

# CONTINUE IN THE FAITH

Colossians 1:23

Colossians 1:21-23

21 **And although you were formerly as unbelievers in JESUS CHRIST alienated and hostile in mind, *engaged in evil deeds,***

22 **yet** in spite of our being enemies of God **He has now reconciled you** eternally **in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach**—this will be at the Judgment Seat of Christ

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.**

Why are we spending so much time on the one verse 23?

First please note that **verses 21-23 are one sentence in the Greek** and must, therefore, be understood as one unit.

Verse 23 has several issues that must be covered

Firstly the beginning 'IF' clause has caused many to claim this verse teaches that WE must be part of

maintaining our Salvation; that JESUS CHRIST did not complete our salvation at the cross.

Here we saw that the problem is resolved by the phrase **in order to present you** in verse 22. This is referring to the Judgment Seat of Christ after the Rapture. And to be presented by JESUS CHRIST at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Verse 23 lists 4 Christian virtues that should characterized our lives on earth.

Secondly we must look at each of these Christian virtues;  
and Thirdly we must look at the importance of whom you listen to in the proclaiming of Biblical truth.

These verses in Colossians are packed with issues and problems which is requiring us to cover just one or maybe two verses a week and right now not even one.

In Verse 20 we had to cover the all-important issue of the blood of the cross, where we saw blood represented the Spiritual Death of JESUS CHRIST.

Then in Verse 21 we studied how we are born into the human race enemies of God.

Then in verse 22, we studied the Spiritual death of JESUS CHRIST.

Now we are in verse 23, where we saw last week how it is often use to show that believers in JESUS CHRIST can lose their salvation

under the introductory 'if' clause, which to many introduces conditional salvation, that man must do something to maintain his Salvation claiming that JESUS CHRIST did not really save us, but that we have to live a certain way or we 'undo' what JESUS CHRIST did on the cross. I am always amused at Christians who like to talk about the cross, and roll their eyes as they sing about the cross, but then claim He did not do all that was needed to keep us saved forever!

We saw that the problem is resolved if we understand the context of verses 21-23, and namely the Aorist Infinitive of verse 22:  
**to present you**

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

Here we looked at Ephesians 2:10; Matthew 5:16; Acts 10:38; 2 Corinthians 5:10 1 Timothy 5:18; Titus 1:16; Ephesians 4:1 and 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** same two words used in Colossians 1:22

So, the question is how can a human being, even though he is a believer in JESUS CHRIST live a Righteous life?

The answer is found in Galatians 5: 5

5 **For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.**

How are we going to translate this verse?  
The issue is that preposition **by means of.**

Some place it with the preceding statement—**for we through the Spirit by faith**; while others place it with the following clause **are waiting for the hope of righteousness by faith.**

But if we understand it to modify both clauses it would go something like this:

5 **For we** (believers in JESUS CHRIST as Savior) **in Spirit –by faith** (“By means of” Faith in the HOLY SPIRIT.)

Now the next clause with the prepositional phrase **by faith are waiting for the hope of righteousness.** That Is Righteousness In Our Lives As We Live By The Holy Spirit Day In And Day Out, He Produces A Righteousness In Us.

Galatians 5 is all about the believer living in the HOLY SPIRIT.

Galatians 5:5,13,16,18

5	<b>in the Spirit by faith we look for a Righteous life;</b>
13	Then in verse 13 <b>through love serve One Another</b> where love is a fruit of the HOLY SPIRIT.
16	<b>walk in the Spirit.</b>
18	<b>led by the Spirit</b>

Verses 22-23 Paul list some of the fruit of the HOLY SPIRIT;  
and in verse 25

25	<b>...live by the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit.</b>
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So, to the question “How can a believer be holy and blameless?”  
by living the Spirit Filled Life... by following the list in Colossians  
1:23

23	<b>if indeed you</b> <b>1 continue in the faith</b> <b>2 firmly established and</b> <b>3 steadfast, and</b> <b>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.</b>
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People, please know that it is not over when we die here on earth. There is the rewards or loss of rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ and then living for all eternity with God and with our Savior JESUS CHRIST.

## Colossians 1:23

23 **if indeed you continue**

(Continue what?)

**In the faith**

OK, let us see how we translate Faith.

How we translate Faith changes the whole issue under the discussion of persevering.

The Greek word is *pistis*,... translated Faith.

Now this can refer to **Living A Life of Faith** or this word can refer to what is believed, therefore referring to a life persisting in doctrine.

**It must be LIVING BY FAITH.**

## Habakkuk 2:4

4 **“Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.”**

## 2 Corinthians 5:7

7 **for we walk by faith, not by sight—**

And a very important passage on Faith:

## Romans 1:17

17 **For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.” from faith (Saving Faith in JESUS CHRIST) to faith (Living Faith in the Holy Spirit)**

## Galatians 2:20

20 **“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith** (not in the Son of God but) **by faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.** (So again, we were Saved by Faith and we Live by Faith.)

