



Intro to 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Sunday, October 25, 2020
Pastor Don Denyes

It's amazing to think from our standpoint as Christians in the 21st Century that Paul was once viewed very negatively by some in his day. The fact that they disregarded him as unimpressive or corrupt or lacking the proper credentials to be an apostle shows that we, as human beings, can often terribly misjudge a person's character.

Of course, this not only applied to Paul, but it reflected the treatment that Jesus Himself received. He was disregarded as unimpressive. People marveled at His miracles, but they always wanted more, always wanted Him to prove more. Finally, even as He hung on the cross, people mocked Him by telling Him that He should get Himself down from there, that He could save other but couldn't save Himself.

These people viewed Jesus according to the flesh. They didn't view Him or His work through the lens of what God was doing. The same is true of our ministry in the local church. There are times where it may feel like we are not much (or at least that we don't look like much), but thanks be to God who has entrusted to us the ministry of reconciliation and delights in using us for His purposes!

Context

Paul has already beaten back some of the criticisms levied against him in the early chapters. He has also discussed at great length the suffering he has endured in the course of his ministry. As he comes to the beginning of chapter 5, he explains that he does not lose heart in the midst of suffering because he knows the certain hope of eternal life. The Spirit is the guarantee of a future world to come that will be free from the suffering and death that we experience now, but in the meantime, we must press on in faithfulness, because God has also appointed a judgment for believers at the judgment seat of Christ.

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

“Missionary Mindset”

View Believers as New Creatures in Christ

- Radical change
- For every believer

View God as Reconciling People through Christ

- Meaning of reconciliation
- Path for reconciliation

View Others as Those Who Need Christ

- Responsibility for the message
- Message of urgent appeal

Discuss

- 1) When you meet someone for the first time, what kinds of things do you tend to evaluate that person on?
- 2) What keeps us from seeing people as either fellow new creations in Christ or as people who need Christ?
- 3) How does this passage inform our understanding of God's character?
- 4) How does this passage inform our understanding of our role in His mission?
- 5) Who are some people in your life who need to know Christ? How can we pray for them? How can you take the next step in sharing Christ with them?