***Reconciliation  
  
Colossians 1:15-20  
  
COL-147***

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Our subject is "Hymn in Honor of Christ," segment number 37 in Colossians 1:15-20.

**False Teacher**

The false teachers who had infiltrated the Christians in Colossae were denigrating Jesus Christ to the level of a superior creation of God. They were proclaiming the falsehood that Jesus Christ was no more than a superior angel. Christ was not viewed as the Preeminent God-Man, the source of all spiritual wisdom. The false teachers in Colossae were actually pretending that they themselves had spiritual understanding that was superior to that of the apostle Paul, and which he never gave them. False teachers in religious matters today, of course, do the same thing. They're always claiming some special insight, or some special revelation from God.

**Jesus Christ**

Well the apostle Paul attacks these false teachers by proclaiming the actual superiorities of Jesus Christ over any other rational creature. And we've been looking at that in this segment of verses in Colossians 1:15-20. Paul has thus far declared Jesus Christ to be preeminent because He possesses the essence of deity. He is God. Christ also, Paul points out, is superior to all the angels, and to all humans, because He created them. And thirdly, he has pointed out that the Lord Jesus Christ is supreme in the universe, because He is Head of the church body. And we have examined that in detail.

I hope that now you have a new sense of respect and appreciation for what it means to be part of the church, the body of Christ, and the privileges, and rights, and honors appertaining thereto, and the freedoms of the grace way of life, not the least of which (I hope you are thoroughly oriented now to the fact that the key feature of the church age) is the instruction of the Word of God. Jesus said, "I'm leaving you. I'm going to heaven. I'm departing. But I am going to send Someone who will do one magnificent thing for you. He will teach you the Word of God. He will teach you spiritual things.

Well, when Christ went to heaven, and took up His residence there, the Holy Spirit came and did that. And how does He do that? He does it through the local church – that teaching ministry. And how does He do that? He does it through the pastor-teacher – that authority. We have people who will never attend Berean Church anymore because they are not under authority. They refuse to subject themselves to the Word of God, and to the exposition of the Word of God with an authoritative explanation. They don't like that.

Years ago, I remember a woman in our church, about my first year here, who said, "The thing we don't like, Dr. Danish, in the church services is that when you speak you make us feel that that's the way it has to be." And I said, "But all I'm speaking is the Word of God. That *is* the way it has to be." People don't like to be under authority because they get their own kooky religious ideas, and they want to take off with them. And if we don't say, "Oh sure, that's all right. You have your own opinions, and we will tolerate and make room for them." That it's not the way God works. And it would be a great deceit were we to give people that impression.

Paul was making very clear to the people of Colossae that he speaks with the authority of God. He speaks with the authority of a revelation from God, and, therefore, he's telling them that those false teachers are going to lead them astray.

Now, a pastor-teacher may fail in his job. And you can always spot him, because he doesn't preach verse-by-verse through a book of the Bible. When that happens, you're going to get shortchanged. There's no way that you're going to get instruction in the Word of God from topical preaching that hops around to a different text every Sunday. And most Christians don't even know that. That never occurs them. They never make that connection. They come out feeling good, if they had a few laughs. They don't recognize how much social socializing with one another is being substituted with a walk with God.

When Paul said to the believers that we who are in Christ have the mind of Christ, he was telling us that this is what is characteristic of the church age. The Jew did not have the mind of Christ. You should join with a prayer request that I frequently utter: "Father, I have this to do. I have this day to face. I don't want to be thinking. I want Your thoughts to think for me. I want Your thoughts just to flow right through my mind."

Now that's not going to happen if you don't know doctrine. If you know the Word of God, and you have the mind of God, then you will receive the directions of God. And when you receive the directions of God, you'll have a significant life. An easy life? No. But a significant one.

