An Analysis of the Greek Text of Colossians 1:21-23

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A Term Paper
Presented to Dr. Barry Blackburn
Atlanta Christian College
East Point, Georgia

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As a Requirement in
GRK 402
Greek IV

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By
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March 2011
In Colossians 1:21-23 (NIV) Paul\(^1\) brings out an unusual concept that he only mentions in four of his other writings\(^2\): reconciliation (v. 22). There was at one point were the Colossians were estranged from God; at this time they could not even call him a friend. Due to their evil thoughts and intentions they were enemies of God (v. 21). Yet through the death of Christ, God reconciled them to be holy, without blemish, and free from accusation (v. 22).

I will work from the Greek text jointly appearing in the fourth edition of *The Greek New Testament* (United Bible Societies/UBS) and in the twenty-seventh edition of *Novum Testamentum* (Nestle-Aland)\(^3\) for the purpose of conducting a careful analysis of this paragraph in Colossians. My effort will be to focus on ambiguities in the text, which are primarily text-critical, lexical, and syntactical. The possible options in each case I will record and document. I will then undertake an assessment to determine the options that are the more/most probablereading of this text. For the sake of space, only textual variations displayed by UBS\(^4\) will be treated. I will also use the Pauline corpus to show Paul’s vocabulary and linguistic formulations, Aside from ambiguities, I

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\(^1\)This paper is written with the assumption that Paul was the author of all the deutero-Pauline letters except for the Pastoral Epistles. D. A. Carson and Douglas Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 554-68 gives arguments for the Pauline authorship of the deutero-Pauline epistles include the Pastoralas well as some of the deutero-Paulines. Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament* (3rd ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010), 221-401, gives a recent defense of the Pastoralas Pauline. Carl R. Holladay, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 421-25 argues against the Pauline authorship of the Pastoralas. From the Pastoralas, I will cite vocabulary, linguistic, and theological parallels, but I will not give these data the same interpretational primacy as those derived from the other Pauline letters.

\(^2\)See Rom 5:10; 1 Cor 7:11; 2 Cor 5:18-20; and Eph 2:16.


\(^4\)Ibid.
will use other data to shed light on the text in question by clarifying grammatical constructions, unusual word order, and the significance of certain tenses.

Prior to the detailed analysis of Col. 1:21-23, it will be helpful to situate these verses in their broader context. From the start of the prior paragraph (vv. 15-20) Paul announces the supremacy of Christ (ο̃V ejstìn eijkw;n tou: qeou: tou: ajoravtou, 1:15). “All things were created by him and for him, and in him all things are held together” (vv.16-17). Paul states that Christ is the head of the body which is the church and that through his resurrection he is supreme over everything (v. 18). God himself was pleased that his fullness dwell within Christ, and that through his blood shed on the cross he might reconcile all things to him (vv. 19-20). In this paragraph Paul focuses all attention on Christ and his full supremacy. Throughout this paragraph Paul only uses third person pronouns and verbs, thus focusing only on Christ and the God at work through him. It is not until v.21 that we find the second person pronoun ᾦμα:V, shifting the thought to the Colossians.

After v. 23, there comes another shift in emphasis. The author segues into vv. 24-29 by ου̇ ejgenovmhn ejgw; Pau:loV diavkonoV (v. 23) the last cause of vv. 21-23. Notice the use of the verb’s person and number, the switch from second person plural to first person singular and the personal pronoun ejgwv. The subject switches from the readers of the letter, the Colossians, to Paul.

In order to show continuity between the verses that preceded vv. 15-20 and vv. 21-23, we need to notice a word they have in common, ἀξιωσασσω (the reconciliation noted in vv. 15-20 is that accomplished through Christ, he is the fullness

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5Unless noted all scripture will come from the New International Version/NIV, 1984.
6See both clause and following paragraph for the shift. Note verbs caiwrw and ajntanaphrw: in v. 24, egenovmhn in v. 25, and kopiw: in v. 29. Also note the switch in personal pronouns to first person, mou in v. 24 as well as ejgw; and moi in v. 25.
of God and all things through him are reconciled) yet in vv. 21-23 the Colossians are singled out as the ones that are reconciled. Even though there is a change of emphasis, the thought of reconciliation between vv. 12-20 and vv. 21-23 is the same.

The clause found in v. 23 (\textit{\textbf{ouj ejgenomhn ejgw; Pau:loVdiavkonoV}}) firmly notes the continuity between vv. 21-23 and vv. 24-2:5. Through this clause Paul is leading us into the next line of conversation which is found in v. 26: \textit{to; musthvrion} ("the mystery"). He is clearly pointing us back to vv. 21-23, yet more specifically to v. 23, \textit{tou:}

\textit{eujaggelivou ouj hjkouvsate,}

Colossians 1:21-23 contains one complex sentence. In the structure of this sentence \textit{ajpokathvllaxen} (v.22) is the main verb, found in the 2nd aorist active indicative singular third person form, giving us the meaning, “he reconciled.” “He” refers to God, the author of reconciliation. The Colossians (\textit{uJma:V,} v.22) are the direct object of the reconciliation. God’s purpose of the reconciliation is that he might present the Colossians before him holy, without blemish, and accusation free. Finally, v. 23 contains the condition (\textit{ei[ “if”]} that must be fulfilled in order for God’s purpose to be realized: the Colossians must remain established and firm in the faith of the gospel.

