***Mother Teresa  
  
Colossians 1:15-20  
  
COL-155***

**© Berean Memorial Church of Irving, Texas, Inc. (1995)**

This morning, we begin a new section in Colossians 1:21-23. Our subject is "Reconciliation of the Colossians," segment number one.

**Jesus Christ**

In this early Christian hymn, which we've just concluded from verse 15-20, the apostle Paul has delineated seven priorities of Jesus Christ. First, He is superior to all the angels, and all other personalities in the universe, by the fact that He is in the image of the invisible God. Secondly, He is the firstborn of all creation, which means that He has preeminence as the firstborn in the family has. Third, He is the Creator and sustainer of the heavens and the earth. Fourth, Paul points out that He is head of the body, the church. Fifth, He is the beginning (the firstborn from the dead). Sixth, He is the bearer of the fullness of deity – "very God of very God." And seventh, He is the reconciler of all things to God.

**Your Former Position**

Now the apostle Paul proceeds, in verse 21-23, to show how reconciliation was applied specifically to the Christians in the city of Colossae, in the consequent of their salvation. Verse 21: "And although you were formerly alienated, and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds." Here was a quick glance at what was the immediate past of the people who are now believers in the city of Colossae. They were in a condition of alienation from God. It's a long Greek word, and one that is significant every time it appears in the Bible. Let me show to you: "apallotrioo." "Apallotrioo" means to be estranged. It connotes a spiritual condition where one is outside of the sphere of God's blessing. Now that means outside of the sphere relative to salvation. That is a horrendous place to be. And it means outside of the sphere of God's blessing here in your daily life. That is an equally horrendous place to be.

I cannot get over the constant stream of madness that possesses Christians, and even Christians who know better. They get into physical immoralities, which are horrendous consequences to their lives. They get into marriages that are dogs marrying princes. They get into financial conditions in life that put them into such a bind that they no longer have room for God, family, or husband or wife. And you wonder: what is going on with human beings? What is going on is that the sin nature is raging. And unless Christians are able to handle the conduct that is required of them to maintain their personal temporal fellowship, and paying attention to the wisdom of the Word of God, they're going to be hurt.

Now, some people are never going to make it. Some are past the stage of life where they can develop spiritually. They are too set in their ways. And they're going to have to keep going on, and self-destruct, and just muddle on. Christians should not have to muddle through life. And Paul here says, "Before you were Christians (formerly), you are alienated from God. You are absolutely estranged from Him. This is in the Greek perfect tense. That indicates a condition that you were born into, where you are outside of any association with God, and then it continued. Perfect tense means that it starts bad, and it keeps going bad.

It's in the passive voice, grammatically, which indicates that this is done to the person at the point of his birth. Why? Well, because you're born under Adam's guilt. That's why it is terrible to be in Adam. "In Adam" is a place of death, destruction, and the loser – all the way. That's why to be in Christ is the only restoration to what God intends you to be, and to be in Christ, the hope of glory. This is a spiritual principle that Paul is referring to here. Unsaved Colossians were in a continued state of alienation from God. The grammatical construction shows that it started, and it kept right on. They were out of harmony with God's absolute righteousness. They were in that condition continuously, with no human way to get themselves back in tune with God. Now, that is the condition of the human race. And here lies the problem.

I caught a little of the interview this morning of Coach McCartney, who began the Promise Keepers. They had their big rally yesterday on the Mall in Washington, D.C. I thought he spoke very well. I wish he were better trained in Scripture, but he understood the basic principle that there is no meaning to life until Christ is in us, the hope of glory. And the interviewer tried to tiptoe around him and trip him up: "What about the Jew? He doesn't have any use for Christ. What about the Muslim? What about the Hindu?" Coach McCartney made it clear that all that he knows, and that his group sponsors, is what God says in the Bible. And before it was over, he made it very clear that there is an order of things in the Word of God. There is a way into heaven that is God's way, and there's way into heaven that is man's way. Man's way doesn't work. God's way does work.

