

2 Corinthians - Commentaries by Charles (Chuck) Hendricks

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Ephesians chapter 4. Verse 17. This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that she henceforth walk, not his other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind. Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart, who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness. And then we'll read from 2 Corinthians chapter 5. 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 verse 17. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ. As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ instead be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin. That we might be made the righteousness of God. In him. And then we'll read a passage from Colossians chapter 1. Colossians, chapter 1. I'll read from verse 19. I'll change one word in the verse to. Give the. The better sense for it pleased the Godhead. That in him should all fullness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself. By Him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven, and you that were sometimes alienated in enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you wholly and unblameable and unprovable in his sight. Then we'll read another passage from Ephesians 2. Ephesians 2. Verse 13. But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off. Are made nigh by the blood of Christ, For He is our peace, who hath made both 1. And hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances. For to make in Himself of twain one new man so making peace. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the cross having slain the enmity. Thereby. And if Romans 5. Romans chapter 5. Romans, chapter 5, verse 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. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom we have now received the IT ought to read the reconciliation. And the last passage, Luke 15. Luke, chapter 15. Verse 22. But the Father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him. And put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet, and bring hit her the fatted calf and kill it. And let us eat and be merry for this. My son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found. And they began. To be merry.

You've probably discerned that I'm going to talk on reconciliation tonight. It's a wonderful subject. A marvelous theme, you might say. One of the, if not the central theme in the New Testament. It's only a New Testament subject. It's not found in the Old Testament, or I know the word is found. But the word is found there. I don't know how many times, but nearly every time it should have been translated atonement. Reconciliation is a New Testament doctrine. And it's only given to us through the Apostle Paul. And it's only given to us in his epistles addressed to the Gentiles. What is reconciliation? Well, we could. Reach for the dictionary and we'd read something like to set things right. And that's partly true. In fact, it's very close to the truth. But it isn't the full truth. What Scripture would teach us is to set things right according to God. According to God. And the scope of reconciliation, we'll see that as we go through the subject tonight. Is extremely vast. It includes. All things in heaven and all things in earth. Reconciliation to set things right according to God. To bring everything back into true relationship. To himself. Set things right according to God. I'd like to look at the subject in a very orderly way and the first thing we want to look at is what is the need of reconciliation? What is the need of reconciliation? Well, let's turn to that first passage that we read in Ephesians 4. And we'll see the need of reconciliation, verse 18 having the understanding darkened. Being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart. Alienated from the life of God. Now that's not a statement. That's just true of some of us. That's a statement that's true of all of us. I think of the passage in Corinthians. I believe it's one Corinthians 6 where. The apostle outlines a number of evils that the Saints at Corinth had been going on with before they were converted. And he says, such were some of you, but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus. And by the Spirit of our God, such were some of you. But when we're talking about the subject of reconciliation and the need for reconciliation, we'll have to say such were all of you, everyone in this room, everyone in the human race. Alienated from the life of God. Through the ignorance that is in us, because of the blindness of our heart, the hardness of our heart, man born into this world is born with a nature which is at enmity with God. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. Flesh is not subject to the law of God, Neither indeed can it be so. Then they that are in the flesh cannot please God, enemies of God. Alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in man. Man has no knowledge of God in his alienated state, alienated from the life of God, He has a nature, He has a life which is the product of Adam. Sin, tainted, defiled by sin, and though Godward thoughts at all in man. Alienated from the life of God. The great need of reconciliation. To set things right according to God when we think of the distance that man is in by nature. By nature and by practice, far. How very far from God? We sometimes sing those words. We cannot measure properly measure how far we were. Until we. Get into the next part of what we're going to talk about and that is. 2nd Corinthians 5 The ministry of reconciliation. We see here in Ephesians the need. The need of reconciliation. And if you'll turn back to Two Corinthians 5, we'll read of the ministry.

Of reconciliation. Verse 17. Therefore, if any man be in Christ. He is a new creature. There is a new creation. All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. Reconciliation involves the removing of all that was contrary to God, all that is contrary to God. All things are passed away. Everything that is not suitable to God must be removed, and what is suitable to God must be introduced so there is a new creation. All things are passed away. All things are become new, and that new creation is in Christ, in Christ risen from the dead. Christ risen has become the head of a new creation. And in that new creation that we're brought into, all the old has been removed. We'll see how that's done in a moment. And all things are of God. All things have become new verse 18 and all things are of God in that new creation. Who hath

reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ? And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, Tremendous, tremendous thought that God has committed to you and to me the ministry of reconciliation. Not only has he reconciled you and me to himself by Jesus Christ, not only has he spanned the distance, not only has he removed all that stood against us, everything that was obnoxious to God, everything that was inconsistent with God's holy being and unsuitable to His presence, He has removed that, and He has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ. He has brought us near and brought us into His very presence. When two parties are at odds with one another and at enmity with each other, and then they settle their differences and everything is made right. Then they are reconciled, and they shake hands and embrace and become friends again. Well, God has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. And you might say, well, he certainly wouldn't commit to those who were so far and so steeped in sin and at such a distance and who were the very slaves of Satan. He wouldn't commit to them anything. He would. Carry out the Ministry of Reconciliation by maybe entrusting it to the angels. Who do his bidding? The elect angels. No, he hasn't done that. It says He has given to us, to you and to me, the Ministry of Reconciliation. He brings us from that awful distance in which we work, that alienation of life. Without a thought, God, word in any of us. Such were we by nature. And by practice proven to be so. And he's reconciled to himself, taken away all that was against us, and brought us near to himself. I think of Joseph's words to his brethren, Come near unto me, come near unto me. And this is God's thought. And that's the wonderful truth of reconciliation. And then he's committed to you and to me. Every one of us has committed to us the ministry. Of reconciliation, he goes on to explain it. When did it begin? When did the Ministry of Reconciliation begin? In this world it began. With the Lord Jesus Himself, the one who was the nearest to his heart of any that was ever in this scene, to wit, that God was in Christ, verse 19, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. I think of John 8. You remember the Pharisees brought to the Lord Jesus that woman who had been taken in adultery, caught in the very act, and they brought her to Him, and said, Moses commanded us that such should be stone. But what sayest thou This they said, tempting Him. They thought that He was on the horns of a dilemma, that no matter how he answered that question, they could have found fault with him. If he had said stone her, he would have been accused of having. Pity. And if he had said let her go free, he would have been accused of violating the law. But he didn't answer either. Either way, he of the very lawgiver himself.

He stooped down, and with his finger he wrote on the ground, and they can't keep asking, and before stooping down he said, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast the stone at her. And then they were convicted in their conscience from the oldest to the least, and they left, and the Lord Jesus rose, and he and the woman were left alone. Now he was the only one that could have cast the stone he's the very one that wrote those 10 commandments with a finger, with the finger of God and he was the lawgiver and he's the only one that qualified he was the only one without sin he could have cast the stone, would he no this verse says God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, bringing the world back into. Unto himself, removing the distance and all that stood against us, not imputing their trespasses unto them. Hath no man condemned thee? No man, Lord, neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more. The ministry of reconciliation. Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more. And so it began with him. And then that verse ends, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. God is beseeching man by you and me. That's what the next verse says. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ. As though God did beseech by us. We pray in Christ's stead be reconciled to God. God is beseeching by us the reconciled ones. We now say to man be reconciled to God. We're commissioned of him as his ambassadors to tell souls to be reconciled to God, that God's attitude toward man is one of favor. One of beseeching, 1 of entreating, 1 of desiring. To bring man back into blessing, He's saying to man, as it were, come near, the work has been done, the distance Christ's work has answered for your sins. Now come near and be reconciled to God. But the marvel of the ministry of reconciliation is that it's committed to us, to us, we who are once so far from God and now have been reconciled by Jesus Christ to himself. He's committed to us. The Ministry of Reconciliation, now, what's the basis for it? There has to be a basis. For reconciliation, we saw the need. The need was in all of us. We were alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in us because of the hardness of our hearts. And now He is. Brought us near, He's reconciled us, and committed to us the ministry. But what's the basis for reconciliation? Verse 21 gives it to us. For he God hath made him Christ to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made. The righteousness of God in Him God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made. Of God in him that we might be who was the altogether righteous, 1. We who were the altogether sinful ones, He has made Christ the righteous one to be sin for us, that we, the unrighteous, the ungodly, the sinners, might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He, the righteous One, took our place, that we, the unrighteous ones, might have his place. Will never know. Properly know how far we were. None of the ransomed ever knew how deep were the waters crossed, or how dark was the night which the Lord passed through, till he found his sheep, which was lost. The only way we can truly measure properly measure how far we were. Is to understand in some feeble measure, for will never understand it fully the cross. The three hours of darkness. From the 6th to the 9th hour. When the darkness enveloped Galgifer's Hill. And when what was transpiring during those three hours of darkness is told us in the cry of abandonment which pierced that darkness at the end of those three hours, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? It's the first and only time in the Lord's pathway here below that He addresses His Father as God.

Prior to that, it was always Father. It was always my father. In the garden, it was Father. If it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done. The term of relationship, The term of communion. The term of fellowship. Father. The Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him. No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work. Therefore does the Father love me because I lay down my life, that I might take it again? Father John 17 I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. And on the cross, he looks down at his tormentors, those that had nailed him to that cross of ignominy and shame. And he says, Father. Forgive them, for they know not what they do. And after he emerges from those three hours of darkness, he says, Father, into thy hands I commend. Commit my spirit. But during those three hours, he doesn't say father. For the first and only time, he says, My God. My God. Why hast thou forsaken me? It wasn't now as Father that he was being dealt with. But it was God in all that He is, in His Holiness, His righteousness, His Majesty, His truth, His love, His grace, His goodness, all the attributes of God's nature. We're now perfectly harmonized. Christ the Son as man on the cross, forsaken, abandoned, alone. He bare the cross alone. Its grief sustained. His was the shame and loss. And he the victory gained. O day of deepest sorrow, day of unfathomed grief, when thou didst taste the horror of wrath without relief. Nothing like the cross. Ye hath made him. To be sin for us. He who knew no sin. He who was the Holy One of God the Sinless 1. The altogether righteous 1. He went into that place of sin. And he bore the unmitigated wrath of a holy sin, hating God. During those hours. Until he could say it is finished. He pronounces upon his own work. Finished. The debt is paid. God is glorified as to the whole question of sin. You'll never understand how far you were, how far I was of never understand it. Until I apprehend in some feeble measure what transpired during those three hours of darkness. When God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we now might become the very expression of God's righteousness in Christ. He took that place. He went into that darkness, He measured that distance. And all that was in God against sin was poured out. Upon his holy head. And he bore it. Until he

