

Reconciliation

Ephesians 2:14-18

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Our world is filled with enmity between different groups of people. The differences between the nations has and will (in this life) always be a problem.

But it is not just race and language that divides us. Paul gives us a short list in Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female;

So we have divided up humanity in almost every conceivable way.

But God is the great reconciler of mankind, not only to Himself but to one another.

Modernistic religion of the past generation tried to convince people in the universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man. And though humanly speaking this is true it is not true spiritually.

The thought being that if you can convince man that his neighbor is his brother then the world would be such a better place. But all we need to do is go back to Cain and Abel. They were brothers quite literally physically but not brothers spiritually.

Jesus no doubt exacerbated the Pharisees by telling them that they were of their father the devil.

The world is trying to find peace outside of Jesus Christ and that is only a mirage. It is only in Jesus Christ that we can be reconciled to God and to each other.

That is the subject of our message today.

- I. For He Himself is our peace,
 - A. The He here is emphatic that is why in the NKJV it is translated He Himself.
 1. This is important to show that there is no other means of peace.
 2. Many other religions claim to give peace, but in them there is no reconciliation as in Christianity.
 - B. So then in Jesus Christ Himself we have peace.
 - C. For His not only gives peace but He is our peace.
 1. He is our peace with the Jews and the Jews with the gentiles.
 2. Since the time of Jacob's sons there was an enmity between the Children of

Israel and the nations that were around them.

3. By the time we get to the time of Paul the enmity between the Jews and the Gentiles has reached epic proportions.

II. Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation

A. Jesus has made a way for both and Jew and Gentile to be joined together.

B. The middle wall of separation was more real than we might think.

1. When Herod rebuilt the temple there were several courts surrounding the temple.
2. There was a court of the Gentiles that was divided by a wall that separated the Gentiles from the Jews.
3. The Gentiles were warned of certain death if they were to cross over that divide into the area only for the Jews.
4. This is what Paul is accused of in Acts 21:27 ¶ Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, 28 crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."
5. That is the main reason they wanted to kill Paul.

C. But God had broken down that wall when He tore the veil of the temple in two to allow any one access who would come by faith in Jesus Christ.

III. Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances,

A. When Jesus died on the cross He did not die as a Jew for Jews or as a Gentile for Gentiles but as a man for all men.

B. In His flesh He kept the law of commandments and became a sinless sacrifice for the world of sinners, both Jew and Gentile.

1. He kept the law that neither Jew or Gentile could keep.
2. He took away the enmity of the law, for the law was our enemy in approaching God.
3. For we could not approach God for we were sinners.
4. But by the sacrifice of His flesh He took the need to keep the law from us.

IV. So as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace

A. As we saw earlier in Ephesians 1:22-23 (NKJV) 22 And He put all things under

His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

- B. Gentiles no longer need to become Jews to be accepted into the fellowship for Jesus has formed an entirely new basis of fellowship, based on grace, not on works.
- V. And that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross thereby putting to death the enmity.
- VI. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.
- VII. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.