. . . Now, Promise Keepers, I think, has a problem. It can get a great number of men. Patricia Ireland of the Now organization, the Women's Liberation Feminist Organization, asks McCartney whether they could add an eighth seventh principle – that women are equal to men. And he said, "No. That's inherent in all the other seven promises that we make to families; to God; and, to society. And if we keep those, then our relationship to women will be right." And he said, "That's the whole point of our organization."

The problem is that you've got a lot of men here who have been told to charge the hill in order to achieve an objective. They've grabbed the flag, but they don't know how to get up the hill. They don't know how to reach the summit. They don't know how to reach the objective, because there's nobody who understands (who is teaching them) the principles of doctrine, and the way the Christian life works. Right now, there's a great deal of enthusiasm. They're going to go international with it unless somebody says, "Here is the way that this is done. It is the Word of God. And the Word of God; doctrine upon doctrine; here a line; there a line; and, precept upon precept – that is the only way you become a normal human being, capable of keeping those promises. Otherwise, most of those men are going to go home from Washington, and the aura is going to blow over, and they're not going to be able to keep the promises.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, one time, in class at Dallas Seminary, told about a meeting that he had with a famous evangelist of a previous generation, Billy Sunday. He used to be a White Sox baseball player. Billy Sunday was a very energetic preacher. He would jump all around. He would smash chairs in the process of beating up on the devil. And he was a very impressive preacher. But after the meeting was over, and people were saved, as indeed they were, then what? On one occasion, Dr. Chafer was riding with Billy Sunday, and as the conversation went on, Sunday said, "What should we do? These people come and make a profession, and then they drift off." Dr. Chafer said, "What you should do, Mr. Sunday, is follow up the gospel with a system of instruction in the Word of God. Teach people. Teach these converts the doctrines of the Word of God, which are the way that they can live in the devil's world." Billy Sunday said, "That's the greatest thing I ever heard. That's exactly what we need to do." And Chafer said, "And that was the last I ever heard of it." He just never followed through.

Of course, who should be following through? The local churches. I was interested to note that McCartney was a Catholic by birth. And then he said, "I became a born-again Christian." I heard all the way from Rome the pope grind his teeth. I thought I did, when he said that. Then he said, "For 15 years, I stayed in the Catholic Church after I was a born-again Christian. And then my children were growing up in front of me. And nobody is 'feeding them on the vine.'" That's the way he put it. He meant: "on the knowledge of the Word of God, and the knowledge of spiritual things." They were getting ritual, but they were not getting truth.

He said, "So, I joined up with a church that was more instructive for my children." He didn't say where, but it was clearly a statement that Catholicism didn't carry the ball with him in the first place. Had he not found the gospel with whoever and however he did it, and died as a Catholic, he'd have gone straight into Hades. Instead, somebody came along and bypassed the system with the gospel, and he was saved. And then he hung in there, not realizing the difference. And he finally realized that there is no salvation in Catholicism. And he got himself and his family under the protective custody of the Word of God. To be alienated from God is a terrible thing. Not to have anybody to explain to you how to get out of that alienation is even worse. These people are, because of their alienation, hostile toward God.

**Hostility toward God**

The word "hostile" in the Greek looks like this: "echthros." And this word means "enemy." Because you have a natural alienation from God, He's your enemy. You don't like Him. You hate Him. He's an irritant. And for many Christians who have negative volition toward God, He is an irritant. They don't want to say, "I hate God," but they'll hear something in church, and, boy, they'll just cringe within themselves. They'll start gnashing their teeth inwardly: "I don't like to hear that. That's not what I think. That's not what I always believed." What are they saying? They're saying, "Well, it's in Scripture, but I don't want to hear it. I don't like people quoting God when it makes me uncomfortable." Now, what the purpose of that is, I've never been able to figure out.

However, as enemies of God, as these Colossians once were in their unsaved days, they were, in fact, friends of Satan. And they were, in fact, friends of Satan's world system of lifestyle. Please remember that the world we live in is under the authority of the devil. Please remember that every institution of our society is under the authority of Satan and his demonic hosts. Satan has organized everything in our society so that we call it the world system. "The Cosmos Diabolicus" is the Latin – the world of Satan. And it is hard for our children to realize that some of those nice friends they have, and some of these cultured adults – these are "Cosmos Diabolicus" people. They are of Satan's world system.