could cry, it is finished. That's the basis for reconciliation. Because he took that place, God can now reconcile the vilest. The most distant, the most rebellious Sinner on the face of the earth. And when we look at all of us, we were all in the same condition, alienated. Alienated from the life of God. Through the ignorance that was in us because of the blindness, the hardness of our hearts who being passed. Had given ourselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greedy.

Unsatisfied lust. Such was the state that we were in before he reconciled this to himself, before he committed to us the Ministry of Reconciliation. The basis? Was the cross. And what he endured during those hours. Now let's look at the scope, the extent, the vastness of reconciliation. Colossians, chapter 1. Colossians, chapter one, verse 20. Having made peace through the blood of his cross. By him, by Christ, the one who made peace. Here the thought of making peace. It's a little different than what you get in Romans 5. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We come into in our own souls into peace with God. This in question settled, we have peace with God being justified by faith. But here Christ makes peace. He makes it with respect to God himself. Glorifies all that is in God as to sin. And he makes peace by the blood of his cross. The blood of his cross, the value of his death presented to God. I believe that. This is the godward side of peace being made. Christ's work, God word, He made peace. Now God is free to act in grace to man. And so the next thing we read by him, by Christ to reconcile, to bring back into proper relationship with respect to himself all things unto himself. By him, I say, by Christ, the one who made peace, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. Now that hasn't been done yet. All the work was done when he was made sin on the cross, the work was done. When God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, the moral basis for Christ to rid the universe, everything on earth and everything in heaven. The heavens are not pure in his sight. Sin has entered into the heavens. Satan has access to the heavenlies and it's unclean and impure and he's going to clean everything up. Everything is going to be brought into suitability to God. In the eternal state, the new heavens and the new earth, behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. Not the sins of the world, but the sin of the world. He's going to one day remove every trace of sin from every sphere, heavenly and earthly. Is going to reconcile, He's going to bring back into proper relationship with respect to himself. He's going to set right according to God, everything in heaven and everything in earth. There won't be anything in those spheres that will be unsuitable to God's holiness and righteousness. It'll all be suitable. It'll be there. We'll be there in love, in the atmosphere of love, but light as well, the unstained courts of light. All trace of evil forever removed. Heavenly and earthly things reconciled to Himself. Because he made peace by the blood of his cross. That's the extent of reconciliation. That's the vastness of it. Everything reconciled to himself in heaven and earth. The enemy will be consigned to the eternal burnings in hell. And all those that forget God and turned away from him, and we're not reconciled. And then everything will be brought into suitability to himself. Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him, Christ to reconcile all things unto himself. By him, I say, Whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And now he says, And you. And you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works. Yet now we don't have to wait for this. The reconciliation of heaven and earth will come when God puts forth power to do it. The work, the moral basis for it, has already been accomplished. That was the cross. Now it needs only an active power on God's part to rid the universe of every trace of sin and evil and defilement, and to reconcile all things to Himself, heavenly and earthly. But right now, you and I. Are reconciled, and you that were sometimes alienated in enemies in your mind by wicked works.

Yet now hath He reconciled in the body of his flesh through death. Let's just look at that expression in the body of his flesh through death. When the Lord Jesus, he's talking about state here, is not talking about guilt, He's not talking about the removing of our sins, but he's talking about state. Our state had to be changed. We had to be delivered from the old order, the old defiled state of sin. And in the body of his flesh, through death, he was charged not only with our sins, but with all that sin. Is that obnoxious things called sin, that principle of evil that is in this world of independence of God, everyone doing his own will, everyone pleasing self. That principle of sin has been dealt with, it says in Romans 8. He condemned sin in the flesh, condemned him. The nature is not forgiven, it's condemned and judged so in the body of his flesh through death. When he was charged with the responsibility of the first man, which we had failed to discharge, He has removed the old. He is so completely answered to God, not only for all that we have done, but for all that we were in the flesh, in that sinful nature. It's been condemned, it's been removed from before the eye of God, and He's reconciled us to Himself. Remove the old that was defiled and tainted by sin. And brought us now into a new creation, of which Christ himself is the head in heaven. He has reconciled us to himself. Yet now hath He reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy. And unblameable. And unreprouvable. Holy. Unblameable. And unreprouvable. In whose sight? Sight of our brethren, the sight of the holy angels? No, in his sight. Everything brought into suitability to himself, and we are as reconciled to God now as we ever shall be, will never be more reconciled than we are today, right now. Yet now hath He reconciled in the body of his flesh through death. To present you wholly. And unblameable. Wholly according to God's own holy nature, unblameable, no blame ever attaching to us an unreprouvable in His sight. That's the effect of reconciliation. And it's all based upon what He has done in the body of His flesh through death, what He has done when made sin on the cross to remove the old forever from before the eye of God. And to bring in the new everything that is suitable to himself. So here in Colossians One, when we're talking about the scope of reconciliation, the first things is that it includes everything in heaven and everything in earth. Now, the basis for that was done at the cross. The actual removing of every trace of sin hasn't taken place yet. It will. I saw a new heaven and a new earth. 1st heaven and the first earth were passed away, and Peter says then that new heaven and new earth dwells righteousness. Righteousness dwelling everything according to God. And right now we have it. We've been brought into that new position of reconciliation. To be holy, unblameable, and unreprouvable. In his sight. How could anyone read a verse like Colossians 122 and doubt for one moment the truth of eternal security? Reconciled us now to himself. Holy. Unblameable. Unreprouvable in God's sight, not in man's sight, not in some creature's sight, but in God's sight. There is no spot in the Lord. All fair, my love, no spot in the perfect suitable according to God Himself. Everything set right according to God. We have it now. And it's for us to enjoy it. Now let's look at Romans 5 for another thought on this wonderful subject of reconciliation. Romans 5 verse 10.

