

AMBASSADORS - CREED

(II Corinthians Chapter 5)

"It's A Worthy Cause"

Foundation

In devotion to the ministry of the Word. We're called to preach the gospel all over the world, establish new churches and nurture them through worship and training. There is no limit to how much we can do. so recruit others who have been converted to join with us in ministry. There is a great need in this world- there are millions and billions of people alienated from God and each other, in danger of being lost for eternity. We hope that you will respond to a spiritual need as well as you would a physical need. I believe that if we could get a vision of the lost and dying world, we would come together for the worthiest of all causes.

I challenge you to put aside any hurt feelings and petty arguments in order that we might concentrate upon the higher calling that God has put before us. I challenge you to join us as partners in the ministry of reconciliation.

Meditate on this.

A Mission To Accomplish

In response to the worthy cause, let's not question our authority and motives. We have taken on an evangelistic ministry of trying to persuade others to accept Christ. We do this not for our own sake, but for the sake of those we persuade.

All must "appear before the judgment seat of Christ". For those that are outside of Christ it will be a terror, but for those in Christ it will be a reward. We do not want judgment to be a terror to anyone, so we must work to persuade everyone to come to Christ.

We have no ulterior motives or unsatisfied egos behind our ministry. We have declared that our whole life was made visible for both God and man to see and examine.

We have provided you with details regarding this ministry, our background and our authority. We are not providing you any new information: instead, we are simply reminding you of what you already know. We hope this reminder will give you an occasion to rejoice on our behalf, that it would encourage you to speak up for us. The true measure of our ministry is not found in you outward appearances, but in character of the heart.

Meditate on this.

Compelled By Love

Christ died on the cross for all sinners. If this is true (and we know it is), then it implies that all were dead. How so? Picture Christ's death as a substitutionary atonement. As sinners we had a penalty we owed God because of our sin. Christ was willing to pay that penalty for us as our substitute. We expect the penalty that He paid to be the same as the penalty we owed. Therefore, if what Christ did for us was to die, then this reveals the penalty that Christ came to be our substitute for.

This is not clever reasoning, here? We are simply explaining our motive for ministry. Since all of us were once "dead in sin" until Jesus paid our penalty. We feel a great burden in our heart to find some way of remembering Jesus for loving us enough to give His own life. The love of Christ binds us together.

Meditate on this

Motive To Inspire

Not limited by what we see. we have come to realize that the physical matters, those of the flesh, are temporary, since Jesus has returned to heaven we no longer relate to Him in that way. He is real, and our spiritual fellowship with Him is even more significant than was the physical relationship.

With this being the case with Christ, there is a spiritual dimension in all people that we should strive to see. and not relate to them after the flesh only. We need to learn to appreciate that everyone is created in God's image and seek to relate to one another on that basis.

Meditate on this

Seeing What We Can Become

When a person is in Christ, he or she still looks the same "after the flesh" as before. But in Spirit, the person is a new creature. Those we can persuade to yield to Christ in faith will have their inner character completely reworked. When you who have been changed consider what a difference you can make with your family and friends, how can we not make every effort to persuade each of them to let Christ make them a new creature as well?

People should be able to easily testify to the dramatic change that being in Christ could produce. Many people have been involved in some of the dirtiest things imaginable. But they can be "washed" in the blood of the Lamb being "sanctified" (cleansed) and "justified" (made right) in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God.

Meditate on this

Message To Proclaim

To understand the ministry of reconciliation, the basic idea is to take two people who are in a disagreement and help them resolve their differences so that they can resume their normal relationship. At Calvary, Jesus Christ acted as the mediator between God and sinful man. We had no legitimate charges against a Holy God. But, because of our sin, He did have just cause for punishing us with death. This judgment against us would have been devastating, but the Father graciously gave His Son Jesus to pay the penalty for us in order to bring about a resolution to this dispute. This offer was above and beyond the duty of a mediator: but Christ is no ordinary mediator. So it is that all people who agree to these terms and allow Christ to pay their death penalty for them can be reconciled to God, restored to a peaceful relationship with the One whom our sins have separated us from. We who have been reconciled to God by Christ are not to rest comfortably. We have been given the ministry of reconciliation. We have a duty to announce to others what they need to do if they want to be reconciled to God as we have been.

No one should ever imagine that the Father was a bystander at Calvary, observing what went on, then deciding how to respond. The cross was part of God's "set purpose and foreknowledge" (Acts 2:23 NIV). It was God who was reconciling the world unto Himself. Reconciliation was neither our idea nor our doing: it was entirely of God.

Because of the work of Christ on behalf of His people, God is no longer imputing our trespasses unto *them*. We need to understand that the biggest obstacle to a relationship with God is the guilt of our sin. This idea of being guilty means to deserve punishment because we have done wrong. Sin makes us guilty in the eyes of God and deserving of His punishment (it should be noted that, we do not always feel guilty, but we are in fact guilty just the same). For those of us who through faith claim the death of Christ for our sins, God will not "impute" the guilt of sins to our record: instead He will mark our debt "paid in full".

Meditate on this.

The Message

Here is one way to summarize our gospel message to the world: *be ye reconciled to God*. After the mediator works out a plan for reconciliation, each party in the negotiation must then decide whether or not to agree to the terms and then they shake hands to "seal the deal". This means

they have decided to accept the offer and to be reconciled to God. Then they must ask God to do the same thing, which is "to be reconciled" to them.

In a spiritual sense, the Father stands even now with His hand reaching across the table. He has agreed to the terms of Christ the mediator. He has accepted His substitutionary death at Calvary. He is ready to shake hands and "seal the deal". Through our preaching and teaching, He is pleading with sinful people... be ye reconciled to God! There is nothing more that God can do for our salvation. It now remains {breach individual to decide whether or not to accept the terms of reconciliation.

This wonderful news will not be communicated unless those who have already been reconciled do so. Therefore, as Christ's ambassadors, we speak in His behalf the message He has given. We are not permitted to modify or compromise it, for it is not our message. We speak what Christ has told us to say. It is the same message that was once delivered to us: be ye reconciled to God.

Meditate on this.

Will You Tell Someone

At Calvary, Jesus was made to be sin for us. This is another reference to the substitutionary atonement, by which Jesus assumed the guilt of our sins and paid the penalty. This should not be understood as Jesus actually became a sinner, but that He took the place of sinners. And He was punished as a sinner should be punished: but He will always be the one who in reality knew no sin.

The one who made all this happen was God himself. God is the one who has made *Jesus* to be sin for us. Once again we are reminded that Calvary was ultimately God's 'plan, a program of redemption "foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet. 1:20).

And never forget the other side of the substitution. Christ took on the guilt of our sins, so that we might be made right with God by Him. We could never pass the judgment bar of God on the basis of our own record of good deeds. For no matter how much good we could show, it would never be enough to make up for our sins against God. That is why God's 'grace' allows us to take as our own. Christ's perfect record, even as He took on himself our guilt. We stand before God fully reconciled to Him, not on the basis of our good deeds, but because He allows us to wear the righteousness of Christ.

Meditate on this.