

J.J.

MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION
2 Corinthians 5 : 11-21

2 Corinthians 5:11 Since then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. 12 We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. 13 If we are “out of our mind”, as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. 14 For love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again. 16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come : The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation : 19 that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf : Be reconciled to God. 21 God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

Pray

INTRODUCTION

Tomorrow, Canada is commemorating the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. It's a day to remember the children of Indigenous people who were forcefully removed from their families and brought far away to residential schools where some of them were abused and even some of them died for the sake of assimilation into the Western ideal of culture and religion. There were 150,000 children who were taken away. This started when archeologists found 200 unmarked graves of children at an old residential school in Canada. Imagine, if that's one of your children.

Remember, the term people used is to “Christianize” them. But that's a wrong term. We all know you cannot “Christianize” someone forcibly. The proper term is they forcibly “religionized” them.

They call it a Day of Reconciliation but if you understand the true meaning of reconciliation, Canada can never ever pay this dark phase in history.

Just like us, we can never ever be reconciled with God on our own merit. We can never do that. God has to reconcile with us.... AND THIS IS THE MAIN MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH... THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

So the first question to be answered is “What is reconciliation?” (Show photo)

Etymology : katallage “an exchange of coins of equal value” or “adjustment of a difference”

Illustration : You lent someone \$100M and then he goes to you and say, “Okay here’s \$100”, we’re now even. What will you say to that person, “Are you mad? You owe me \$100M and you think you’re paid by giving me \$100” And then if that persons say, “I can’t pay \$1M” What will you do? It’s just but right for you to sue that person and get justice.

Katallage or reconciliation is you owe \$1M and then you pay \$1M, then you can say, “We’re even. It’s now paid”

But the bad news is because we have sinned against an eternal and thrice holy God, we owe Him not only \$1M but triple, quadruple quintuplet, infinitely gazillion dollars and there’s no way we can pay it.

The good news is God said to us, “Don’t worry, my son paid for it already”. Your debt is already reconciled.

In short, God through His Son has already forgiven you.

That’s why the Bible says :

that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them.

Now look at this word “not counting”. It means, Jesus did not only pay for our sins, because of what He did, GOD threw out the scale!

God is saying, because of my Son Jesus, I am not counting your sins anymore. You only need to accept what He did for you.

But we go to the next important question, “Why is it the main ministry of the church?”

It’s because *And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation*

Etymology : committed “tithemi” set before you, served in front of you in order to eat it or drink it.

That’s why there’s the Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...

Mark 16:15 Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every nation

Acts 1:8 ...and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.

The ministry of reconciliation is the reason why the church is here on earth.
It's not worship, though it is good but we will have a purer worship in heaven.
It's not fellowship, though it is good but we will have a better fellowship in heaven.

This is the reason our Lord said,

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

The ministry of reconciliation is the thing that we live for and if needed be, to die for.

So if our main ministry is the ministry of reconciliation :

1. How are we motivated?
2. Who is the mission field?
3. What is the message?

1. How are we motivated?

a.) The fear of the Lord.

11 Since then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others.

The context of this is that Paul's integrity was being attacked saying that he is preaching the gospel because of money or for sexual favors. He then said, "I'm not doing it for these things." The point is I'd rather go be with the Lord now than to be here on earth"

2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

But at this point, it doesn't matter to him because he knows someday, he would be facing our Lord Jesus Christ and that's why he said,

9 So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ..."

And when he faces the Lord, he doesn't want to be ashamed in front of him.

Illustration : Yesterday, I saw a video of landslide (mudslide) in Japan.

I was thinking, most of these people never knew that mudslide is going to happen today and there were people who died and who are still missing. We will never know our last time here on earth. The question is when we face our Lord,

"Did you only live for yourself or did you live for me and told others about me?"

That's why verse 13, Paul knows this

13 If we are "out of our mind", as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.

He's saying, the reason why we're doing this is for God and for you.

b.) The love of the Lord

14 For love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

I've told you that the secret to fall in love with God more is to think about how much He loves you.

Illustration : Sometimes, we have a term in our home when we catch ourselves complaining "Nakakahiya naman sa Panginoon" not in a guilty way but on a level like, "Grabe, God has blessed us so much, why are we complaining".

In connection with this, God has asked us to do one thing and that is to tell people that God has already forgiven their sins and we do it simply because we have realized how much He loves us.

Illustration : It's just like Kuya Met or Ate Nitz asking us to do something, (Kuya Met who drives for us, helps us, serves us, loves us) and then he just asks us, "Jerry, is it ok when you're free, can you go to Tony's house and hand this envelope to him." I wouldn't say, "Ikaw na lang Kuya Met, dami kong ginagawa e, busy ako e or I have different priorities"....kasi nakakahiya naman because of the amount of love he has shown to me and my family.

2. Who is the mission field?

15 And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again.

16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come : The old has gone, the new is here!