## Colossians 1:23

23 **if indeed you continue in the faith** (Saved by Faith and we Live by Faith, we must Persevere in a Life of Faith.)

(Now the next condition (which results from fulfillment of the first): **persist in a life of faith firmly established** (does this describe your life?)

**Firmly established** (is one word in the Greek. It is the Perfect Passive Participle of the verb meaning ***foundational, fundamental to lay a foundation***)

I hope everyone of you know how important a foundation is to anything in life. You can build your foundation on sand or on a Solid Rock— JESUS CHRIST.

You can build your foundation on wood, hay and stubble or on gold, silver and precious stones. It is up to you upon what you build your life, but consider it wisely.

The Perfect tense here points out that this is something accomplished in the past with the present result of being firmly established.

And the Passive Voice is so important. It means that you receive being *firmly established* by what you have used as your foundation, and your persistency in building on that foundation.

The Participle is used to present the principle: as you begin to live a **Life of Faith** and as you are persistent in a **Life of Faith**, you begin to be stable in all areas of your life.

The wise man build his house on solid rock while the foolish man built on sand and when the storms of life came—of course, the house of the foolish man was destroyed while the house of the wise man stood firm. (Matthews 7:24-37)

A wise Pastor-Teacher uses Gold Silver and Precious stones for his foundation while the unwise pastor uses wood, hay and stubble.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15

10 **According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another (Pastor-Teacher) is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it.**



- 11 **for no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**
- 12 **Now if any man (Pastor-Teacher) builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,**
- 13 **each man's (pastor's) work will become evident; for the day will show it (Judgment Seat of Christ) because it is *to be* revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.**
- 14 **If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. (At Judgment Seat of Christ)**
- 15 **If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.**

Once Again, The Principle

## **IT IS SO IMPORTANT WHOM YOU LISTEN TO IN THE TEACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD**

Colossians 1:23

- 23 **if indeed you**
- 1 continue in the faith**
  - 2 firmly established *and***
  - 3 steadfast,** this Greek adjective means stabilized.

There are so many things that God desires to give every believer in JESUS CHRIST His joy, His peace and here His stability.

**Stability—SPIRITUAL STABILITY—is so important in life.**

I don't know if you have thought about the importance of being steadfast in your own life and in teaching your children.

Spiritual maturity is characterized by stability in all areas of your life. Stability in your moral life, stability in testings and temptations. This word means the inner ability to standfast on the principles of truth in your life... not wavering.

The body of Christ is demonstrating how it does not have *steadfastness* in so many areas. Like morality where almost anything is acceptable and the church is ordaining people who are nowhere near the moral truth of Scripture. It takes courage to be steadfast in life.

In the last verse of the great chapter on the gospel, 1 Corinthians 15:, Paul challenges believers to STAND FAST.

## 1 Corinthians 15:58

58 **Therefore**, (considering all that has been declared concerning the gospel, by which we were saved, we should now stand throughout our lives) **my beloved brethren**, (believers in JESUS CHRIST as Savior) **be steadfast**, (firm conviction of the truth of the Gospel) **immovable**, (we will see this in the last of the verse in Colossians 1:23, where believers are not to be moved away from the truth of Scripture. **always abounding in the work of the Lord**, (here is what we are studying—*doing good works throughout your life*, remember good works, good deeds refers to everything we do in the power and leading of the Holy Spirit) **knowing** (you do not know if your Pastor-Teacher does not teach you..) **that your toil is not *in vain in the Lord***. Doing good deeds or good works in the power of the Holy Spirit will not be in vain on two levels. First here on earth during your life and then, of course, at the Judgment Seat of Christ which every believer must stand after the rapture. Being steadfast is vital in a warfare, which every believer in JESUS CHRIST is in every day. Your spiritual life, your married life, your morality, every area of your life is under siege.

## 1 Peter 5:8-9

8 **Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil**, (every believer must realize that Satan and his angelic forces of fallen angels is your enemy – the enemy of your spiritual life)

**prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.** (He seeks to devour your spiritual life, your producing of good deeds for the Lord.)

9 **But resist him,** (and how do we resist him) **firm in your faith,** (same principle we are seeing in Colossians 1:23) **knowing** here is that all important word in our lives. Do you know these things **that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.** You are not alone!

This is why we should be on alert, be in prayer for One Another, instead of judging – ever praying for One Another. Sometimes standing firm, being steadfast will bring hurt to your soul and life but you have to stand fast.

The great reformation came about because one man, Martin Luther: “here I stand, I can do no other, God help me”.

What characterizes instability? Always moving from one thing to another; job, husband/wife, city, friends, and oh, yes, churches.

