

## Colossians 1:13-20

Back in the 1800's, a **feud** broke out between two families - the **Hatfields** of Logan County, West Virginia; and the **McCoys** of Pike County, Kentucky. This feud, which continued throughout the last third of the 19th century, has been romanticized in song and legend. However, anyone who studies the history of that time, will quickly recognize that there was nothing **romantic** or **humorous** about it. The feud, which began over nothing more serious than a disagreement over some **hogs**, spawned bloody **violence** which killed **many** people, and nearly led to **war** between the states of West Virginia and Kentucky. As we look at the history of that time, we wonder, "Why did the fighting have to go on for so **long**? Why couldn't the people who were involved have been more forgiving? Why couldn't there be some kind of **reconciliation** - a reconciliation which would have saved many lives?" Well, you know what they say. Hindsight is always 20/20. It would have been great if **reconciliation** had come, but it didn't - not until both clans had been nearly wiped out! Today, we will be talking about **reconciliation** - a reconciliation which is even **better** than the one that never took place between the Hatfields and McCoys - a reconciliation which involves each one of us here today in a most personal way. Today we will see that **Jesus Is The King Who Reconciles Us With God**.

The whole first part of our text tells us what a wonderful king Jesus is. Paul tells us, "*He is the image of the invisible **God**, the firstborn **over** all creation. For by Him all things were **created**; things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created **by** Him and **for** Him. He is **before** all things, and in Him all things **hold together**. And He is the **head** of the body, the church. He is the beginning, and the firstborn from among the **dead**, so that in everything He might have the **supremacy**.*" First of all, Jesus is in the **image** of God - that is, He is **perfect** and **holy**. That's true, not only because He is true **God**, but it is also true of Him as a true **man**. Jesus had to be perfect in **every** way, if He was going to be able to carry out the tremendous **task** which God had given to Him - the task of **saving** all mankind. Jesus is also described here as our **creator** and our **preserver**. He made us and everything which exists, and He continues to take care of all creation too - holding it together like **glue**. And finally, Jesus is described as our **head** - that part of the body which **guides**, and **directs**, and **controls** all the other parts. He has supremacy not only over **us** - the members of His body - but over the entire **universe**. There is no greater **king** than Jesus.

But His most precious kingly action is the fact that he **reconciled** us with **God**. Reconciliation only becomes a **need** when there has been a **separation** of some kind. And you and I have been involved in a **horrible** separation. Think about

it. Certainly you can remember a personal **enemy** - one whom you **hated** with a passion - one whom you wanted to irritate, dishonor, and harm in every possible way. Perhaps you don't want to **admit** it though, because Christians aren't supposed to **hate**. Christians aren't supposed to cause **separations**. Rather, Christians are supposed to **love**. Nevertheless, whether we want to admit it or not, you and I **did** once have a personal enemy whom we deeply **hated** - and that **enemy** was our gracious **God!**

God didn't **want** to be our enemy. He didn't give us any **cause** to hate Him. But rather, it was our **own** evil behavior which made us hostile toward God. Of course that evil behavior begins with **original sin** - our Old Adam - the sinful nature which we have all **inherited** from our sinful parents. We were conceived and born as **enemies** of God. The sins which we **actually** commit, are merely the natural **result** of our sinful **condition**. Unfortunately, these sins just **add** to the **separation** and **alienation** which already exist between us and God. God is **perfect** - and we're **not**. God is **good** - and we're **not**. God is **loving** - and we're **not**. In our original sinful condition, everything we **are** and everything we **do**, **opposes** God and His will. And ultimately, that opposition will lead us to eternal **damnation** in hell.

That's right - eternal damnation would be our fate, if we had **remained** enemies of God. But, praise the **LORD** that such hatred and rejection have **not** continued to rule in our lives. And praise the **LORD** that **He** was the one to make the first **overture** toward peace, because we **couldn't**. As remarkable and impossible as it may seem, even while we **hated** God, He carried out His **loving** mission of **reconciling** us to Himself. Paul told the Romans, "*When we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him.*" Now let's see exactly **how** He carried it out.

Our text indicates that God reconciled us by means of a **sacrifice**. Paul wrote, "*God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Christ, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.*" All the action begins with **God**, for not only were we **unwilling** to seek reconciliation with God - we were **incapable** of it. The guilt of our sins was far too great for **any** mere human being to make atonement. A project of this magnitude took the efforts of **God Himself**, and in **Jesus** we find all the **fullness** of God - all the **power**, all the **wisdom**, and all the **love**.

Sadly, it took the **sacrifice** of **Jesus** to redeem **us** from sin. Since our sin and guilt were **infinite**, brought about by a **total** rebellion against God on the part of the **entire** human race - **payment** for that sin and guilt would have to be made with

infinitely **precious** blood. The blood of **normal** sacrifices wouldn't be **sufficient**. In the **Old** Testament, God gave very specific instructions about the use of **blood** to atone for sin and guilt. Depending on who had sinned, **some** of the blood of a bull, a goat, or a lamb was to be put on the **horns** of the altar; while the **remainder** of the blood was to be poured out at the **base** of the altar. And in these instances God said, *"In this way the priest will make **atonement** for the man's sin, and he will be **forgiven**."*

But in the **New** Testament, the writer to the Hebrews said, *"It is **impossible** for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."* And he goes on to tell us that the only reason these Old Testament sacrifices were **effective**, was because they all foreshadowed the sacrifice of **Jesus** on the cross - the **one** sacrifice which **does** take away sins. He wrote, *"Christ did not enter the tabernacle by means of the blood of goats and calves; but He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His **own** blood, having obtained **eternal** redemption. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are **outwardly** clean. How much more, then, will the blood of **Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, cleanse our **consciences** from acts that lead to death, so that we may **serve** the living God!"* Jesus shed His infinitely **precious** blood on the cross for **us**. **Jesus Is The King Who Reconciles Us With God.**

Praise the LORD that the infinite, almighty God loved us **so** much, that He created and carried out a plan to **reconcile** us to Himself. He sent His Son, **Jesus**, to live a **perfect** life, to offer the sacrifice of His **blood**, and even to **die** for sinners like you and me. In that sacrifice of **Jesus** we find **peace** with God, for through Jesus He has made us **holy**, without **blemish**, and free from **accusation**. Praise the LORD that in **Christ**, God went **beyond** ending our rebellious war against Him. He has washed us clean from all our **sin** and **guilt**, so that we are destined to be Christ's holy people **forever**. Paul told the Ephesians, *"Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her **holy**, **cleansing** her by the washing with water through the Word, and to present her to Himself as a **radiant** church, without **stain** or **wrinkle** or any **other** blemish, but **holy** and **blameless**."* We have been blessed to **receive**, and to enjoy **forever**, the **peace** which is so wonderful that not even the angels in heaven can understand it. It is, *"The peace of **God**, which surpasses **all** understanding,"* and it becomes **ours** through **Jesus - The King Who Reconciles Us With God**. Amen.