

# We Are Not What We Were

*And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him (Col. 1:21-22)*

## 1. We were Alienated and Hostile

*<sup>21</sup> And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, (Col. 1:21)*

The weight of this verse is found in the phrase “**who once were.**”

Paul is reminding the Colossians how they were before their salvation.

You see, the thing our sin nature fights hardest against is the idea that we are bad people.

... as sinners (in spite of all the evidence to the contrary) as sinners we believe that we are good people ... that most people are basically good.

- Genghis Kahn and Joseph Stalin, they were anomalies.
- Adolph Hitler was an exception to the rule.

... we think that most people are like us and we are good people.

Although the Bible is clear that “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” we live in denial of our original condition.

Paul really highlighted this in first letter to the church in Corinth.

In the early part of the letter of 1 Corinthians Paul reminds them of their pride and tells them that it is because of their pride that their church is divided.

... on the one hand their pride caused them to think that they spirituality superior to their fellow Christian brothers and sisters **and on the other hand** (because of their pride) they became so petty in their feelings of superiority they sued one another in the court of law ... even over church disagreements.

So, just as Paul did with the believers in Colossae Paul reminded the Corinthians of what they used to be.

***<sup>9</sup> Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,<sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.<sup>11</sup> And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. 6:9-11)***

This passage of scripture is important not only because it reminds us of where the Lord has brought us from ...

... but Paul is also very specific about what sin looks like.

... HE GIVES A LIST (certainly not complete, but a list none the less)

- Sexual immorality
- Idolatry
- Adultery
- Homosexuality [the NASB also adds the word effeminate.]
- Thievery
- Greed
- Drunkenness
- Revilers
- Swindlers

Paul wants to remind them of some of the things that sinners do.

... and after this short list Paul makes this bold statement—*and such were some of you*

and any true believer will have to agree—these are some of the things that the Lord Jesus Christ has saved us and delivered us from.

... But sinners won't agree with that.

The sinful nature inside of every unsaved person, will fight, not only to protect and promote sin, but ultimately to punish those who call those deeds evil.

**On Thursday the United States House of Representatives passed what they are calling the Equality Act.**

... it now has to go to the Senate for final approval before becoming the law of the land.

If this ‘equality act’ is passed it will amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ... and it will extend minority status to sexual orientation and gender identity.

While similar bills have been proposed from time to time since the 1970s, this version of the Equality Act was proposed in the 116th United States Congress ...

... and passed in the House of Representatives May 17, 2019 in a bipartisan vote of 236–173.

However, the United States Senate did not act upon the bill when they received it from the House

... even if they had acted, President Trump made it clear that he would veto it.

But since this past election things have changed.

So, again this past Thursday the Equality Act passed in the House by a vote of 224 to 206

It will now move to the Senate.

At its core **The Equality Act** is not about equality ... it is about social re-ordering ...

The Equality Act designates schools, churches, and healthcare organizations as “public accommodations.”

... In other words, this law says that all of these spaces (education/health/religion) belong to the government and therefore is under their jurisdiction.

... I can accept that the public schools and even healthcare organizations ... but CHURCHES?

With the passage of this law the church can be forced to accept the government’s view of sexual orientation and gender identity.

... in its most extreme enforcement people in these spaces (education/health/religion) can be fined or even lose their jobs simply for using the wrong name or pronoun when referring to another individual.

We are not talking about defending the right of all people of every ethnicity to have the same equality, liberty, and freedom ...

... we are talking about a law that is equating behavior with one's biological ethnicity and gender.

Listen to what Paul wrote the church in Galatia...

***<sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise. (Gal. 3:28-29)***

Paul says it doesn't matter what your **ethnicity** (Jew or Greek) what your **economic status** (slave or free) or **gender** (male or female) ... we are all equal and one in Christ Jesus.

... do you notice what IS NOT in that list—behavior!

Behavior and lifestyle will never rise to the level of ethnicity or gender.

This “Equality Act” is at its very core, is both racist and misogynistic.

... ultimately the Equality Act will oppress people because of their ethnicity, and it will oppress women.

*In a Wall Street Journal op-ed article posted on Jan. 22 Olympic track and field coach Linda Blade said, “the leadership skills, all the benefits society gets from letting girls have their protected category so that competition can be fair, all the advances of women's rights—that's all going to be diminished ... parents of teen girls are generally uninterested in watching their daughters being demoralized by the blatant unfairness of a rigged competition.*

Here is what many people just don't get ...

... God's classification of something as sin or sinful does not hurt or marginalize anyone ...

... God's classification of sin is intended to warn and protect!

This, "Equality Act" mandate will force medical professionals to engage in gender transition treatments as well as surgeries... even for children.

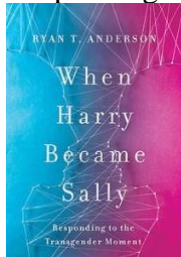
I'm saying that not only will this "Equality Act" oppress people because of their ethnicity and gender ... it will abuse of children.

There is no greater abuse of children than to **invest them with the power** to make irreversible life changing decisions even before they are old enough to even understand life itself.

... Jesus says (in the old KJV) "*Suffer the little children to come unto me*"

... but our government and the power brokers in our society are saying, "*let the children suffer.*"

Some time ago I purchased this digital book by Ryan Anderson. [When Harry became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Moment.]



I hadn't gotten around to reading the book yet, but based on the reviews it argues against the ideology of the transgender activist ...

... this book explores the nature and treatment of gender dysphoria and gives a logical argument against gender transitioning and gender reassignment.

