

“Ambassadors For Christ!”
2 Corinthians 5:20-21

Introduction:

1. This Morning - We Are Going To Finish Looking:
 - At The 5th Chapter Of 2 Corinthians:
 - So Please Head Back There With Me!
 - 2 Corinthians 5 - Where Last Week We Read:
 - In 5:17 - “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!”
2. This Verse Tells Us That - When You Become A Christian:
 - Your Entire Life Is Completely Transformed:
 - And Renovated By God!
 - And As We Looked At Last Week:
 - You Will Be Changed!
 - Your Perspective In Life Will Completely Change!
 - And Your Purpose In Life Will Completely Change!
 - This Means That:
 - You Will Learn To See:
 - The Way Jesus Sees!
 - And That:
 - You Will Learn To Serve:
 - The Way Jesus Served!
 - And The New Purpose For Your Life As A Christian:
 - Is Found In The Last Part Of 5:19:
 - Where The Lord “Hath Committed Unto Us The Word Of Reconciliation!”
3. Now - What Is This “Word Of Reconciliation” - Paul Is Speaking Of?
 - It Is Simply Another Way To Describe:
 - The Gospel:
 - And What God Offers You When You “Believe On The Lord Jesus Christ” And Are Saved!
 - The “Word Of Reconciliation” Is That:
 - Even Though You May Be A Sinner Before God:
 - Through Jesus Christ - You Can Receive:
 - His Forgiveness!
 - The “Word Of Reconciliation” Is That:
 - Even Though You Are An Enemy Of God:
 - Through Jesus Christ - You Can Become:
 - His Friend!
 - The “Word Of Reconciliation” Is That:
 - Even Though You May Be Separated & Estranged From God:
 - Through Jesus Christ - You Can Experience:
 - His Fellowship!
4. And When You Receive This:
 - “Reconciliation” In Your Life:
 - Including Complete Forgiveness, Friendship, And Fellowship With God Himself!
 - The “Love Of Christ” Will “Constrain” You & Motivate You To Share This:
 - “Word Of Reconciliation” With Others!
 - And This Is What The Last Two Verses Of This Chapter Are All About!
 - 5:20-21 - “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. / For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him!”
5. These Verses Reveal:
 - Another “New Thing” That God Has Given You:
 - If You Are A Christian!

* You Have Been Given:

1. ***A Special Position From The Lord!***
 - A Special Position!

- Your New & Special Position Is That:
 - Of An Ambassador!
 - 5:20 - “Now Then We Are Ambassadors For Christ!”
- This Position Is One That Would Have Been Quite Familiar To The Corinthian Christians!
 - Because The City Of Corinth Was A Cross-Roads In The Ancient Roman Empire!
 - And Ambassadors From Other Cities & Countries Would Travel Through Corinth On Their Way To Rome!
 - And They Were Honored & Treated With The Utmost Respect!
- And Just Like Our Own Ambassadors:
 - Who Are Appointed By The President & Confirmed By The Senate - They Would Represent:
 - The Interests Of Their Own Government & Their Own People In A Foreign Land!
 - And Now - Paul Says - This Is What *We* Are!
- “Now Then We Are Ambassadors For Christ!”
 - And This Position Applies To Every Christian!
 - And We See That “We Are Ambassadors:”
- In Response To The Lord!
 - When Paul Says “Now Then” - He Wants You To Look Back At All That God Has Done For You!
 - He Wants You To Remember:
 - God’s Word To You!
 - That “Word Of Reconciliation!” And That Now You Have “Peace With God Through Our Lord Jesus Christ!”
 - He Wants You To Remember:
 - God’s Work In You!
 - His Work Of Redemption - And How He Made You Into “A New Creature / Creation!”
 - And When You Remember These Things:
 - You Will Not Forget Your New Position In The Kingdom Of God!
 - “Now Then We Are Ambassadors For Christ!”
 - You Are Here:
- As Representatives For The Lord!
 - You Represent The Interests Of The Lord & His People:
 - In The Now-Foreign Land Of This World!
 - You Are *Christ’s* Ambassador!
 - This Means That You Have:
 - The Authorization From The Lord!
 - He Has Given You A “Great Commission!”
 - Mark 16:15 - To - “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature!”
 - But You Also Have:
 - The Authority Of The Lord!
 - Acts 5:28-29, 32 - “Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us. / Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. / And we are his witnesses of these things!”
- “We Are Ambassadors For Christ!”
 - No Matter When A Christian:
 - Has Lived In This World!
 - No Matter Where A Christian:
 - Lives In This World!
 - This Is Who You Are!
 - And This Is What You Are To Do!
 - And As Christ’s Ambassador, You Also Have:
- A Responsibility To The Lord!
 - Every Ambassador - Back Then & Even Today:
 - Has A Responsibility To Be Faithful:
 - To The One Who Sends Them!
 - **IE:** Ambassadors To Nearly Every Country - Even The UN - If They Start To Do Things On Their Own - Can Be Removed & Replaced!
 - As “Ambassadors For Christ” We Are To Be:

