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Proclaimed In All Creation

Reading Colossians 1:21-23

The apostle Paul directs this statement to his brothers and sisters in Colossae. **He is issuing a sobering reminder of their conversion.** Then, he calls them to a continuing practice of faith.

Before the saints in Colossae were *buried with Christ in baptism* (see Col. 2:12), what had been their condition?

Alienated and Hostile. Living in sin, the sinner is alienated (separated from God). Beyond that reality, the active sinner is living a life that is hostile to God (against Him, offending Him). “Doing evil deeds” is a life of ruin with diverse consequences. But here, the emphasis is on the **alienation** and **hostility** of one’s life before being buried with Christ in baptism. {Please keep in mind, I haven’t invented this phrase, “buried with Christ in baptism.” These are the words of Paul to mark their conversion in Colossians 2:12.}

Colossians 1:22 described what God did when they were buried with Christ in



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baptism. Based on the atoning value of the death of Christ, God “reconciled” the alienated, hostile sinners. Why did God do this for those buried with Christ in baptism? **To present them “holy and blameless and above reproach before Him.”**

Please pause here and observe *what the Colossians did*, as written by the apostle Paul:

- 1) They **heard** the word of truth and understood the grace of God {Col. 1:6}.
- 2) They **believed** what they learned {Col. 1:4,7}. That they **confessed** their belief is apparent, since Paul knew of their faith {Col. 1:4}.

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- 3) They **repented** {Col. 2:11-15}.
- 4) They were buried with Christ in **baptism** {Col. 2:12}.

When they responded in this way (instructed by the apostles), God reconciled them. And His purpose was, “to present” them “holy and blameless and above reproach before him.”

What would need to happen after their initial obedience in baptism?

Verse 23: “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.”

Isn't it clear – their lives as Christians started when they were “buried with” Christ “in baptism.” Now, that initial active faith would need to be continued, not in some casual way. But with stability and steadfastness, not shifting from the hope they embraced when they first responded to Christ. But holding to that hope.

This was the good news Paul “proclaimed in all creation under heaven.” It remains as the only message that can save those alienated from God today.