

Exegeting Scripture

Colossians 1:23

23 **If indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.**

This is the kind of verse you always hear quoted by those who want to make man part of his salvation. Who deny the complete work of Christ on the cross and that people can actually lose their salvation. They are more occupied with man and what man has to do than with the completed work of JESUS CHRIST.

And along with their sloppy theology, they are also sloppy in their exegesis (*critical interpretation of a text of the bible*) which they twist to go along with their theology.

A person's theology is vital to one's life, but theology must be built from sound exegesis, not exegesis from one's theology.

And the same thing can be said of one's **eschatology** (*this is theology of future events and final events of history*) One's **eschatology** must be from sound exegesis not from one's faulty theology. In picking a Pastor-Teacher to sit under, you need to know his exegesis! How he views the Scriptures and how he views building theology and eschatology. I mention picking a Pastor-Teacher because this is the issue at the end of Colossians 1:23.

Now back to looking at verses 23. On the surface, it seems as if the English is saying that Salvation is conditional...; that a believer in Jesus Christ can lose being reconciled to God...; lose 34 things God gave him in Salvation the moment he believed in Christ.

It goes something like this:

23 **IF you continue in the faith, firmly established AND steadfast, AND not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard---** conclusion they now draw – but if one does not continue in the faith, later in life denies his Faith in JESUS CHRIST, and is not steadfast, and does move away from the hope of the gospel **then that person loses their salvation** or contextually they lose what is stated in verse 22, you lose being presented before God as **Holy, blameless and beyond reproach**, you can actually lose these things Christ as accomplished by something you do or don't do. This according to their false theology and sloppy exegesis of this beautiful verse.

Now first thing we are going to do is to clear up this sloppy exegesis.

Sound exegesis should begin from the original languages but this is not absolutely necessary.

A simple procedure for systematic study of the bible:

1.

Observation:	What does the text say?
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2.

Interpretation:	What does the text mean?
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3.

Application:	How does this apply to our lives?
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Fundamental Principle:

Each of these steps must be done in the power and leading of the Holy Spirit.

Exegetical Principle:

How are you going to approach the Bible?

Literal, grammatical, historical Hermeneutics.

(This means you interpret the Scriptures literally, by grammatical analysis, and in historical setting.)

In reference to our passage of Colossians 1:23, we are simply going to look at the correct way of understanding this passage then we will examine it more closely.

The correct way of understanding verse 23 begins with the Aorist Infinitive in verse 22... **to present you.**

This is the purpose of JESUS CHRIST **to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach** which depends on how you live as a believer in JESUS CHRIST.

You must remember there are three stages of righteousness in a believer's life.

There is what we call **Stage 1 Righteousness**, which is the perfect Righteousness imputed to everyone who believes in JESUS CHRIST;

then there is the corresponding **Stage 3 Righteousness** which is our righteousness for all eternity

This leaves **Stage 2 Righteousness**, which is the righteousness that the Holy Spirit causes us to live in our temporal lives here on earth.

This is what is at issue here in this passage. The first three primary principles in exegeting are Context, Context, Context!

So many false doctrines come from taking something out of context or not even considering the context, which is the problem with correctly understanding Colossians 1:22-23.

Verses 21-23 are one sentence in the Greek, and must be understood in that sentence.

To simply what is going on in these three verses:

A simple procedure for systematic study of the bible

One	The state we were in BEFORE SALVATION.
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Two	The state we are IN ALL ETERNITY.
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and

Three	REWARDS AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST DETERMINED BY HOW WE LIVE AS CHRISTIANS; In the flesh, which results in loss of rewards or In the Filling of the Holy Spirit, which results in rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
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Unfortunately,
many Christians consider this stage in one of two extremes:

One

Since we are saved eternally
it does not really matter how we live

and

Two

The other is to live a legalistic life.

or

to put it another way is from our study in
Galatians-

SAVED BY GRACE LIVE BY LAW

which is what Paul is trying to correct in the book of Galatians.

or

SAVED BY GRACE AND LIVE BY GRACE

There are a few passages we should look at concerning this point.
Ephesians 2:10

10 **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. (I know most like to say we are saved to witness to others of the Saving work of JESUS CHRIST. But Scripture is very clear that we are saved and remain on earth) for good works.**

Matthew 5:16

16 “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (There are two points pertinent to our study in this verse.)

Sometimes we emphasize bringing people to JESUS CHRIST, but always remember **THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS TO BRING THEM TO GOD THE FATHER, THIS IS WHY JESUS CHRIST CAME AND THIS IS WHY WE SHOULD DESIRE GOOD WORKS—To Lead Others To God The Father.**

Secondly, what are good works or how do we do good works. We know that anything in the flesh is not good before God, so production of good works or good deeds is anything and everything we do in the power and leading of the Holy Spirit. Again, it is vital that every believer knows how to be Filled with the Holy Spirit by Faith in the Holy Spirit.

Acts 10:38

38 “*You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and the even with power, and *how* He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. (by or through the Holy Spirit.)*

We have studied how the first thing after the rapture for those who are raptured is the Judgment Seat of Christ, where you will either gain or lose rewards.

2 Corinthians 5:10

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (Good- those done in the power and leading of the Holy Spirit and bad those done in the Flesh.)

1 Timothy 6:18

18 *Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,*

Again, why did JESUS CHRIST come to earth and leave those who believe in Him as Savior here after salvation?

Titus 2:14

14 *who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession.*

Titus 1:16

16 *They profess to know God, but by *their* deeds they deny *Him*, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.*

Ephesians 4:1

1 *Therefore, I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,*

There are many more passages that exhort believers in JESUS CHRIST to perform good deeds (in the Holy Spirit).

