

It's all about Jesus: The Great Transfer

Introduction

The key words faith, hope, and heard are repeated from the opening verses (1:4-6). These verses also repeat the theme that redemption comes through Jesus Christ.

Especially important is the way these verses pick up the theme of a “transfer” from one spiritual realm to another from vv. 12-14.

The bare bones of the sentence: you... he reconciled... to present you... if you continue... (Moo).

Once you were an Enemy (1:21)

- **The Holy Bible more than any other book describes the helpless state of our lives apart of Jesus Christ.**
 - Man...does not do evil against his will, under pressure, as though he were taken by the scruff of the neck and dragged into it, like a thief...being dragged off against his will to punishment; but he does it spontaneously and voluntarily. –Martin Luther
- **So we begin where the Word of God begins... that we are sinners and in need of the Gospel.** But how much and how deep is our sin?
 - The Bible calls us aliens.
 - You see a life of sin = a life separated from life with God. A life of sin = no life at all.
- **The world alienated implies isolation, loneliness, and a deep sense of not belonging.**
 - Maybe this morning you are experiencing these emotions: isolation, loneliness, and no sense of belonging. This is a clear indication of your need for Jesus Christ!
 - In the original, “alienated” was an unusually powerful word that indicated a persistent a permanent condition.
- **Not only does our sin break our relationships with God it makes us a hostile enemy of Jesus**
 - The verbal tense of hostile is active. So to actively sin = active hostility to God.
 - You see without a Savior, you will eternally remain an enemy of God and hostile to the Cross of Jesus Christ.
 - We have a strange illusion that mere time cancels sin. But mere time does nothing either to the fact or to the guilt of a sin. CS Lewis

- **But God's purpose rises from mankind's miserable condition.**
 - While Colossians paint the darkest possibilities for man apart from Christ, they also gives us the highest, noblest, vision of man known to any religious conception anywhere!
- **Once I was an enemy... BUT... I am offered restoration**

Now you have reconciliation (1:22)

- Paul the writer of Colossians loves to highlight the glorious new status that believers enjoy by contrasting it with our former life of sinfulness and condemnation. Once → Now
- **Reconciliation**
 - The word means to reestablish proper relations after these have been disrupted or broken.
 - In some languages, however, reconciliation is often spoken of in idiomatic terms, for example, 'to cause to become friends again,' 'to cause to snap fingers again' (a symbol of friendly interpersonal relations in many parts of Africa), 'to cause to be one again,' or 'to take away the separation.'
 - **You see you and I broke the relationships but God offers to mend it, to restore it, to forgive and bring you back as a child, a son, a daughter**
 - Against the dark foil of the past ehre arises a present that is all the more gleaming
 - Wouldn't you rather be a son than an adversary, a daughter vs a combatant?
- Reconciliation is only found in the body of His flesh **through death**
 - You see reconciliation costs a heavy price. The life of one who was sinless to restore a relationship with the one who is sinful.
 - Here is the glorious truth. Jesus died as an enemy of God that me an enemy might be called friend.
- **But this is not all... Jesus alone presents us as holy, blameless and above reproach**
 - The purpose of God's reconciling work is that believers might be presented as holy.
 - Blameless—comes from the world of sacrifice.
 - Animals offered to God had to be without blemish. Caird reminds us that "when a man offered an animal in sacrifice, **he laid his hand on** it in order to identify himself with his offering and to express his aspirations to be himself holy and unblemished (NIV).
- **Once you were an enemy... Now we have hope, relationship, and restoration in Jesus Christ.**

Continue in the faith (1:23)

- Our reconciliation to God is permanent and eternal. Because Christ accomplished it for us, there is no possibility it can ever be undone.
 - Though we continue, even as believers, to do those things that in themselves deserve God's displeasure, we can never revert to a state of divine alienation. For the sake of Christ, God will always accept us. — Jerry Bridges

