

566 Grounded and Settled

In the Christian calendar we have now entered the season of Advent once again, in which we focus on the various “comings” to this earth, past, present and future, by Almighty God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These comings include the incarnation of Christ at “Christmas”, a title grabbed by the business world to keep the tills busy – “but don’t bother with that Bethlehem stuff!”. Further divine comings soon followed: Jesus’ coming into public ministry (eg., Mark 1.9-11); Jesus’ coming forth from the dead (eg., John 20.11-18); and the gift of the Holy Spirit coming from the Father and the Son into the Church and into the heart of each Christ-believer (egs., John 14.16,26;15.26;16.7 / Acts 2.1-4 / I Corinthians 3.16; 6.19-20).

Scripturally-promised future “comings” are mentioned in these Reflections when appropriate, but for this time let us now be encouraged by the marvellous passage in Colossians 1.12-23a, where the full spiritual blessings of Christ’s coming into this messed-up world are set forth, and then duly give shape and guidance to our daily Christian conduct. The JPGreen Literal Version is shown in full here, highlighting the past, present and future deeds of the Father (F1, F2 ...) and of the Son (S1, S2 ...), and of “Us” (US1 ...). Having read it carefully through at first, it can then be helpful, (in your Pasted Word copy you could add Bold, Italics and Underlinings) to pick out just the deeds of the Father (F1 ...), and then just the deeds of the Son (S1 ...), to bring out the utter unity yet complementarity of the Father and the Son. We remember that all these divine achievements spring from Almighty God’s love for His creation, and provide such abundant blessings to all who accept Christ’s call and Lordship.

So, Colossians 1.12-23a (JPGreen Literal) – “v12 Giving thanks to THE FATHER, F1, who has made us fit for a share of the inheritance of the saints in light (= DONE):

v13 F2 who delivered us out of the authority of darkness (= DONE), and F3 translated us into the kingdom of S1 the Son of His love (= DONE):

v14 S2 IN WHOM we have redemption through His blood (= DONE), the remission of sins (= DONE):

v15 S3 Who is [the] image of the invisible God (= NOW), S4 the Firstborn of all creation (= NOW):

v16 S5 For all things were created in Him, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth, the visible and the invisible; whether thrones, or

lordships, or rulers, or authorities, all things have been created S6 through Him and F4 for him (= DONE):
v17 S7 And He is before all things (= NOW), and S8 all things have subsisted in Him (= NOW).
v18 S9 And He is the Head of the body, the church (= NOW), S10 who is the Beginning, [the] Firstborn from [the] dead (= NOW), S11 that He may be pre-eminent in all things (= NOW and TO COME);
v19 (F5) S12 because all the fullness was pleased to dwell through Him (= DONE):
v20 S13 and through Him making peace by the blood of His cross (= DONE), to reconcile all things F6 to Himself (= NOW / II Corinthians 5.18-19); S14 through Him, whether the things on the earth, or the things in the heavens (= BEING DONE).
v21 And US1 you then being alienated and hostile in [your] mind by evil works (= THEN), but now S15 He reconciled -
v22 in the body of His flesh through [His] death (= DONE), S16 to present you holy and without blemish and irreproachable F7 before Him (= DONE / Ephesians 2.16):
v23 US2 If (= IF) indeed you continue in the faith grounded and settled, US3 and (= IF you are) not being moved away from the hope of the gospel ...”.

In these few verses are the grand facts of the Christian Gospel, won at such cost, for our benefit, by the coming of God the Son into this fallen world at the bidding of Almighty God His heavenly Father. We see how God the Father is the Initiator of Creation and Salvation, and God the Son is His Agent of Creation and Salvation, and how, from other passages (eg., John 14.31-32; 17.1,4-5,22,24), both Father and Son bring glory to the other. As a result of these mercies, the receivers of Christ are now made “fit for a share of the inheritance of the saints in light” (v.12), being “translated (already!) into the kingdom of the Son of the Father’s love” (v.13), being “redeemed through Christ’s blood” with our sins remitted (v.14), and hence made presentable to the Father as “holy and without blemish and irreproachable” (v.22).

In response, and enabled by the indwelling Holy Spirit, may we indeed “continue in the faith” - The Faith – “grounded and settled, being moved away” - not an inch – “from the hope of the Gospel”.

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