As we move back to Colossians 1

let us note Ephesians 1:3-4

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love (Spiritual Love)

These two words: **holy** and **blameless** are the same two words in in Colossians 1:22

22 ...in order to present you before Him holy and blameless.

So the Question:

How?

How are we going to be **holy** and **blameless**?

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Is this possible for any believer in JESUS CHRIST?

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The answer is yes, and is explained in **Colossians 1: 23**

23 if indeed you
(1) continue in the faith
(2) firmly established and
(3) steadfast, and
(4) not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister

So, the **if clause** or the **conditional clause**
is not about being Reconciled to God forever
but with being presented before Him
HOLY and **BLAMELESS** at the **Judgment Seat of Christ**
right after the Rapture.

If indeed (the if clause or the conditional clause is what we note as a first class condition, that is, the **prodasis** is true.

Paul uses this first class condition for two reasons:

First in noting the current faithfulness of the Colossian believers. This is a wonderful statement to be made of any assembly of believers.)

Then he uses it stating a principle or a fact;

if a believer continues to live by Faith in the Holy Spirit and continues to grow in the Word of God, that believer will live worthy of His position in Christ and be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

And please do not make the mistake that so many make, and relate being worthy of the Lord to mean that you will be successful in worldly pursuit. Not necessarily in business, or education, or talent, etc., but in reflecting the glory of God and of Christ.

Next, Paul adds a quick warning in the word **indeed, if indeed**
This important article is omitted in the King James and the NIV but it
is an important warning to every believer.

if indeed you continue

Present Active Indicative noting what must continue daily in
your Christian life, of the compound verb meaning to prolong or
stay.

I wished I had the articulate ability to cause every one of you, young
and old, to understand the all importance of this word: **continue**, to
your life—here believer is the secret to life (sports, music, art,
business, marriage, and your Spiritual Life.)

The high virtue of persistency.

Some believers will understand and others never will, and this is the
difference between the believer who reaches Spiritual Maturity and
glorifies JESUS CHRIST and the believer who does not.

Here is the key in all areas of your life.

You want a good stable marriage... here is the secret.

Here's the secret for receiving rewards at the Judgment Seat of
Christ.

Here is the battle of every believer in Jesus Christ—
the challenge to stay with the course...

stay in the battle.

So many believers grow tired, weary or are distracted by worldly seducing things. Seduced away from living by Faith, continually growing in the word and continually doing good deeds in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word means **TO PERSIST** in something.

- 1 To stay, remain in the sphere of the leading of the Holy Spirit.

- 2 It means to stay there all your life, day in and day out. And when you fail, you get right back at it. It is ashamed that when some believers fail, they just quit.

- 3 It means to persist in being led of the Holy Spirit; persist in going to bible study with other believers; to persist in growing in Knowledge of God and in the Knowledge of JESUS CHRIST; to persist in doing good deeds, living a Righteous Life.

- 4 It means to avoid distractions that the world sets up, that Satan brings your way or that the flesh would rather be doing.

- 5 It means to avoid moving into a life of sin, or a life of Law, but persisting in a life of Grace.

- 6 It means to persist in a life of Spiritual Love even when you do not want to love.

“oh, Father, give me the desire to desire to love that person” (Lewis Sperry Chafer)

The wreath of victory goes only to those who overcome distractions and who persevere in bringing glory to JESUS CHRIST.

And one that I did not include over the years... those who persist even in the trials of old age. For some old age is an easy time to serve the Lord but to others it is a chore and is tiresome. But we must persevere.

Youth has its many distractions and Old Age has its weirdness. But **the soldiers of Christ perseveres on in the path of Righteousness doing good deeds.** It is not just a matter of **Not Sinning**, it is a matter of **Doing Good in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

Hebrews 10:34-37

34 **For you showed sympathy to the prisoners** (those in captivity because of their Faith) **and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property,** (because of your Faith) **knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession** (rewards in eternity) **and a lasting one.** (all eternity)

35 **Therefore, do not throw away your confidence,** (persevere) **which has a great reward.** (At the Judgment Seat of Christ)

36 **For you have need of endurance,** so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. (At the Judgment Seat of Christ right after the Rapture)

37 **FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE (JESUS CHRIST) WHO IS COMING (TO CALL US HOME AT THE RAPTURE) WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.** (Don't lose confidence in Scriptures of Prophecy)

Habakkuk 2:4

4 **AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK,** (is distracted or grows weary, does not persevere in Filling of the Holy Spirit and Doing Good Deeds) **MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.** (not loss of salvation but loss of intimacy with JESUS CHRIST and with God the Father.)

Hebrews 10:39

39 **But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction,** (here is yet another passage used to show loss of Salvation but this does not refer to destruction as loss of Salvation... but loss of rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ) **but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.**

Ok, people, note that the battle is in the soul!

Your thought process,
to either be distracted
or give up
or press on
in the battle.

AMEN

Now, for further comfort:

While the heavens and the earth will be destroyed

**the Bible is unchangeable,
His Word abideth forever.**

*You have more comfort, more stability in the Word of God
than you do in the universe.*

*You can rest in His Faithfulness
of your Eternal existence with Him.*

You have to make up your mind:

Is Christ sufficient for all your needs?

Or do you have to have other things or something else?

**This book is about the Sufficiency of JESUS CHRIST:
to God the Father;
and to you?**

Is the Word of God sufficient for you?

Sufficient to bring you to JESUS CHRIST?

Sufficient to bring you to God the Father?

Is the Word of God sufficient for **SAD** (*Stress, Anxiety, Depression*) in
your life or do you need outside help?

So we learn so much from the true understanding of the Gospel.