I heard a scholar from Harvard this week on Pat Robertson's 700 Club. I usually listen to the news there. And he had a man who I think was Jewish, but I can't say for sure. But he has written a book about "the Bible Code." And, lo and behold, he was talking about what we talked about – the encoded messages in Scripture that we talked about at Training Union this last week. And he has written a book on it: the encoded messages. But he said, "I don't believe in God." And Robertson says, "You've just shown us these codes. This could not have been accidental. It could not be by chance. This could not have come about any other way, and these are really there – this system of equal-space distance of letters, they do spell out messages relative to the surface message." He says, "Oh, no. Yes, this could not have happened by chance. This was designed by an intelligence. There is something that designed this." And he said, "But you don't believe in God?" He said, "No, I don't believe in God."

Well, Robertson was about ready to have a catatonic fit. The guy just said this could not happen by chance. It's all over hundreds of places in the Scripture. It's a most amazing hand of God (signature of God), demonstrating that God really did write this book, and man could not have done it in this way. But he said, "I don't believe in God." What's his trouble? He's alienated from God. He goes to Harvard, but he's a stupid intellectual. He's an ignorant intellectual. And because he is alienated from God (he is hostile to God), he is God's enemy. James 4:4: "You adulteresses (speaking here spiritually), do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." But how hard it is for Christians to say, "I don't want to be part of the world system. I don't want to be helping its institution. I don't want to be carrying on in its lifestyle. All I want to do is tell you the gospel. And I want to point you to a place where you can learn doctrinal instruction, so that you can develop into the human being that God intended you to be.

It grieves me to think that Christians cannot get through their heads that, if their friends of the world, they're God's enemies. And the devil is going to make them fools, and they're going to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ and say, "Why did I do this? I spent all my life in these things of the world (in the world system). I was humping out there. Sometimes I was even very famous. Everybody looked up to me. Everybody had a great respect toward me in the community. And what am I doing? I'm doing what all these dead unsaved people could do just as well. But what I'm not doing is the work of God for which I've been gifted, and to which I've been called."

Why would a Christian do that? Well, it's because the love of the world so overwhelms us, and the desire for its esteem may be, that we forget what it is to be a friend of God. It was no small thing for Abraham to be called a friend of God. Why was he called a friend of God? Because he didn't care a Fig Newton about Satan's world system – his "Cosmos Diabolicus:" his whole system of life that surrounded Abraham. Unfortunately, his nephew Lot didn't share that view. His nephew Lot went right for the world system. When he had to separate from Abraham, Lot said, "Well, I'll take this choice area here." Abraham said, "Do you really want to do that? You know, that's right out there by the proximity of Sodom and Gomorrah. I mean, you've got a family, Lot. Are you really sure you want that sector? I've got plenty of land everywhere as far as you can see, and good stuff." Lot said, "No, I want that." And sure enough, Lot gets it, and gets there. And before you know it, all the homosexuals had their arm around Lot. He's one of them. He's one of their judges even. He sits in the gate. Man, what esteem! And he's up to his eyeballs in "Cosmos Diabolicus."

Well, the result is one of the great enemies of Israel today descended from the Moabites and Edomites: two children sired by Lot through his daughters in a drunken stupor after Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, and there was nothing left of all the lifestyle that he had immersed himself into during the days of his high living in the world system.

To be alienated from God is a terrible thing, but that's a normative position of the unsaved. But for a Christian to live as the enemy of God, because you're so immersed into the world system? It was while all of us were helplessly in this system, as indeed in the case of the Colossians, that God came in and said, "I'm going to take you out of this. You can't get yourself out of this filthy system. You cannot get yourself out of society and entanglements in it. But I'm going to take you out of it, and you'll be My friend."

