

**Colossians 1:17-29<sup>1</sup>**

 **17<sup>a</sup>He is before all things,**

**1. JESUS IS BEFORE ALL THINGS.**

**John 17:24**


*“Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.*

 **17<sup>b</sup> and in Him all things hold together.**

**2. IN JESUS ALL THINGS HOLD TOGETHER.**

**Hebrews 1:3**

*Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.*

 **18He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.**

**3. JESUS IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY/CHURCH.**

**Ephesians 1:22**

*And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup> which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

**4. JESUS IS THE BEGINNING (and the end).**

**Revelations 1:8**

*“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”*

**5. JESUS IS THE FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD.**

**Revelations 1:5**

*And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.*

**6. JESUS IS THE PREEMINENT ONE (FIRST PLACE IN EVERYTHING).**

**Hebrews 1:8**

But to the Son He says:

*“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;*

*A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.*

 **19For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,**


<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, Bible verses are from the NKJV or NASB

**AMPLIFIED:** *For it has pleased [the Father] that all the divine fullness (the sum total of the divine perfection, powers, and attributes) should dwell in Him permanently.*

**7. ALL THE FULLNESS OF GOD DWELLS IN JESUS.**

*Colossians 2:9-10*

*For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; <sup>10</sup> and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.*

 <sup>20</sup>*and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.*

**8. THROUGH JESUS ALL THINGS ARE RECONCILED TO GOD.**


*2 Corinthians 5:18-19*

*Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

**9. THROUGH JESUS WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS.**

*Romans 5:1*

*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

 <sup>21</sup>*And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, <sup>22</sup>yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—(in His sight)—*

**10. Blameless:** "Unblamable" is *amōmos*, "without blemish," like an O.T. animal sacrifice free from defects, without blemish. -Wuest

**11. Beyond reproach:** "Unreprovable" is *anegklētos*, "not only free from the blemish but from the charge of it" (Vincent). -Wuest

**12. "Sight"** is *katenōpion*, made up of *Kata*, "down," *en*, "in," and *ōp*, "to look," thus "to look down in," speaking of a searching, penetrating gaze. -Wuest

<p><b>13. BEFORE:</b> You <u>were</u> alienated. You <u>were</u> hostile in your mind. You <u>were</u> engaged in evil deeds. You <u>were</u> unholy. You <u>were</u> full of blame. You were a reproach.</p>	<p><b>14. NOW:</b> You are no longer alienated, but <u>reconciled</u> to God through Christ's death. You are <u>holy</u> before Him. You are <u>blameless</u> before Him. You are <u>beyond reproach</u> before Him.</p>
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15. **Reconciliation is a core message of the gospel.** Notice that this verse says we “were” enemies, but no longer. **Why?** We have been reconciled to God.  
**Romans 5:10-15**

*For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. <sup>11</sup> And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. <sup>12</sup> Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— <sup>13</sup> (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. <sup>15</sup> But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.*

16. **Reconciliation is the message we should be preaching to all.**  
**2 Corinthians 5:17-21**

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. <sup>18</sup> Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

- a. **When we are reconciled to God, we become His righteousness. Glory to God!**


 **<sup>23</sup>if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.**

17. **THE BIG IF!** But, just what is the IF? Take a closer look!
- If you continue in the faith;** that is to say, if you continue to believe in Jesus.
  - If you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast IN THE FAITH, AND aren’t moved away from the hope of the gospel which we’ve heard. WHAT IS THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL?** The hope of the good news that we have eternal life by faith in Jesus.