- **Continue!!**
 - If we have been reconciled we are not challenged, no we are bound never to take our new status for granted, nonchalant about our responsibilities or be fooled into thinking that other avenues to God exist.
 - Christ alone offers the solution to human alienation in the world.
 - Faith here does not refer to the act of believing but to what is believed: Jesus Christ as the way truth and life
- **How do we continue?**
 - Grounded, steadfast not shifted → have their background in the world of building.
 - Grounded = refers to laying the foundation of a building and its form highlights the need for believers constantly to live in a state of being securely founded
 - Continue to build upon Jesus Christ
 - **If you do not maintain your house it will rot, rust, get cobwebs.**
 - **The gospel does not work like magic.** The mind, heart, and the will must be involved. Our minds feed on Christ and his Word. Our heart is to focus on him in love. Our wills are to take the practice and pattern from Him (Hughes).
- **But oh how difficult it is to continue in the faith at all times, in all circumstances**
 - Do not misunderstand. Paul is not expressing doubt as to whether they will continue on.. this is not what the Greek construction relates:
 - **At any rate if you stand firm in the faith --- and I am sure you will.**
- **If you have faith in Jesus Christ... he has already given you the strength to stand firm in your faith!**
- **You once were an enemy// now have been reconciled// continue to stand firm!**

Conclusion

- Story related by DL Moody:
 - One morning my sister's boy said something naughty one morning and the father's son said "Sammy" go and ask your mothers forgiveness or I will put you in bed. Sammy refused and was put to bed. At noon the father came home expecting Sammy to be playing round the house but was in bed refusing to ask forgiveness. The same thing at night.
 - That night as Sammy stayed in bed both mom and dad went in to coax him to forgive to no avail. Neither parent slept that night expecting a knock on the door. It was for the good of the boy that they didn't want to give him his own way.
 - Later the next afternoon mom went in to talk to Sammy. After reasoning with him she said Sammy follow my lead and say—mother// for // give// me//. Sammy repeated the words and cried "take me down to papa so I can say it to him
 - What a picture of how we are! Just those words "Father, forgive me" said from the heart brings us to God.
- **Are you an enemy of the Cross? Do you need to say today: Father forgive!!!**
- **Are you continuing to stand firm?**
- **By sitting in your seat you are agreeing that you are right with God and do not today need to profess Him as Lord.**
- Do you have a Savior Story?

Why does it Matter?

- We have been justified (made right before the Lord) and accepted

- We receive forgiveness (redeemed)
- We escape God's wrath (reconciled)
- We are adopted in to a new family
- We gain a new identity (New Creation)
- **Believe, Confess, Faith, Baptism**

Notes

The key words faith, hope, and heard are repeated from the opening verses (1:4-6). These verses also repeat the theme that redemption comes through Jesus Christ.

Especially important is the way these verses pick up the theme of a “transfer” from one spiritual realm to another from vv. 12-14.

The bare bones of the sentence: you... he reconciled... to present you... if you continue... (Moo).

Col. 1:21 Once you were alienated and hostile in your minds because of your evil actions.

- The word alienated implies isolation, loneliness, and a deep sense of not belonging (NIV).
- Being “enemies of God” does not limit the hostility only to the intellectual aspect of our lives (NIV).
- The depraved mind then commends evil behavior as good or natural or as an alternative lifestyle (NIV).
- Unbelievers = separated from life of God” (Moo).
- Scriptures present human beings in their natural states as hostile to God because of their involvement in Adam’s primal sin (Moo).
- “and you”
 - mark a new beginning in order to show the community that the message of reconciliation which pertains to the whole world applies to them (Lohse).
- Hostile—active sense
- God’s purpose rises from mankind’s miserable condition (Hughes).
- In the original “alienated” was an unusually powerful word that indicated a persistent and permeant condition (Hughes).
- While the Scriptures paint the darkest possibilities for man apart from Christ, they also give us the highest, noblest vision of man known to any religious conception anywhere! (Hughes).

22 But now He has reconciled you by His physical body through His death, to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before Him—