Romans 5:10 teaches us that: "For if, while we were enemies (alienated), we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Now God said, "I have reconciled you to My standard of absolute righteousness. You are now a person of the standard of absolute integrity. Why do you still want to mess around in the world? Why do you still want to be a system of the world? You're a missionary. Every heart with Christ, a missionary; every heart without Christ, a mission field. That's our life. That's i, from start to finish. That's it. If you are not sounding it off, who will?

Jack Smith recently told me: "If I were down there at Berean Church, I'd know what my mission is. I'm not inside the world. I'm not part of the world. I'm here to sound off to the world – to warn it. I'm a Noah. I'm a John the Baptist. And I'm letting people know what's coming. If I were down at Berean Church, I'd be walking in, week in and week out, with these people that I have saved from Satan's system. It wouldn't be long before you'd have to be using Texas Stadium for the church services of Berean Memorial Church." He said, "I'd consider that my duty as a member of your church. It is not your duty as pastor. It is my duty to fill the place. It is your duty to give us the information with which we can do that.

Well, why do we not do that? Because our minds are so immersed in the world system, we don't really think about God that way. And we don't think about our lives that way. We have to scrape and beg and plead to get someone to have a heart for a group of little girls, so they can have a club.

Specifically, verse 21 says, "We're alienated and hostile in mind." It is the problem of the mentality. This word "mind" is a different one from what's used by "heart" ("nous"). This is another word: "dianoia." "Dianoia" means what you use to think things through. Why are you a fool? Because you don't think things through God's way. Why do you marry a dog? Because you don't think things through God's way. Why do you use your body in sexual immorality, and thereby worship Satan? Because you don't have the capacity to think things through God's way. You're an enemy of God. So, you think like an enemy of God.

"Dianoia" refers to the capacity to think things through. And these people, because they are hostile in their minds, and in their capacity to think things through, their decisions of the mind are going to determine their overt external actions. The result is that they're engaged in evil deeds. The consequences of the natural unsaved mind, devoid of the ability to think things through from a divine viewpoint frame of reference, is described for us in Romans 1:18-32 in a most sobering manner. Paul writes this book of Romans in order to explain how to get to heaven – the principle of justification. And right off the bat, he says, "Here's the trouble. Some of you are going to come up and say, 'Well, I'm smart. I'm intelligent. I know how to quote scholars. I know this and I know that.'" But Paul says, "No, here's the problem."

Romans 1:18-32: Let's read it: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. You sit on divine viewpoint, either through ignorance of knowing doctrine, or through your negative volition to it, because that which is known about God is evident within them. For God made it evident to them. Within yourself, there's a God-consciousness by the very surrounding of creation. For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse." Only a fool can say, "Evolution made all this."

God says, "No, you know darn well, down in the depths of your heart that this is not true. You know that I'm out here, and that I made it. But because you're mentally My enemy, you will not obey and submit to My authority." So, what happens?

**Professing themselves to be Wise, they became Fools**

"For even though they knew God (originally, they had all the information), they did not honor him as God, or give things, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools." How many people are there who are no longer at Berean Church because they had a better insight spiritually? And now we look at them, and they're fouled up human beings – arrogant, and living high on the hog with all of their money, and surrounded in a church context where everybody is mutually patting each other on the back, and praising each other. And they're just as poverty driven spiritually and doctrinally as they could be. And they're having a great time now. And they better enjoy it, because it's going to be a big revelation at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Why? Because they were in the world, and they loved it: "And they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed animals, and crawling creatures – idolatry." Therefore, God said, "OK, if that's what you want:" "God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them." Isn't that interesting? You worship God with your body. God says, "Fine, if you don't want to worship Me, then I'm going to turn you over to worship Satan." How? With your bodies. "I'm going to turn you over to the worship of Satan with your body."

For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator Who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason, God gave them over to degrading persons." Here's what they did with their bodies then: "For their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural. And in the same way also, men abandoned their natural function of the woman, and burned in their desire toward one another: men with men, committing indecent acts, and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error."

