

“Being Reconciled To God”

2 Corinthians 5:10-21

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Teaching Aim: To understand God first loved us before we loved Him. To realize it is the love of Jesus that compels us to reach others with the good news of the gospel. To understand it is at the moment of regeneration (or new birth), that we become “*a new creation*” in Christ, old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. To encourage every believer to answer the call of God to be an ambassador for Christ and to share His gospel with others so that they too might be reconciled to God.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

Part I: Knowing the fear of the Lord we persuade men (2 Cor. 5:10-15)

1. What is “*the judgment seat of Christ*” (vs. 10)? Is our salvation decided there? What if any differences are there between “*The Great White Throne Judgment*” and “*The Judgment Seat Of Christ*” (vs. 10)? (See **2 Cor. 5:10**; **Rev. 20:11-15**) What can we learn about “*The Judgment Seat Of Christ*” from **1 Cor. 3:10-15**? Do you think your works and the motivation of your heart will stand at “*The Judgment Seat Of Christ*”? Why or why not?

2. What does Paul mean when he says, “*knowing, therefore the terror of the Lord*” (vs. 11)? Should Christians fear the Lord today? If so, in what way? (See **Prov. 9:10**) How would you feel if your entire life and the motivations of your heart were played out at “*The Judgment Seat Of Christ*” for the Lord and all of heaven to see? Looking back, would you change the way you’ve lived your life? In light of the coming Judgment Day for unbelievers, why should each of us be diligent in persuading people to come to Christ?

3. In **verse 11b**, we find Paul defending himself before the Corinthians and those who have brought false accusations against him. What can we learn about Paul’s ministry from **verse 11b**? How would you evaluate your own ministry? What do you see as your main ministries today? Will your conscience defend or accuse you on Judgment Day? What are some steps you can take to become more effective in ministry?

4. How can you know for sure that you will stand on Judgment Day? (See **John 3:16; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 16:31b; Eph. 2:8-9**) What is the basis of salvation?

5. In the second half of **verse 11**, Paul seemed to be defensive of both his personal integrity and his ministry. Why? Have you ever had anyone challenge the motivation of your heart when it comes to ministry? How did you respond? Who and what did Paul use as his defense?

6. Paul was under constant verbal attack from the false teachers and Judaizers who had infiltrated the church at Corinth (**vs. 12**). Why? What heart problem did the false teachers have in Paul's day? What heart problem do false teachers have in our day today? According to Jesus, how will we be able to identify true teachers from the false? (See **Matt. 7:15-20**)

7. According to **verse 13**, what accusation were the false teachers making against the Apostle Paul? Why might they think Paul was out of his mind? (See **Acts 26:22-24; 1 Cor. 14:18-19; Eph. 2:8-9**) What similar accusation was made against Jesus? If so, by whom? (See **Mark 3:20-21; John 8:48-49**) Have you ever had someone treat you like you've lost your mind because you follow Jesus? If so, how should you respond to them? According to the second half of **verse 13**, what was Paul in all reality? Why was it important for him to be sound in mind?

8. In light of **verse 14**, what do you think was the motivation behind Paul's ministry? Is this verse speaking primarily of the love of Christ for us or of our love for Christ? Why? How should **1 John 4:18-19** fit into our lives today? What should motivate us to be actively involved in ministry today? Are you?

9. Is Paul declaring "*universalism*" in **verses 14 & 15**, the concept that "*everybody*" is saved?" Why or why not? If not, is he indicating Christ died to make salvation possible for all, but efficient only for those who believe in Him? In this case, does "*all*" refer to Christians from "*all nationalities*" (meaning not just the Jews), or to something else? According to **verse 15**, what major change should we see after coming to faith in Christ?

