

A Ministry and Message of Reconciliation: The Gospel

Colossians Series

By Sean Harris

sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: Colossians 1:19-21

Preached on: Sunday, June 28, 2009

Berean Baptist Church

517 Glensford Drive

Fayetteville, NC 28314

Website: www.bereanbaptistchurch.org

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/bereanbaptistch

Colossians chapter one. If you found your place in that chapter let's go ahead and stand in honor of the reading of God's Word and we are going to get into an awesome text. We will read the text, pray, then we will get to work. And I pray that you have ears to hear this morning and that all of God's people are ready to be blessed from God's Word.

Verse 19 says:

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you [number one] holy and [number two] unblameable and [number three] unproveable in his sight.¹

And let's pray.

Father God in heaven, I would ask right now that you would give me the power to preach in your name under the leadership and influence and guidance of God the Holy Spirit. I pray, oh God, that you would do the work that only you can do, God the Father, that you would draw sinners to yourself this morning. I pray, oh God, that today would be a day of salvation and that a lost man or woman would repent. I pray, oh God, that you would reconcile sinners to yourself today through the power of the cross in Jesus' name. Amen.

And you may be seated.

The title of this morning's message is, "A Ministry and Message of Reconciliation."

¹ Colossians 1:19-22.

Look in your Bibles at verse number 19 please. Notice especially, “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.”²

Once again we are reminded of the significance of the deity of Christ. We are reminded again. Paul wants to bring to our attention one more time this Church at Colosse needs to be alerted to the idea that Christ, the body of Christ, the man Christ Jesus has every ounce of deity within him. He is the walking, talking, breathing, living God.

Why is this so important? Why must we put such emphasis on this? Because salvation is in him and him alone. And, folks, you can’t make up your own him. You can’t decide what attributes you would like him to have. The Word of God has already made that clear. You can’t pick and choose your Jesus. Your Jesus has every ounce of godhead in him.

That is how Paul said it in 2:9.

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”³

Every ounce of the godhead, everything that God the Father had, God the Son had. All of it. Paul is communicating that Jesus is completely God. Everything that God is Jesus is. God is more than Jesus. God includes the Father, the Son and the Spirit. Jesus is only one aspect of God, but he is every bit God. This diagram is probably the best illustration. If you need to explain the trinity don’t do it without drawing something. Pull out a piece of paper and draw this triangle and use this idea right here.

You say, “Preacher, when would I be called upon to do that?”

You might be called upon to do that any time and when you are supposed to give an answer, you want to know how to give an answer. How pitiful it is for you to say, “Let me get you to talk to my preacher.”

Every single Christian is called to be able to explain the person and work of Christ. Everybody ought to be able to do that. What a pitiful thing it is that if the preaching ministry of the Church doesn’t develop God’s people to be able to defend their faith. Not a social gathering. This is a time of instruction. This is a time of development. This is a time of discipleship.

Again and again I want to say this. You shouldn’t have to come out to a private class on a Monday night to grow in Christ. You ought to be able to grow in Christ through the preaching and teaching of his Word in Sunday school, adult Bible fellowship, camps, all the time, men’s ministry. Everything that we do ought to be forcing you and encouraging you to grow in Christ.

² Colossians 1:19.

³ Colossians 2:9.

So you put the Father at the top and you say the Father is God, but the Father is not the Holy Spirit and the Father is not the Son. The Son is no the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is not the Father. But they are all God.

You say, "I don't understand that."

Me either.

That is our premise. We just take the Word of God at face value. We just believe that all 66 books are divinely inspired and that they have been preserved by God for our edification. And we are not here to do anything other than present the truth, present the truth.

And so Paul said it like this to Timothy. To Timothy he said, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."⁴

One mediator, only one mediator. The godhead determined that the man Jesus who would reconcile the world to God would be God sharing all the properties, characteristics and prerogatives of God himself. Of course, the movement of the incarnation was that God took flesh, not human being became divine.

So important for you to understand this.

A church member sent me an email this week about how she was confronted by a Jehovah Witness and how she needed to be able to articulate her faith and be able to defend her faith. I am telling you right now, it is pitiful when a Jehovah Witness comes and knocks on your door and you find yourself nervous and shaking in your feet and wishing you didn't have to defend your faith. Something is wrong there.