For if when we were enemies. In verse 6 it says we were without strength. Unable to help ourselves. Totally weak. It says in due time Christ died for the ungodly. An ungodly person is one who lives his life just as though God didn't exist. He's ungodly. He doesn't refer to God in any of his decisions. In any of his actions and any of his thoughts, he's ungodly. God has left out. Then it says in verse in verse. 8 God commanded his love toward us, and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The Sinner is one who commits. Positive. Sins against God does things which God hates and which are contrary to his nature. This is more active in evil ungodly. It's just leading him out of all of our calculations and thoughts and plans and a Sinner is one that's actively doing those things which. He's opposed to, but there's something worse than that, and that's verse 10, when we were enemies. An enemy is one who is in that enmity with God, one who is at war with God, an enemy when we were enemies. We were reconciled to God, brought back to God. By the death of his son doesn't say. By the death of Christ, it doesn't say. By the blood here it says by the death of his son. Having therefore one son, his well beloved, he said, I will send him also. They will reverence my son. His son, his delight, his loved. 1 He gave the cross to endure by suffering to save. Sinners, He's reconciled as to himself by the death of his Son. He couldn't have given more. And blessed be his name, he wouldn't have given less. Less would not have

met our need. He could not have affected reconciliation. He could not have changed the the heart of man. Man is the one that needs to be reconciled. There are old hymns that were written that talk about reconciling God. God does not need to be reconciled. His heart's never been turned away from man. If it had been, who would have, who would have been able to have turned God's heart towards man? None. No, thank God, His heart was never turned away from man. He didn't need to be reconciled, but we needed the reconciliation. God needed to be propitiated. God's holy nature needed to be vindicated as to the question of sin. The question of good and evil was settled at the cross, but he never needed reconciliation. You and I needed that. We were the ones that were astray. We were the ones that were far off. We were the ones that had wrong thoughts of God and we needed to have those thoughts changed. How did he affect it? How did he change these thoughts of this wicked heart of mine by the death of his son? Death of his son, the darling of his bosom, the son of his love. He couldn't have given more. And his brother Hajo used to say, if God hasn't won your heart, what more could he do to win it? The death of his Son, He has reconciled us to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. He hasn't just brought us back to himself and then said to us as it were. Now you make your way through the wilderness, and I'll welcome you into the courts of light at the end. Oh no. Were saved by his life. The Lord is living on high for us. He died for us. We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Much more being reconciled, being brought back to God in true relationship. Now we're saved by his life, His life of intercession. His life in the presence of God is our great high Priest. Ever living to intercede for us. But there's more than this. Verse 11. Here we have the apex of this epistle, and probably we could say the New Testament. Here's a height beyond which you cannot go. Not only so, but we also joy in God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation. Shouldn't read atonement there, it should read reconciliation. We have. Been reconciled, we've received the reconciliation. Now we joy in God, the source of it all, the source of all this wondrous gospel that he is unfolding in this epistle to the Romans.

