

We Highly Value Restored Relationships

September 27, 2023

Text: *Romans 5:1, 10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 1:19-22*

The Central Concept of Christianity

- Reconciliation makes a _____ with God possible.
- _____ separates us from God and His people.
- The basis of restored relationships is _____.

God as the Reconciler

- God presents the _____.
- How could God do this?

The Church is God's Reconciling Agency

- Our divisions and exclusiveness _____ God's reconciling nature.
- Our _____ points to reconciliation.
- The aim of our mission is _____.

Life Enrichment

What about today's teaching challenged, disturbed, or encouraged you?

- Consider the changes that take place when a couple gets married. Which do you think are the easiest changes? The most difficult changes? Why?
- What changes when a person starts following Christ? How does this affect the way they relate to the world?
- Why do you think reconciliation is the central concept of Christianity?
- What divides us from God and each other? How has God worked to restore those relationships?
- List the ways that the life transformation process helps us restore our relationships with others.
- How does our tendency toward building barriers and hostility/division hinder God's work of reconciliation?
- What are some ways that we can partner with God this week in His mission of reconciling people to Himself and each other?

Explanation

Since the fall of humanity into sin (Ge 3), God has been on a mission to reconcile people to Himself and each other. In the ultimate act of love, God paid the ransom to redeem us from our sin. Now He invites His followers to partner with Him, bringing the good news to their community, region, and to the ends of the earth.

Key Points

- God so loved sinful humanity arrayed in rebellion against Him that He sent His only son to rescue them (Jn 3:16-17).
- As God sent Jesus, so, Jesus sends His followers to advance His redemptive purposes (Jn 20:21-22).
- God's redemptive purpose is conducted as His followers live gospel transformed lives and proclaim the good news in our communities.
- Partnering with God in His redemptive mission shifts the focus of the church from being "About us for us" to being "About them for Him."
- God's redemptive mission is best accomplished in meaningful relationships with those who do not yet believe and is demonstrated in radical Christian love and holistic generosity.
- God's redemptive mission must be conducted in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Key Scriptures

- **Matthew 28:18-20** - Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- **Mark 10:45** - For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
- **Acts 1:8** - But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
- **Acts 2:47** - And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.