When a Mormon knocks on your door, when a cultist knocks on your door you ought to be able to say, "Let me tell you something right now. I believe that Jesus is God and that he is the Son of God both. Let's get right to the heart of the matter right away." Cut him right off.

It is pitiful that they are more articulate than we are. It is pitiful that those who have the truth are less articulate than those who are deceived. Something is wrong there. Something significantly wrong there.

Look at verse number 20, please, in your Bibles.

"And having made peace..."⁵

Peace. That means that we were at war. You don't go from peace without having been war before. Everyone understands that. There was a war. God hates sin. There is a war

⁴ 1 Timothy 2:5.

⁵ Colossians 1:20.

against sin. There is a war against unbelievers. There is a war against children of disobedience. Our staff song about the wrath of God. We are going to talk about the wrath of God.

So he “made peace through the blood of his cross.”⁶

The consequence of disobedience is enmity or hostility between God and man.

Last week we had the privilege of dedicating a baby. There are several small babies running around this congregation. Carol has just had a little baby. There is all kinds of cute infants everywhere, but the reality is outside of Christ Jesus there is an enmity between that little innocent baby from our perception and a holy and righteous God.

And that is why the ministry of reconciliation, the goal of the gospel is to get that baby reconciled to God. If not, if we are not committed to that, folks, we might as well just be a Kiwanis club. You know, we do some good deeds. We hang out a little bit and we fellowship a little bit, play softball together, kind of have a cute little club.

That is not what we are here for. That is not what we are here for.

Romans 5:10 says, “For if, when we were enemies...”⁷

Let me tell you something. You start a gospel presentation out by letting that sinner know that they are an enemy of God they might feel more of a need to repent.

“That is too confrontational, pastor.”

Which is more confrontational, to tell them the truth or die and let them go to hell?
Which is more loving, folks? What is more loving?

You see, if I understand that I am an enemy of God there is a necessity to figure out how to fix that problem. I have got to figure out, ok, if I am an enemy of God I don't like that idea. How do I fix that? And that is when the soul winner can tell them about the gospel. If they don't understand that their sin separates them from God and God hates that sin and his wrath abides on that sin, then you are in no position to tell them the awesomeness of the love of God.

Verse 20 says that, “...by him to reconcile...”⁸

Reconcile is this incredible, awesome word that describes the restoration of a friendship. We love the idea of being reconciled.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Romans 5:10.

⁸ Colossians 1:20.

Husbands and wives, when you get into a little tiff, isn't it awesome to be reconciled? When somebody takes the spiritual leadership—and it should be the father, it should be the husband, but sometimes we are too weak to do that and so the wife steps up and begins to iron through the difficulties—and you get honest one with another, you get transparent one with another, there is a little bit of repentance that goes on inside that marriage and then all of the sudden the joy at the love of this alienation that was there prior is not brought back together. That is reconciliation, folks. And reconciliation is awesome in a marriage.

Now you think about two sinners being reconciled. How much more awesome is it to be reconciled to the God of the universe, the holy, sovereign, perfect God of the universe? Now all of the sudden this message of reconciliation is awesome. You might even want to say amen on something like that.

So what are the reasons why unbelievers don't think much of this reconciliation? Why is it that the coworkers that you are with, why is it that the neighbors that we have that are lost, why aren't the people that you associate with as students at the colleges that you go to, why don't they get all excited about the reconciliation of God? Why isn't this something important then?

There is three reasons. Let's look at them. Number one, they don't believe that there is a God. They honestly do not believe that there is a God. They have been duped into believing that evolution is a fact and that they were once a blob, came from a monkey and there is nothing after life. And so they are living life with all they can for a few years and they have believed the lie that they are going to decompose into a pine box and that is it. And they love that lie because they love their immorality. And if you love your immorality you don't want any accountability.

That is the facts, folks.

Number two, ignorance. They don't know that sin has alienated them from God. They believe that they are morally good people and that as a general rule God loves me. How in the world wouldn't God love me? I help my neighbor and I am a good person and, really, please don't tell me that God doesn't love me. You don't know me. Don't judge.