It's the gospel of God, it flows from God, it comes from him, and it brings the soul who is reconciled to joy in God Himself. The source of it all, the sum and substance of all blessing, both in this life and in that which is to come, is to know God, and he can only be known in Christ. And he's reconciled as to himself, so that we can joy in God himself. The end of verse 2 Says that we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. That's being there in the glory of God being in heaven. But verse 11 goes far beyond that. It's joy in God Himself. The source, The blessing himself. By whom we received the reconciliation. Everything that stood against us removed. Put away. To God's glory. To his full and complete satisfaction. And now he brings us into that new order, a new creation, and. It's all according. To himself. There's one other thought, and I didn't touch it, and it's in Ephesians 2 IN connection with reconciliation. Let's look at that before we look at the last passage in Ephesians 2 and verse 13. But now this is connected with the scope of reconciliation. We saw that everything in heaven and earth will be reconciled. And we now have the reconciliation. You and I have it right now. We are reconciled. We're holy, we're blameless, unprovable in His sight right now. But there's another thought in reconciliation in Ephesians 2, verse 13, now in Christ Jesus. Ye who sometimes were far off, that's the Gentiles are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace. Now the thought of peace here in this passage is that He's our peace, referring to Jew and Gentile. He is the one that has made these two opposing parties the Jew and the Gentile. That you look down with disdain upon the gentile dog. The Gentile was outside, he was at a distance dispensationally. The Jew was near in the old order, in the old economy. But now in Christ, by the blood, we've been brought nigh. Not now not a dispensational nearness just, but a vital 1A vital nearness. He is our peace. He's the one that has done the work by which God can bring these two warring factions, these two opposing parts of humanity, together and make them one body. United together, 1 Newman. That's the thought here in Ephesians 2 Of our peace. He is our peace who hath made both Jew and Gentile 1. And hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. No distance now, no distance between Jew and Gentile. Whenever a Christian erects A barrier, you remember when the Apostle Peter. Was eating with those of the Gentiles, and then certain Jews came from Jerusalem, from James. And the pressure, the peer pressure, the group pressure of these legalists. So work on the great Apostle Peter himself. And so great was the power of deception and being carried away, that even Barnabas was carried away by their dissimulation. You read this in Galatians 2. And the apostle Paul saw that Peter did not act straightforward. Peter had pronounced in Acts 15, God put no difference between us Jews and them, the Gentiles. He put no difference between us but Peter. Now all of a sudden when these Jews came from James at Jerusalem, he refused to eat with the Gentiles. He erected that middle wall of separation partition again. Denied the Gospel a most serious thing. He was influenced by the legalists and whenever. We do that. And we can do it. We can make a difference between our Christian brethren. We can look at some as being a cut above others. We can give them a place of prominence above others. That's exactly what Peter was doing in principle. The Jewish Christians are here. The Gentile Christians are here. I won't eat with them when the Jews are present. And Paul said, he said, I rebuked him publicly.

Because he was denying the truth of the gospel, He's denying that Christ is our peace. Now if we had a meeting here and we had some of a different color or a different race and they had to sit in a different section. That's a denial of the gospel. That's a denial of the truth that there is no difference. There's no difference as sinners, there's no difference as Saints. We're all one in Christ Jesus, for He is our peace. Let's follow the line of reasoning, verse 14. He is our peace, who have made both 1 and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. To make a distinction is to re erect that middle wall of partition, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments containing ordinances. For to making himself of Twain one new man, so making peace. 1 Newman. No more Jew and Gentile, but one Newman. There's peace made. They've been reconciled to one another, not just to God, but to one another. Every bit of distance between those two groups. Was gone. Remember the language of the woman of Samaria in John 4. When the when the disciples came back, I should say they marveled that he talked with the woman, and the woman said to him. How is it that thou, being a Jew, ask this drink of Me, which am a woman of Samaria? The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritan's. There was a distance between the Jews and the Samaritans. There was a distance between the Jews and the Gentiles. But in Christianity that distance is gone. Reconciliation has been affected. We're all one in Christ, one in Christ, No distance, no difference. And whenever we make a difference, I don't care how we do it, we deny the gospel. Very serious. So making peace 1 Newman, and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body, by the cross having slain the enmity, the enmity existing between them. As we look around us today, just to make a practical application of what we're looking at here, we see Christians divided into little groups. Walls are partitioned between this one and this one and this one and this one. Total denial of the truth that we have in Ephesians 2. In Ephesians 2, he's made one Newman, one body. He's reconciled all these differing opposing parties to one another and to God himself. What a marvelous subject. Reconciliation is the scope of it all distance removed, all earthly distinctions obliterated and blotted out by the Cross. 1 Newman, one body, and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross. Having slain the enmity thereby. And now to close, we will look at Luke 15 where you have. Something very, very precious we saw in Romans 5. That. Not only so, but with joy in God. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation. We've been brought into this new position of reconciliation. All that stood against us, all that was unsuitable to to God, that would have hindered and marred fellowship and nearness and intimacy, all gone, all removed. And we, we are now brought into favor, brought into a position of favor,

accepted, taken into favor. In the beloved. And with joy in God. But here we have something even. More than that, Luke 15:22 you don't have the word reconciliation here. But you have the subject of it. But the father said to his servants. The prodigal had returned now. He had said, I have sinned, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son. It was about to say, make me as one of thy hired servants. The Father stops him, and he says, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him. That's Christ. Christ is our righteousness, and put a ring on his hand, the symbol of eternal love. And shoes on his feet that we might now walk down here for him. And bring hit her the fatted calf and kill it. Christ, to be feasted upon by the Father and the returned Son. The one has been brought back, the one who's been brought back into favor.