**The Beginning**

The apostle Paul attacks these false teachers for proclaiming things that are false about Christ, and he does it with authority. Colossians 1:18: "He is also the Head of the body, the church. And He is the beginning." "He" is referring back to the Lord Jesus Christ at the beginning of verse 18. He is also the Head: "And He is." And the expression here in the Greek is giving a cause or a reason. So, you might translate this: "because He is." He is head of the body, the church, because of something about Him and that something is that He is the "arche" (ar-khay'), A R C H E. That word is the word for "beginning." It is a word that indicates the source from which something comes. This is because Christ is the source of something. Jesus Christ is the power which brought the church into existence. He is the Head of it because, on the basis of His death and His resurrection, He brought the church into being. He made it possible. He is the beginning of the church as Abraham is the beginning of Israel. And that's the connection between the two. Christ is the Head of the church (the beginning of the church) as Abraham is the beginning of Israel.

Then, to explain what beginning means, we have another word: "the firstborn." This word looks like this in the Greek: "prototokos" (pro-tot-ok'-os), P R O T O T O K O S. The word "prototokos." I put it up there because it is a word selected by the Holy Spirit. You are not interested in my words. You'll very seldom hear me say: "It is my opinion. I think. I believe. It seems to me." That is because you didn't come here to have my wisdom. You came here simply to have someone explain to you what the Word of God says so that you have the mind of God. This word is very important. It is a word which connotes the preeminence in a human family. This word was used to show who was number one in a human family.

This does not mean that Jesus Christ had a beginning, because He is eternal. He is the firstborn in terms of the fact of explaining how He is the beginning. It defines the basis of His headship in the church body. We could translate this as: "He is the beginning because he is the firstborn out from the dead." The Lord Jesus Christ is first from the dead ("nekros"). No human being is indifferent toward the subject of death. What this refers to is the resurrection of Jesus Christ as the first of many more who are going to follow with glorified bodies. What is a glorified body? Well, it's not only a body that is entirely functioning properly (a body in good shape), but it is a body that no longer has a sin nature. And when you don't have a sin nature, you can never die again.

Now what Paul is driving toward here, and we may not get to the key word this morning – but what he is driving toward here is the fact that God has done something that began with Jesus Christ, which is irrevocable. This is one of the great passages in the Bible that establishes that once you are in the family of God, you can never be lost again. And you should not consider that a very small statement, because most of the people that gather in churches think that, by Monday morning, they're out of the family of God.

Now, you have that kind of relatives. They're uninformed. They're spiritually ignorant because they're ignorant of doctrine. Nobody's ever teaching the Word of God. And even in a church that centers upon the Bible, very often, you'll find Christians who, in the back of their mind, are not quite sure when they get into something really sinful that maybe they're not even in the family of God, or maybe they're not in it anymore. This passage is moving us toward something that God has done that is so irrevocable that there will be no question left in your mind that when he has saved you, you'll never get unsaved. Right now, that is applied to the fact that you are assured a resurrection. Christ is not only the first to be raised from death to immortality; that is, never to die again, but he is the source of that kind of resurrection for all church-age believers.

Everything we have, folks, begins with Christ. That's why I don't appreciate groups of Christians who hold meetings and who hold activities that diminish the person of Jesus Christ as something less than He is – the second person of the Trinity, the God-Man. That will corrupt your Christian life, and that will degrade your walk with God. You may even survive as a good person, but in heaven the loss to you will be enormous. Everything we have is because of Christ. He is the beginning because with His resurrection, the church body with all of its glories became a possibility. That's why He is the Head of it. Jesus Christ has made church believers spiritually alive so that they may be given physical life forever.

Colossians 2:13 says, "And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions."