Always moving, always searching, never finding!

People, you have to find a Pastor-Teacher teaching the truth of the Word of God, and be consistent and persistent in the hearing of the Word of God.

This means there will be many things in the teaching of the Word of God that are not of personal interest to you, but you ‘persevere’ and you learn, and then slowly you begin to see how scripture is tied to scripture and you begin to see that those scriptures that were of no personal interest—how they blend in with all other Scripture and there is a joy in knowing the Word of God.

Before we move on in Colossians 1:23 let us note the next verse here in 1 Peter 5:10

10 **After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you** (note the four things that are important to God.)

First **perfect**, this Greek word means to put a thing in its appropriate condition, to establish then **confirm**,

I hope you see it! It is not us who accomplishes the 4 virtues we are studying in Colossians 1:23, it is God the Holy Spirit who does these things. Even faithfulness is not of you, for the flesh does not desire to be faithful in anything related to God and JESUS CHRIST and truth. When we live by Faith in the Holy Spirit, He causes us to be **perfect** for our mission, **confirmed** or able to stand fast **strengthen** this is the only place this is used in the New Testament and while it includes the strengthening of the Holy Spirit when we walk by Faith in the Holy Spirit this word emphasizes the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our souls, and finally **and establish you**.

**This is the same word used in Colossians 1:23 translated *firmly established*.**

So as we look at the list in Colossians 1:23, remember these are not something you do, they are the result of you walking by Faith in the Holy Spirit. These are things the Holy Spirit does in you and with you in your life. Colossians 1:23

23

**if indeed you**

**1 continue in the faith**

living by Faith in the Holy Spirit;

**2 firmly established**

your life has a solid foundation **and**

**3 steadfast,**

able to stand on truth;

and now we move to the fourth phase of becoming holy and blameless in your life before JESUS CHRIST **and**

**4 not moved away from the hope of the gospel**

here is the result of being able to standfast

**not moved away** this is an interesting verb used only here in the New Testament;

It is the Present Passive Participle of a compound verb made up of the prefix *meta*-denoting change of place or condition; and the verb meaning to move. To move from one place to another; to move away from.

Now what do we move away from?

**The hope of the gospel** First, to move away from something means you have to have been there. An unbeliever can never move away from the hope of the gospel because they have never had the hope of the gospel.

So this passage is talking about someone who has believed in JESUS CHRIST as Savior and who has learned some basic doctrines or “**elementary teaching**” (Hebrews 6) and instead of **pressing on to maturity** actually not only moved away from that sound teaching but actually moved away from it or as is stated in **Hebrews 10:39** **shrink back** from advancing.

You will note that this does not say ***be not moved away from the hope of the gospel***, making this an imperative; nor does it say **do not move yourself away** as if this were in the middle voice. This is *passive voice* which means you do not receive being moved away from the hope of the gospel.

Question:

How does a believer receive being moved away from the hope of the gospel?

The answer is found in Galatians 5:16-17

16 **But I say, walk by the Spirit**, we walk by the Spirit when we walk by Faith in the Holy Spirit **and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.**

17 **For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. When you walk in the power and leading of the flesh you receive moving away from the truth of the Word of God and the desires of God for you.**

So again, the decision is yours: will you walk by Faith in the Holy Spirit and fulfill the will of God or will you walk in the desires of your flesh nature and receive turning away from the truth of the gospel? The decision is yours! Either faith or not, the results are of the Holy Spirit or of the flesh.

**From the hope of the gospel –from the ultimate source of the hope of the gospel.**

**Hope** here means CONFIDENCE—confidence that comes from the gospel

It is such a shame when a believer moves away from the confidence of Eternal-Life provided by JESUS CHRIST on the cross. The hope or confidence of the gospel is our eternal life with God and with JESUS CHRIST in a Resurrection Body forever.

While rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ depends on how we live our lives, our Eternal-Life with JESUS CHRIST does not depend on anything we do or don't do. **The confidence of the gospel** is what propels believers to live the Spirit Filled Life and *continue to live by Faith; and being firmly established in Christ and in His Word and to stand fast in that teaching and not moved away from the confidence we have in the Gospel of our so great a salvation.*



The amazing thing about verse 23 is that all three phases of the Plan of God are referred to in this one verse:

Phase 1: The gospel: good news that Christ died for us

Phase 2: All four of the conditions, continue in the faith

Phase 3: Hope of the gospel

Colossians 1:23

23 **away from the hope confidence of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.**

**THAT YOU HAVE HEARD,  
WHICH WAS PROCLAIMED IN ALL CREATION UNDER HEAVEN,  
AND OF WHICH I, PAUL, WAS MADE A MINISTER.**

Colossians 1:23

**if indeed you**

**1 continue in the faith**

**2 firmly established** it means to stand,  
now,

**3 and steadfast**

*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.