- Faithful Witnesses:
 - Of God's Word, God's Work & God's Will To This World!
- If You Have Been Reconciled To God:
 - You Have Been Sent!
 - You Have Been Commissioned!
 - "Now Then We Are Ambassadors For Christ!" - This Is Our Special Position!
 - And We Have Been Given:

2. *A Special Plea From The Lord!*

- A Special Plea!
 - 5:20b - "As though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God!"
 - Here - Paul Is Putting Into Practice:
 - What He Has Just Preached!
 - He Is Sharing The Message Of His Master!
 - And This Is The Example That We All Need To Follow!
 - Like Paul - Our Witness For The Lord:
 - And Our Plea Needs To:
 - Reveal God's Grace!
 - This Is What Paul Means When He Says:
 - "As Though God Did Beseech You By Us!"
 - Or - "As God Is Beseeching / Pleading Through Us!"
 - His People! His Ambassadors!
 - When You Speak As God Wants You To Speak!
 - When You Witness As God Wants You To Witness!
 - Then God Himself Is Speaking Through You! What A Privilege!
 - Your Message Of Reconciliation Is Really God's Message!
 - Because Your Words Are Really His Words!
 - This Is One Reason Why We Don't Need To Get:
 - "Cute Or Creative" With The Message Of The Gospel!
 - Because It Is His Word That Is:
 - "Quick And Powerful, And Sharper Than Any Two-Edged Sword!"
 - God's Word & God's Message Alone:
 - Has The Power To:
 - Call / Change / Comfort People!
 - Isaiah 55:11 - "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it!"
 - And When You Reveal God's Grace:
 - By Sharing God's Word:
 - There Will Be Some Who Will Respond As The Thessalonian Christians Responded In 1 Thessalonians 2:13 - "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe!"
 - Our Plea Needs To Reveal God's Grace!
 - But Our Plea Also Needs To:
 - Reflect God's Goal!
 - And The Goal Of Jesus Christ:
 - Who Came To "Seek And To Save That Which Was Lost!" (Luke 19:10)
 - That's Why Paul Also Says - "We Pray You In Christ's Stead!"
 - The Word "Pray" Here Means To Plea With Someone!
 - With An Earnest Desire To Get Them To Respond / To Act In Some Way!
 - Used Of A Leper In Luke 5:12 - "Who Seeing Jesus, Fell On His Face, And *Besought* Him, Saying, Lord, If Thou Wilt, Thou Canst Make Me Clean!"
 - Imagine What This Would Mean If You Were That Leper!
 - But With That Same Burden & Desire:
 - Paul Shows Us How We Ought To:
 - Plea With Others As Jesus Himself Did!
 - Matthew 11:28 - "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I

- will give you rest!”
- John 7:37 - “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink!”
- And So - We Pray & Plead To Others:
 - With The Words Of Jesus In Our Tongues!
 - And We Need To Do So:
 - With A Personal Plea!
 - With A Passionate Plea!
 - With A Persistent Plea!
 - Until Those Who Need The Lord:
 - Come To Know The Lord!
 - Now - There Will Be Some - And There May Be Many - Who Will Ignore Your Pleas - But We Don’t Know Who They Are! Only The Lord Does! So - We Need To Continue To “Pray & Plea In Christ’s Stead” So That Those Who Are Lost Might:
- Receive God’s Gift!
 - And This Is Our Plea!
 - “Be Ye Reconciled To God!”
 - Now - This Is An Interesting Plea!
 - Because Even Though It Is In The Form Of A Command - An Imperative - It Is Also In The Passive Tense!
 - It Shows That There Is Absolutely Nothing:
 - A Person Can Do To Reconcile Themselves To God!
 - You Have Nothing God Needs / Nothing God Wants In Order To Have Peace With Him! **IE:** Unlike The Negotiations For Peace With North Korea - Give & Take! This Is Not How You Make Peace With God! No Negotiations With God!
 - Instead - God Has Already Provided Everything Necessary For Your Reconciliation!
 - Through The Person & Work Of His Eternal Son, Jesus Christ!
 - We Saw This Back In:
 - 5:18 - When We Are Told That God - “Hath Reconciled Us To Himself - How? - By Jesus Christ!”
 - And In 5:19 - When We Are Told That “God Was In Christ, Reconciling The World Unto Himself!”
 - And So Now - We Make This Plea To Sinners:
 - “Be Ye Reconciled To God!”
 - Receive The Gift Of God’s Reconciliation!
 - By Faith Alone & Trust In The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - And This Must Always Be Our Message & Our Plea!
 - Isn’t It Interesting That Paul Even Makes This Plea:
 - In This Letter - To A Church He Helped Establish?
 - There Were Still Some Even Within That Church Who Had Not Yet Been Reconciled With God On His Terms!
 - Perhaps There Are Still Some:
 - Even In Our Own Church:
 - Who Needs To Hear & Respond By Faith:
 - To This Plea - “Be Ye Reconciled To God!”
 - Remember The Words Of Jesus:
 - In Matthew 7:21 - “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven!”
 - And His Will Is - “Be Ye Reconciled To God” - On His Terms - Not Your Own!
 - “We Are Ambassadors For Christ!”
 - And This Is Our Plea!
 - But Then - Paul Reveals To Us:

