

Because of God's love for humanity He has provided the means for us to be His again. We were once enemies by our own doing, but Christians are reconciled to God through His Son, Jesus Christ.

**In the past, enemies of God!** Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 5:6-11

**Reconciliation, in fellowship with God again!** 2 Corinthians 5:17-19; Matthew 20:28

**Through His flesh, the body of Jesus.** See Matthew 26:26-28 and His comments concerning the Lord's Supper He was instituting. The 'cup' or 'fruit of the vine' was symbolic of the blood of Jesus. Jesus did come in the flesh! John spoke of Anti-Christ and identified it as any who denied that Jesus came in the flesh. Anti-Christ was in the world in John's day. Put aside the popular scenarios of an evil political person and read John's writing carefully. 1 John 2:18-27; 4:1-4; 2 John 7-8.

Reconciliation was made possible through Jesus's death which was and is the 'once for all' sacrifice. The blood of bulls and goats could not forgive sin. That was insufficient. It took the blood of Jesus, the Son of God, Who lived the sinless life to provide redemption which brought reconciliation. Hebrews 9 and 10 address this truth, as do 2 Corinthians 5:12-21 and Ephesians 2:11 – 3:13. These are just a few passages on the topic of Jesus' death and our reconciliation. I urge you to carefully study those passages. But, let no one think that forgiveness of sins was withheld before Jesus died on the cross. Read the book of Leviticus where forgiveness was promised when they made those sacrifices. While those sacrifices could not forgive sins, God could forgive them because He knew Jesus would pay the redemptive price (1 Peter 1:10-21). When Jesus spoke of Hades and Abraham's bosom where Lazarus was comforted, He provided the description of the final blessing of reconciliation which is the salvation of one's soul with the eternal blessing (Luke 16:19-31).

Paul encouraged the Colossian saints to continue in that which they had heard and obeyed (see text box above). They were not to be moved away from that hope. Hope is provided to those who hear the gospel of Christ, obey that gospel and continue faithful. Paul was a minister of the gospel and each one today who wants to be a faithful servant of God must follow the words God has given through the New Testament apostles and prophets. Any teaching or practice which is not authorized in the New Testament is not to be taught or practiced. We are to listen to the words of Jesus given in the New Testament, and we are to do what Jesus says in order to have eternal life (Matthew 7:21-28). As you consider the literature of the New Testament remember that Jesus lived under the law of Moses and kept that law. Then when He went to the cross the law given through Moses was fulfilled and is no longer binding upon any. It is the new covenant mediated by the blood of Jesus which is our standard of life today (Note Colossians 2:12-14 and Hebrews 9:14-22). When we obey Jesus, we are reconciled to God and have the hope of heaven.

And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight— if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Colossians 1:21-23 NKJ