*“Continue” is menō, “to persist in, adhere to, stay at or with, abide by.” The faith here is not the Christian system of doctrine, but their faith as exercised in the gospel message.-Wuest*

18. **This gospel was proclaimed in all creation under heaven.**  
 19. **Paul was made a minister of this gospel.**

**AMPLIFIED:** *[And this He will do] provided that you continue to stay with and in the faith [in Christ], well-grounded and settled and steadfast, not shifting or moving away from the hope [which rests on and is inspired by] the glad tidings (the Gospel), which you heard and which has been preached [as being designed for and offered without restrictions] to every person under heaven, and of which [Gospel] I, Paul, became a minister.*

 **24** *Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.*


20. Amazingly, Paul rejoiced in His sufferings for those to whom he ministered, Christ's body, the church.
21. What does it mean to fill up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions? Wuest explains:

*"Fill up" is antanaplēroō, "to fill up in turn." The prefixed preposition anti "signifies that the supply comes from an opposite quarter to the deficiency" (Lightfoot). Thus, the translation reads: "I fill up on my part." "The afflictions of Christ" here do not refer to His expiatory sufferings on the Cross, but to His sufferings endured in His humiliation prior to that event, sufferings for righteousness' sake, sufferings incurred through exhausting service, heart-sufferings due to the opposition of sinners, sufferings which were the result of persecution; and for two reasons, first, because the atonement was a finished work, and second, because the word for "sufferings" here, thlipsis, is never used of the vicarious sufferings of the Lord Jesus. These sufferings incurred during His earthly ministry, were necessarily curtailed by reason of His limited life on earth, and needed to be continued in His servants if the work of preaching the Word was to be carried on. Thus, all the saints down the ages are partakers of these sufferings when they are faithful to the obligation they have of preaching the Word. The word "church" is ekklēsia, from ekkaleō, "to call out of." The word was used in classical Greek of a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place. It was used among the Greeks of an assembly of the people convened at the public place of council for the purpose of deliberation. In the Christian sense, it is used of an assembly of Christians gathered for worship, and then of the entire Mystical Body of Christ, as it is here.-Wuest*


22. Why are these called Christ's suffering if it is Paul who was suffering? Andrew Wommack gives the following excellent explanation:

*All of Christ's sufferings did not end when He finished His earthly ministry. He still takes the persecution of His people personally, as can be seen by His*


*statement to Saul on the road to Damascus: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He didn't ask Paul why he was persecuting His people. He said, "Why are you persecuting Me?" When we are persecuted for righteousness' sake, it is actually Christ who is being persecuted). Therefore, Christ is still suffering persecution today when His people are persecuted and will continue to do so until the establishment of His physical kingdom. The persecutions that are still taking place today and will take place in the future are the afflictions that are yet to come, which Paul is speaking of here.-Andrew Wommack's Living Commentary.*

 ***<sup>25</sup>Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, <sup>26</sup>that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints,***

23. Paul intensely identified with Christ's Church. He believed God made him a steward of the church for their benefit.
24. His goal was to completely carry out the preaching of the word of God, which he defines as the mystery which was hidden from those in past ages and generations, but was manifested.

 ***<sup>27</sup>to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.***


25. **Willed:** "*thelō*, "to desire." Thus the translation reads, "to whom God desired to make known." Wuest
26. The mystery revealed was that Christ would live in and among the Gentiles. No one knew this was going to happen.
27. **WHAT A GLORIOUS MYSTERY.** Jesus Christ lives inside of us and among us. We don't need to pray Him down or ask Him to come. He is living **INSIDE OF US.**

 ***<sup>28</sup>We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.***

28. How do we as ministers "present every man complete in Christ? The text tells us.
  - a. We proclaim Him, just as Paul has just done.
  - b. We admonish each other to believe in Him and continue in the faith and not be moved from the hope of the gospel.
  - c. We teach with all wisdom the gospel.

*"In all wisdom" is more properly "in every wisdom," that is, "in every kind of wisdom." Lightfoot says; "The Gnostic spoke of the blind faith for the many, of the higher Gnōsis (knowledge) for the few. Paul declares that the fullest*

*wisdom is offered to all alike. The character of the teaching is as free from restriction, as are the qualifications of the recipient."-Wuest*

 ***<sup>29</sup>For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.***

**29. Paul knew what His calling was. He didn't labor in vain. He didn't labor in his own power, but in Christ's.**

***1 Corinthians 15:9-11***

*For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. <sup>10</sup> But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. <sup>11</sup> Therefore, whether it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.*