

Colossians – Week 4 – The Peacemaker – Bible Study Helps

Sermon Summary: This sermon explores the supremacy of Jesus Christ as the head of the church and His role as the ultimate peacemaker who reconciles humanity to God. It emphasizes Christ's divinity, His sacrificial death on the cross, and the profound transformation believers experience through reconciliation with God. The message underscores the importance of recognizing our former state as enemies of God and the miraculous change brought about by Christ's redemptive work.

Key Points:

- Jesus Christ is the head of the body, the church, directing and sustaining it
- Christ's supremacy and fullness as God incarnate
- The reconciliation of humanity to God through Christ's death on the cross
- Our transformation from enemies of God to holy and blameless in His sight
- The importance of continuing in faith as evidence of genuine salvation
- The call to share the gospel and the hope of reconciliation with others

Scripture Reference:

- Colossians 1:18-23

Stories:

- The pastor shares a personal anecdote about his initial rejection of the gospel and subsequent conversion
- A brief mention of Jonathan Edwards' sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" and its impact
- An illustration of a car accident involving the pastor's son Levi to emphasize life's fragility

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Discipleship and Small Group Guide: Jesus Christ - The Head and Peacemaker

Opening Prayer

Key Takeaways:

1. Jesus Christ is the head of the church, directing and sustaining it.
2. Christ alone accomplished full reconciliation between God and man through His death on the cross.
3. We were once alienated from God, but now are reconciled through Christ's sacrifice.

Discussion Questions:

1. The sermon emphasizes Jesus as the "head" of the church. How does this metaphor help you understand your relationship with Christ and His role in your life?
2. Reflect on the concept of Jesus as the peacemaker. How does His reconciliation work impact your daily life and relationship with God?
3. The sermon mentions our past condition as "alienated, enemies, wicked" and our present condition as "reconciled." How does this transformation affect your self-perception and actions?
4. Discuss the statement: "Jesus Christ's goal is not just to forgive sins, but to transform sinners into saints." What does this mean to you personally?
5. How does the idea that God initiated reconciliation with us (while we were still His enemies) impact your understanding of His love and grace?
6. The sermon touches on the assurance of salvation. How do you balance the confidence of eternal security with the call to "examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith"?

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Practical Applications:

1. This week, intentionally reflect on areas where you might not be fully submitting to Christ as the "head" of your life. Choose one area to work on.
2. Write a letter of gratitude to God, thanking Him for His reconciliation work in your life. Be specific about how this has changed you.
3. Identify someone in your life with whom you need reconciliation. Pray for guidance and take a step towards making peace this week.
4. Spend time meditating on Colossians 1:21-22. Consider memorizing these verses.
5. Look for an opportunity to share the message of reconciliation with someone who doesn't know Christ.

Closing Prayer

Encourage group members to continue reflecting on the sermon throughout the week and to support one another in applying its teachings.

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Discipleship Questions

How does understanding Jesus as the 'head of the body' (the church) impact our daily lives and decision-making as Christians?

In what ways might we unintentionally elevate other things or people to a position of 'preeminence' in our lives instead of Christ?

How does the concept of Jesus as the 'peacemaker' through His blood challenge or comfort you in your personal relationship with God?

Reflecting on the description of our former state as 'alienated and enemies' of God, how does this deepen your appreciation for Christ's reconciling work?

How might viewing ourselves as 'holy, unblameable, and unprovable' in God's sight (through Christ) change our self-perception and behavior?

In what ways can we actively participate in God's reconciling work in the world around us?

How does the idea that Jesus contains 'all fullness' of God challenge popular cultural or personal views about who Jesus is?

Considering the passage's emphasis on Christ's supremacy, how might this shape our approach to evangelism and sharing our faith?

How does the concept of being 'reconciled to God' inform our understanding of salvation and our ongoing spiritual growth?

In light of verse 23's call to 'continue in the faith,' how can believers cultivate spiritual steadfastness in a world full of distractions and challenges?

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A 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide

Day 1: The Supremacy of Christ

Reading: Colossians 1:15-20

Devotional: As we begin this journey, let's reflect on the supremacy of Christ. Paul paints a magnificent picture of Jesus as the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, and the one in whom all things hold together. Today, consider how this exalted view of Christ impacts your daily life. How does knowing that Jesus is supreme over all things change your perspective on your challenges, relationships, and purpose? Take time to praise Him for His majesty and allow this truth to anchor your soul in times of uncertainty.

Day 2: Reconciliation Through Christ

Reading: Colossians 1:21-23, Romans 5:6-11

Devotional: Yesterday we focused on Christ's supremacy; today we explore the miracle of reconciliation. Once alienated and enemies of God, we have been reconciled through Christ's sacrifice. Reflect on your own journey from estrangement to reconciliation. How has God's peace transformed your life? Consider areas where you still struggle to fully embrace this reconciliation. Ask God to deepen your understanding of His forgiveness and to help you live as one truly reconciled to Him.

Day 3: The Mystery of Christ in You

Reading: Colossians 1:24-27, Ephesians 3:14-19

Devotional: Paul speaks of a profound mystery: "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This indwelling presence of Christ is the source of our transformation and hope. Today, meditate on what it means to have Christ living in you. How does this reality change how you face temptations, make decisions, or interact with others? Pray for a greater awareness of Christ's presence in your daily life and for the courage to let His life shine through you.

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Day 4: Growing in Christ

Reading: Colossians 2:6-7, Ephesians 4:11-16

Devotional: Having received Christ Jesus as Lord, we are called to continue to live in Him, being rooted and built up in faith. Reflect on your spiritual journey. What practices or experiences have most helped you grow in Christ? Are there areas where you feel stagnant or uprooted? Ask God to show you specific ways you can deepen your roots in Him and strengthen your faith. Consider one practical step you can take today to nurture your spiritual growth.

Day 5: Living as New Creations

Reading: Colossians 3:1-17, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Devotional: As we conclude our study, we focus on the practical implications of our new life in Christ. Paul urges us to set our hearts and minds on things above and to put on the new self. Examine your life in light of this passage. What fleshly and carnal part of you do you need to put to death? What Christ-like qualities do you need to "put on"? Remember, you are God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved. Let this identity shape your actions and attitudes today. Pray for the Holy Spirit's power to live out your new nature in Christ.