That is the world we are living in right now, folks. That is the ministry that you have. That is the culture that you are called to minister in. We cannot go back to leaving beaver. Those days are over with, folks. We are not going back. We live in a Postmodern world in which absolute truths are completely denied. And if we want to get outside of our bubble and start reaching people with the gospel, we have got to know the people that we are going to encounter.

And you go engage sinners at work. When you go engage these people they recognize they don't see themselves as alienated from God. Only Hitler and a few of those kind of dudes are alienated from God. For the most part they can justify their sin.

Hey, folks, that is exactly what governor Mark Sanford did in South Carolina when he brought to our attention with David. That was all justification. That is all it was. That is exactly what it was. If it was good enough for David, it is good enough for me. Don't throw me out of the office. God didn't throw David out, so don't throw me out.

That is exactly what he was saying. It is a justification.

By the way, he is a Republican, so I am an equal opportunity preacher when it comes to that. It doesn't matter whether you are Democrat or Republican. You are both going to get it.

Number three, misperception. They can't imagine that God sees them as an enemy. The reason they are underestimating God's wrath. The entire world is in love with the love of God and we should be in love with the love of God. But what makes the love of God so awesome is the understanding that God is a vengeful, wrathful God who sets that aside in his mercy and grace. That is what makes it awesome.

If there is no concern for punishment, mercy isn't that big of a deal. It is no concern. But when all of a sudden life is on the line and the consequences are over the top and you get mercy, then mercy is a big deal. Then mercy is a big deal. All you got to do is think about your own life either when you were a child or as a parent.

Man, when you see dad explode over something he sends you to the room and you know, man, the consequences are going to be over the top and you know that you are going to get it. You know that you are going to get it. Come on, young people, you are not too old to remember that. There has been at least one time in your life when you sinned, even [?] because we are all sinners.

And then when mom and dad say, "You know what? I love you. I love you," man that love is awesome. That love is magnified because you understood that you deserve the punishment. You understood that you were dead to rights. You should have got the ticket.

We all know the deal. There isn't anyone in here that hasn't sped. You know, driving down the road going way too fast, way too fast. You know you are guilty. There is no way around it. Speed limit clearly posted. You looked at your speedometer a few minutes earlier. You know you were speeding. You were taking a chance and you get pulled over. When you know that you are caught dead to rights and you deserve the ticket and you get some mercy, isn't that mercy awesome?

So first thing the gospel presentation has to establish, teachers, is that you are dead to rights. You deserve the wrath of God. That is the first thing that the gospel presentation has to establish. It has to look at the wrath of God.

Turn to Colossians chapter three in your Bibles. You are almost there so turn over to chapter three and look at verse number six.

So just go ahead and establish the fact that what you are dealing with is a child of disobedience.

“For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.”⁹

Brother Bill, if they don’t see themselves as a child of disobedience, the gospel is meaningless to them, meaningless. The gospel is meaningless. If they do not see themselves as alienated enemies from God you don’t have good news for them. You don’t have good news. And so we have got to establish that first and foremost.

Number one, number two, we need so that they can see beyond a doubt that between God and man there is some irreconcilable differences outside of Christ. We have got to show them that there isn’t a plan B. There isn’t a plan C. There is now way they can be morally pure enough. All have fallen short of the glory of God. All are sinners. I am the sinner. I am the chief of sinners. I lead the way in sinning. And then the mercy of God is magnified. The mercy of God is magnified.

And so let me give you a word of caution, please. Please listen to this very closely. Do not attempt to defend the love of God by denying the wrath of God. Do not do that. When someone says to you, “I do not understand how God could be a loving God and a wrathful God,” don’t try to deny the wrath of God. Don’t try to minimize the wrath of God to magnify the love of God because you are doing just the opposite.

When you communicate how holy God is, how just God is, how perfect God is and then that gets you to better understand his mercy and grace, recognize that God’s wrath towards sinners magnifies his love, mercy and grace when he extends reconciliation to sinners.

Recognize according to verse 21 that we are, in fact, before Christ, before being born again, we were alienated. We were alienated. Yes, even you. You were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works.