The one who has had conferred upon him everything that makes him suitable to the divine presence of the Father. And then they sit down together, and they feast on the fatted calf, the Father God himself feasting on Christ. And we brought into that same position of nearness to feast on the same one. That the father feasts are. Bring hit her the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry. That's fellowship. Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. These things write unto you, that your joy may be full. And here you see the gain of reconciliation, the gain to God. Not just to us for this my son was dead and is alive again. He was lost in his found and they began to be married. Let us make Mary, he said. Let us eat and be merry, the God who said Let us make man in our image after our likeness. Now says let us make merry. He sits down with you and me. And brings us into that place of nearness. So that we can feast on the same object. The East Eastern. Christ, he brings us into that position. Of favor and he finds delight in us. The Father found delight in the return. Prodigal. Let us, let us rejoice, let us be merry. My son has returned. He was lost at his found. He was dead and is alive. Let us rejoice the joy of God in Romans 5. We joy in God here God is joy in US. Join heaven. Over the center that repents and it comes back. God's own joy, God's own merriment brought into that. By reconciliation, so we've seen. The need for reconciliation is our alienation of life. The ministry of reconciliation having reconciled us to Himself, that ministry began with Christ when He was here below. Not imputing man's trespasses unto them, neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more. If no man condemned thee, neither do I. He could have, but he hadn't come for that. He'd come with the ministry of reconciliation. And now he's committed it to us, to you, and to me to go out and say as ambassadors for God himself, we're beseeching for God. Be reconciled to Himself. Beseeching representing God and Christ as a reconciling God. As an intriguing God. And then we saw the basis for reconciliation was the cross, the sufferings, the darkness, the distance that he went into. In order to bring us near. And then we saw the scope of reconciliation. Heaven and earth all rid one day soon to come of every trace of evil gone forever. We have that reconciliation now, yet now hath he reconciled. We who were enemies in our mind by wicked works, He is now reconciled to Himself to present us wholly unblameable, unprovable in his sight, will never be, will never be more holy, will never be more unblameable or unprovable in His sight than we are right now in Christ. And then we saw how he's reconciled in one body by the cross. All opposing earthly distinctions down here. And he's made one Newman, one body, and we can deny that. If we make distinctions when God said there is no difference. If we're in Christ, we're brethren. We belong to Him and to one another. Doesn't matter the color of our skin or the language that we speak or the culture that we come from, if we. In Christ were one. That's the scope of reconciliation. And then we joined God himself. And God joys in. The game of reconciliation. What a subject. What a tremendous theme. The occupied. May God bless His Word to our hearts. Let's sing in closing. #27 in the appendix. A mind at perfect peace with God. Oh, what a word is this. A Sinner reconciled through blood. This. This indeed is peace.

Chicago Conference: 2001, Ministry of Reconciliation

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Turn with me again to. 2nd Corinthians 5. Verse 10. For we must all appear. Before the judgment seat of Christ. That everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that she may have somewhat to answer. Them which glory and appearance. And not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God. Whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead, and that he died for all. That they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh? Yet, though we have known Christ after the flesh. Yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation to it, that God was in Christ. Reconciling the world unto himself. Not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ, that be reconciled to God, for he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin. That we might be made the righteousness of God. In him. In the 3rd chapter we had before us in verse 8 the ministry of the Spirit. How much? How shall not the administration of the Spirit be rather glorious? And again in the middle of verse 9, the administration of righteousness exceed in glory. And at the end of this 5th chapter we have the ministry of reconciliation. That we are here as his ambassadors to minister this precious truth that God wants you back. Do we tell that to sinners? God wants you back. He is a reconciling God. He is one who is not against you, but He has sent us as his ministers and we're all ministers of His. With a ministry of reconciliation, telling them that a righteousness has been one for them which can be theirs. It won't be their own righteousness, but as this chapter ends, the righteousness of God in Christ, they'll stand before God in a righteousness which He Himself provides, and which is for his own glory. A ministry of reconciliation. What is reconciliation? Well, in a case of two people who are at odds with one another, it is setting things right between them. And the reconciliation that God gives to us to entreat sinners to come back to him, it's to set things right according to God. To set things right according to God. God does not need to be reconciled to man, He needs to be propitiated, and that was accomplished on the cross, For God hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

God has been propitiated, but man needs to be reconciled and he's committed to you and to me who were once guilty, lost sinners away from God, who have been reconciled to God. Now to have that ministry of reconciliation ourselves to reckon, to offer to man peace has been made

