

Colossians - Christ is Enough!

Week #4: Reconciliation

May 19, 2019

The prevailing conditions of the church in the first-century are alarmingly like our own. Self-centered philosophies, pluralistic beliefs in multiple gods, a deep preoccupation with our physical bodies, and an insatiable desire for knowledge easily gain an audience who are looking for answers to life's deepest questions.

Charles Swindoll correctly writes, "anyone who digs deeply into Paul's brief but powerful letter to the Colossians soon realizes that while it addressed specific problems of first-century Christians, its relevance easily bridges twenty centuries of history."¹

That this is true reflects the fact that the human condition is not changed by advances in technology and knowledge. At the core of our lives we, too, continue to ask deep questions of meaning and relevance - questions that modern technology and knowledge are not designed to answer. And as Christians, we are convinced that these questions *are* fully answered in Jesus Christ.

In Paul's letter to the Colossians, we will learn and be reminded that Jesus has life's answers.

Study Questions: Case Studies in God's grace & love.

1. Think of a time in your life that demanded reconciling with someone - your brother or sister; your mom or dad; your spouse; perhaps a friend or neighbour; your son or daughter.
 - What did you have to give to mend the relationship? What did you have to receive?
 - How fragile were things for a time? What did you learn?
2. Read Colossians 1:19-23.
 - Paul writes that God was "*fully present in Jesus Christ*" (v.19).
 - What aspects of God's character would be hard to identify if Jesus had not come? What is it about our Lord that makes the Father so wonderful?
 - Paul also writes that God made peace with *everything* - on earth and in the heavens, too. What do you think this means?
3. Pastor Ken reminded everyone of the five aspects of God's salvation: *forgiveness, redemption, adoption, justification & reconciliation* - each of which reflect the brilliance of God's grace.
 - Which of these was most important to you when you first met Jesus and gave him your life? Which of the others become more important since? Are there any that you still struggle to understand?
 - Consider how Christ is fully sufficient to provide for each of these five aspects of salvation. Write down his sufficiency and give thanks.
4. Ken reminded us this week that we are "Living Case Studies" of God's grace & love who give witness to His power to transform a broken life.
 - What has been the greatest change in you since you met and embraced Jesus?
 - How is God transforming you right now?
 - Where is it difficult to see any transformation in yourself? What is it that is frustrating you and holding you back? a bad habit you can't break? friends that are pulling you down? hurt that you can't seem to let go of? dreams & hopes that don't seem to be getting closer? health issues? something else perhaps?
5. Paul's encourages the Colossians to persevere and hold onto what they received. Pray this week for exactly this in your life, and for all of us who call New Life our Church Community.

¹ Swindoll, Charles. Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Vol 9. 2017, Tyndale House Publishers, p. 101.