I want to pause for just a minute. I want you to think of the parable about the two sons. One son stays home, good son stays there, doesn’t go out, doesn’t explode all the inheritance. The other guy goes out, lives. You know the story I am talking about, right? Gets way down in the pig pen of life and asks to be brought back.

Now which son more clearly understood the love of the father? The one who thought that he wasn’t going to be reconciled, the one who thought he was going to have to live in the pig pen. He couldn’t get over the fact that his father loved him.

Now don’t misunderstand. I am not encouraging you to run out there and sin. That is not what I am saying. I am saying let’s make sure that we clearly understand how much our sin offends a holy and righteous God. Let’s not bring God down to our level. Let’s not

⁹ Colossians 3:6.

try to get God to understand us and so God can justify us and God winks at our sin. Let's recognize that ungratefulness is a sin. Let's recognize the fact that a failure to be content is a sin. Let's recognize that failure to appreciate God's goodness is a sin. Let's recognize that we still have a problem with sin.

Self righteousness kills the Church. That is why Christ went after self righteousness. Look at your gospels and you see him going after self righteousness with a passion.

Who gets called vipers? Who gets called snakes? The self righteous do, the hypocrites do. It is those who recognize that they have a need for a Savior who embrace Christ. So that is our first step.

So the issues of man and most importantly the issue is in my mind so let's talk about this, enemies in you mind. Number one, it all begins in the mind.

Number one, it all begins in the mind. It all begins in the mind. You need to be concerned about your thought life. You need to be concerned about your thought life. You need to be concerned about your attitude, your thinking. It starts in you mind.

Number two. Sinners engage in evil deeds because they are hostile in their minds. That is why I need a new mind. I need a new heart. I need the stony heart removed and a heart of flesh [?]. I need God to do an entire work on my whole body. That is exactly what Paul was talking about where he said he couldn't wait to be delivered of this flesh.

Number three. Faulty thinking leads to faulty behavior. So it starts in the mind.

Counselors, this is so important for you. You have got to address thinking in the campers. Get to their minds. It is easy to get them to conform to known [?]. We have got to get deeper than that. We have got to get into their minds. What were you thinking?

It is easy to tell Christians, "Dress this way. Look this way. Walk this way."

That is easy. Everybody can conform to a known set of standards. You have got to peel that back, folks, and get inside the thinking process.

Number four. Every thought needs to be taken captive to the obedience of Jesus Christ. Every single thought.

So let's be real pointed one more time.

Eight years ago, that was when the thought needed to be taken captive, eight years ago, eight years ago, eight years ago, eight years ago. That is when we should have grabbed that very first immoral thought and grabbed a hold of that thought and said, "This thought will be taken captive right now. This thought is not ok. This thought is immoral. This thought is sinful. This thought must not go on."

You want to protect your marriages, husbands? Husbands, you want to protect your marriages? You say, "I want to protect my marriage. I want to go the distance."

Then keep a hold of your thought life. Keep a hold of your thought life. Do not allow your thought life to get out of control, because when your thought life gets out of control your behavior gets out of control.

Everyone believes somehow that they are strong enough to have this thought life which is immoral, but behavior which is moral. It never works that way, folks. It never works that way. never. This governor attributes the entire affair to the first email, the first email. That is one of the problems with the 21st century. We are texting things and we are typing things that we would have never ever said in person. We are texting things and we are typing things.

Young people in Anchorage, do not allow yourself to type something or text something that you would not say in person. Do not allow yourself to go down that road because there is no end to it. Your morality is at stake.

Eight years ago the affair began on a simple little email and it started in his mind.

Men, our relationship with ladies should be above reproach, above reproach. Ladies, I know that from a pastoral perspective sometimes you feel like that I am exceptionally short with my emails with you. I am going to tell you right now that is an intentional decision on my behalf. I don't ask you how your day went. I don't ask you how you are doing because I am not to have that kind of relationship with you. Your husband is to have that kind of relationship with you. I am not.

If you feel like I am current with the emails, folks, if I am responding to a lady, you are going to get just the facts, ma'am, just the facts. I am not going to go any deeper because I don't want an email relationship with you.

It is a reality. Who does Satan go after? He goes after leaders. He goes after senior pastors.

