

Sermon Notes
Good News Church
"Good News 101 - Reconciling Relationships"
Drue Warner
11-2-25

OVERVIEW – We're talking about who we are as a church (Why do we exist? What is our purpose?), what we believe, what difference what we believe makes in our lives, and what is the Good News motivation undergirding our beliefs and behaviors.

- **Vision** – *"to experience and express LOVE from God and to others."*
 - **Verse** – The verse that undergirds our vision is, *Galatians 5:6b, "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love."*
- **Mission** – Our mission is *"to connect with people and build relationships through community workshops, neighborhood-focused ministry, serving local needs, mentoring, and worship."*

THE GOOD NEWS

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is **the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes**: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a **righteousness that is by faith** from first to last ("author and perfecter" – Heb. 12:2), just as it is written: *"The righteous will live by faith."* – *Romans 1:16-17*

GNC BELIEFS

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. I'm broken. | I'm really broken and I need help. |
| 2. Jesus is perfect. | Jesus is perfect and He is my help. |
| 3. Jesus is the only way... | to healing in my relationship with God. |
| 4. The Holy Spirit is my power... | to live as a follower of Jesus. |
| 5. God calls me into community... | to submit and to serve His Church |

GNC BEHAVIORS (as a result of what we believe)

1. Serving others (valuing others greater than myself)
2. **Reconciling relationships (building bridges, not burning them)**
3. Giving generously (blessing others with my time, talent, and treasure)

LAST WEEK... Key Thought: **Serving Relieves Suffering.**

Serving (mercy) is a natural response to those who have experienced mercy.

Dispensers of Grace - When we serve, we become dispensers of grace who point people to Jesus.

THIS WEEK... Reconciling Relationships (building bridges, not burning them)

I've said that, to me, the most beautiful word in the Bible is "grace." If that's #1, then #2 is the word, "reconciliation." This idea of reconciliation gets right to the heart of relationship. Every great story is a story of reconciliation (separation or broken relationship brought back to unity).

You can't have reconciliation if you first don't have sin and brokenness. We see this reconciliation theme in the face of sin and brokenness as a constant thread throughout the Bible.

- THEFT – Jacob & Esau's reunion (Genesis 32-33)
- HATRED – Joseph & His Brothers (Genesis 37-50)
- ADULTERY – Hosea (Hosea 1-3)
- REJECTION – The Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15)
- BETRAYAL – Jesus' reconciling Peter to himself (John 21)
- ALL OF THE ABOVE – God and His People

Probably the central text on this topic of "reconciliation" is in **2 Corinthians 5:17-21**, but before we dive into that text, the context is of Paul writing to the Corinthian Church of the amazing grace of God that has been revealed, as a result of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, namely ***the Good News that we are saved, not by our own work and merit, but by the work and merit of Jesus Christ.***

The Protestant Reformer, Martin Luther's spiritual eyes were opened to salvation by faith (not works) while reading Romans 1:17, which says, "**For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'**"

- In **Philippians 3:9**, Paul references this "righteousness by faith" as a "foreign / alien" righteousness that is beyond and outside of us.
- Of this righteousness by faith, Luther said, *"This most excellent righteousness, **the righteousness of God, which God imputes to us through Christ without works**, is neither political nor ceremonial nor legal nor work-righteousness but is quite the opposite; it is **a merely passive righteousness**, while all the others, listed above, are active. For here we work nothing, render nothing to God; we only receive and permit someone else to work in us, namely God... For there is not comfort of conscience so solid and certain as is this passive righteousness."*

Of this passive righteousness by faith, Paul says in 2 Corinthians 1:20-22, "**For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.**

And by and large, that sets the context for what we read here in 2 Corinthians 5:17-21. As we think about our theme for this morning of "Reconciling relationships (building bridges, not burning them)," listen to what Paul has to say...

TEXT: 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: 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.**

OBSERVATIONS (6 bullet points)

1. If anyone is "in Christ," (see vs. 21) he / she is a **new creation** (new heart / new nature), all because of God.
2. **God reconciled us** to Himself, through Christ.
3. God gave us the **"ministry of reconciliation."**
4. God made us ambassadors of Christ sent out and representing Him with the **"message of reconciliation"** (vs. 19 "that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them").
5. As Christ's ambassadors, **God is making His appeal through us** and imploring people to "Be reconciled to God."
6. **We are reconciled to God when, by faith, we are "in Christ"** who *"became sin for us, so that we can become righteous, in Him."*

REVERSING THE CURSE

Tim Keller quote: *"Since humanity turned away from God, both the human and natural worlds have been dominated by sin and evil, disorder and disease, suffering and death. But when Jesus rose from the dead, he inaugurated the first stage of the coming of God's kingdom power into the world to restore and heal all things."*

- The way of this world is towards **brokenness and destruction**, but the way of Jesus is towards **reconciliation and renewal**.
- **If we as Christians would truly follow Jesus as peacemakers and ministers of reconciliation, the impact in our families, neighborhoods our country world would be profound and would get people's attention!**
 - **Example:** How we handle conflict with neighbors, co-workers, PTA, HOA

OUR MISSION

*"To be a Christian means to **forgive the inexcusable** because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you."* - C.S. Lewis

One Word Summaries

- God's primary message to us in the Bible... "Trust Me."
- The Good News of salvation... "Rescue."

- Jesus' ministry... "Believe!"
- **The Believer's mission... "Reconciliation."**

Reconciliation = Forgiveness + Repentance

- **Forgiveness** involves absorbing the pain that was inflicted by another.
 - In Matt. 18, Peter asked Jesus if we should forgive up to 7 times.
NOTE: The Talmud requires forgiveness up to 3 times.
 Jesus said that we should forgive 70 x 7 times (no limit).
- **Repentance** involves acknowledging your role in inflicting pain, expressing remorse, and taking action to restore what was lost.

REFLECTION

Have you been reconciled to God?

- **ACTION** – Think deeply about what **barrier (or barriers)** are keeping you from being reconciled to God (being "in Christ") or may have you stuck in your relationship with God.

Is there a relationship in your life in which reconciliation is needed?

- **ACTION** - Think of **one person (maybe more)** who you clearly have broken relationship with. Start praying for that person and start asking God to give you a heart of love, forgiveness, and reconciliation for that person.
 - Do you need to offer **repentance** in a relationship?

STORY – Dad's story

FINAL THOUGHT

When we have experienced God's incredible grace in reconciling us to Himself through Jesus, we are then motivated and empowered to serve as ministers of reconciliation who can offer hope and healing to broken relationships, with one another and with God.

And THAT'S Good News!