

Centered in Christ: The Heart of the Gospel

Colossians 1:13-23

The New Exodus (v. 13-14)

- Paul describes the work of God in Christ as deliverance
 - God **has** delivered us from the 'domain of darkness'
 - *Exousia*: Authority, power
 - Like God delivered the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt
- God not only frees us from bondage, but also transfers us to a new type of authority (v. 13b)
 - One ruled by His Son; our loving rescue agent
 - Just like Israel was not called to just leave Egypt, but was called to the Promised Land as an inheritance (see v. 12)

The New Creation (1:15–20)

- Paul defines the person and work of Jesus in terms of the Creation
- He is the image of the invisible God
 - He has made the invisible visible
- He is the firstborn* of all Creation
 - It is an ancient way of saying that Christ is preeminent
 - And thus, He is the means by which the Father created all things (v. 16; see also John 1:1-3; Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26)
- Thus, Jesus is Lord of it all
 - Especially the Church
 - Dictating and empowering her mission
- And in His resurrection, He has become Lord of even death
- In Christ, we can become part of His new Creation
 - Which comes as a result of His reconciling everything to Himself
 - Bringing us back to a state of peace with God
- This New Creation is not purely a future event
 - He offers it to us now (2 Cor. 5:17)

A New Age (v. 21-23)

- Paul describes our state before Jesus
 - Alienate from God: Our standing
 - With our minds against God: Our thinking
 - Practicing evil: Our actions
- Through His sacrifice, Jesus ushered in a new age, marked by reconciliation
- In which we are **declared**:
 - Holy, blameless, & above reproach

- Not by our own merits, but by Christ's work
- This declaration has a future-focused undertone
 - It is something started on the Cross
 - But we await the full culmination of this new age
 - Which will take place when Christ returns

So What?

- Because Jesus is Lord of all (v. 15-20)
- We can have confidence that God's rescue mission is successful (v. 13-14)
- Ushering us into the Messianic Age (v. 21-23)
- Are we living in this reality?

Meditation Verse: Colossians 1:13-14