

*“Equipping believers for growth and service by encountering God through his word.”*

**THE BIBLE FOR TODAY**  
**MAY 26, 2010**



# NUANCES OF LANGUAGE— IMPORTANCE TO OUR BIBLE STUDY

- “What does it mean when you say....your son is going to start a company.” In US context, we start businesses....in other lands businesses are only started when the father gives a blessing.
- Politically correct: a confusing idea— “you have freedom to speak, but then you are not permitted to speak what you think about something—it is incorrect.”

# COLOSSIANS 1:15-20: THE SEQUENCE OF THE HYMN/ REVIEW

- The Colossians can thank God for Christ who as God is creator and redeemer
- Christ is not another god (the false teaching creeping into Colossae) but supreme over all
- Christ came into his world to restore relationships with sinful humanity and establish a new people—his body, the church
- Thus, when you are in Christ, you have all you need; you are new creations and can grow into a new person within Christ's body (Romans 12:1-2)
- This new life does not hinder us with rules, but liberates us to be what we were created to be

# OUTLINE OF COLOSSIANS

Greetings (1:1-2)

The Themes (1:3-2:5)

A. Thanksgiving

B. Prayer and Meditation

C. Paul's Ministry and Reason for Writing

Appeal for Christian Maturity (2:6-4:6)

A. Continue in Christ

B. Let No One Exclude You

C. Live in Accordance with Life of Christ

Final Greetings (4:7-18)

# COLOSSIANS 1:20-24

- Colossians already experienced truth of new creation in Christ in hearing and accepting the gospel; rescued and now living in present hope
- What Christ has done in the created order applies now also to the Colossians
- Paul is a messenger of the gospel along with Epaphras

*<sup>21</sup> Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. <sup>22</sup> But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—<sup>23</sup> if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel.*

- Alienated: (*apallotrioo*) Col. 1:21, Eph. 2:12 & 4:18; “continually alienated;” alienated in both life and thought
- Minds: (*dianoia*) not just habitual wrongdoing “but the way your mind works, the process of its understanding and intellect;” thought and act corrupt each other—more corrupt the more we think and act (Rom. 1:21-32)

- Reconciled: moral aspect; *judicial concept*—acquitted of all charges; holy, pure, blameless **when** we stand firm, now, not in the future
- Physical Body (difficult passage to translate): technical terms for Paul [Sequence--1. Jesus, as Messiah, fully represents humanity by becoming flesh and taking on the consequence of sin; 2). Jesus, is fully God as well as humanity; 3). God identifies himself in Christ with humanity and humanity's sin; 4). Through the cross, sin is condemned and humanity is reconciled to God.]
- God's purpose is to create a holy people in Christ;
  - a. God did this through Christ on the cross and resurrection;
  - b. God is doing it by changing lives;
  - c. God will do it in the future at the end of the age—We can live without shame or fear, IF....

- Salvation is free, but it must be kept; abide or persevere in Christ (John 8:31, 15:4-7; Acts 14:22; Rom. 11:22; 2 John 9)
- Apply the truth to your lives continually (Rom. 5:1-5)
- Continue: not just believing something, but believe the content of it—rely on it continually
- Established/ firm: construction term/ building's foundation; the gospel is the foundation of belief

*23 This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.*

- God has reconciled the world to himself; every creature—the gospel has gone about. *Vs 6 In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—*
- Paul is a servant, one who tells what God has done. Servant (*diakonos*) “a steward who distributes” like in Acts 6

*24 Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.*

Difficult to translate--- not happy because of suffering, but the link of suffering for the sake of the gospel (Mt. 5:10-12); there are consequences at times of living morally and ethically for Christ.

Most probable:

1. Mystical union that Paul has with Christ; we suffer and experience the suffering of Christ as followers; our suffering might 'draw fire' from others who are young in Christ
2. Deficiency of Paul: he is learning in suffering, becoming like Christ; a maturing of our faith as we suffer also

## Jewish thought/ Paul's writing:

- “Messianic woes:” this is an evil age, suffering comes to God’s people as we transition from one stage of the world to the next; “foreshadowing the coming” by suffering.
- Christ is the Messiah: What is true of Christ is true of the church and his people; we are the body of the crucified Messiah.
- “Suffering shows we are God’s people;” incorporated into Christ.
- Do not seek out the suffering, but know that it comes as we are following in the path of Christ.

# THE BIBLE FOR TODAY

- In sin/ self, our thoughts and actions spiral into more self focus and deeper into sin.
- We are to herald the ‘good news’ that God has reconciled the world to himself through Christ. We are to help distribute the good news.
- We should not seek suffering, but also not run from it; it is a part of our growth in faith; being incorporated into Christ.
- Stand firm/ abide in Christ...on the foundation of the gospel.