



Once Far, Now Near
Colossians 1:21-23
September 28, 2025

BIG IDEA

Through Christ's sacrificial death, those who were once far from God are brought near. Our reconciliation is not just a change of status but a transformation of life. Paul reminds us that before Christ we were alienated, hostile, and dead in sin. But because of the cross, we are forgiven, made holy, and called to live lives that reflect our new relationship with God. This truth calls us to gratitude, faithfulness, and steadfast hope in the gospel.

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Colossians 1:21-23 (ESV)

"And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister."

MAIN THEME

Paul gives the Colossians—and us—a clear picture of what salvation really means. Apart from Christ, we were enemies of God, living in rebellion and far from his presence. Through Jesus' real, physical death on the cross, the barrier of sin has been removed. We are now reconciled to God, made holy in his sight, and invited into an intimate relationship with him. This gift is entirely undeserved and should lead to ongoing faith, gratitude, and perseverance.

DISCUSSION & APPLICATION

1. Once Far from God

Colossians 1:21, Romans 5:12

- What does Paul mean when he says we were "alienated" and "hostile in mind"?



- Why is it important to understand that sin separates us from God, even before we commit individual sins?
- How does recognizing our former condition deepen our appreciation for what Christ has done?

2. Christ's Death Bridges the Gap

Colossians 1:22, Romans 8:3

- Why was it essential for Jesus to come in a real, physical body to save us?
- How does Jesus' substitutionary death give you hope and security?
- In what ways does the cross show both the seriousness of sin and the depth of God's love?

3. Made Holy and Blameless

Colossians 1:22, Revelation 12:10

- What does it mean to be presented "holy and blameless and above reproach" before God?
- How does this truth affect the way you see yourself and your relationship with him?
- How does knowing that the enemy's accusations are now powerless bring you freedom?

4. Continuing in the Faith

Colossians 1:23, Hebrews 10:23

- Paul calls believers to remain "stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel." What does this look like in everyday life?
- Which of these areas is most challenging for you right now: staying grounded in the gospel, persevering through trials, or holding on to hope?
- How can the church community help you stay rooted in Christ?

5. Living as One Who is Near



Psalm 103:1-5, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

- How does reconciliation with God fill you with gratitude and purpose?
- What are some practical ways you can live out your new identity this week?
- How can you share the message of reconciliation with someone who is still far from God?

PRAY

Lord Jesus, thank you for reaching out to me when I was far from you. I was alienated, hostile, and lost in sin, but you gave your life to bring me near. Help me never to take my salvation for granted. Teach me to live with gratitude, to stay steadfast in faith, and to reflect your love to those around me. Thank you for making me holy and blameless through your blood. I trust you and submit my life to you. In your name I pray, Amen.

DIG DEEPER

For further study this week:

- Romans 5:6-11 — Christ's work of reconciliation
- Isaiah 53:4-6 — The suffering servant who bore our sins
- Ephesians 2:11-22 — Once far off, now brought near by the blood of Christ
- Hebrews 10:19-23 — Confidence to draw near to God through Jesus
- 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 — The ministry of reconciliation

NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA

Colossians 1:24-29

Paul's willingness to suffer for the gospel