Sure, you can email me and I will answer your question. I will answer your question. But I should never—dads, listen to me, please. Husbands, listen to me. I should never type something that I am not more than willing to cc my wife on.

Here, sweetheart, read this email.

There is something seriously wrong in your marriage if you have got a private email account that your wife does not have access to.

Outside of the military I know there are some guys [?] and things like that. I am not talking about security. I am not talking about national security. I am talking about personal accounts. You have got your little work email and you have got your little

personal hotmail and nobody knows about that. There is something wrong there. Take that into captivity right now, men.

Jesus said it like this. “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart...”¹⁰ and then just the opposite for the evil man.

So question number two. How did God reconcile us? How did this reconciliation happen? What did Christ do to reconcile you to God?

The Scripture is very clear on that. Look at the Scripture 20 and 22 he tells us two key elements.

Number one, he shed his blood. He shed his innocent blood. The Bible makes it very clear. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. Every single lamb, goat, every single pigeon, every single thing in the Old Testament that was shed blood was all picturing the perfect Lamb of God who would shed innocent blood.

And, number two, he died on that cross. The God man died on that cross.

Please turn back to 2 Corinthians, please. Very easy for you to get to. Just turn back a few pages. Everyone turning. Don't allow yourself not to turn right now. Please take your Bible and turn to chapter number five. This is a parallel dissertation on reconciliation that Paul delivers to us. And we will move through these Scriptures and then we will wrap it up.

We have got some great food. Pastor Joe wanted me to remind you that your food is going to get across the street when you carry it across the street. That is the only way it is going to get across the street. It has no wheels. He said it, not my words. He said that [?] that is Joe's... see him about that. I would have said it kinder, but you know. He is not even in here so I can set him up real good.

Verse number 11. Look at verse number 11. Paul says, “Knowing therefore...” fully aware of, “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord...”¹¹

That is the issue right now. There is no fear of God in our country. There is no fear of God. The fear of God is gone. The fear of God is gone in our country. We are not concerned with our immorality. How in the world do you carry on affair for eight long years and call yourself a Christian? Something is wrong there. Where is the fear of God? Where is the fear of God's judgment on my life, on my ministry, on my office, on my state? Where is the fear of God? It is gone. It is gone in America. That is why there is such a need of pulpits that preach the Word of God, the truth.

Folks, I am not mad. I know sometimes it looks like I am mad. I am not mad. I am

¹⁰ Matthew 12:34-35.

¹¹ 2 Corinthians 5:11.

honestly not angry. I am passionate about this truth. Ok? I don't know how to tell you to guard your marriage with a million dollar smile on my face. I can't do that. Because when we are talking about adultery, when we are talking about destroying families, I feel like that needs a wake up message. I feel like that needs a get it going, that kind of a message.

I can't do it any other way. I don't know how to do it any other way. When Paul says we have got fear of God, he is concerned that some day he is going to stand before a holy and righteous God and account for his life. He has got to account for his life, folks. Yes, his sins are forgiven. That is a true statement. Be he still knows that he is going to account for his life, the choices he made, the priorities he made, the sacrifices he made. He is going to account for that. And so he says, "We persuade me."¹²

So I am not the leader. You are the leaders, but let me just talk to the counselors for just a minute. When Monday afternoon happens isn't that when they come, Mondays? Those campers come piling off the bus. That is your objective right there. You are there to persuade men and women. That is it. You are not there to entertain them. You are there to persuade them. You want to persuade them to the truth. You want to passionately persuade them to the truth. That is the goal. If I didn't think that you weren't committed to that I wouldn't support the ministry. I wouldn't love you guys the way I do. I am crazy about Anchorage. I am crazy about the entire ministry, because I believe that for 12 weeks, the whole summer and the other parts of the year you are committed to persuading men and women, boys and girls to the truth that Jesus Christ is Lord.

And Berean Baptist Church is not going to partner with anyone that isn't committed to that. We are not going to partner with anyone that is not committed to that.

Look at verse number 14 please. Fourteen in your own Bibles, look at it wit me.