by the blood of the cross. And now come back to God. Come back. His arms are open and outstretched, welcoming you to come. That's the Ministry of Reconciliation. As my Father hath sent me, he said, Even so send I you. And he came administering the ministry of reconciliation, not imputing the trespasses unto them. We had that before us in John 8, in these meetings, when this woman was brought before the Lord, taken in adultery by the hypocritical Pharisees. Moses and the Law commanded that such should be stoned. But what sayest thou? And here they were talking to the very lawgiver. And they kept pressing him for an answer. They wanted him to say either one of those. They thought they had him on the horns of a dilemma. No matter what he would say. Stone her. Then they could have accused him of having no mercy out. If he had said to let her go free, they could have said you're not keeping the righteous law. But he said neither, He said He that is without sin among you, let him first cast the stone at her. And they went out one by one, from the oldest to the least, and he was left alone with this poor sinful woman. Hath no man condemned thee? No man, Lord? Now he had said he that is without sin among you, let him first cast the stone, and that disqualified all her would be stone throwers. They all left, and here was the only one that could cast the stone. Woody. This was the critical moment of that encounter. Would he cast the stone? He said, neither do I condemn thee. He was the first to minister this Ministry of Reconciliation. And now it's been committed to you and to me. Receive the Ministry and the Word of reconciliation. The atoning work is done, the work is accomplished, and the floodgates of God's love and grace are now opened. And the Word is welcome. I love to come to a house where it says welcome. And you know that you're welcome in that house. And that's what God says today. Welcome. You can come back to him, He won't reject you. That's the ministry of reconciliation. Having therefore this ministry. What a ministry we have. A ministry of an accomplished righteousness by the Lord Himself. Ministry of the Spirit of God who's been given. You might say the the greatest, or I could say maybe the second greatest. If we say the greatest is the Father giving his Son, and the Son and the Father giving the Holy Spirit. When it comes to these divine realities, it's not a question of which is the greatest, because they're all the greatest. God himself has come to dwell in every believer. But I just want to make a few more comments and then I'll sit down. Back where we started, verse 10, That's where we had left off. We must all appear. We must all be manifested. It's a manifestation seat where how we have lived as Christians, and it may include those times in our life before we were Christians, but how we've lived, especially after we got saved, what we've done with our time. What we've done with our energies. What we've done with all that God has entrusted to us, because it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful, and we're all stewards. He's committed to each one of us some talents. And what have we done with our talents? How have we used them? How have we? I was talking to a brother. It was so refreshing to talk with him because he was telling me about this. Man that was working at the hotel where we're staying. He's a Muslim, he's an Arab and a Muslim.

And he had a Bible there. This brother pointed him to John 3:16 and he folded over the page. I want to read that. And then he told him, read the whole Gospel of John. And then he folded over the page at the beginning of John's gospel, and we trust he will read it. We trust that there will be a follow up of this young man at that hotel. He's on the night shift, don't remember his name. For the Bob will be able to tell you. Bottles, whether Bob waddles. His name? To follow him up. The wonderful thing people say when I hear the Jew getting saved, he rejoices. I would rejoice even more to hear of a Muslim being saved. Having such an antagonistic religion, everyone who gets saved is a trophy, a wonderful trophy of His grace. What are you doing with your time? What are you doing with your talents? I asked this question because we must all appear. Be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ. Now this is for us. We'll never be at the great White Throne Judgment, but this is broad enough to embrace that for the unsaved. All will be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ. That everyone may receive the things done in his body. According to that he hath done. Whether it be good or bad. You see, there's a payoff day coming. People do not get away with the evil that they've committed. And the good that they've done will be rewarded in that coming day. And what a day that will be a manifestation seat. Our lives will be manifested, will be we ourselves as Saints will be in glorified bodies when we stand before that judgment seat. So it has nothing to do with our acceptance before God. That's already been decided. But it has to do with how we've lived after we've become a Christian. How are you living? How you spending your spare time? How's your prayer life? How much time do you spend in this book? How much time do you spend witnessing to souls? I know of one who wouldn't go to bed at night until he had spoken to at least one soul every single day. One night he lay down on his bed and and they came to him. I haven't talked to anyone today. He got dressed, he went out and with tracks in hand, he found someone that he could witness to give the gospel to leave a track with. You may not be eloquent in your speech, but you can always give attract. And speak a word for the blessed Lord. You work with people every day, rub shoulders with them, talk to them about your Savior. Precious Savior. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. That everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Now just hold your place here and go back to Romans 14 for a quick, quick moment. Romans 14, we have it again. And. Verse 10. Why does thou judge thy brother, Or why does thou set it not thy brother? Where we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord. Every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us. Shall give an account of himself. God let us not therefore judge one another anymore, but judge this rather that no man put a stumbling block in here or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. He's dealing in Romans 14 with non essential matters, not fundamental doctrines, but non essential matters as to eating, drinking and what you wear and so on. But that expression we shall all stand. Before the judgment seat of Christ. So then everyone of us should give account of himself to God. We're going back to the Second Corinthians 5.

You're going to give account. I'm going to give account. For what we've done with our lives. How we've spent our time, precious commodity. Everyone of us has the same amount of time. And how are you using it? You're either using it for self or are you using it for him? Well, there's going to be a day, a day when we'll stand before him, not a question of our salvation here. It's a question of how we have handled as stewards what he has committed to our trust. And it's required in stewards that a man be found faithful. But then it says, Read verse 10 again, We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Someone says, well how do we receive for the bad? Well Christ has already received for the bad for us, but we will lose reward if we have not used our. Talents faithfully for him. We'll lose our reward and everything that we do for him. Even a cup of cold water will be rewarded every word. You speak for Christ every act of kindness. Every. Everything that is selfless, you're doing it for self. You've lost a reward. For the applause and the praise of men, you've lost your reward. But if you do it for him. If you do some good deed and they they say I've noticed you, we're talking about how we live in our meetings and I've noticed you and you must be a very religious person and and you just leave it there. If you say no, I'm really not religious, but I found a savior and everything I do is for his glory and not for mine. Don't praise me, don't thank me, thank him. He's the one that has produced. Any good works that I do, he deserves all the praise. Now when we do that, there may be there will be a reward. But if we take the credit to ourselves and they look upon us as a wonderful person, that's not the right attitude on our part. But then he says in verse 11, knowing therefore the terror of the Lord. I believe the judgment seat of Christ for the ungodly, for the lost, is the great white throne. And that's why it says the terror of the Lord. We persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. He says we're living our life as an open book before

