

2 Corinthians: Encouragement in Troubling Times
"Motives for Ministry" Pt. 3, # 15
2 Cor. 5:18-21
8-7-16 Sun AM

Paul said in v. 9: "Wherefore we labor" Paul moves to his theme of "Motivation for Ministry" [vs. 9-21].

We are to have a holy ambition that honors the Lord, and desire to be well-pleasing of Him. We strive with zeal to be pleasing to Him.

TT- Paul says that the Christian has three big motives for ministry. We have examined the first two motives for why we serve the Lord.

I. The Judgment Seat of Christ (5:9-13).

II. The Love of Christ (5:14-17).

III. The Commission of Christ (5:18-21).

v. 18a- All men without Christ are enemies of God but it's not God's fault. God does not hate us but we hated him. God does the all the reconciling.

God initiates the reconciliation because we must to him on his terms. What are his terms?

- Repentance and faith in His Son Jesus Christ.
- Regeneration and transformation.
- He alone can forgive sin and impart life.
- Jesus provided the way we can be saved. He satisfied the Father's wrath against sin and the sinner by his perfect righteousness and our faith in Him.

TT- We see some important theological terms in our text- reconcile, reconciliation, imputing, and ambassadors.

I. The Believers Reconciliation (5:18b-19).

NNIBD says, The Bible teaches that man and God are alienated from one another because of man's sinfulness and God's holiness. Through the cross, a relationship of hostility and alienation is changed into one of peace and fellowship.

God could do two things with our sins: count them against us or cancel them by the work of Christ on the cross.

All three members of the Godhead were involved in our salvation.

Heb. 9:14-15, How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (15) And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by

means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Reconciled appears only here and Rom. 5:10 in the NT.

Rom 5:10, For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

- The Father reconciled us in Christ.
- Christ did the reconciling work on the cross.
- We are reconciled in Christ to the Father.

Now we have the ministry of reconciliation. He did not commit it to angels, but to us. Only those who have been reconciled can tell others about reconciliation.

How is it done? Not by attracting events, waiting for the lost to come to us, or marketing techniques, but by the believers telling the lost about how they can be right with God.

Robert's Word Pictures says, "The task of winning the unreconciled to God is committed to us. It is a high and holy one, but supremely difficult, because the offending party (the guilty) is the hardest to win over. We must be loyal to God and yet win sinful men to him."

I. The Believers Reconciliation (5:18b-19).

II. The Believers Responsibility (5:20-21).

If we are to reconcile men to God then we are ambassador for Christ. God uses the gospel and believers to beseech the lost to be reconciled. Note the word "us" in v. 20.

What about the believer as an ambassador?

- Ambassadors are appointed and chosen to be his representatives. We are entrusted with this message of reconciliation.
- Ambassadors represent his homeland in a foreign country. We must be a citizen of heaven to represent heaven.
- Ambassadors are held accountable to say what the one who sent them told them to say. They will give an account for their work.
- Ambassadors are called home before war is declared. Christians will be called home before the day of wrath (1 Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; 5:1-10).

The message of the church is not social reform but spiritual regeneration. What a great responsibility and privilege, to share a message that can change men!

John 20:21, Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

Our message must be right, our methods must be right, and our motives must be right, so that our work will stand approved before the Judgment Seat of Christ!

Three motives for serving Christ:

- I. The Judgment Seat of Christ (5:9-13).
- II. The Love of Christ (5:14-17).
- III. The Commission of Christ (5:18-21).