I was pleased to notice that Coach McCartney came right down, loud and clear, when the interrogator said, "Well, what about all the homosexuals? They're not part of your movement." And he said, "No, homosexuality is a sin. We welcome them as they correct that, and they become members, with Christ in them, the hope of glory (the term he used)." But he said, "The act of homosexuality is condemned in Scripture as sin. And we cannot condone it, and say that it is not sin. And it must be corrected." So, he said without compromise a thing that just will reverberate everywhere. People are going to pick that up, and the liberals are going to go as frothing at the mouth as they can, because that kind of talk will hinder the advancement toward the antichrist's world. And that's everything that Satan is doing in American society day. I cannot give you the information.

One of our ladies gave me another thing this morning. I can't get it out to you without overwhelming you of how rapidly even the United Nations now is taking over our country. Do you know that if you go into one of the most sacred, hallowed places of our national heritage, Independence Hall, that the first thing you see will be a plaque on the wall that this hall now belongs to The United Nations as a natural World Heritage site? Now, who told them that they could take over our Independence Hall as a United Nations World Heritage site? It came from up in the executive branch. They said, "Yeah, you can have it." Yellowstone Park is under their authority, as is Yosemite and t Grand Canyon. These are now natural heritage of the world under the United Nations.

We Christians are sitting around, wondering how long we're going to be able to keep going in our trivialized lifestyle when God's work is crying out to be done. We have a room full of tapes that could revolutionize lives, but there's no money to have the time to do the work.

"Receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error." Today, we call it AIDS: "And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind to do those things which are not proper; being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful. And although they knew the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them."

All you have to do is watch one of these entertainment programs on televisions – these situation comedies, and you will see how much there is hearty approval being given to sins of all kinds, especially homosexuality and lesbianism. They're doing exactly this. And this is the world that ended up being destroyed by the flood. This is the world which now you're living in, that's going to be destroyed by the plagues that God will send in the tribulation world. That's going to shred all of nature – engaged in evil, that which is against the righteousness of God, deeds that are the expressions of the sin nature. And remember that evil has two forms. It has the form of human good. It has the form of sins. It goes both ways. That's what evil is.

So, there are people in our world who are well-known for their human good works. These are not coming from the Spirit of God, but they are coming from the sin nature. And when it comes from the sin nature, it's evil. Everything from the sin nature is evil. We have sins. Christ dealt with those by bearing them at the cross. And we have human good works which God rejects. They're condemned at the cross. Some people are good at producing sins. That's their temperament. Some are producing human good. There is the area of weakness in the sin nature that goes for sins. And there in the area of strength where human good is produced, but it all comes from this vile source, and no good; no merit; and, nothing from the sin nature can be accepted. That's why man, on his own, cannot find God, or ever enter heaven.

The natural alienation from God or the unsaved results in ungodly conduct and evil deeds. False doctrine in the mind about God's way of salvation, and about getting to spiritual maturity – if you have false doctrine on that, it always expresses itself in evil deeds and human good. Every system of false doctrine of salvation is a system of indulging evil or indulging human good. Every human system of salvation goes either way. The Gnostics said, "The only way to stop the evil of the body (they considered the body an evil thing by nature) is to do every wrong thing: indulge it to the limit until the body exhausts itself of its evil."

On the other hand, you have people who spend their lives in doing human good. Unbelievers sincerely think that their sin nature good works are acceptable to God for personal salvation. But God says that they are evil works. You worship Satan through the use of your body with these evil works that you perform.

Now, there is a great blindness upon the lost. The unsaved Colossians found reconciliation with God impossible by the sin nature efforts. They did not even have the motivation to seek reconciliation from God. God Himself exercised mercy to take the initiative to save these Colossians. And Paul says, "That's how it once was with you, as enemies of God. Now you have come to where you have been reconciled. You no longer have to be alienated and hostile to God. You no longer have to produce evil works." The resulting grace reconciliation was the only ground upon which they could change. And now they should have great gratitude and praise to God for that. That's what we're going to talk about at the Lord's Supper tonight – this reconciliation that has changed us in a way that nothing else could. And remembering how helpless we were to save ourselves by human works makes our grace reconciliation all the more magnificent to contemplate.

