

Notes: When Adam sinned all of his descendants were born separated spiritually from God. Jesus death and resurrection provided the opportunity for men to be spiritually reconciled to God. Last time we talked about the newness of life. Tonight we are going to look at how God reconciles us to Himself and the changes that occur when that happens.

I. Reconciliation changes our focus from self-centered to God-centered. (12-16) For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us; 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. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Paul says God has saved us for his glory not to elevate us for glory. Some folks may think we have lost our minds or are overly zealous but we do that so you and other folks will find out about Jesus. The “love of Christ constraineth”, means controls us or compels us to realize our salvation is by the grace of God and that Jesus wants to share that same love with everyone. The truth is all men need to know Jesus. Paul knows his life belongs to Jesus and he wants to live for him by spreading the good news. The message sin has separated men from God, Jesus death brings them back. The disciples knew about Jesus in the flesh but now they know him as Lord.

1. Jesus can help us to be reconciled because he became like us. Hebrews 2:16-18 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. Sometimes we struggle with sin or addictions thinking our situations are hopeless. How could a holy God possibly know what it is like to be human and face temptation? Jesus did that by becoming one of us. **Life Recovery Bible:** *He lived in our world as a human being and suffered as we do-therefore he understands our pain and suffering from personal experience. He has been where we are, and he is both eager and able to help us.* I was once a HOPE volunteer. We would go to hospitals and transport alcoholics and drug addicts to detox centers. Of course we would usually want to go about 2 in the morning. We were once asked why we did this; we answered because someone did it for me. People have a tendency to respond to someone who has walked in their shoes. Part of being God centered is the way we evaluate people. We try to look at them as people who need Jesus instead of as miserable sinners whose suffering is deserved.

II. Reconciliation gives us new identity. 2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. When I get saved I get a new set of want to's. My spirit and my soul is saved and renewed. My soul needs to be sanctified and my mind needs to be renewed. You've heard the expression I'm just a sinner saved by grace. We are much more than that. Jesus told us in **John 1:12** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: We are sons of God with all the benefits that go with it.

1. Jesus brings peace with God through his blood. Colossians 1:20-22 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 holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: **Life Recovery Bible** *When our life is unmanageable and out of control, we are God's enemies, and our thoughts and actions separate us from him. But God through Christ's death on the cross reaches out to make us his friends. When we turn our life and our will over to him, he brings us into the very presence of God and makes us blameless before God.* The key to this is when we turn our life and will over to Him we abide in Him. It is when we are abiding that we are unblameable. Remember we are given the power to be sons; that power is the Holy Spirit.

III. God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

1. Jesus death was sufficient to save anyone who would believe. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ,..... To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; **Colossians 2:13-14** And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; There is only one way for reconciliation; Jesus and his shed blood on the cross. Folks need to know that they don't have to pay the penalty for their sins. Paul is trying to teach us that we are complete in Christ. God knew every sin we would ever commit and he still loved us enough to die for us. We could conceive of dying for our spouse or our children or grandchildren but for a lost sinner. Part of salvation means we are being made Christ like and have access to the joy of knowing God is always with us. That is a hope the world does not have. How could a holy God cancel a sin debt and remain holy. **1 Pet. 2:24** Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. Jesus paid the sin debt in full. **Rom. 7:6** But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter. And **Rom 6:14** For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. That means I am not trying to obey the law to please God. I am not trying to be good enough. Christ has already paid that debt. I am under grace. That means I obey God because I love Him and desire fellowship with Him. I want that benefits available to me as blood bought child of God.

2. We need to tell folks reconciliation is through Jesus imputed righteousness. and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation..... hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 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. The message is to be welcome in God's presence requires God level righteousness. Faith in Jesus puts that righteousness to our account. God recognizes our right to live in his presence because Jesus righteousness is our access code, key, password or whatever access idea you have. This is the greatest news the world needs to hear and it is the one Satan and the world is trying to silence.