God, and I trust it's an open book before you. We're not hypocrites and we're not pretending to be something that we're not. We're not putting on a front, Paul said. He said I trust that. We're just as open before you as we are before God. How is it with you? How is it with each one of us? How are we living our lives? For we commend not ourselves again unto you. But give you an occasion to glory on our behalf. That she may have somewhat to answer them which glory and appearance, and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God whether he is raptured, so to speak, in his soul, as he's occupied with what the Lord Jesus has done. We had some of that this morning at his table, as we considered him the forsaken. 1 And we sang that beautiful hymn, God, my God, art thou forsaking him, whoever did thy will? It was for you and for me. That he went to the extremity of suffering to win your poor soul and mind. What do we owe him? Everything. Everything. It always de stresses me. When troubles come amongst the Saints. And a person justifies. The way they're going because my family went that way.

The Lord said He that loveth father or mother, wife or children, more than me, cannot be my disciple. He deserves the 1st place always above everything else. And if he doesn't have it, we are idolaters. We've had we put another object before him. And he's a jealous God. He demands, he requires, He deserves always, ever the first place in our lives. May it be so with each one of us. Whether we be beside ourselves, raptured in an ecstasy of the awesomeness of His, of his love, of His goodness, of His power, of his unspeakable grace. Is to God. It is to God this is not to be displayed before men. This is a this is a rapture that we have in our souls as we're occupied with him and all that he is and all that he has done. Whether we be sober, it is for your cause, before our fellow men were sober. Not given to levity and lightness as alas, some of us are guilty of. For the love of Christ constraineth us. It motivates us, it impels us, it propels us. Because we thus judge that if one died for all. Then we're all dead. If he died for all. Then all were dead while we were in the state of death. And that he died for all. That they which live, that's us who believe the gospel we've passed from death to life, from to the power of Satan, to God. Now we live. What does it say that they which live should not henceforth live under themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again? This is what he claims for you, from you, from me. And alas, we failed. We have not committed ourselves entirely to him. The biblical example of one that did that was the Apostle Paul. He was a man that was characterized by whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. And when he was persecuting Christians, he did it with his might, and after he got saved he did it with his might to preach the gospel, to get souls saved. He was he was an he was not wishy washy. He was committed. And made the soul. With us the little while that remains to us. He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live under themselves. But unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we know man after the flesh. If I was a Jew. And I get saved, I'm not a Jew anymore, I'm a Christian. I was a Gentile and I get saved and a Gentile anymore, I'm a Christian. We don't know one another in our relationship after the flesh. Remember they came to the Lord and they said their mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to speak with thee. And he said, who's my mother? Who are my brethren? That they that hear the word of God and do it. He disowned the natural in favor of. Spiritual. And that's what he's saying here. Henceforth know we know man after the flesh. Yeah, though we have known Christ after the flesh. That was true of the Jew, not the Gentile. They knew Him after the flesh. They were expecting their Messiah to come, and when He came, we know they rejected him. And Paul speaking as a Jew here, says, though we have known Christ after the flesh, we Jews that now henceforth know Him no more. And that's the meaning in John 20 when? Mary Magdalene came to realize who she was talking to. And. Said master. And he said touch me not. Don't handle me. Don't cling to me, Mary. You can't have me back as Messiah to Israel. I am now a risen man. And a new, complete, new order of things has come in, and you go to my brethren, My brethren, tell them I ascend to my Father, to your Father, to my God, and to your God. And that's the opening up of this dispensation of grace.

Greece, and we belong to that. Where participants in the the highest order of blessing ever conferred on that. That's what we've been brought into. She wanted him back as Messiah to Israel. Remember in Acts One they said to him, Wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel? And he said, It is not for you to know the times of the seasons which the Father has put in his own power, but he shall receive power after that. The Holy Ghost is come upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. That's a that's an outline of the whole book of Acts and the way the gospel is going forth, starting at the guiltiest spot, Jerusalem, reaching out to Judea and then Samaria and then to the Gentiles. Wonderful to be a participant in this, to be ambassadors in this, to represent a heavenly country. And not to be engaged in the politics and the affairs of this world. He's called us out of it. We are now new creatures in Christ. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature or there is a new creation. Old things have passed away. I'm no longer a Jew. I was, but I'm no longer a Jew. I'm no longer a Gentile. I was, but now I'm a Christian. Whole things have passed away, all things have become new, and all things are of the God who hath reconciled it to Himself. By Jesus Christ, and hath given to us. Ministry of reconciliation, so we can go to anyone and say be reconciled to God. He told me to tell you this, He loves you, He wants to save you. He wants to bring you into this blessing. And we can go to that Muslim behind the desk there and say God loves you. He wants to bring you into his family. He wants to become your father. He wants you to know God. The Scott that you worship, you can't know him. He's unknowable. We heard that last night. Ministry of Reconciliation. The foundation of it, that is, that He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

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