Then, in 1 Corinthians 15:20: "But now Christ has been raised from the dead (the firstfruits of those who are asleep)." We will follow in the same pattern. Everyone that you know who has ever gone into God's presence as a believer will follow in the same pattern as the resurrection of Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:23: "But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits. After that those who are Christ at His coming." That is describing the rapture, following in the pattern of the resurrection of Christ. So, positionally what I'm telling you (what the Word of God is saying) is that you now possess immortal physical life. You are physically immortal, and that is our position. You are immortal physically because you are part of the body of Christ. You did not receive that immortality by eating a wafer, as in the Catholic mass, or performing any other ritual. You received it because Christ, was the beginning of all of this for you. He's the beginning because He was raised from the dead. And His resurrection is confirmation that God the Father is satisfied with the payment for sin. That's why the resurrection is so important. Secondly, you will then follow Him. He's the first of the line of all of us who are going to follow in that kind of a resurrection body.

Now, while we have the sin nature, we have potential for death. That is always a possibility. Once we are in the Lord's presence, that will be removed. For some, it is through death, and then the sin nature is removed. For others, at the rapture, it will be removed the instant that we are caught up to meet Him in the air. Our sin nature is out. We will not only be immortal physically, but it will be impossible for us ever again to violate the character of God ever – to sin.

He is the beginning; that is, the firstborn from the dead: "So that" – purpose: "He Himself might come to have first place in everything. The word "first place" is the idea that Jesus Christ should hold the preeminence: First place in all the whole universe of angels and human beings. No one is superior to the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul says: "And you false teachers in Colossae are misguiding the people. No one is superior to Christ in God's universe. Therefore, no one should be superior to Him in your personal life." It all begins, and it all continues with Jesus Christ. It is He who is the Preeminent One. And it is very important for you not to sit here and say, "You bet. I believe that. Amen. It all begins with Him. He sustains it. My life is Christ."

What it takes now is to apply that come this week, in the decisions you have to make. With these decisions, we will say, "I'll go this way because that's good for me," or "I'll go this way because that's good for Christ." It is one thing to speak it. It is another thing to really make Him preeminent. How much? How far? "That He might come to have the first place in everything. The Lord Jesus Christ is the beginning and the end of everything in God's creation. In Revelation 1:8, He says, "I am the alpha and the omega." Those are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet: "I am the 'A' and the 'Z,' says the Lord God, 'who is; who was; and, who is to come: the Almighty." Jesus Christ is preeminent in His relationship to the origin of the church, and to the resurrection of the body of church believers. If it wasn't for Him, there would be no church. If it wasn't for Him, there'd be no resurrection. Our spiritual and our physical lives are entirely dependent on Christ from start to finish.

In Colossae, the false teachers were demoting Jesus Christ from the God-Man to a superior angel, and they were promoting themselves as supreme sources of spiritual enlightenment. Believers are to be preoccupied with Christ as the supreme source of spiritual understanding. And that comes through the Word of God. You do not look to some ecclesiastical organization, one that you may have happened to have been born into. Some of you have found how very hard it is to speak to people who have great confidence in the ecclesiastical organization in which they were born, in order to speak to them about the gospel. Just try talking to a Catholic about salvation. And you'll see the glazed eyes, and the resistance to the fact that they don't have to do more than depend on their church to get them in. If they perform the right rituals, their church will get them into heaven. And it's the exact thing that will keep them out of heaven. But will they listen? No.

I cannot believe how often people think that what I was born into is what is the truth with God. But that's what most of the world believes. That's why Jesus said that only a few people are ever going to make it into heaven, because most of them are born into false religions, and they think they have the truth. But God says, "No. Those are all wrong because they're wrong at one critical point: they do not make Christ the Preeminent One. Christ is the preeminent one of God, and nobody else can substitute for that.

Colossians 1:15, as we noted earlier: "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." He is the Preeminent One in God's new creation the church. In Colossians 1:18, as we're seeing here: "He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead." Apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, there is no access to God for life eternal.

John 14:6: "Jesus said to him, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father but through Me."

John 14:19: "After a little while, the world will behold me no more, but you will behold me. Because I live, you shall live also." There is no access to God except through Jesus Christ. But that access is spelled out by the Lord. It is based upon what He has done, and He alone has done, to cover our sins. And access to Him is through an act of faith. You will never enter heaven under any other condition.