When Jesus Christ died, He did not die for some people, He died for all people.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

READ CAREFULLY : And when the Bible says, "*we regard no one from a worldly point of view.*" It means he's not looking at the external things of man. He's not looking if they are male or female, black or white or brown, if he's rich or poor, if he's homosexual or lesbian or straight, if he's a drug addict or drunkard or a faithful husband or a nice person, or he's wearing a turban or a sari, or if he's Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Catholic, or his political affiliation – conservative, liberal, in the states, Republican or Democrat and etc...HE'S LOOKING AT THE INSIDE OF MAN...IN SHORT, HIS SOUL.

And what is inside of man?

Illustration : A preacher was talking to one of his friend who is an autopsy doctor. You know those doctors who open you up when you die and find out what's the cause of death. The autopsy doctor said to the preacher, "You know pastor, I have been an autopsy doctor for so long, it doesn't matter whether you're a homeless person, or a person who is rich who took care of their skin or wore nice clothes, or you're a priest or a prostitute, whether their Presidents or VPs of companies or janitors, when I open them up, their insides are the same, it still looks ugly on the inside."

Believe it or not, brethren, all men are ugly on the inside. **All men have sinned against a holy, holy, holy God.**

The doctrine is called the depravity of man.

But here's the good news, the ministry that Christ has given us.

Brothers and sisters, God is saying to us to tell everyone no matter who they are.

We implore you on Christ's behalf : Be reconciled to God

That is our main ministry...that is our only message.

Application : Do you want to change your husband or your wife? Your children? Your neighbor? You don't do that by condemning them, you do that telling them the message of reconciliation. That's the reason why the Bible says,

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come : The old has gone, the new is here!

Important : That's how we ensure that there is righteousness around us. **We don't start by trying to change the behaviour, we start by changing the heart and it is only when Christ enters it that the heart is changed.**

3. What is the message?

a.) God has forgiven you of your sins because of Jesus.

19 that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against Them

All religions in the world, their main message, you do good, you follow this set of commands and then you will go to heaven.

Illustration : Warren Buffet, the world's second richest man announced in June 2006 that he would donate 88% of his \$44 Billion fortune to five charitable foundations. Commenting on this extreme level of generosity, Buffet commented, "There is more than one way to get to heaven but this is a great way."

He couldn't be more wrong.

God is saying, "I have already forgiven you through my Son Jesus Christ." **Again, what's the synonym for forgiveness...it is acceptance.** Let's tell people this message that you are accepted by God because of His Son Jesus Christ.

Do you know why Christianity spread so fast? It's because people heard the good news that God has accepted them already in Christ Jesus.

b.) God now treats you as if you have never sinned because of Jesus.

God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

What does it mean we might *become the righteousness of God?*

It didn't say, you will have the righteousness of God, it says, you become the righteousness of God. It means you are perfectly right before God just like His Son.

It's called the great exchange. He was punished as if he was the worst sinner in the world though he had no sin. We are enjoying the rewards as if we are the most perfect man in the world though we are the one who sinned.

EVANGELISTIC MESSAGE

It's all because of Jesus Christ!

Illustration : When I was working in advertising as a copywriter, I had only one pair of shoes. A fake Sperry topsider I bought in Cubao and just have two pants. The owner of our company who became the Ninong in our wedding was also the president of the Manila Polo Club. Manila Polo Club is the most elitist prestigious club in the Philippines. Membership share is around \$11M. It doesn't mean you have money, you can become a member immediately. They even rejected Pacquiao's application even if he has a house at Forbes Park. But since my Ninong was president of the club, he gave us signing privileges. So every so often during lunchtime, me and two other art directors will go there during office hours will take lunch there and go for a swim in the pretense of brainstorming for an idea. One time, while we were there, there's this rich woman who was also working at the office who saw us there swimming in the pool. When she saw us, she said to us with a smirk on her face, "What are you doing here?" I answered back to her with conviction as if I own the club, "What are you doing here???"

The reason I acted that way is because I know I have the right to be there not because I have the money nor the influence nor the right background but because the president of the club gave us the right to be there.

It's the same with those who believe in Jesus Christ. You have all the right to enjoy all the perks and privileges of heaven because you have become the child of God because our Lord Jesus

Christ gave us that right.

**Isn't that good news worth telling to other people? Again, the message :
GOD HAS FORGIVEN YOU AND YOU CAN CALL HIM OUR FATHER**

CONCLUSION :

Remember, you are Christ's ambassadors to the world.

As an ambassador, you need to step out from where you are and go into the country you were assigned to represent the King.

And since you really belong to heaven and representing the King, the King will take care of all your needs.

Matthew 11:28 Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

During those times, a yoke is pulled by two oxen.

Our Lord is saying, partner with me in this ministry of reconciliation, that is my yoke that we share and find joy when people are saved through the spreading of the good news.

You might say, "How?" God has given you different gifts and resources. Use those gifts and resources to partner with the Lord.

S.G.D.