\textbf{Reconciliation: Christ and the Colossians}

\textbf{Colossians 1: 21-23}

\textbf{Verse 21}

\textbf{Kaiv uJma:V}
**Kaiv** is by far the most frequently found conjunction. Here in v. 21 it is used to introduce a result of the Colossians reconciliation to God through the death of Christ.7

The finding of the 2nd person pronoun **uJma:V** in this position is somewhat unusual. Simple sentence structure in the Greek (through freer than in some languages) have certain habits and tendencies. Sentences usually begin with verb or nominal predicate with its copula, then the subject, object, supplementary participle, etc.8 Finding the **uJma:V**, the object referring to the Colossians, before the subject and verb is unusual. (Blass states that these positions are by no means mandatory. When the emphasis is on an element in a sentence, the element is moved forward.9) Robertson also gives the same argument with a bit more emphasis. Not only can the emphasis be at the end as well as at the beginning but also in the middle in the case of antithesis. The emphasis consists in removing a word from its usual position to an unusual one.10

**Pote...nuniv/nu:n**

Wallace refers to this combination as a correlative conjunction (a paired conjunction) used to show the comparison of time, **potev**: “once” . . . **nuniv/nu:n**: “now.”11 In the Pauline corpus this phrasing occurs many times and in many different ways. The chart below will demonstrate a few of the different ways.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th><strong>potev</strong></th>
<th><strong>nuniv/nu:n</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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Col. 3:7-8 | ejn oiV kai; ujmeiV periepathvsatev pote nuni; de; ajpovqesqe kai; ujmeiV ta; pavnta

Eph. 2:11-13 | Dio; mnhmoneuvete o{ti pote; uJmeiV ta; e[qnh ejn sarkiv, . . . o{ti h`te tw/; kairw;/ ejkeivnw/ cwri;V Cristou:, ajphlottiwrmevnoi th:V politeivav tou: jirah;l kai; xevnoi tw:/n diaqhkwn th:V ejpaggeliaV, ejlpivda mh; e[conteV kai; a[qeoi ejn tw/: kovsmw/.

Eph. 5:8 | htje ga;r pote skovtoV

From these examples we can attempt to choose the proper translation for pote . . . nuniv. Because we know that it denotes a change in state, and because our passage speaks of pre-conversion and post conversion states then it seems probable that “formerly . . . now” is the best option.

[OntaV ajphlottiwrmevnoV kai; ejcqrou;V

Perfect periphrasis and predicate accusative are two different augments regarding this section of v. 21, which I would like to present. Both Blass and Robertson are in agreement that perfect periphrasis is the best context for the reading of this section of v. 21, while the context should be viewed as a predicate accusative is the view of Wallace. In regards to prefect periphrasis Blass offers us this statement; “Periphrasis may even be used for the participle, however they are to express still more forcibly the persistence of the new state of things.”¹² Robertson tells us that the periphrastic use of a participle in common in the N. T. and the oldest usage would be the perfect tense, dating

¹² Blass, Grammar, 179, (sect. 352).
as far back as we can go. He states, “ονταV ajphllotpiwmevvouV is found in the periphrasis perfect tense.”

Wallace disagrees with both of these arguments referring to v. 21 as a predicate accusative in which an accusative substantive stands in predicate relation to another, this can also be found in adjective form as well. This construction is fairly uncommon, yet ονταV ajphllotriwmenvouV and ejcqrouvV are used as predicate accusatives, this would allow both of them to modify ιJma:V as the direct object of ajpokathvlaxen.

Participles are often times difficult to understand as they can take on several forms (usage), found in unusual word order, and locating the main verb is rather difficult. Participles may take on the form of a noun, verb, adverb, or adjective in any mood. The location of participles can be found often at the end of a sentence or any other location causing the location of the main verb. The main verb in this since can only be implied or not at all as well as found verses away. As an adjectival proper participles can function as an adjective. An attributive participle is commonly found where the predicate participle is rarely found.

jA pallotriovw is the lexical form for the participle ajphllotriwmenvvouV, (when translated it means “to alienate.”) Paul uses this verb only two other times in his writings. Both are found in Ephesians, and both speak of pre- and post- conversion. Again both usages are found in the participial form, yet only one of the two has the same meaning of an alienation toward God as in Col 1:21, ajphllotriwmenvvoi th:V zwh:V tou:

qeous: dia; th:V a[gnonian th:n ou\san ejn auijtoi:V (Eph. 4:18). This “being alienated” is

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13 Robertson, Grammar, 374-375.
14 Wallace, Grammar, 190-191. He list our text to affirm his support of this reading with Matt 4:18; 9:9; Luke 21:37; 23:33; John 2:9; Acts 3:2; 9:11; 15:37; 17:16; 27:8, 16; Rom 16:1; Eph 2:1; Col 1:21; 2:13; 1 Tim 1: 12-13; Rev 16:16 all fall into this category.
something Paul has expressed rather harshly and is not a matter in which the readers should take lightly.

Two chapters earlier in Ephesians we find the same participial form of \textit{ajpallotriovw} although the meaning of the word is slightly different than in Col. 1:21. The alienation is toward God yet more so to the citizenship of the Jewish Christians and everything that comes along with that, \textit{ajphllotriwmevnoi} . . . \textit{tou jlsph;l kai; xevnoi tw:n diaqhkw:n th:V ejpaggelivaV}, . . . (Eph. 2:12). Paul gives us insight on what “being alienated” means for the readers of this letter.

With both positions able to be justified as well as the other, and the fact that neither option has different translation or impression on the text, it makes it very difficult to determine the most probable option. I am uncertain as to which should be chosen as the correct construction for our text. Since the translation is not affected by this problem, I am comfortable leaving this phrase in the realm of the unknown.

\textit{jecqrouvV}

According to Bauer, \textit{jecqrouvV}, though having two possible meanings depending on voice,\textsuperscript{15} it is most commonly used in an active manner.\textsuperscript{16} Translating \textit{jecqrou;V} passively in the immediate context of v. 21 would not fit. The active definition Bauer gives is “pert. to being hostile,” while his glosses are “hating” and “hostile.”\textsuperscript{17} If

\textsuperscript{15} Bauer, BADG, 419. He states that the only probable usage of the passive meaning in the NT can be found in Rom. 11:28, though he admits that there is still a possibility that even here it could be used actively.

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, 419.

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid, 419.
ejcqrou;V were translated as passive, it would cause th:/ dianoiva/ to not make any sense.

Another issue is the use of ejcqrouvV as a noun or adjective. Although it is technically an adjective, it can also take the form of a noun better known as a substantival adjective.18 Wallace’s definition of this form is “the adjective is frequently used independently of a noun. That is, it can function as a substantive (in which case it either implies a noun or takes on the lexical nuance of a noun).”19 The substantival form is not the case in v. 21, as mentioned earlier with regards to the adjective form of a participle, however o[vntaV ajphllotrimenouV is viewed, ejcqrou;V has to be viewed as an adjective that gives a larger description of the direct object “uJma:V.” One other time, in Romans 5:10, Paul uses ejcqrouvV to show hostility to God, eij ga;r ejcqroi; o[nteV kathkkavjmen tw: qew: . . .

When speaking of relationship of an adjective to a noun two normal possibilities come to mind; attributive or predicate. In either case the relationship is to modify the noun or assert something about it. The normal key of discernment of this relationship is when the article is present. When there is no article present as seen in v. 21 it makes determining the relationship between a noun and adjective more difficult, Wallace defines anarthrous adjective-noun construction as a “type of construction occurs almost 2400 times in the NT, over one fourth of all adjective-noun constructions ...In the anarthrous construction, since the article is absent, the position of the adjective does not

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18 Paul’s usage as a noun Rom 11:28, 12:20; 1 Cor 15:25-26; Gal 4:16; Php 3:18; 2 Th 3:15.
19 Wallace, Grammar, 294.
determine its relation to the noun.”

Th:/ dianoiva/ evn

Syntactical and lexical issues have to be dealt with in regards to th:/ dianoiva/.

The usage of dianoiva/ in the NT is rare and even more so in the Pauline corpus. The most probable of Bauer’s definitions would be the one that both he and Louw/Nida agree on listed under “mind as a mode of thinking.” The more important discussion is how to handle it in the dative case. There are several ways in which the dative case can be used. There are only a few that would make sense in the context of v. 21. Listed below is a chart to help organize the options, their meaning, and what are the pros and cons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Standing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dative of Reference</td>
<td>Used to qualify a statement that would typically not be true. Translated “with reference to.”</td>
<td>Poor, easily confused for Dative of Sphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative of Rule</td>
<td>Specifies the rule or code a person follows or the standard of conduct to which he or she conforms. Translated “in conformity with.”</td>
<td>Rarely used but possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative of Sphere</td>
<td>Indicates the sphere or realm in which the word to which it is related take place or exists. Translated “in the sphere of.”</td>
<td>Fairly common, Probable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative of Cause</td>
<td>Indicates the cause or basis of the action of the verb. Translated “because of.”</td>
<td>Makes little sense, plausible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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21 The pre-conversion conditions are founded in earlier mentioned parallel text found in Eph 2:3 and 4:18.
23 Chart quoted from Wallace, *Grammar*, 144-68.
Out of the four possible choices there are three that stand out, Dative of Reference, Dative of Sphere, and Dative of Cause. Regarding the text in v. 21, Dative of Reference does not seem to fit. To use the Dative of Reference would mean “that the word to which the dative stands related as detached or separated somehow from the dative.”24 Dative of Sphere as well does not seem to fit. To use the Dative of Sphere to read th:/ dianoiva/ would mean “the word to which the dative stands related as incorporated within the realm of the dative.”25 Leaving the most logical choice to, Dative of Cause,26 to use this dative case “th:/ dianoiva” would indicate the cause or basis of the action of the verb. When used in conjunction with the preposition “ejn,” under the Bauer definition “marker of cause or reason,”27 Paul is stating that the Colossians at one point have been alienated and hostile in their minds toward God by using ejn, if translated as “because,” he shows them that their alienation and hostility has been ejn (“because of”) toi:V e[rgoiV toi:V ponhroi:V.

Toi:V e[rgoiV toi:V ponhroi:V

Since both of these words and their articles are grouped as “Second Attributive Position” I will discuss them together. To understand the second attributive position, Wallace states that “the difference in the placement of the adjective is not one of relation, but of position and emphasis.”28 Robertson agrees but in his statement: “both substantive and adjective receives emphasis and the adjective is added as a sort of

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24 Wallace, Grammar, 154.
25 Ibid. 153.
26 Ibid.197.
27 Bauer, BADG, 326-330.
climax in apposition with a separate article.”29 The grouping of these two words is rather rare in the NT. It is only found twice,30 the antecedent gives us a better understanding of the cause of the Colossians alienation and hostility toward God.

Verse 22

jApokathvilaxen

The reading of ajpokathvilaxen as well as its four variants is a problem that needs to be discussed; only two of the five can claim to be the original reading.31 I will start with the three that are the most unlikely first, dismiss them, and then move on to the two most favorable.

jAphkkaxen is the second variant32 listed in the critical apparatus of UBS4.33 The problem lies in that this textual variant’s only witnesses are from two late 11th century minuscule.34 The third variant listed is ajpokathvilaktai.35 The only witnesses to this reading are miniscule 33 from the 6th century.36 This variant not only has limited support but it goes against normal Pauline thought. Paul never describes God as being “reconciled.” The third unlikely variant is listed in the critical apparatus of UBS4 as the

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29 Robertson, Grammar, 777.
30 Found in 2 Tim. 4:18 in the genitive case, rather in the dative and 2 Jn. 1:11.
31 Textual variants 1 and 4 are the two texts that will be dealt with. The other three will be briefly reviewed and then dismissed.
32 For the sake of the argument, the textual variants given in the critical apparatus of UBS4 will be discussed out of order.
33 Translated “he released;” 1 Aorist Active Indicative 3 person singular.
34 104 459 (/921 kathvilaxen). See UBS4, Col 1:22. It is safe to assume that due to so little support and its late date this is not the most probable choice as it is the original reading.
35 Translated “he has been reconciled;” perfect passive indicative 3 person singular.
fifth variant, \textit{ajpokatallagevnteV}.\textsuperscript{37} The problem with this variant is not found in the lack of witnesses;\textsuperscript{38} rather the problem lies in how it changes the structure of the sentence by removing the main verb and causing v. 21 to stand alone.

The two variants that will now be discussed have a legitimate claim to be the original readings: \textit{ajpokathvllaxen} and \textit{ajpokathllavgnte}. In the critical apparatus, \textit{ajpokathvllaxen} begins the listings of textual variants and is supported by a number of witnesses of various types that date back to the 4\textsuperscript{th} century. The Codex Sinaiticus is the earliest manuscript this variant is found in as well as nearly all minuscules, church fathers, and versions.\textsuperscript{39} With the exception of Bruce Metzger, the editors of the UBS Greek NT chose this word because of the strong evidence.\textsuperscript{40} When considering the evidence, this variant makes acceptable sense, although, according to Metzger, “if this were the original reading, it is exceedingly difficult to explain why the other readings should have arisen.”\textsuperscript{41} This variant makes more sense as a correction of a possible change of syntax within this sentence structure.

The last variant that will be discussed also has a legitimate claim as the text’s original reading: \textit{ajpokathllavghte}.\textsuperscript{42} Although it has fewer witnesses, the ones it has are strong.\textsuperscript{43} The highest level of credibility of the four witnesses are the P46 (dating back to

\textsuperscript{37}Translated “having been reconciled;” 1 aorist passive participle masculine plural nominative.
\textsuperscript{38}D\* F G itb, d, s vgms Irenaeus\textsuperscript{lat}; Ambrosiaster Speculum. See UBS4, Col 1:22. This reading has a reasonable amount of witnesses, though among them is “Codex Bezae,” which has more variants than any other manuscripts (see Metzger, \textit{Text}, 70-75) and manuscripts of the Western text type.
\textsuperscript{39}Bruce G. Metzger, \textit{A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, 2nd ed.} (Freiburg: United Bible Societies, 1994), 554-555, sect 1.22.
\textsuperscript{40}A C D* Y 048 075 0150 6 81 256 263 265 424 436 1175 1241 1319 1573 1739 1852 1881 1912 1962 2127 2200 Byz [K L P] Lect it\textsuperscript{ar}, l, mon vg syr, h arm eth slav geo (Adamantius\textsuperscript{9}) Chrysostom Severian Theodore\textsuperscript{9} Cyril; Jerome Pelagius. See UBS4, Col 1:21.
\textsuperscript{41}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{42}Translated “you were reconciled,” 2 aorist passive indicative 2\textsuperscript{nd} person plural.
\textsuperscript{43}(P46 \textit{ajpokathllavghte}) B Adamantius\textsuperscript{lat}; Hilary.
200 A.D.) and the Codex Vaticanus. This variant has strong support from Metzger that it makes more sense to correct a problematic reading rather than a corrector to change an acceptable reading to problematic. The claim this variant has as the original reading rests on the fact that it is problematic, which leads to the other variants as more or less successful ways to correct the syntax of the sentence.

With regards to the earlier date of P46 along with Metzger’s arguments for his choice of the original variant, ajpokathlavghte, I must disagree. ajpokathvlaxen is the more probable choice as the original reading because the external support is so much stronger. With only a few occurrences in the New Testament of ajpokathlavsw and katallavsw neither variants lend any support to Metzger’s suggested reading of the text.

The subject of who ajpokathvlaxen is referring to is worth mentioning in this discussion. There are two choices: patriv (v. 12) or pa:n to; plhvrwma (v. 19). To assume that pa:n to; plhvrwma is the subject in v. 19 as it is mentioned with reconciliation would be easy, although a shift occurs from the fullness that is dwelling in Christ to God eujdovdhsen . . . di j aujtou: ajpokatallavxai. The clear understanding in the Pauline corpus is that God is the one who is reconciling as seen in 2 Cor. 5:18-20. One other witness to this fact comes from v. 12 when Paul gives thanks to God for doing the reconciling. When understood this way, God is the subject of ajpakathvlaxen and pa:n to; plhvrwma is the instrument through which he accomplishes the reconciliation.

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44 See Metzger, Text, 555, sect. 1.22 for additional information on P46.
45 Ibid.
46 Occurs twice: Eph 2:16 and Col 1:20, neither support Metzger’s variant
47 Occurs Five times: Rom 5:11, 1 Cor 7:11, 2 Cor 5:18, 5:19, and 5:20.
48 Translated; “God was pleased to reconcile through him.”
Here is a more difficult use of the preposition *ejn*. Its uses must be understood because of the phrase that follows it. The decision must be made on whether *tw:/ swvmati th:V sarko;V* modifies *ajpokathvllaxen* or *qanavtou*. Bauer’s definition of *qanavtou* is a “marker of a position defined as being in a location.” This would have to be used if *qanavtou* is chosen as it would emphasize the location where the reconciliation occurred. Although if *ajpokathvllaxen* is the one chosen, Bauer’s definition, a “marker introducing means or instrument” would have to be used as it brings an emphasis to the means by which the reconciliation was accomplished. Wallace gives more information to help in making a decision as to which reading should be chosen. “...in general, the prepositions that take accusative and dative case objects function adverbially, while those that take a genitive case object often function adjectivally.” With this information, the assumption that because the object of *ejn* is a dative, then the phrase following it is functioning adverbially, making the emphasis not on the location of the reconciliation, rather on the means: *tw:/ swvmati*.

The two issues that will be addressed are syntactical and lexical in regards to *tw:/ swvmati*. Syntactical will be dealt with first; the use of what dative case must be decided and this decision depends solely on the usage of the word they follow, “*ejn*.” Since the

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49 *tw:/ swvmati th:V sarko;V dia; tou: qanavtou.*
51 Ibid.
52 Wallace, *Grammar*, 357.
decision was made in regards to the reading of ejnas bring attention to the means by which the reconciliation is accomplished,-tw:/ swvmati must also be read under the usage of a dative of means.

Lexical will now be dealt with, which is what is meant by the word swvmati. The meaning appears in both Bauer and Louw/Nida. Listed under the occurrence in v. 22 under the sub-definition “the living body,” Bauer defines sw:ma as “body.” In agreement with Bauer, Louw/Nida gives the definition as “the physical body of persons, animals, or plants, either dead or alive.” The question still remains: is this speaking of the physical body of Christ or a metaphor for the church? It is unlikely a metaphor but rather the physical body of Christ because of th:V sarko;V aujtou: which follows sw:ma.

**Th:V sarko;V**

Found in our reading in its genitive form, savrx is clearly linked to tw:/ swvmati. Bauer offers this definition: “the material that covers the bones of a human or animal body.” With this evidence tw:/ swvmati should be read as the physical body of Christ. There is one other place where sw:ma is compared to savrx. It is found in Col 2:11. Though different in context, the meaning is the same. With sw:ma and savrx used together in both instances, Paul ensures the understanding as Christ’s earthly, human, physical body.

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53Bauer, BADG, “sw:ma.”
54Louw/Nida, 8.1.
What sort of genitive is \textit{th}:\textit{V sarko};\textit{V}? There are three possibilities that will be dealt with in this order, descriptive genitive, genitive of material, and attributive genitive.

1. Descriptive genitive: “the least likely choice, it describes the head noun in a loose manner. Referred to by Wallace as the “catch-all, drip pan, and the black hole of genitives. . . although all adjective genitives are, by their nature, descriptive, very few, if any, belong only to this specific category of usage. . . Hence, this use of the genitive should be a last resort.”  

2. Genitive of Material: “specifies the material out of which the head noun is made, usage is quite rare in the NT (more frequently stated with “\textit{ejk}” + gen.). This is a - possibility,” this is listed as an example of our text along with the next genitive.

3. Attributive genitive: “specifies an attribute or innate quality of the head substantive.” Robertson states “to express quality like an adjective indeed, but with more sharpness and distinctness.” Wallace further states “If the noun in the genitive can be converted into an attributive adjective, modifying the noun to which the genitive stands related, then the genitive is very likely an attributive genitive.” Evidence shows the frequent usage of this type of genitive with \textit{swvma} within the Pauline corpus that matches this text.

Out of the three possibilities presented along with both Wallace and Robertson, the attributive genitive seems to best support this text.

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56Wallace, \textit{Grammar}, 79-81  
57Ibid., 91-92.  
58Ibid., 86-88.  
59Robertson, \textit{Grammar}, 496.  
61Ibid. Occurrences: Rom 6:6; 7:24; Phil 3:21; Col 2:11.
There are two probable choices to answer the question, how is diav functioning? They are denoting instrumentality or agency. The best possible choice is instrumentality due to the lists of occurrences Bauer list the definition “marker of instrumentality or circumstance whereby something is accomplished or effected.” Since it has been established that the reconciliation was accomplished by God through tw:/ swvmati th:V sarko;V of Christ.

Bauer defines the usage of this work as relating specifically to the “death of Christ.” Observing the context, there does not seem to be any other way of using this word other than speaking of the death of Christ. As it has been established, diav is used to denote instrumentality making it clear that tou: qanavtou: must take on the same usage and function as that instrument. There is nothing ambiguous about this word other than these concerns.

Parasth:sai uJma:V

In dealing with the issues of this reading, most are syntactical with one lexical. I will deal with the lexical first then move on to the syntactical. Both Louw/Nida and Bauer list this verse under the sub-definition “to make, render” and “to cause to be, to cause to serve as, to make something be,” as well as they agree on the translation of

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63 Bauer, *BADG*, qanavtou 1b. Pauline corpus similar occurrences: Rom 5:10; 6:3-5; I Cor 11:26; Phil 2:8a.
64 Ibid, parivsthmi, 1c.
65 Louw/Nida, *L&N*, 13.11. Note this parasth:sai is the example used as this meaning.
parasth:sai as “to present.”66 Here is another question that needs an answer: Is Paul thinking of an eschatological courtroom-like setting or sacrificial metaphor? Similar verses suggest this picture painted by Paul is eschatological.67 There is no question that the Colossians are assuming that they have been reconciled and they will one day be presented in this future court-room like event due to the ιδμα:V that follows immediately after parasth:sai.

Just how does parasth:sai function in v. 22 and how is it construed? Wallace and Blass give a logical choice: adverbial use of purpose, “used to indicate the purpose or goal of the action or state of its controlling verb. It answers the question “Why?” in that it looks ahead to the anticipated and intended results.”68 That information from both Wallace and Blass will help to answer how parasth:sai is construed, rather as an aorist or present. If construed as a present infinitive, then it carries a “durative or iterative”69 reference rather than the implication that is carried by the aorist infinitive. If construed as an aorist infinitive it carries a reference to the point of time that it occurs. In understanding the syntactical usage of parasth:sai as, “adverbial use of purpose” and the anticipated and intended future, courtroom-like presentation, the aorist tense best compliments that because it references the point of time of when the event will occur.

JAgivouV kai; ajmwvmouV kai; ajnegklhvtouV

67Other occurrences of the eschatological view of parasth:sai, I Cor 8:8; 2 Cor 4:14; Eph 5:27; Col 1:28.
68Wallace, Grammar, 590-592. Blass gives the same suggestion with further discussion in his grammar,§ 390.
69Blass, Grammar, § 388.
There are only a few other occurrences in the Pauline corpus where these three words are used together.70 Bauer defines \textit{ajgivouV} as “pert. to being dedicated or consecrated to the service of God, (b) of humans and transcendent beings,”71 \textit{ajmwvmouV} as “pert. to being without fault and therefore morally blameless (a) of pers.,”72 and \textit{ajnegklhvtouV} as “blameless, irreproachable.”73 The usage of these words together is a massive shift from the previous reference of Colossians, \textit{o[ntaV ajphllotriwme;nouV kai; ejcqrouV}. Notice the drastic difference that Paul views from the pre- and post-conversions of the readers.

\textbf{Katenwvpion}

With no ambiguity found in this word, there still needs to be a determination of whom the \textit{aujtou:} is referring to that follows \textit{katenwvpion}. Bauer defines \textit{katenwvpion} as a “marker of position relative to someone who is viewed as having jurisdiction, whether visibly present or not, before.”74 Louw/Nida agrees with Bauer noting that when used with a genitive case this word functions as a preposition.75 In light of the statements from Bauer and Louw/Nita, it has to be understood that this word commands that the \textit{aujtou:} following it places God the Father as the subject of \textit{ajpokathvllaxen}.

\textbf{Aujtou:}

\footnotesize
70See Eph 1:4 and 5:27; note these occurrences of these words describe a post-conversation reader.
73Ibid, “\textit{ajnegklntoV},” 76. Similar occurrences: 1 Cor 1:8; I Tim 3:10; Tit 1:6f.
74Ibid, “\textit{katenwvpion},” 531, sect. 2. Similar occurrences functioning as prep w/gen.: Eph 1:4; 2 Cor 2:17 v.l.; 12:19 v.l.
75Louw/Nida,\textit{L&N,} 90.20.
With the information above, there is only one option that works in this context (because God must be the one implied here as the one the reader is positioned before as pointed out by Bauer and Louw/Nida in the usage of *katenwpion*). The idea that the subject of *ajpokathvllaxen* is *pa:n to; plhvrwma* is now completely ruled out. It is clear that this cannot be what *katenwpion* refers to.

So why is there not a reflexive pronoun used here? Bauer gives the answer. “Editors variously replace contract forms *aujtou:* and *aujtw:h* of later mss. W. uncontracted forms or w. *aujtou:, aujtw:h,*” leading to the belief that this should be regarded as a reflexive pronoun.” This would make the subject of both *ajpokathvllaxen* and *katenwpion* God.

Verse 23

**Ei[**

**ei]** at the start of this sentence is a signal that the following sentence is a conditional sentence. That being said, what, exactly, is the nature of this conditional sentence? This sentence according to Wallace fits the “first class” of the semantic categories of conditional sentences.” This word is classified under assumed time for the sake of argument and must not be confused with the affirmation of truth. Wallace states, “even in places where the argument is apparently believed by the speaker, the particle **eiij** should not be translated. . . There is great rhetorical power in *if.* To translate **ei jas since**

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77 With this assumption, the suggestion to translate *aujtou,* in this instance, as “himself” to avoid future confusion.
is to turn an invitation to dialogue into a lecture.” 79 This does not make the condition true based on reality but the assumption of reality. 80 In this conditional sentence, Paul is stating that there is a condition that goes along with the reconciliation that the Colossians must remain in, if they wish to be part of the presentation before God.

**Ge**

The combination of *ei* ge is only found in the Pauline corpus four times, 81 with only twice is this usage followed by the indicative. 82 Wallace defines the pairing of these two words as “Emphatic Conjunctions [certainly, indeed], this use appears in various forms and is determined by the context. It usually involves intensifying the normal sense of a conjunction,” 83 Louw/Nida agrees. 84 Not only does Bauer agree with both Wallace and Louw/Nida but offers this definition, “enclit. Particle, appended to the word or words it refers to; as in Hom. + serves to “focus the attention upon a single idea, and place it, as it were, in the limelight: differing thus from dhv, which emphasizes the reality of the concept (though in certain respects the usages of the two particles are similar).” In light of this information, it seems to be clear; Paul is stressing the condition in which the Colossians are to remain, in order to continue in the reconciliation of God.

**jEpimevnete**

Within the Pauline corpus, ejpimevnete is rare with not much ambiguity. Both Bauer and Louw/Nida give ejpimevnete the exact definition “to continue in an

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79 Ibid. Footnote: Although many translations do this in various places, such translations miss the literary force of the conditional statement.
80 Ibid.
81 See other occurrences: Eph 3:2; 4:21; Gal 3:4; 2 Cor 5:3.
82 Note: Eph 3:2; 4:21.
83 Wallace, Grammar, 673, sect F 1.
84 Louw/Nida, L&N, 91.6.
activity or state.”85 Bauer lists ejpimvnete while Louw/Nida does not.86 Within the rare usage of ejpimvnete in the Pauline corpus, this is the only occurrence with th:/ pivstei.87 Although th:/ pivstei is not used in Rom 11:22, Paul is still speaking of “continuing in [God’s] kindness.

Th:/ pivstei

Two issues to deal with: First, we will discuss the meaning of th:/ pivstei in this text. Second, we will discuss if it goes with the following participle or the verb.

Bauer lists three possible headings for pivstiv although only one suits the occurrence here in this text. I will show the most unlikely heading first, “that which is evokes trust and faith” which cannot work with this text, and “that which is believed.” This seems too broad. The heading I most agree with for th:/ pivstei is found under the definition “state of believing on the basis of the reliability of the one trusted, trust, confidence, faith(a) as true piety, genuine devotion, which for our lit. means being a Christian.”88 Louw/Nida’s definition closely matches Bauer’s, “to be a believer, to be a Christian, Christian faith”89 Since the literal definition of this text is “being a Christian,” then exchanging “genuine devotion” to “faith” for the definition of pivstei really defines exactly what our faith has to remain in.