Colossians 1:19 goes on to say, "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him:" "For:" the basis of the supremacy of the God-Man Jesus Christ: "It was the good pleasure." This word "eudokeo" (yoo-dok-eh'-o) connotes something that pleases one. The subject of the phrase is God: "It was the Father's good pleasure. It was God the Father's good pleasure for all to dwell in Him." We could say: "Because it was the good pleasure of God the Father." It expresses the sovereign pleasure of the Father: what He chooses to please Himself.

This word "good pleasure" is found several other times in the Bible. In Luke 12:32, it's "chosen gladly." In Hebrew 10:6, it's "taken no pleasure." In 1 Corinthians 1:21, it was "well-pleased." 1 Corinthians 10:5, it was "not well-pleased." In Galatians 1:15, it was "pleased." All of these verses convey the same thing – that God, in His sovereignty, decides what pleases Him and what doesn't.

**For All the Fullness**

You can't come up and make up your own rules. These things are not optional if the Bible says them. God himself has taken pleasure in what? "For all the fullness." And here's the great word that we have looked at in times past, the word "pleroma" (play'-ro-mah), P L E R O M A. This refers here to the fullness of deity. Colossians 2:9: "For in Him all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form." Paul defines for us what fullness he's speaking of. This refers to the divine essence of God the Father. It was that the Father's good pleasure should dwell in the Son. Jesus Christ is deity. He has the same essence as the Father and as the Holy Spirit. They are one because they have the same essence.

Well, have you heard what the Roman Catholics are up to. The cardinal of New York is expressing his approval, and is approaching the Pope that a fourth person should be added to the Godhead – that Mary should now be added as the co-redemptrix. She has already been added as a co-mediatrix. Now she will be the co-redemptrix. She will be viewed as the wife of the Father; the mother of the Son; and, the sister (or something) of the Holy Spirit. I forget. I have to improve my theology here. But here it is. Bingo! It came off the internet, announcing religious news. We're going to up Mary one step more.

Now, isn't it interesting that the evil ecclesiastical system of the antichrist is described in terms of a woman? And she's called a harlot. And if there ever was spiritual adultery in religious matters, it certainly is in Roman Catholicism. And here it is, that the boldness and the blindness is so great now that a huge contingent of powerful ecclesiastics in the Roman Catholic Church are now petitioning the Pope for the elevation of Mary officially to being part of the one who has redeemed us. Why? Because she was always there with the Son. She was always behind the Son: at the foot of the cross. And you can see that a ritualistic system has lost sight of the fact that it was the death of the sinless person of Christ that could substitute for us.

So, in Scripture, the fullness of deity in Jesus Christ is very important for us to understand. The liberal theologians say, "No, He was just a man." But that is not what the Word of God says. Here it is to reside in Him: to dwell in Him. This began at the point of the incarnation. That's when the deity (Christ, Who always existed) took up residence in a human body, and then became the God-Man. Thereafter, he is undiminished deity and perfect humanity in one person. This was experienced by Jesus Christ as an act of God the Father. And in the Greek grammar, it's Infinitive in the form (mood), which means that this was the purpose of the Father for His Son: that He would be incarnated as the God-Man.

The idea is that God the Father, in all His divine fullness, was pleased to take up residence in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ always was God, with the fullness of deity. But at the incarnation, His deity joined with humanity, and a new state developed in which He will exist forever now as the God-Man. So it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness of the essence of deity to dwell in the Son.

