

Reconciliation

THE GOSPEL IS A MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION

MY TESTIMONY OF SALVATION AND MY ONGOING THANKFULNESS!

Matthew 4:18-22

18 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, "**Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.**" 20 **Immediately they left their nets and followed him.** 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 **Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.**

- The importance of discipleship
- The importance of what we are discipled into - **fishers of men** and **discipling the nations** (Matthew 28:19)
 - Too much of our discipleship is centred around our comfort and convenience. I.e. How can I fit Christ into my life?
 - Too much of discipling is 'classroom stuff' and not in the mission field
 - Too many times discipling is just not happening!

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

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 (CALL)**: 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 (MESSAGE)**. 20 We are therefore **Christ's ambassadors (DESIGNATION OR TITLE)**, 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**.

WE HAVE BEEN RECONCILED TO GOD

- Totally and completely.

Psalms 103:11-12 *11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.*

- Every time we come to Him asking for forgiveness, He does so!

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

- The importance of understanding the tenses of salvation

- I have been saved - justification
- I am being saved - sanctification
- I will be saved - glorification

WE HAVE BEEN RECONCILED TO OURSELVES

Matthew 22:37-39 *37 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: **You shall love your neighbour as yourself.***

Genesis 1:26 *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

- The world and its systems strip us of our self-worth and dignity, and sell it back to us at a price. ILLUSTRATION: The whole consumer/marketing machine is geared this way. You are only something if you wear this, or use this, or smell like this ... Etc.
- Therefore, we develop our identity and value in the external: products, physical beauty, possessions ... Etc.
 - Who said movie beauty is the norm. Why does it torture so many?
 - The popularity of make-overs and body make-overs
 - The shallow value of the body
 - Dissatisfaction with the way God made us
- No one is a mistake!

ILLUSTRATION: one day when God was creating someone significant and important - a blob fell off His creation palette - Marcus! No one is a mistake. I may have been conceived before my parents were married, mistake, but not God's!

• Jesus had done nothing yet, and His Father spoke encouragement over Him.

Matthew 3:17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is **my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.**"

If we don't sort this out, we could suffer from many disorders and conditions.

My lack of identity in Christ skews everything!

• The modern day disease - emotional disorders - many develop this because of a poor self-image, a damaged self-image or no self-image at all! The sale of these prescription drugs to control depression ... Etc, are constantly on the increase.

• As believers, we live under the generous hand of our God's favour, grace and love and acceptance and approval.

WE HAVE BEEN RECONCILED TO EACH OTHER (OUR CHRISTIAN FAMILY)

John 13:34-35 34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, **you also are to love one another.** 35 **By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.**

Matthew 5:23-24 23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

- We are commanded to love our neighbour as we love ourselves.
- Forgive as Christ forgave
 - In advance
 - Unconditionally
 - Totally
- No root of bitterness. **Hebrews 12:15** See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.
- No whispering or criticism. **Psalms 41:7** All my enemies whisper together against me; they imagine the worst for me, saying.
- Preferring, honouring and looking out for one another.
- Others' centred! (All the 'one another' scriptures).
- Sorting out our relationships.
 - All relationships go through three stages
 - The honeymoon stage, where we are nicer than God to each other
 - The disillusionment stage, where the veneer wears thin and we see the chip-board underneath (warts and bumps)

- The re-affirmation stage, where I love you sacrificially and totally, like Jesus.
- Covenant of love
- Deal with issues
- Default is love and forgiveness.
- Call a witness if there's no response to sorting out our differences. Matthew 18
- Relational health leads to partnership and fruitfulness
- Each of us needs to be integrated and functioning

WE HAVE BEEN RECONCILED TO THE WORLD

- Break the consumer/spectator approach to Christianity. We are called to be a functioning priesthood! Go over 1 Corinthians 5:17-21 The flow is important
 - God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ (OUR SALVATION) AND
 - Gave us the ministry of reconciliation (CALL)
 - Committed to us the message of reconciliation (MESSAGE)
 - We are therefore Christ's ambassadors (DESIGNATION OR TITLE), as though God were making his appeal through us

• **To:** The nations, our nation and our neighbourhood

• **Where:** Work, play, stay and pray

- Salvation isn't just our life-after-death insurance policy - tick that box. It's a commissioning to impact the world with His Kingdom! ILLUSTRATION: Baboon Christianity.

ILLUSTRATION: That's why we don't die at water baptism! We rise up out of the water in new life, ready to make a difference for the Gospel.

We are called to be apostolic, looking to seek and save the lost - fishers of men!

Matthew 10:8 *Freely you have received, freely give*

Matthew 28:19-20 *Go into the world and make disciples of all nations*

You have received power Acts 1:8

- The discipleship process is getting me from being ego-centric to being others-centred. The only way to do this is to first become Christo-centric. When we are Christo-centric, we will understand and love people and mission!

- The bigness of the task should not intimidate us!

In Nehemiah each person rebuilt the wall in front of them.

ILLUSTRATION: Leading the deaf boy's interpreter to the Lord.

- **John 3:16** *For God so loved the world that He gave, and so should we.*

God is mobilising more gifts than ever before.

NOTE: The importance of starting - *IN PRAYER!* Do you have a prayer hit list?

ILLUSTRATION: My dad's conversion, after over 25 years of praying for his salvation.