From the lake of fire to heaven is a gift from God. That's what has happened. And what God has done, nothing can add to it, and nothing can detract from it. Nothing can be added to make our reconciliation more perfect or more permanent. Christ has done it all for us. And if we try to add to this salvation provision, we will ruin it all, and we'll be lost in the lake of fire.

**Mother Teresa**

So, I have to mention Mother Teresa, the Roman Catholic nun, who is being lauded now by all the world for her works of mercy. She did indeed do an enormous amount of good in relieving human suffering in India. Her services of good works, however, was performed to earn merit with God for her personal reconciliation. She was asked if she ever tried to convert the people that she was ministering to. She said, "Yes, I do it all the time. If you are a Muslim, I try to convert you to be a better Muslim. If you are a Hindu, I try to convert you to be a better Hindu. If you are a Protestant, I try to convert you to be a better Protestant." And we must assume that if you were Catholic, she would try to convert you to be a better Catholic; and if you were a Buddhist, she would try to convert you to be a better Buddhist; or, whatever. She then added, "Whatever road you choose to God, I encourage you to do it with full devotion. I want to convert you to do it with full devotion." Whatever road – now, what does that mean? That means that we have a mountain, and the top is reached by several roads: Hinduism; Buddhism; Islam; liberal Protestantism; Roman Catholicism; and, the religions of these. And the implication is that they're all going to the same place, and they're all going to end up with God in heaven.

So, now that tells us a great deal about Mother Teresa, right off the bat: of what she thinks about how to get to heaven, and what she was depending upon to get there. It makes clear that she was confusing the broad road of human good works; religious rituals; and, self-denial, with the narrow road that leads to eternal life. Therefore, I would be remiss not to remind you of a few Scriptures while you are bombarded with the lauding of this woman now for sainthood. Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter by the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it."

Matthew 7:21-23: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father, Who is in heaven." What is the will of His Father? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and You shall be saved." That's will number one: "Many will say to me that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practiced lawlessness. These were lawless things that you were doing.'"

Matthew 7:24-27: "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house upon the rock. And the rain came, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against the house, and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house. And it fell, and great was its fall." The wind; the rain; and, the destruction: that's the judgment of God. And anybody who builds his salvation on that human good work structure, which is evil because it's from the sin nature, is going to be a great disappointment. That house of cards will come down.

John 14:6 makes it clear. Jesus, in His statement there, makes it clear that He, and He alone, is the only way to the Father: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father but through Me.

Acts 16:31 says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." Some say, "Yes, I do believe our Lord Jesus Christ, but I do need to suffer with my own works. There is temporal suffering as well as the provision of the suffering of Christ." Oh, yeah?

Romans 4:4-5 says, "Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as that what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him Who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness. You can work with your human good till your eyeballs drop out with exhaustion, and you have not gained one iota of merit with God – not one bit of merit that'll take you into heaven.

Romans 11:6 nails that down: "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works. Otherwise, grace is no longer grace." They're mutually exclusive.

Now, the pope has made a declaration. Everybody wants Mother Teresa to be declared a saint. It takes five years of examination and of the procedures of the Magisterium of the Roman Church (the cardinal hierarchy), to determine that this person qualifies for sainthood. The pope said he would not shorten the normal five-year period following Mother Teresa's death to establish her sainthood. Most Christians who have heard that do not realize the significance of that statement: "I will not shorten the five-year period." I hope you have some inkling of what the pope actually said.

**Purgatory**

First of all, the fact that the process is under way for Mother Teresa to be declared a saint indicates that she is considered a likely candidate for sainthood. Why? Because of her life of good works. Now, if she is considered for sainthood, then this means, unlike most Roman Catholics, Mother Teresa bypassed purgatory. Every Catholic who dies only hopes to go to purgatory, because his moral guilt has been paid by Christ, and he says, "Christ is my Savior. He paid for my sins, yet that will not get me into heaven. For I must add my works to pay for my sins here on this earth. I must do my own penance, and I must suffer for my sins" – temporal suffering over against Christ's suffering on the cross.