**Reconciliation**

Then Colossians 1:20, the last verse of this section: "And through Him." And here we come to the great doctrinal principle of reconciliation. "And through Him, to reconcile all things to himself:" "Through Him to reconcile." There are three different forms of the word "reconcile" in Scripture. And here it uses the most intense one of all: "apokatallasso" (ap-ok-at-al-las'-so), A P O K A T A L L A S S O. This word means "to change from one condition to another." And it is in the most intensified form that you can put it in the New Testament. And what it is telling us is that reconciliation is irreversible. This is the preposition "apo" (apo). This is the preposition "kata" (kat-ah'). The word for "reconcile" is "allasso" (al-las'-so). And when you put two prepositions before it, it tells you that this is absolutely, totally, completely done right. It is perfectly executed, and perfectly absolutely irreversible. "Apokatallasso:" the doctrine of reconciliation. What this means is to remove the sinner's enmity toward God, and to adjust him to God's standard of absolute righteousness. That's what reconciliation is: taking away the sinner's, hatred, opposition, and enmity toward God, and making him absolute righteousness – adjusting him to God's standard. The result of reconciliation is to remove all impediment to the sinner's unity and peace with God and salvation.

Let's look at the doctrine of reconciliation by going over to the book of Romans first. Romans 5:10: "For if, while we were enemies," and we were enemies of God. We hated Him in our unsaved days, and we wanted nothing to do with Him: "If, while 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." This is another form of the word for "reconciliation." This one not quite as strong as the one in our Colossian passage. This is "katallasso" (kat-al-las'-so). The first preposition "apo" is left off here: K A T A L L A S S O.

Basically the word for reconciliation is: "allasso" (al-las'-so). This means "to change" or "to transform into something else." First of all, you must learn that this applies only to people. The change is in man. He is the one that needs the change. Acts 6:14 uses this word in this form: "allasso" (al-las'-so). Let me show you what it means there. Acts 6:14: "For we have heard him say that this Nazarene (Jesus) will destroy this place, and alter the customs which Moses handed down to us." Alter – change the customs. Here the Jews are accusing Jesus of changing the laws of Moses.

Galatians 4:20 uses this word "allasso:" "But I could wish to be present with you now to change my tone, for I'm perplexed about you." Here, Paul uses the word to say, "I'd like to speak in a different way to you. I'm rebuking you. I'm having to condemn you because of your foolish legalisms, turning back to Judaic systems of living the Christian life."

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 also uses this word. It will illustrate it: "Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised, imperishable, and we shall be changed." "Be changed," in both verses, is this "allasso." We are going to be totally and completely changed. Here it applies to physical change. I'm going to be changed from a body of sin to a body of sinlessness.

One more: Hebrews 1:12 also uses this word "reconciliation:" "And as a mantle, You will roll them out. As a garment, they will also be reconciled (changed). But you are the same, and your years will not come to an end." Here it is being used of a change of garment, as it were, of what God is going to do to the heavens, and His work of creation.

So, this word "katallasso" is built upon a word which means "to make a change" in some way in a person. And the "kata" means to make an emphatic change, to change him completely. In the classical Greek, this word "katallasso" ("reconcile") was used of changing in money transactions, when you exchanged money. It was used of a mercenary soldier who had exchanged his life for money. It was used of bringing nations and individuals together who had been estranged – reconciling them.

This word describes what is done to a watch. This may be the best illustration for you to grasp this. This is the word that is what is done to a watch, when you go from daylight saving times to sun time. You change your clock to adjust it to the standard of the sun. That's called reconciling. That is reconciliation.

You may also illustrate this by what happens when you get your monthly statement from the bank for your checking account, and you match your checkbook against the bank statement. The bank statement is the standard, and if your checkbook is off, you have to reconcile your checkbook with the standard of the bank. The bank is the standard. This is the purpose of reconciliation.

Now turn to 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, "Now all these things are from God Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: namely, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself" Sinners are the ones who have to be changed. God does not need to be reconciled to us. It is we that have to be reconciled to His standard: "Not counting their trespasses against them, And He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God we're entreating through us, we beg you, on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. We are all ambassadors for Christ." That is part of our job as Christians. And what is our message? An ambassador has a message from the one he represents. Our message is: get yourself adjusted to God's standard. What is God's standard? Absolute righteousness. You must be adjusted, in the eyes of God, to absolute righteousness. Without that adjustment, you cannot go to heaven. And once this adjustment has been made, since it has all been made by God, it has not only been made perfectly and completely, but it is irreversible. You cannot undo this reconciliation.