Part II: If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation (2 Cor. 5:16-17)

1. What does it mean to “*have known Christ according to the flesh*” (**vs. 16**)? How does this scripture relate to your life before coming to Christ? What kind of a relationship did you have with Jesus before salvation? What did the Bible mean to you? What kind of spiritual life did you have? (See **Eph. 2:1-5**) How did your feelings toward Christ and the Word of God change after salvation? What incredible truths can we learn about Jesus from **Col. 1:15-23**? How should this section of Scripture affect our view of Jesus?
2. According to **verse 17**, what major change takes place in the lives of the sinners after regeneration (*meaning the moment we are born again*)? What sort of changes did you notice in your life after salvation by grace through faith in Christ? Were these changes immediate or did they occur over a period of time? Has anyone ever commented to you about the changes they’ve seen in your life since coming to Christ? If so, what did they say? Is there enough evidence in your everyday life to convict you of being a Christian in a court of law?

Part III: Being reconciled to God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:18-21)

1. According to **verse 18**, who initiated this reconciliation between God and man? Why do we need to be reconciled to God? (See **Ezek. 18:20a; Rom. 3:23; 6:23; 8:6-8**) Who is the offender and who is the offended party in this case? How much love was demonstrated by God in initiating this reconciliation? (See **Ezek. 36:24-27; John 3:16; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Rom. 8:1**) As Christians, what is one of the main purposes of our lives according to **verse 18**? How can you better incorporate this God given “*mission*” into your own life?
2. What did Christ do so that we could be reconciled to God? (See **Rom. 5:8-11**) What can we learn about God from this incredible sacrifice and act of love? Does **verse 19** teach “*universalism*,” (meaning everybody in the world will be saved by Christ’s atoning death on the cross)? Or was Paul referring to the “*world*” as believers from every race and nationality? Why? What mission is reiterated in **verse 19** that applies to every Christian? Is there anyone that you need to be personally reconciled to today? If so, who? According to Scripture, what should you do if this is the case? (See **Matthew 5:23-24**) What is your responsibility if they won’t reconcile with you? (See **Rom. 12:17-18**)
3. What does it mean to be an “*ambassador*” (**vs. 20**)? (See Dictionary) How should the word “*ambassador*” apply to us today as Christians? What special message is given for us to take to the world as “*Christ’s ambassadors*?” Are you fulfilling this commission in your life? Why do you think so many Christians don’t share the gospel message with others today?

4. **Verse 21** is one of the clearest verses in the Bible on the doctrine (*or teaching*) of “*double imputation.*” What does the word “*imputation*” mean? (See Dictionary) According to **verse 21a**, what was applied to Christ’s account while He was hanging on the cross? Does this mean Christ became “*sinful*”, or was He so closely identified with the believer that He took on the believers sin in order to pay for it? (See **Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5**)
5. In order for us to be saved today, not only do our sins need to be paid for by Christ’s substitutionary atonement on the cross, but something else has to happen. What is needed (**vs. 21b**)? Is the “*righteousness*” spoken of in **verse 21** an “*intrinsic righteous*” within us, or is it an “*imputed righteousness*” (*meaning the righteousness of Jesus Christ as applied to our account*)? What is the difference between the two? Can we ever become righteous enough to earn our own salvation? Why or why not? (See **Eph. 2:8-10; Tit. 3:5**) Whose righteousness are we desperate for?
6. Have you received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? If not, why not do so right now in prayer? If you have received Christ but have not been sharing the message of reconciliation with God through Christ to others, why not ask for God’s forgiveness right now? (See **1 John 1:9**) Will you begin your life anew today being an ambassador for Jesus Christ to the world?

MINER’S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- Knowing the fear of the LORD, Paul worked hard at encouraging people to be reconciled to God, so should we!
- The love of Christ should compel us to reach out to others with the good news of the gospel.
- At regeneration (*the moment we are born again*) we become a new creation in Christ Jesus, “*old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*”
- The only way we can be reconciled to God is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
- We are now Christ’s ambassadors to the world, pleading with people to be reconciled to God while there is still time.
- If the sinless Son of God became our sin bearer and died on the cross to save us from spending eternity in hell, shouldn’t we at least be willing to share the love of God with others?