

Reconciliation

(2 Corinthians 5:16-6:2)

Yearly Theme: *“Peace is...”*

Series Title: *“The Cost of Peace”*

October 10th, 2021

Something to think about:

Reconciliation is not always easy, but it is a must for the believer in Christ. It is the goal for all believers in Christ. It is not optional. But it is hard. Try as we might there are not always easy ways to resolve conflict; and try as we might hurt feelings and pain is not easily overcome. However, as much as it depends on us, we must live at peace with everyone, and the way to do this is through forgiveness and reconciliation.

As our final message in this series, we turn to one of Paul's letters in the New Testament; the second letter to the Corinthians. In chapter five, Paul gives a very clear and concise treatise on what reconciliation is, and how we are to apply it to our lives. Let's take a look at this transformative passage this morning:

2 Corinthians 5:16-6:2 (NLT),

¹⁶ So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! ¹⁷ This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

¹⁸ And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. ¹⁹ For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. ²⁰ So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!” ²¹ For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

^{6:1} As God's partners, we beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God's kindness and then ignore it. ² For God says,

***“At just the right time, I heard you.
On the day of salvation, I helped you.”***

Indeed, the “right time” is now. Today is the day of salvation.

As Christ came into the world to reconcile us to GOD, we too have the responsibility to extend that offer of reconciliation to the world through Christ. Again, here's our main point for this morning:

Key Point: “As much as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

What is the ministry of reconciliation that we are called to, and what does it require of us? Let's see...

- **Stop evaluating others from a human point of view.**

2 Corinthians 5:16-18 (NLT), ¹⁶ So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! ¹⁷ This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

- **Remember, we are Christ's ambassadors to the world.**

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 (NLT), ¹⁸ And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. ¹⁹ For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. ²⁰ So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!” ²¹ For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

- **Remember, today is the day of salvation.**

2 Corinthians 6:1-2 (NLT), As God's partners, we beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God's kindness and then ignore it. ² For God says, “At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you.” Indeed, the “right time” is now. Today is the day of salvation.

Something to take home:

Ernest Hemingway grasped some of the difficulty that characterizes the great desire of forgiveness and reconciliation in his short story, *The Capital of the World*. The story revolves around a father and his teenage son Paco, set in Spain. Paco was an extremely common name in the Spain at that time.

With desires to become a matador and to escape his father's control, Paco runs away to the capital, Madrid. His father, desperate to reconcile with his son, follows him to Madrid and puts an ad in a local newspaper with a simple phrase:

“Dear Paco, meet me in front of the Madrid newspaper office tomorrow at noon. All is forgiven. I love you.”

Hemingway writes, “the next day at noon in front of the newspaper office there were 800 ‘Pacos’ all seeking forgiveness and reconciliation with their father.”

The world truly is full of people in need of forgiveness and reconciliation, and the model for such forgiveness is most profoundly found in Jesus Christ.

St. Clement of Alexandria wrote, “For the sake of each of us he laid down his life – worth no less than the universe. He demands of us in return our lives for the sake of each other.”

Key Point: “As much as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

That peace cannot be achieved without forgiveness.