So, this passage here in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 tells us that sinners are enemies of God. They're hostile to His authority. Sinners are incompatible with God's standard of absolute righteousness. They're out of adjustment. Sinners, therefore, are under the wrath of God. Sinners, therefore, need to make a change, so as to make them compatible with God's standard of absolute righteousness. They need to be reconciled.

**Propitiation**

Now here's where man goes astray: "Yes, I am out of sync with a holy God. I need to change. I need to get compatible to Him. How do I do that?" So, human works comes in, and religious ritual comes in. The systems of church activities come in as the basis for reconciliation, and that will never work. No matter how much you try, you'll never achieve absolute righteousness. It has to be imputed to you: a gift from God to your credit. God does not need to be reconciled to the standard of absolute righteousness, but God does need something. The change in God is propitiation. God's justice toward us has to be satisfied. And that's the other side of the picture. God has to be satisfied because His justice demands death for sin. And until the penalty of death has been paid for you, you're going to be forever suffering for it in the lake of fire. But because Christ has paid for that, God has been propitiated. Therefore, this problem has been solved.

The sinner has been changed by reconciliation, from enmity to friendship with God, and from relative righteousness to absolute righteousness. And the believer is responsible for appealing to unbelievers (this passage that we read says), that they should be reconciled to God. Christ has already reconciled the whole world. Every sinner is reconciled to God. That's objective, potential reconciliation. But subjectively, that reconciliation must now be applied, and you do that when you accept Christ as your personal Savior. Until that has been done, the reconciliation that is out there does not apply to you. It is just there potentially.

Another illustration of the concept of reconciliation is between a husband and wife. 1 Corinthians 7:11 says, "But if she does leave." It says that if you are married, and you find yourself married to an unsaved woman, and she doesn't want to stay in the marriage, so she leaves: "But if she does leave, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband, and that her husband should not send his wife away." She's going to leave her husband for some reason, and there may be good reason for leaving her husband. But she remains unmarried, or else she gets reconciled back to her husband.

The madness of no-fault divorce, out of liberal judges, that was finally instituted, has brought nothing but devastation to American society. Now the state of Louisiana has instituted a new type of legal marriage. It's called the marriage contract. And you may choose to be married under a legal contract arrangement. And what that is, is going back from a no-fault divorce condition to where there cannot be a divorce unless there is just cause that is accepted for the divorce. Now that makes it pretty tough in the state of Louisiana. You walk up to the window for a license, and you say, "We want to get married." They say, "Do you want a regular marriage license, or do you want a marriage contract license?" You say, "What's the difference?" They say, "Well, the marriage contract license means that you mean it. You're not going to be able to walk away from your marriage. It' will very difficult for you to get out of it." And if you really wanted to say the right thing, you'll say, "It's the biblical way." The Bible says that God hates divorce. And the Bible says that this is not God's way, unless you have two very specific conditions. One of them is desertion, that he's talking about here. Or the other one is persistent adultery. Otherwise you can't get divorced. And this has caused devastation and horrendous conditions for the children who've been left as the result of that kind of a brutal act. Make no mistake about it – it is a brutal act. Divorce is a brutal act.

Well here, under such a very stringent human relationship condition, you have a wife who has deserted her husband, and the Scripture says, "Here's what she can do. She does not find somebody else to get married to. That would be out of the will of God, and it would be comparable to adultery. But she is to be reconciled to her husband. This is, of course, a picture of Christ and the church. All of us, as sinners, have been untrue to God. And when we become Christians, we are as a bride who is becoming reconciled to Christ, our bridegroom. So, the efforts and the appeal of the husband to a deserting wife is: "Let's be reconciled." And this Scripture says that the wife, who is estranged, should return and be reconciled to her husband.