"For the love of Christ constraineth us."¹³

It grabs a hold of me. It takes control of me. Not the wrath of God. I am beyond that. I have been freed from that. Now the love of Christ, the love that Christ bestowed on me, the love that I have for him. That love grabs a hold of my hand. It grabs a hold of my arm. It grabs a hold of my arms. It constrains me. Why?

"Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."¹⁴

So you don't live for yourself anymore. You don't live for yourself anymore. You don't live for your children. You don't live for your wife. You live for him and him alone. You don't live for the United States army. You don't live for the corporate dollar. You don't

¹² Ibid.

¹³ 2 Corinthians 5:14.

¹⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:14-15.

live for the state. You live for him and him alone. He constrains you. He controls you. Every decision you make is based on what would you have me to do, Lord. You are not concerned about what you want to do in life, you are concerned about what he has for you to do, not what college do I want to go to, but where would you have me to go to college, Lord. Not what occupation do I want, but what occupation do you want me to have, Lord. Not what wife do I want to marry, but what wife do you want me to marry. Not who do I want to date, but who do you want me to date, God, because you get a hold of every aspect of my life.

Will that change you? Yeah. It radically changed Paul. It radically changed Paul. So the gospel is supposed to impact my current life. I no longer live for myself. I live for him. Who died and reconciled me.

Verse numbers 17.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”¹⁵

So verse 18, now we get to it. Here it is.

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us...”¹⁶, us, folks, not the preacher, not the deacons, not the Sunday school teachers, us, us, the entire body of Christ. We all have a ministry of reconciliation, all of us, the entire Church has a ministry of reconciliation, not those you only have a spiritual gift of evangelism. No, that is not what Paul says. Paul said everybody has a ministry of reconciliation.

Verse number 19 says, look at it closely please, not only do we have a ministry of reconciliation, we have a word of reconciliation. Our message is one reconciliation.

Verse 20 says we go forward with a message of, “Be ye reconciled to God.”¹⁷

Be reconciled. Be reconciled. Be restored. And so our message is not pray this prayer to avoid hell. Our message is not an intellectual assent to the existence of Christ. Our message is not bring your sins up to this bar and exchange them for a [?]. Our message is not a health and welfare gospel. That is not our message.

Maybe you don't understand what I mean, so let me give you a similar illustration. What would do you about a guy who said, “You know what? I don't want to be by myself when I am old and gray so I am going to go find me a wife”?

¹⁵ 2 Corinthians 5:17.

¹⁶ 2 Corinthians 5:18.

¹⁷ 2 Corinthians 5:20.

What would you do with a guy who said, “You know what? I am tired of doing my own laundry and I would really like somebody to cook for me so I am going to go find me a wife”?

What would you think about that idea?

You say, “That is ridiculous. That is not why you get married.” You say, “That is ridiculous. Preacher, you get married because you love somebody and you adore them and you want to spend the rest of your life with them.”

Well, that is the gospel message. The gospel message is it is time to stop adoring yourself and start adoring the Creator God of the universe. The gospel message is now it is time to start serving God and God alone. We don’t come from a message of get out of hell and go back to your own life living it any way you want. That is not our message. Our message is it is time to be reconciled to God. You have been living for yourself long enough. It is time to restore your relationship with God.

And so our message of reconciliation comes from Acts 20:21 in which it requires repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every single counselor has to talk about repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the true gospel. That is the only gospel, repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot waiver from that. That is the message that the apostles gave and we must continue to preach that message.

God is not reconciling people to himself so that they do not go to hell. He is restoring them to a place of harmony and friendship with himself so they might glorify his name and that people who are righteous and are being made righteous by the sanctifying grace of God. That is why we are saved, to glorify his holy name. And we do that through holy living, folks.

Look at verse number 21 in 2 Corinthians and then we will flip over and compare it to Colossians one. Look at what he says. Look what he says, folks.

He says, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”¹⁸

Now turn back to Colossians 1:22 and look what he says there and we will wrap it up. Look at what he says, folks. Three things. Why?

“Why does he reconcile us, pastor? Why is it so important that we are reconciled? Why doesn’t justification sufficient? Why does he reconcile us? Why does he redeem us? Why does he do all that for us?”