- Blameless—comes from the world of sacrifice. Animals offered to God had to be without blemish. Caird reminds us that “when a man offered an animal in sacrifice, he laid his hand on it in order to identify himself with his offering and to express his aspirations to be himself holy and unblemished (NIV).
- Paul loves to highlight the glorious new status that believers enjoy by contrasting it with our former life of sinfulness and condemnation (Moo).
- The purpose of God’s reconciling work is that believers might be presented as holy (Moo).
- But now—the miracle of the salvation that was experienced is contrasted to the lostness from which God has freed them. Since their lostness has been ended by God’s wonderful act, this turn of events demands obedient loyalty (Lohse).
 - **Luke 7:47** Therefore I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; that’s why she loved much. But the one who is forgiven little, loves little.”
- **Against the dark foil of the past there arises a present that is all the more gleaming** (Lohse)/
- Before him→ do not primarily refer to the future of the Lord. Rather, they express that the Christians present lives are lived in God’s presence. Therefore to be holy one much characterize their conduct according to the will of God (Lohse).
- Reconcile→
 - **40.1 καταλλάσσω; καταλλαγή, ἡς, ἀποκαταλλάσσω; συναλλάσσω:** to reestablish proper friendly interpersonal relations after these have been disrupted or broken (the componential features of this series of meanings involve (1) disruption of friendly relations because of (2) presumed or real provocation, (3) overt behavior designed to remove hostility, and (4) restoration of original friendly relations) — ‘to reconcile, to make things right with one another, reconciliation.’²
 - συναλλάσσω: συνήλασεν αὐτοὺς εἰς εἰρήνην ‘he tried to make peace between them’ Ac 7:26. This is the only instance of συναλλάσσω in the NT, and it has εἰς εἰρήνην added to emphasize peace as the goal, although the feature of making peace between previously hostile individuals is already implicit in the act of reconciliation.
 - Because of the variety and complexity of the components involved in reconciliation, it is often necessary to use an entire phrase in order to communicate satisfactorily the meanings of the terms in this subdomain. In some languages, however, reconciliation is often spoken of in idiomatic terms, for example, ‘to cause to become friends again,’ ‘to cause to snap fingers again’ (a symbol of friendly interpersonal relations in many parts of Africa), ‘to cause to be one again,’ or ‘to take away the separation.’ A particularly crucial element in terms for reconciliation is the assigning of responsibility for original guilt in causing the estrangement. Some terms, for example, imply that the individual who initiates reconciliation is by doing so admitting his guilt in causing the estrangement. This, of course, provides a completely untenable meaning for reconciliation in speaking of God reconciling people to himself through Christ. In a number of languages the contextual basis for an expression for reconciliation is often found in terms relating to the reconciliation of husbands and wives. Such expressions fit in well with many contexts in the Scriptures, especially in speaking of reconciliation of people to God, since God is frequently referred to as the husband and the believers as the wife.

23 if indeed you remain grounded and steadfast in the faith and are not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that you heard. This gospel has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and I, Paul, have become a servant of it.

- They cannot take their new status for granted, be nonchalant about its responsibilities, or be fooled into thinking that other avenues to God exist. Christ alone offers the solution to human alienation in the world.
- Faith—
 - Implying faith here does not refer to the act of believing but what is believed: Christian truth (Moo).
- How?
 - Grounded, steadfast not shifted → have their background in the world of building.
 - Grounded = refers to laying the foundation of a building and its form highlights the need for believers constantly to live in a state of being securely founded
 - Firm=
- Paul is not expressing doubt as to whether they will continue on; that is not what the Greek construction means (Hughes).
 - “at any rate if you stand firm in the faith – and I am sure you will”
- The gospel does not work like magic. The mind, heart, and the will must be involved. Our minds feed on Christ and his Word. Our heart is to focus on him in love. Our wills are to take the practice and pattern from Him (Hughes).

Illustrations

- For the way in which we walk, that is, the road by which we reach perfection, is cleansed by clean prayer. That, however, is a clean prayer in which we say in truth, “forgive us, as we ourselves forgive.” (Augustine)

Application

- Sin is not just what we do; it is who we are. The theme of human rebellion and sin is an unbroken scarlet thread that runs through the entire Bible to the foot of the cross (NIV)
- Practical holiness should be our life's business (Hughes).
- **Story related by DL Moody:**
 - One morning my sister's boy said something naughty one morning and the father's son said "Sammy" go and ask your mothers forgiveness or I will put you in bed. Sammy refused and was put to bed. At noon the father came home expecting Sammy to be playing round the house but was in bed refusing to ask forgiveness. The same thing at night.
 - That night as Sammy stayed in bed both mom and dad went in to coax him to forgive to no avail. Neither parent slept that night expecting a knock on the door. It was for the good of the boy that they didn't want to give him his own way.
 - Later the next afternoon mom went in to talk to Sammy. After reasoning with him she said Sammy follow my lead and say—mother// for // give// me//. Sammy repeated the words and cried "take me down to papa so I can say it to him
 - What a picture of how we are! Just those words "Father, forgive me" said from the heart brings us to God.