Romans 5:10, "For if while 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." If God, when we were His enemies, was willing to cause us to be reconciled to His absolute righteousness standard (He died for us, and He did the job for us. Now what are we going to expect once we are in His family. If He did this for us by His death, we're going to be saved by His life. We're never going to get unreconciled. Romans 5:10: "For if, while we were enemies, we were brought into a standard of absolute righteousness, in the eyes of God, through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." There is no place else you're going to go but heaven, because you cannot turn back reconciliation.

Now, in three places in the Bible, we have this absolute intensive word for "reconciliation" used. One of them is in Ephesians 2:16: "And might reconcile them both, Jews and gentiles, in one body, to God, through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity." God has brought Jew and gentiles together in one body, the church, so that the enmity between Jews and Gentiles is removed, and they have a common compatibility of oneness in Christ. "Apokatallasso" (ap-ok-at-al-las'-so) means absolutely done and absolutely totally secured.

The second place that this is used in the Bible is in Colossians 1:20, that we are reading this morning. Here, it uses this intensified word: "And through Him to reconcile ("apokatallasso") all things."

The other place is in Colossians 1:22: "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." God is not going to let you slip away. He has reconciled you. And this is the word that Paul uses, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in Colossians 1:22: "He has now absolutely, positively, irreversibly reconciled you in His body, through His death, in order to present you:" what? "Before Him, in heaven, holy, blameless, and beyond reproach." He didn't do this so that maybe you'll make it. Your relatives are ignorant. They're uneducated spiritually. They're uneducated in doctrine. And they're spiritually disoriented. And it is sad. And you're not going to change their minds. That would be very unlikely. But at least you'll understand now what it is – where they're missing the point.

There is one other thing that's important. There is another word for "reconciliation." Remember that I told you that God does not have to be changed. His justice has to be satisfied. Only man has to do the changing, not God. Therefore, here's another word for "reconciliation:" "diallasso" (dee-al-las'-so), D I A L L A S S O. This is used in the Bible, but it is never used of the doctrine of reconciliation of Christ's adjusting us to God's standard of absolute righteousness. And the reason for that is that this word for "reconciliation" is a word that means that two people who are at fault and out of line, each admit their fault, and each agree to come together, and they make a deal. That's not what God does. God is not at fault. God does not have to change. It's a one-sided operation. He does it all.

One place this word is used is Matthew 5:24. Here is a Jew bringing an offering to God, and he remembers that he has a falling-out with a brother. So, he says, "Leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way, and first be "reconciled" ("diallasso") to your brother, and then come and present your offering." And the implication is that he's wrong and you are wrong, and you're back to back against one another, and you're each going to turn and face one another, and you're going to shake hands. That kind of reconciliation is not what is involved in what Christ does for us. This word could not describe the doctrine of reconciliation, because God does not have to be reconciled to us. Therefore, this word is never used. The noun for "reconciliation" also means the same thing: a changeover, and that's used in several places.

Romans 5:10: "For if while we were enemies," and we were enemies of God: "We were reconciled," To whom? "To God." That brings us to what this is all about. What is it that we must be reconciled to? And we've been telling you that it is the standard of God's absolute righteousness. Now, how that is done, the reconciliation to that standard, we will go into tonight.

Our Heavenly Father, we want to thank You for this great doctrine. All because of You, we who are far from You, who had no possible way of ever getting close to You, to be in any way compatible with You. Yet because of Your Son, we have been made absolute righteousness. We, who were your enemies, while we were in a throes of having no concern for You, yet, You have provided for us an absolutely irreversible adjustment of us to the standard to qualify us for heaven. You have made us as good as Jesus Christ. To us has been imputed absolute righteousness. And that justification now qualifies us to be on good terms with You. We pray that You will help us to have a new sense of appreciation for the fact that our salvation is not only a gift from God, but it is a gift which can never be taken back. We thank you for that in Christ's. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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