

"SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?"



TEXT: **2 Corinthians 5:19-21** *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's stead, 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.*

INTRO.: A. Last week we spoke on the subject **"NEW, ALL NEW, BRAND NEW"** and spoke about **a new relation, a new creation and a new reconciliation** from verses 16-19. Today we want to deal with verses 19-21 and the question **"SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?"** We will attempt to deal with **a new message** and **the new messengers**. (read text)

B. The **Old** Testament gave us a glimpse of things to come, but those things were shrouded in types, symbols, pictures and mystery. The truths were there, but were incomplete. That's why we call the 2nd installment of the Bible the **New** Testament. Here the types and pictures become fulfilled; they become reality. The things they hinted at are completed. The sacrifices pointing to Christ's death on Calvary becomes reality; the symbols in the Tabernacle and Temple find their fulfillment in Him, the Priesthood is transferred, the pictures hanging on the walls of the O.T. in the offerings, people and ceremonies now have their completion in Him. And the mystery surrounding all the rituals, vestments, and furnishings (including the altars, the table of showbread, the candlestick, the veils, the curtains, boards encased in gold, etc.) find their completion in Him. Even the overall strength and beauty of the Temple itself finds its anti-type in Christ.

Psalms 96:6 *Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.*

C. Although we have already examined in some detail v.19 we have not plumbed its depth...nor could we. However there are some things we want to emphasize there and in order to do some justice to v.21, we must link it with v.19. So let's now look more closely and attempt to answer the question **"SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?"**

I. THE NEW MESSAGE: V.19,21

ILLUS.: The subject of this new message is reconciliation. It was not possible in the O.T. except in a temporary form, i.e., **"the blood of bulls and goats."** But because of Calvary we now have a permanent reconciliation message.

Religion is man's feeble effort to be reconciled to God. It fails! Christ alone is capable. Paul's appeal was not a perfunctory pronouncement, but an impassioned plea: **"...we persuade men" v.11**

A. A Monumental Reconciliation: v.19

1. This new message embraces the whole world!

ILLUS.: Christ's atonement was not limited to the "elect" as the Calvinists teach. The reconciliation accomplished on the Cross was universal in its effects and potential. Through Christ God declared the potential of peace on the entire world.

That verse familiar to every Sunday School child, Jn.3:16, doesn't mean the **"world"** or **"whosoever"** to the Calvinist. For Calvinism to stand, this (& many other verses expressing the same truth) cannot mean what the words seem to say: **"world"** and **"whosoever"** cannot signify all mankind but only the elect. Sproul, a leading Calvinist says, *"The world for whom Christ died cannot mean the entire human family. It must refer to the universality of the elect..."* Another Calvinist boldly declares *"...the Bible teaches again and again that God does NOT love all people... 'loved by God' is not applied to the world but only to the saints."* Calvin himself declared, *"All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation."*

2. The good news of this new message is that God has already reconciled the world to Himself by virtue of the sacrifice of His Son; the problem is that sinners are not yet reconciled to Him – thus it is our ministry to deliver the good news.
3. This is the **"word of reconciliation"** which is given to every believer.

ILLUS.: Christ has declared peace on the world, one day He will declare war! The Tribulation and Armageddon are coming! The Great White Throne Judgment is coming! That's why men are told to escape the wrath to come. Today Christ sits not on the Judgment Throne, but on the Mercy Seat of grace.

4. Because of Calvary Christ is **"not imputing their trespasses unto them."**

B. A Magnificent Reconciliation: v.21

ILLUS.: At one time in our history it was legal, and often practiced, that one drafted into military service could choose a substitute to go to war in his place. You say "That's unfair! What if the substitute got killed or seriously wounded in battle...a battle the draftee should have fought?" If you think that is unfair, read our text verse!

1. A Stranger to sin becomes sin!

ILLUS.: Here is something NEW. In the O.T. the sinner symbolically transferred his sin & guilt to the sacrificial substitutionary animal, but the animal never really became sin!

2. The Innocent One is treated as guilty.

ILLUS.: Christ was never tempted by sin (God cannot sin!!!), knew no sin, never confessed sin, never expressed sorrow for sin, never apologized. Even His enemies had to trump up charges against Him, because the united testimony of both His friends and enemies was that they could find no sin in Him! Herod found no guilt in Him; Pilate declared His innocence 5 times, his wife once, and the officer who had charge of His crucifixion publicly declared Him to be a righteous man, and the sinner crucified next to Him stated: **"...we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this Man hath done nothing amiss." Lk.23:41** He was brought into contact with both the tables of the Law, but He transgressed not a single commandment! There were neither sins of commission, nor sins of omission on His spotless record. There was no guile in His heart, nor sinful thought in His mind. He was 100% pure and sinless.

Nevertheless, the cumulative sin of humanity are gathered into one mass & placed on Christ. All the murders, rapes, child abuse, homosexuality, lust, immorality, fornication, adultery, robberies, blasphemy, profanity, rebellion, pornography, unbridled tempers, destructive criticism, gossip, stubbornness, filth, abortions, unforgiving spirits, etc. were piled together in one hideous heap & Christ bore them all with their shame and guilt & took the just penalty!

3. Strangers to righteousness become righteous.

- a. Christ had no sin, but our sin (unbelief) was imputed to Him.
- b. God treated Him as He should have treated us.
- c. We had no righteousness, but His righteousness was imputed to us.
- d. God treats us as He should have treated Him.
- e. Christ has become **"Jehovah-Tsidkenu" – "The Lord our Righteousness."**

II. THE NEW MESSENGERS: v.20

A. A Meaningful Motivation:

1. We have become the bearers of this new message.
2. No O.T. prophet had such a high and lofty calling.
3. We have become Ambassadors for the Sinless One:

ILLUS.: The duties of an ambassador; they are 1) Not to originate their own message 2) Not to think lightly of their mission 3) Not to seek their own glory 4) Not to aim at their own comfort and pleasure as a chief object 5) Not to depart from their own instructions; neither add nor detract 6) To go where sent 7) To communicate accurately the wishes of their Master 8) To defend his honor & integrity 9) To make their master's business pre-eminent 10) To do their work to honor him 11) To be dependable 12) To represent him and his wishes accurately.

An ambassador is always called home before war breaks out! (Before the Tribulation and Armageddon the saints will be removed from a hostile world!)

B. A Marvelous Ministry:

ILLUS.: In the Roman Empire there were 2 kinds of provinces: Senatorial provinces which were at peace with Rome and had friendly delegates from the emperor, and Imperial provinces which were dangerous because hostile to Rome. They too had ambassadors, but it was a precarious mission. So it is with us. Among the saints we are at peace, when representing Christ to the world we are in hostile territory.

1. Think of it! Wretched, wicked and willful sinners, now Ambassadors for a sinless Savior!
2. Think of it! Those who had sin in us, and sin on us, now have Christ in us and His righteousness on us!

3. Think of it! Those who were enveloped in darkness, now are sons of His light, those who were destined to hell are now detoured to heaven!

CONCL.: Suppose your neighbor was an adulterer, drug pusher, rock music nut, hated you. But instead of arresting & punishing him, they come and take you, try you, & sentence you for his crimes! You say "*That's unfair!*" You are right. Or suppose some neighbors child every day, broke your windows, vandalized your car, stole from you, beat up your kids, and spit in your face and then to even the score, you beat YOUR child for every one of his offences & on top of that you treated the neighbor's child as your own innocent child and bestowed gifts on him, etc. You say "*That's unfair!*" You would be right again. But, in effect this is what our Savior has done for us – to an infinite extent! **"SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?!" That is new!**