffith Thomas sees five stages of mankind that the work of Christ continues to work in: Alienation, Reconciliation, Presentation, Continuation and Evangelization and I suppose he’s right.

Paul says that we were once “*alienated*” from God. Apart from a relationship we had no use for God and we didn’t even think about Him unless it was to complain or blame Him for something that didn’t meet our expectation. We didn’t want His involvement in our lives unless it was to fix something that was broken; than once it was fixed we wanted Him back into His bottle until we needed Him again. We started each day without a thought of Him and we went about our plans living life for ourselves doing whatever we thought was best for us. There was little or no thought or thankfulness for the gift of life and His bountiful blessings that went well beyond our sustenance. As we got older we really didn’t want Him involved in our lives as He would be the unwanted guest at our party whose presence would kill our fun. That’s why Paul says in verse 21b that we were “*enemies in our mind by wicked works.*” The Greek wording of this statement is very important as it means that our alienation and estrangement from God is what caused our hostility towards Him and that caused our sinful behavior to increase.

“*Yet now He has reconciled*”, all that has changed, Paul says. We had shoved God out of our lives, broken off any knowledge of Him let alone a relationship yet He without any cause or reason forgave our estrangement and hurt and still chose to love us. It was that love demonstrated by His death upon a cross that changed our attitude towards Him. As

John said in His letter it is because of His unconditional love towards us that our attitude towards Him changed from hatred to love. No longer was God a kill joy judge he was a loving Father. Saint's don't you see that if we are going to be transformed that the first and most difficult thing to change is going to be our attitude? **Our wealth must no longer be seen in the created instead they must be seen in the Creator!** God is into transformation and there can't be any better news than that for fallen humanity.

### III. Vs. 22 The way we are

Vs. 22 The means to this reconciliation was in the body of Christ, through his death. The gulf between fallen mankind and God is impassible by man but God sent His only Son who has become the bridge by which we can come home! Yet the bridge of Christ is so effective that it not only takes us home it transforms us by presenting us as a "New Creation" whole, blameless and above reproach. I don't know about you but upon my completed transformation I'm going to really enjoy finally being "*whole, blameless and above reproach*". We were never saved to be refugees, 2<sup>nd</sup> class citizens living in a ghetto.

"*Blameless*" means "*without blemish.*" The word was applied to the temple sacrifices which had to be without blemish. It is amazing that God looks at His children and sees no blemish on them! "*Above reproach*" means "*free from accusation*" and once we have been reconciled to God, no charges can be brought against us. Dear ones as I've said before this transformation starts with our attitude but according to verse 22b it is headed to a certain goal which Paul says (*and I'm paraphrasing*) to "***present you whole, well balanced in spirit, soul and body in His sight.***" And we know according to Paul's letter

to the Philippians that “*He who had begun a good work will see to it until He completes it.*”

#### IV. Vs. 23a The way we stay that way

Vs. 23a Paul used an architectural image in this verse—a house, firmly set on the foundation. The town of Colossae was located in a region known for earthquakes, and the word translated “*moved away*” can mean “earthquake stricken.” Paul was saying, “*If you are truly saved, and built on the solid foundation, Jesus Christ, then you will continue in the faith and nothing will move you.*” **In other words, we are not saved by continuing in the faith. But by continuing in the faith we prove that we are saved.** Someone has well said, “*If your faith fizzles before you finish, it is because it was faulty from the first!*” That doesn’t mean that our faith may not wobble at times, even grow so dim that it is barely visible for long periods of time but deep down there is still signs of new life and a changed attitude. Jesus’ work in humanity isn’t limited to just a “*get out of hell free card*” it is a pass go and collect the jack pot! Jesus died that He may live in us, be available to us every moment of the day! *Jesus had to be who He is and do what He did in order that we might have what He alone has, a **VICTORIOUS LIFE!*** This is why Paul preached Jesus, Christ in you:

- The hope of glory
- Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus