

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

The Ministry of Reconciliation

Intro: We saw in our previous study that for Paul heaven was not just a Destination – but a Motivation

A) It was a motivation for his ministry unto the Lord

B) Tonight we are going to see that Paul's was motivated by another passion – The Love of Jesus Christ

¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences. ¹² For we do not commend ourselves again to you, but give you opportunity to boast on our behalf, that you may have an answer for those who boast in appearance and not in heart. ¹³ For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; or if we are of sound mind, it is for you. ¹⁴ For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

C) Paul knew that he himself and other believers in Jesus were going to heaven

1) But he also knew that many people were not Narrow...destruction/ broad to life – few

D) That there was a judgment that was awaiting people who were rejecting Jesus

¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men

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Knowing that a judgment day is coming – we persuade men

A) Persuade is we plead, we beg, we strongly warn, we seek to convince. – Be reconciled to God

C) It is a word that speaks of a sense of passion – urgency and desperation.

1) Life and death is hanging in the balance!

D) When was the last time you were that passionate in sharing Christ

1) Begging a friend or family member to consider the truth of the Gospel.

Sometimes I think in the PC world that we live in we are all too timid to be that passionate about sharing the gospel

A) Eternity with God or Eternity in Hell are hanging in the balance.

B) May the Lord give us boldness

C) Paul was motivated by the reality of heaven and hell in his sharing of the gospel with the lost.

In fact Paul would describe himself as fanatical

but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences. **(God knows our hearts and so do you)** ¹² For we do not commend ourselves again to you, but give you opportunity to boast on our behalf, that you may have an answer for those who boast in appearance and not in heart.

13 For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; or if we are of sound mind, it is for you. ¹⁴ For the love of Christ compels us,

If we seem overly passionate there is a reason: Here we see his 2nd motivation

A) The Love of Jesus Christ is compelling us

B) I think there is a twofold meaning to this statement in Paul's heart

1) #1 Paul's understanding of Jesus love for Him Save sinners - I am one // Chief

C) Paul's life had been so radically touched by Jesus

1) That moved him to want to share Jesus with others

D) Persecutor to proclaimer

1) Paul realized – though zealous – zealously wrong

E) He was so blown away that Jesus would save – He looked at himself as being in debt to Christ

F) So realizing the love that Jesus had for him and the lengths that Jesus went to save him

1) Was a motivator

#2 I think Paul is also talking about – what is the natural response to being touched by the Love of Jesus Christ

A) You love him – So Paul was also motivated by his love for Jesus too. – Worshipper

B) Knowing how deeply Jesus loved him – moved Paul to respond in Kind

1) Paul was a worshipper – so descriptive in his letters talking about Jesus

C) And His Love for Jesus compelled him to proclaim the Gospel

D) Started dating my wife – I told all my friends

E) Excited about something you share it
1) Sale – Video clip – movie

F) Jesus?

So Paul was motivated by the love of Jesus to the point he didn't view his life as his own.

14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

Read that again in the NLT

¹⁴ Either way, Christ's love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. (theme – new creation)¹⁵ He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

**The impact that Jesus had made on Paul resulted in a new way of Living – For Jesus / not self
The Love of Christ that had touched Paul's heart also impacted the way he saw people as well.**

¹⁶ Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

I love this: Paul says From now on - I don't want to regard anyone after the flesh.

A) Looking at People – I don't want to see them in their flesh – their flaws

B) Here is how Paul saw people – Either in Christ – believers – or outside of Christ

C) Believers – New Creation in Christ

1) Old things have passed away – behold all things are new

Paul wanted to see believers as a new Creation

A) He didn't want to know them after the flesh not focusing on the flesh –

B) Carnal man focuses on the body

1) Lots of problems in the body

C) Spiritual man looks at the head

1) Look for what you can see in others of Jesus

D) Looking for Jesus in that person – my focus

So Paul wanted to see believers as those who were in Christ – and unbelievers as those who need Jesus

¹⁸ Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Paul was motivated by the ministry of reconciliation.

A) Notice the strong language again in v.20 – Pleading and imploring on Christ behalf

B) Be Reconciled to God!

The word 'reconciliation' is used 5 times in that brief text.

A) Reconciliation is a very important word.

B) It simply means to bring two divided parties back together

1) In this context that man and God can get together.

C) Man was separated from God because of Sin. Enemies of God rebellious.

1) Broken his law and his heart

The Ministry of reconciliation begins with God

A) Starting in verse 18 we read this, "Now all these things are from God who reconciled us."