**Super Arrogation**

Now, we just read that you can't have works and grace mixed for salvation. But if she is considered for sainthood, she has gone directly to heaven. Most Roman Catholics have to go to purgatory because they do not qualify with enough works to pay for their sins, and their temporal punishment has not been fulfilled. So, this means that Mother Teresa had good words in excess of her need to qualify for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to gain entrance into heaven. She had more than she needed in temporal works to get into heaven. A saint in the Roman Catholic Church is one that has excessive earned merit beyond that person's personal need for salvation. This is called, in Roman Catholicism: "works of super arrogation."

Every time you invent a doctrine of nonsense, you give a big word to it (a long-word name): "works of super arrogation." This is an important word. This word means "more than enough for the need." So, she has huge, excessive amounts of merit (in all her years of working in India) to cover temporal punishment. This was not for her moral guild. Christ paid for that. But her temporal punishment is what she has to pay for. Unless you separate those two, the Roman Catholics will confuse you in their speech, because they'll seem to agree with you.

**The Treasury of Grace**

Now, what happens to these works of super arrogation? These works of excessive grace that she has earned go into the treasury of grace? And who has the key? Mr. Pope himself? The pope has the key to the treasury of grace. In this treasury of grace, there is all the grace of Jesus Christ; the excessive grace of the virgin Mary; and, the excessive grace of all the saints. And now to it will be added the grace that belongs to Mother Teresa.

**Indulgences**

How does the pope dispense this grace to people so that they may benefit by merit that others have earned? By the act of indulgences. This is where the indulgences came in which brought on the Protestant Reformation. It came to a head in the 16th century: "You may release your mother or your father from the punishment, if purgatory paid for their temporal punishment (their penance), by buying their indulgence." And thereby, the pope will put to their account (to whoever you say), from his treasury of grace, which is unending, to make it easy for those people to get out of purgatory. Special Masses; special prayers; and special works went all to their credit.

**Indulgentiarum Doctrina**

Now, this indulgence from the pope's treasury of grace was established by the Council of Trent, which followed the Protestant Reformation, to settle what Roman Catholicism now believes. And at the heart of it was indulgences. You have to pay, in purgatory, your sins to match to the payment of Christ. And this was revised to update it, to make it solid and clear, on July 1st, 1967 in the Apostolic Constitution – the revision on indulgences, under the Latin title "Indulgentiarum Doctrina." Next time, I'm going to quote to you from the "Indulgentiarum Doctrina" exactly what they're going to do with Mother Teresa and her excessive grace.

**Hades**

Now, what Mother Teresa was saying was that: "You're all going up to God in various routes. Whichever way you take, be very serious about it. Hello, brothers, we're all going to end up at the same place." Was Mother Teresa right – that she and all of the other people following other roads ended up in the same place? I'm afraid so. But the place of their meeting was Hades – not purgatory. And the place of their ultimate rally will be in the lake of fire. You'll find this very interesting. Unless you know the background of what Roman Catholicism is doing, you won't understand all of these laudatory news reports, and all that is going on about the sainthood of Mother Teresa. But when you understand what is involved with the treasury of grace and the indulgence system, and match that against Scripture, you will recoil in horror.

Now, that's what's out in the world. Do you want to be a friend of the world? The world cannot get enough of Mother Teresa, and cannot rush fast enough to exalt her to sainthood. That's a system you want to be part of? Have a good time.

Father, we pray that You will help us indeed to find that we are willing to let the thinking of God simply overcome and take over our mental processes. We don't want to think sin nature. We want, Father, to have the Spirit of God thinking the thoughts of God, through the mentality of our souls. We want to walk with You, and we want to act upon You. We're sick and tired of being shriveled up little peanuts when we should be magnificent servants, and conquerors for the Great and Mighty God Who is our Father. We ask You, Father, to remind us that greater is He, Your word tells us, that is in us (the Spirit of God) than he that is in the world (the spirit of Satan). Why in the world are we pursuing the spirit of this world when we should be pursuing the spirit that is within us: Christ, the hope of glory; God the Holy Spirit; and, the power of omnipotence? We thank You for this time in Your Word. In Christ's name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

[**Back to the Colossians index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/colossians.htm)

[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)