

STABILITY WINS.

Colossians 1:21-23

And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Three strikes against us...

- ▶ Your status: You were alienated from God – 1:21
And you, who once were alienated¹
- ▶ How you thought: You were enemies of God in your mind – 1:21
and hostile in mind,

Scot McKnight: “That is, Paul is not accusing them of being mentally incompetent or irrational. Rather, because for Paul this term “mind” is connected to the Hebrew concept of “heart,” this mental enmity is a deep-seated heart-driven and whole-person rejection. Thus, he saw in their past a rejection of the truth of the gospel that came to an end by the invasion of the grace of God. As Paul says in the parallel text in Ephesians, “gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and *thoughts*” (2:3) and “darkened in their *understanding*” (4:18).”²

1 Peter 4:1

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking,

Romans 1:21

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

- ▶ How you lived it out – 1:21 *doing evil deeds,*

Evil deeds...¹ Corinthians 6:9-10 *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.*

What He did...

- ▶ Reconciled us through His death – 1:21, 22a
And you...²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death,
- Reconciliation “embraces the total life situation of man.”³

Ephesians 2:16

*and might **reconcile us both** to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.*

For what purpose?

In order to present you... – 1:22

- ▶ *Holy – 1:22b*
- ▶ *Blameless – 1:22b*
- ▶ *Above reproach before Him – 1:22b*

What does this look like?

If indeed you continue in the faith...

- ▶ *Stable – 1:23*
- ▶ *Steadfast – 1:23*
- ▶ *Not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard... – 1:23*

Stability wins...

¹ “The Colossians were once continuously and persistently out of harmony with God.” O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, 66, in R. R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, vol. 32, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 230.

² Scot McKnight, *The Letter to the Colossians*, eds. N. B. Stonehouse, F. F. Bruce, G. D. Fee, & J. B. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2018), 171-172.

³ F. Büchsel, *ἀλλάσσω, ἀντάλλαγμα, ἀπ-, δι-, καταλλάσσω, καταλλαγή, ἀποκατ-, μεταλλάσσω*, eds. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 259.