B) Then verse 19, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them,

The only way that we could ever be reconciled to God is if the barrier, which is sin, is out of the way.

A) God is reconciling sinners to himself and he can only do that one way and that is by not counting their trespasses against them.

B) Here in lies the Dilemma! God is loving God who pursues sinners. But he is also a Just God

1) He is a Just Judge – He cannot simply wink at sin

C) His love and Justice – His grace and truth His mercy and righteousness go hand in hand.

D) So what could God do to forgive sins but still maintain – His Righteousness and Justice?

1) How can God...to put it in the language of Romans 3:26 “**how can God be just and the justifier of sinners?**”

How can...how can He do that?

A) Because as soon as He just passes over everybody's sin, forgives it, He stops being just.

B) Justice punishes sin.

So How would God do that?

V.21 – Tells us what He did.

Verse 21, “**He made Him, Christ, who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**”

The doctrine of Imputation. is a word borrowed from banking; it simply means “to put to one’s account.”

A) When you deposit money in the bank, the computer (or the clerk) puts that amount to your account, or to your credit.

B) When Jesus died on the cross, all of our sins were imputed to Him—put to His account.

1) He was treated by God as though He had actually committed those sins.

C) All the wrath of God was imputed to Him

D) God treated Jesus on the cross as if he had committed every sin ever committed by every person who would ever believe.

E) The Father lay upon the Son all the guilt and wrath our sin deserved.

At that Moment the Father became estranged & Alienated from His Son

A) whom He had always been together w/ in perfect harmony

B) Jesus said: My father and I are one –

1) Cross { *My God Me* } Sons perspective

C) **Ever lose your Child** – Sick feeling inside – Fathers perspective – Broke his heart

D) God was in Christ – They were together in this!

If you understand that you understand the first half of substitution and imputation.

A) But there's another side wonderfully.

He made him who knew no sin to be sin for us on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

B) What does that mean? Jesus took your sin and you were given his righteousness!

C) Your Position in Christ – God treats you Holy and righteous

D) Invited to come into his presence – part of his family – hold head high – no tension – no shame

E) That my friends is the Glory of God’s work of reconciliation

Who is this glorious ministry of Reconciliation available to?

A) Notice how Paul puts this in v.19a *God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself:*

B) This work was done for the World.

John 1:29 “Behold the Lamb of God who takes the sin of the world.”

1 John 2:2, “He is the propitiation for our sins and not ours only but the sins of the whole world.”

1 Timothy 2:3 “God is our Savior who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

C)Reconciliation is available to all but it is only experienced by those who believe

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

D)You have to believe in Jesus – Cling to trust in and rely upon in order to receive this reconciliation

E)How can a loving God send people to Hell?

- 1)He doesn't – He has done everything necessary for reconciliation to happen –
- 2)but some refuse to be reconciled – their fate their fault

God invites us to be a part of this ministry of Reconciliation

A)He has given US the ministry of Reconciliation

B)V.20 Calls us AMBASSADORS for Christ. It's a very noble word.

C)An ambassador represents his government in all of its character,

1)all of its dignity,& in all of its philosophy.

D)An ambassador speaks solely for his ruler, he is his ruler's mouthpiece.

E)He never offers promises, demands his own things, but rather those things of his kingdom.

An ambassador does not speak to please his audience, but the King who sent him.

A)So, an ambassador is a messenger. An ambassador is a representative.

B)And in Paul's day such a duty was as highly respected as it is today, if not more so.

C)Generally speaking when the Roman govt would conquer a particular country,

1)they would put into that country as many as ten ambassadors in that country to represent their interest.

So an ambassador is also in a foreign land.

A)He spends his life with those who are strange to him.

B)He has to speak a different language. He has to interface with a different culture.

1)He has to bear a different life style.

2)He has to endure a different tradition.

C)He lives really in a foreign world. And in that foreign world he represents his own king,

1)his own kingdom and he brings the message of his sovereign.

D)Church that is a Very graphic picture of our calling in this world.

Our mission as His Ambassadors is to plead with men and implore them to be reconciled to God

A)Every thought is about this - Everything else that we do here – will be better in heaven

B)Purer fellowship there,

➤ purer worship there,

➤ purer lives there,

➤ purer everything there.

C)The only reason we're here is because we have this ministry of reconciliation.

D)Privilege, honor, blessing

E)Be intentional about being ministers of Reconciliation – look for opportunities