Does th:/ pivstei go with the following participle, teqemelowmevnoi or with the verb, ejpimvnete? We have no support for this reading because there are no other occurrences where th:/ pivstei, or any dative like it occurs with teqemelowmevnoi, I

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85Bauer, BADG, “ejpimvnete”375 (2).
86Louw/Nida, L&N, 68.11.
87Other occurrence: Rom 6:1; 11:22-23; 1 Tim 4:16
88Bauer, BADG, “pivstiv,” 818-820, sect 2 (d.a.).
89Louw/Nida, L&N, 31.102
cannot support this reading. If the dative is linked to *ejpimevnete*, it is probable as there are other occurrences of it with the datives to back up the reading.90

**Tēqemelōmenvnoi kai; ejdrai:oi kai; mh; metakinoumenoi**

*Tēqemelōmenvnoi* has rare usage not just in the NT91 but also in the Pauline corpus, only appearing twice. Notice that there are only two occurrences within the Pauline corpus, Eph 3:17 and our text. There is a remarkable similarity between the use of *teqemeliwmevnoi* in Eph 3:17 and our text. The only thing that is notably different is that *teqemeliwmevnoi* is with *ajgavph/*, translating to “in love . . . being established.”92

Because both of these readings are very similar, as well as the rare usage of them in the Pauline corpus and the New Testament, the assumption is that the basic meanings of both text are the same.

Three of the four usages of *ejdrai:oV* are found in the Pauline corpus. Other than the rarity of this word, there is no ambiguity. Bauer defines *ejdrai:oV* as “pertaining to being firmly or solidly in place.”93 Two of the other occurrences are similar except the fact that 1 Cor 15:58 is understood metaphorically as meaning Christian perseverance. Since both are translated as “firm” or “steadfast,” it is safe to read this text as such.

Out of all three words in this text the rarest is *metakinoumenoi*. Is it a passive or present participle? Throughout the whole New Testament, the occurrence here in this text is only found once. The definition Bauer gives is to “shift, [or] remove.”94 It is wise to take this word as a passive participle due to *teqemeliwmevnoi* being in the passive

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90See other occurrences: Rom 6:1; 11:22-23; 1 Tim 4:16
91See other occurrences: Mt 7:25; Lk 6:48; Eph 3:17; Col 1:23; Heb 1:10.
92See Eph 3:17 “*ejn ajgavph/ ejrriwzwmevnoi kai; teqemeliwmevnoi.*”
94Ibid, “*metakinevw,***” 639.
form. This gives symmetry to both participles. When translated as a passive, the idea that “not be moved,” rather than translated present “not moving” works within our text.95

jApo; th:V elpivdoV

The issue concerning elpivdoV is lexical. Bauer defines elpivdoV by listed it under “the looking forward to something with some reason for confidence respecting fulfillment, hope, expectation: 1 (b) of Christian expectation.”96 Louw/Nida agrees with Bauer as they define elpivdoV, “to look forward with confidence to that which is good and beneficial.”97 Although I do not agree with Bauer (it makes no since to read this as “that which one hopes,”98), reading it with this understanding would imply that our hope is not based on tou: eujaggelivou. I choose his definition “that which is the basis for hoping (foundation of) hope.”99 In light of both Bauer and Louw/Nida, it is clear that this hope is linked to eujaggelivou, and is a part of the conditional statement. The Colossians must hold to this hope in order for their reconciliation and presentation to God to be complete.

Tou: eujaggelivou

Earlier, we established that both elpivdoV and eujaggelivou are linked together as part of the condition. Because of this, it too, must be examined. The issue here is not lexical but syntactical. We must determine the type of genitive this is although the options are limited. “Attributed Genitive” seems the most probable choice, which is

95Note 1 Cor 2:6-7, Paul pleads that “they not be moved by false teaching.”
96Bauer, Grammar, 319-320.
97Louw/Nida, L&N, sect. 25.59.
99Ibid, 320, 2.
defined by Wallace as “the head noun, rather than the genitive, is functioning (in sense) as an attributive adjective.”\textsuperscript{100} In construing \textit{eujaggelivou} in this manner, Bauer offers this statement, “the genitive can also give the basis for the expectation: \textit{ej tou:}

\textit{eujaggelivou hope that is based on the gospel},”\textsuperscript{101} making the translation look like “the hope of the gospel,” rather than “the gospel hope” which would be the normal originate from a genitive. The “Descriptive Genitive,”\textsuperscript{102} Wallace only recommends as a last resort. The only logical choice is the “Genitive of Apposition,” it makes perfect sense to say that the \textit{elpivdoV} is the \textit{eujaggelivou}. If the hope is equal to the gospel, which would be understandable as to why it is so vital that the Colossians not be moved from that hope.

\textbf{Ou| hjkouvsate}

Why is the relative pronoun \textit{ou|} and not \textit{o|} as it would be expected? This is the issue here that has to be addressed. It would be assumed that since the relation of the relative pronoun to \textit{hjkouvsate} it would be in the accusative case, but the case of the relative pronoun does not always follow syntactical agreement. What seems to be happening here is an “attraction of the case to the antecedent.”\textsuperscript{103} Bauer suggests that the relative pronoun is a genitive because \textit{ajkouvw} is speaking of people and not things.\textsuperscript{104} This explains the genitive relative pronoun and fits well with this issue.

\textbf{Tou: khrucqevntoV}

\textsuperscript{100}Wallace, Grammar, 89-91.
\textsuperscript{101}Bauer, Grammar, 320 (b) b.
\textsuperscript{102}Wallace, Grammar, 79-81.
\textsuperscript{103}Ibid, 339. Wallace explains that “this is especially common with the attraction of the accusative of the RP to either the genitive or dative of the antecedent.”
\textsuperscript{104}Bauer, Grammar, “\textit{ajkouvw}”, 38.
It is worth our time to look at *khrucqevntoV*. Although it does not cause any problem for this text, its usages with *eujaggelivou* within the New Testament, as well as the Pauline corpus is what will be discussed. These two words are used together eleven times throughout the New Testament. The majority of these occurrences are found in the teachings of Christ with regards to the good news of God or the Kingdom in the gospels.\textsuperscript{105} In the Pauline corpus, these two words are found three times. They speak of the gospel which has already been preached. In this text, Paul seems confident that the good news has been preached to the Colossians.

