



Sunday, April 28, 2019

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Intro to 2 Corinthians 5:20

John the Baptist came into the world proclaiming a baptism of repentance in anticipation of the arrival of the kingdom of God. When Jesus Himself arrived on the scene, He also preached repentance and the arrival of the kingdom of God. When Jesus ascended to heaven, He commissioned His followers to go into all the world and teach people to obey Him as their king. So, we are ambassadors of the kingdom of God.

Because we are His ambassadors, it is crucial that we understand Jesus' role in our own lives as king, but also His role over all of creation as the rightful king. As an old theologian/statesman used to say, "there is not one square inch of creation over which Christ does not make the claim, 'Mine!'" Therefore, it is just as important that we understand that not only are we subjects in God's kingdom, but He is making His appeal for others to become subject to Him through us. What a great privilege! But of course, it is also a great responsibility. May God give us the necessary love and courage required to make the truth about the King known to those around us!

Context

Chapter 5 is a prominent chapter in the letter of 2 Corinthians. Certainly much could be said about all of its contents, but suffice to say: Paul, in 2 Corinthians is making an appeal to the Corinthian church to recognize his authority as an apostle and, therefore, to also recognize Jesus' authority more clearly and fruitfully in their own lives. He recognizes that others may come and put on a good show, but Paul is more concerned with substance than anything else. There is no other (and certainly no superior) ministry to Paul's and ours, if we choose to take up that same mantle. Thankfully, despite the treasure of the gospel being contained in jars of clay, God is still reconciling people to Himself through us!

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

“Marketplace Ambassadors”

Questions

- 1) What does God say about being an ambassador for Christ?
 - a. Work is important
 - b. The first thing God did after He created Adam was put him to work (Gen. 2:15)
 - c. The marketplace was a central platform for Jesus’ spiritual impact
 - d. Whatever we do, we are to work at it with all our hearts, as working for the Lord and not for man (Col. 3:23)
 - e. The apostles all came from the marketplace.
 - f. They used the marketplace as their strategic launchpad to advance the Great Commission throughout the world.
- 2) What does an effective ambassador look like?
 - a. Make disciples (Matt. 28:18-20)
 - b. Entrust the gospel to faithful people (2 Tim. 2:2)
 - c. Through evangelism and discipleship

Discuss

- 1) According to 2 Corinthians 5:11 and 5:14, what are the primary motivations for Paul in his ministry? How intensely do those things motivate you?

- 2) What does it say about God that He desires reconciliation from the world that hates Him and is opposed to Him?

- 3) Do you tend to think of the people in your life (work, school, other sphere of influence) primarily in terms of their relationship to Jesus (5:16)? Why or why not?

- 4) What kind of confidence does it give you to know that God is making His appeal to the world through us (5:20)?

- 5) Who are some people in your life right now who don't know Christ that we can be praying for as a group: that they might come to know Christ and that God might use you in a significant way to draw them to Himself?