... Now this is not a religious book.

**To quote a book review from the website *Influence*:** "Though Anderson is Catholic, his arguments are secular in character, depending on biology, psychology and philosophy, not Scripture and theology."

In other words, this was just an academic discussion about why the transgender movement is

both wrong and dangerous.

Well, this week I saw an article that said this book (which by the way has been out there 3 years) had been removed from Amazon ... so I went to check my kindle to see if it was there.

... The icon was there but when I selected it to download I was unable to do so.

... It said uninstall and re-download the book.

Then I even lost the icon ... so apparently the news articles were correct.

Although Adolph Hitler's *Mein Kampf* is still available on Amazon, this book critiquing the transgender movement is not.

[For the record. The book is still available on Google books as well Barnes and Noble.]

There is no greater injustice than to remove the "stop signs" from intersections of life.

... and that is what The Equality Act is about ...

... It is about moving God's Moral stop signs.

Remember Satan hates God and he hates God's creation and God's ultimate creation was humanity ...

- This is why Satan tempted Adam and Eve in the garden to sin
- This is why Satan is trying to remove every roadblock to sin in our society

And we have politicians and financial powerbrokers working in tandem with Satan.

Look back at what point #1 says: **We were Alienated and Hostile**

The real reason our legislators, senators, and president will pass and sign the "Equality Act" ...

... is because every unbeliever is **alienated from God ....**

Ultimately the issue isn't that we have a SIN problem ... the issue is that we have a GOD problem.

As sinners we were alienated from God, hostile in our minds toward God, and therefore we did evil deeds.

... and we challenged anyone who called those deeds evil. [Who are you to judge me?]

This has been the situation since Genesis 3.

- Joseph's brothers captured him, threw him into a pit, and sold him into slavery.
- When the prophet Elijah came into the throne room—Ahab called him a troublemaker.
- The wicked princes of King Darius hated Daniel's prayer life and tricked the king into signing a decree to get Daniel cast into the lion's den.
- They threw the prophet Jeremiah into a dungeon.
- The Pharisees called Jesus a blasphemer in an attempt to discredit his teachings.

As sinners we love our sin, we protect and defend our sin BECAUSE we are alienated from God and completely hostile in our minds toward God and the things of God.

Although our sins have been forgiven and forgotten we need to remember what we used to be

... so, just as Paul reminded the Corinthians and the Colossians of what they used to be we also need to be reminded of where God has brought us from.

*And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him (Col. 1:21-22)*

## **2. We have been reconciled by his death**

*<sup>22</sup> he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death... (Col. 1:22a)*

Sinners are alienated from God and they need to be reconciled ...

... this is what the gospel is all about.

... and there is no reconciliation without the death of the Lord Jesus Christ...

However, this phrase is so common in scripture and in Christian talk that I'm afraid we have a tendency to take it for granted.

This phrase, "**in his body of flesh**" is really quite remarkable.

The Greek word for *body* is the word **SOMA** and the Greek word *flesh* is the word **SARX**.

Paul intentionally uses these two words in order to push back against a heresy that was growing in the Colossian church.

... there were a group of people that, although they believed that Jesus was fully God, they did not believe that Jesus was fully human

... they believed that Jesus only seemed or appeared to have a human body ... and only appeared to die.

This heretical group was teaching and preaching "another Jesus" ... not the Jesus of the Bible.

Paul is pointing to the Jesus of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John ...

- It was a flesh and blood Savior that was nailed to the cross.
- It was a flesh and blood Savior that died on that terrible cross.
- And it is in the death of that flesh and blood body that we are reconciled
- ... **and I might add**, that at the right hand of the Father, NOW, interceding for all believers ... is our flesh and blood Savior the Lord Jesus Christ!

Because Jesus is 100% man, he could die for me ... and because Jesus is 100% God, that death has reconciled me to the Father!

*And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him (Col. 1:21-22)*



- I was alienated and hostile to God
- I have been reconciled by the death of Jesus
- ... and NOW

### 3. We are **holy, blameless and above reproach**

*...in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, (Col. 1:22b)*

I love that phrase “in order to” ...

Here Paul is telling us God’s ultimate purpose for our reconciliation.

Jesus has reconciled us to the Heavenly Father in order that he might **PRESENT US.**

Paul writes something very similar to the Ephesian church ...

*<sup>25</sup> ... Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. (Eph. 5:25-27)*

Notice Jesus gave Himself for the purpose of sanctifying us ... that He might present to Himself

... the church in all her glory without spot or wrinkle...

And both in Colossians and Ephesians Paul uses the words “holy” and “blameless”

... of course, when writing to the Colossians Paul also adds “above reproach.”

There are three very wonderful words and rather than define these words myself ...

... I want to use what Paul writes to other churches to illustrate what he means by these words.

*HOLY- He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. 5:21)*

*BLAMELESS- There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8:1-2)*

*BEYOND REPROACH - <sup>28</sup> And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. <sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? (Rom. 8:28-31)*

This is the crowning goal of God's redemptive work ...

... not merely to make us happy ... but to make us holy

... not simply to deliver us from penalty of sin ... but to make us pure even as Jesus is pure.

... not that we would be just be blameless before sinful man ... but unblameable before a holy God.

This is what should govern our lives.

This is what should ground us when the world around us is falling apart.

... we must forever be anchored to the reality that there is a **power** working in us that is going to make us just like Jesus Christ!

<sup>2</sup> **Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. <sup>3</sup> And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. (1 John 3:2-3)**