*JEn pavsh/ ktivsei*

Paul also expresses confidence that the Colossians have heard the good news preached to them with *ejn pavsh/ ktivsei* following *tou: khrucqevntoV*. Bauer defines and explains *ktivsei* as “the result of a created act, that which is created,” but this is not speaking of creation as a whole, but is “here limited to human beings.”\textsuperscript{106} With the meaning of “all” which comes from *pavsh/*, Paul seems to be restricting the *khrucqevntoV* to humans and that the *eujaggelivou* has been proclaimed to every “*pavsh*” human, *th:/ uJpo; to;n oujanovn*.

*Th:/ uJpo; to;n oujanovn*

There are questions as to Paul’s purpose of this phrase, is he trying to restrict or maximize the statement he just made?\textsuperscript{107} Bauer suggest that “[s]ince the heaven extends

\textsuperscript{105}See other occurrences, Mt 4:23; 9:35; 24:14; 26:13; Mk 1:14; 13:10; 14:9; 16:15; Gal 2:2; Col 1:23; 1Th 2:9.

\textsuperscript{106}Bauer, *BADG*, “*ktivsiV*,” 572.

\textsuperscript{107}Strangely enough, this phrase appears nowhere else in the NT. However there are multiple occurrences in the LXX: Gen 1:9; 6:17; 6:19; Exod 17:14; Deut 2:25; 4:17; 4:19; 9:14; 25:19; 29:20; 2 Kgs 14:27; Esth
over the whole earth, \textit{ujpo; to;noujr}. Under (the) heaven = on the earth, through-out the earth.\textsuperscript{108} Paul seems to be maximizing his previous statement by the usage of this phrase. If Paul’s previous statement, “which has been preached to every human,” did not include \textit{th:/ uJpo; to;n oujranovn}, he would have not expressed his confidence. In ending the entire phrase with this statement, Paul expresses this belief that all geographical locations on earth have heard the \textit{eujaggelivou}.\textsuperscript{109}

\textbf{Ou| ejgenovmhn ejgw; Pau:loV diavkonoV}

This final phrase holds two important issues: why does Paul name himself and what is the exact meaning of \textit{diavkonoV}?

To answer the first question, it would help to know if this is a reoccurring signature in the Pauline corpus. This phrasing occurs five times in the Pauline corpus, and each time this phrase occurs, it is a critical part of the letter.\textsuperscript{110} The Expositor’s Bible offers the suggestion that “[Paul] puts stress on the fact that he became a minister of the gospel, as being an ‘evidence of Christianity.’”\textsuperscript{111} This statement gives the insight that perhaps Paul names himself so that the readers of his letters may gain inspiration from his emphatic phrase.

\textsuperscript{108}Bauer, \textit{Grammar}, “\textit{oujranovn},” 737-739.
\textsuperscript{109}It is possible to believe that the author is referring only to that of the known world, which would have been significantly smaller than what we know it as today.
\textsuperscript{110}2 Cor 10:1; Gal 5:2; Eph 3:11; 1 Th 2:18; Phil 9, by that I mean it is usually at the crux of the author’s main or one of the main pleas or arguments.
\textsuperscript{111}Expositors Bible, see Col 1:23.
Louw/Nida defines diakonoV,\textsuperscript{112} as “one who renders service,”\textsuperscript{113} while Bauer offers more. The definition Bauer gives is “\textbf{one who serves as an intermediary in a transaction},”\textsuperscript{114} and states that it is sometimes employed that “With specific reference of an aspect of the divine message: of the apostles and other prominent Christians charged with its transmission.”\textsuperscript{115} Instead of taking the authoritative title, Paul follows in the steps of Christ by pleading with them as a “servant” to heed the conditions of the reconciliation. Taking the role, not as “apostle” but rather “servant/helper,” Paul helps them understand that the good news also reconciled him.

\textbf{Conclusion}

This text begins with Paul, the author, carefully and intentionally emphasizing to the Colossians what they were at one time and state they were in. Paul explains how they were once separate from God, hostile towards him, and lived according to their evil ways. The language Paul uses was designed to cause them to remember the days before they could call Christ a friend.

As the Colossians begin to understand and remember the state they were once in, he pulls them forward to the time when they acknowledged their reconciliation to God through the death of Christ. Paul paints the Colossians such a picture of Christ’s death in order to describe how wonderful this gift of salvation is. It was through Christ’s death that they can now be presented to God as holy, blameless, and irreproachable, but there is a cost. Paul makes it clear just what the cost is: the Colossians must continue in the

\textsuperscript{112} See other occurrences: Rom 13:4; 15:8; 16:1; 1 Cor 3:5; 2 Cor 3:6; 6:4; 11:15; 11:23; Gal 2:17; Eph 3:7; 6:21; Phil 1:1; Col 1:7; 1:25; 4:7.
\textsuperscript{113} Louw/Nida, \textit{L&N}, sect 35.20.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
hope of the faith and not be moved away from false teachings that would compromise their hopes of being presented to God. This hope is now theirs through the reconciliation of Christ’s death. Paul is confident that this hope has been preached throughout the whole world.

This is the pivotal point of this whole letter to the Colossians; this text is full of emphasis. Paul assures the Colossians of his confidence that they will remain in the faith, but he still wants to remind them of a few things. This letter is a warning to the Colossians: warning them not to fall away, to not lose hope in the gospel, and to encourage them to stand firm in the faith.
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