So that he can present us “holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.”¹⁹

¹⁸ 2 Corinthians 5:21.

That is why. That is why.

So the message is you are in darkness and he delivered you to light. The message is you are a sinner and he took the righteousness of the Son and put it on your account. The message is you were enslaved and he bought you off of the block. The message is you were way out there and he set you apart. The message is you were alienated from God and he took that enmity and he got it out of the way and he said, "Let's go. Let's get the friendship back in place."

He is literally moving us back to a pre fall day. He wants to walk and talk with you in the cool of the garden. He wants to have an intimate, personal, close relationship with you. He wants you to get up in the morning and start your devotion time out with a close and personal time.

God, I just want to be close to you. And he says, "Not only have I justified you, not only have I redeemed you, not only have I delivered you out of darkness, but I have reconciled the harmony that is supposed to be there so that we can have a friendship."

This is what you have got going on. You have got the judge of the county. You have got the judge of the county forgiving your debt and inviting you over to his house for a barbeque.

And you go, "Man, you are just the judge that forgave my sins."

Yeah. Not only am I going to forgive them. Come on over. Let's grill some burgers together. Let's sit by the patio and enjoy some friendship together. Let's get close and personal. I want you to know me. Not way out there distant, not far, far away, not unbelievably amazing and I can't even fathom. No. I am going to come in with you and sup with you and be with you. I am going to fill you with my Spirit so that you can have a close and intimate relationship with the God of the universe."

Now do you see why it is so important for us to preach a ministry of reconciliation? How awesome that is.

All right, all right. Let's go to our closing slide.

So let's wrap it up with what is the application of this. What is the application to God's people in the 21st century?

Number one, we go with the message that is so awesome. The Mormons don't have the message. The Jehovah Witnesses don't have this message. Buddhists don't have this message. Muslims don't have this message. Nobody has a message of reconciliation like we do. Nobody does. Nobody talks about the intimacy that the Word of God communicates. Nobody talks about being filled with the Spirit of God and having a close

¹⁹ Colossians 1:22.

and personal relationship with the creator God of the universe. No one talks about that. Christianity is alone in that teaching. Christianity is alone in communicating that you can have a personal relationship with the sovereign God of the universe.

And then let's take it real personal and then we will be done.

How in the world could any of us not be reconciled one to another? How could any of us... listen to me very closely, please. Listen, please. How could any of us not be reconciled one to another?

Aaron, how is it that maybe I come to camp and we have a falling out for whatever reason, but you have been reconciled to God and I have been reconciled to God. How could it be that I enjoy reconciliation with God the Father and you, my brother, enjoy reconciliation with God the Father, but you and I we can't be reconciled? How could that be? You are a new creature in Christ. I am a new creature in Christ. I have been reconciled. You have been reconciled. How in the world could we hold any animosity towards each other inasmuch as we love the reconciliation that God the Father has done for us through Christ?

Counselors, are you getting it? Because listen to me very closely. The children and the teenagers that you counsel with need to be reconciled to somebody. I promise you, if they are hurting, if they are distraught, if they are in rebellion, if they are having difficulties there is somebody that they need to be reconciled to. Often it is going to be a mother or a father. Often it is going to be the authority figure in their life. So once you get this reconciliation done, you have got to start working that lateral reconciliation.

Who do you need to forgive? Who do you need to forgive?

Again, let's make it real intimate. Let's make it real personal, brother Bill. How could a husband who loves Jesus and a wife who loves Jesus have irreconcilable differences between them? It should never happen, folks. It should never ever. How in the world would a marriage end up in divorce if the father has been reconciled and the mother has been reconciled? How in the world would a marriage end up in divorce if the father has been reconciled, the husband is reconciled and the wife has been reconciled? How in the world would anyone justify their refusal to be reconciled to another human being when they enjoy the reconciliation that the Father has provided?

That should never ever happen in the body of Christ. And when two Christians are refusing to be reconciled, when two counselors are refusing to be reconciled, when two students are refusing to be reconciled, that is sin, sin which must be confronted and dealt with through the what? Through the power of the gospel. The same gospel that saves a soul from hell is the same gospel that has the power to reconcile two individuals who believe they have irreconcilable differences.

Let's pray.