3. ***The Special Plan Of The Lord!***

- The Special Plan:
 - That Makes Reconciliation With Him Even Possible!
 - 5:21 - “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the

- righteousness of God in him!”
- We Need To Remember That:
 - Everything Necessary For You To Be Reconciled To God:
 - Has Been Already Accomplished!
 - Through The Life & Death Of Jesus Christ!
- And So - Now You Can Be Reconciled To God:
 - Because:
- Your Own Sin Was Transferred To Jesus!
 - Who Is Described Here As The One “Who Knew No Sin!”
 - Now This Does Not Mean That Jesus:
 - Was Ignorant Of Sin!
 - He Knew What Sin Was!
 - He Knew What Sin Does!
 - He Grieved Over Sin!
 - But It Does Mean That Jesus:
 - Was Innocent Of Sin!
 - Completely Pure & Perfect!
 - Hebrews 4:15 - “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin!”
 - But What Did God The Father Do With Jesus, His Sinless Son?
 - “For He Hath Made Him To Be Sin For Us!”
 - This Does Not Mean That Jesus Was:
 - “Made Into” Sin Or “Made Into” Something Sinful!
 - Remember - He “Knew No Sin!”
 - But It Does Mean:
 - That Jesus Became Your “Sin-Bearer!”
 - It Means That God The Father Transferred All Of Your Sin Upon Jesus So Completely, That On The Cross, He Saw Jesus & Treated Jesus As Sin Itself!
 - And He Did This So He Could Pour Out All Of His Judgment & Wrath That Your Sin Required!
 - Even As We Are Told In Isaiah 53:6:
 - “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all!”
 - And So - When Jesus Died On The Cross:
 - It Made Your Reconciliation With God Possible - Because The Infinite Debt Of Your Sin Was Fully & Finally Paid!
 - This Is Called “Propitiation!”
 - God’s Justice Was Completely Satisfied!
 - 5:21 - “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin!”
 - But - Paul Goes A Step Further - And Explains That You Can Also Be Reconciled To God:
 - Because:
 - God’s Own Righteousness Is Transferred To You!
 - 5:21b - “That we might be made the righteousness of God in him!”
 - This Means That God The Father Transferred Jesus’ Righteousness To You So Completely - That When You Trust In Christ - He Regards You & Treats You As Righteous!
 - This Is Called “Justification!”
 - The Declaration Of God:
 - That “The Absolute And Spotless Perfection Of His Righteousness Is Reckoned To Us!” (Philip Hughes)
- And This Is Why:
 - We Can You Can Be:
 - “Reconciled To God!”
 - Because God Has Already Provided Reconciliation Through Jesus Christ!
 - Charles Hodge - “[Your] Sins Were Imputed / [Transferred] To Christ, And His Righteousness Is Imputed / [Transferred] To [You]! He Bore [Your] Sins; [You] Are Clothed In His Righteousness!”
 - And Now - All The Benefits & Blessings:
 - Of Reconciliation With God Are Yours!
 - Forgiveness & Friendship & Fellowship With God:

- Through Faith! Alone!

Conclusion:

1. So Today - In The Words Of 5:20:
 - "We Are Ambassadors For Christ!"
 - If You Have Received & Experienced:
 - This Reconciliation With God In Your Own Life:
 - This Is Your New & Special Position!
 - Are We Taking This New Position:
 - That We Have As Christians:
 - Seriously? Or Have We Forgotten:
 - The Special Purpose That God Has Given To Us:
 - As Individuals & As A Church?
2. Our New & Special Purpose & Plea Is:
 - To Urge Others:
 - Who **Need** God – To **Know** God!
 - "Be Ye Reconciled To God!"
 - And This Is Such A Special Ministry!
 - Listen To How God Describes It:
 - In Romans 10:14-15 - "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? / And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"
3. But We Must Never Forget That:
 - All This Is Possible:
 - Only Because God Himself:
 - Has Paved The Way To Himself!
 - Through His Special Plan Of Justification!
 - As Romans 5:1 Tells Us:
 - "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ!"
4. So - From Now On:
 - We Have A Mission From Our Savior, Jesus Christ!
 - "We Are Ambassadors For Christ!"
 - And Christ Himself Is Our Message!
 - "Be Ye Reconciled To God!"

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