

Reconciliation

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[0 : 01] 45 minutes as Ted Tripp drives, an hour and a half for the rest of us. Open your Bibles with me to Ephesians chapter 2. Let me express to you the greetings from Bible Fellowship Church in Greentown.

We look at you as being our elder sister. We have been thankful and much blessed over the years for many facets of fellowship. You have fed us, you have nurtured us, you have encouraged us. We are very grateful for your presence here. We are very thankful for this opportunity, these rare opportunities of fellowship. Before we read, let us pray.

Our Father, into your presence we come. Counting on the merits of your Son, the virtues of his blood. Owning him as our mediator at your right hand.

And trusting all the benefits and blessings that he has died to win for us this day. Of all things, our God, we pray, give us your presence. Teach us your word.

[1 : 17] Shape us by it. In Jesus' name, amen. I hate to do this, but we pick up reading in verse 11 of Ephesians chapter 2.

The reason I hate to do this is because everything is smack in the middle of a context. And this context goes on for paragraph after paragraph.

And so we're picking up in the middle of something. But providence is what it is. Verse 11. Verse 11. Therefore, remember at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called the uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands.

Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

But now in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments in ordinance, expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two.

[2 : 41] So making peace. So making peace. And might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.

For through him, we both have access in one spirit to the father. And we'll stop at that point. There is much more to be read and said. A quick rationale for this passage.

I was originally drawn to this passage because of the word reconcile there in verse 16. Paul is the only apostle who uses the word reconcile and reconciliation to describe and interpret the cross of Jesus Christ.

And it attracted my attention. And he expounds on that doctrine in four passages. And this is probably of the four the most expansive.

Every passage that he brings this up in is just saturated with the gospel. And it fills a great deal of gap. I was encouraged with the doctrine of reconciliation because of all the ways that the scriptures describe the cross of Christ.

[3 : 59] Reconciliation speaks most clearly and pointedly to a love relationship with God. And it's fascinating in the passages where he expounds it. The love of God is right there.

It is in 2 Corinthians 5. It is the love of Christ that constrains us. And then he goes into it. In Romans 5, it is the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Here you can find the love of God up a few verses in that first paragraph, which is definitely part of the context here. And it's not just love in verse 4. It is the great love. And then he goes into this whole matter of reconciliation.

And this is what our culture, our race, our hearts so desperately need to hear. I don't have to go down a litany of things that will explain to you how fractured and fragmented our lives and our culture is.

All you've got to do is pick up the paper yesterday, read the goings on in Virginia, and you can see this world is filled with hate. If you haven't been on the streets passing out of the streets passing out tracks lately, maybe you haven't heard how palpable the hate of Jesus Christ is in the general culture.

[5 : 12] The idea is we are reaping the consequences of sin that was heaped upon us by the fault of our first father.

When God created this world, everything was very close together and very united. God and man were just like this. Nose to nose, mouth to mouth, he breathed the breath of life into man.

People were together. She was bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, and the two were made to become one flesh. Well, sin disintegrated all of that.

And all of that oneness dissolved into shame, fear, guilt, ultimately exile from the very presence of God. And we reap the consequences of that.

Families disintegrate. Disintegrate into hate. Disintegrate into hate. Everything from abortion to abuse. And everything in between. Our culture.

[6 : 21] You can see it not only in hate from person to person, from tribe to tribe, and group to group. You can see it from person within himself. These days, a man can wake up in the morning, look at himself, and swear that he's a woman.

He is alienated from himself. And then you go into things like depression, addiction, suicide, and it is everywhere.

This world is fractured. And someplace in the middle of it, Christian throws up his hands and says, All right, what is God doing? Well, to explain what God is doing, He had his holy apostle, the object of hate and persecution, landed him in prison, and Paul sat down and wrote what God is doing.

And that's what the book of Ephesians is all about. The theme of the book is in chapter 1 and in verse 10. And here you can see the theme of reconciliation come up in terms of the big picture of God's purpose.

Verse 9, that he is according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him.

[7 : 39] Things in heaven and things on earth, and that's what God is doing. He is uniting all things in him. And so, in Ephesians, the gospel is put in the context and with the words of reconciliation.

Before we look at it, just to make it very personal, if you are here, and you are one of those detached, isolated, and lonely souls, and you are among those persecuted, those who are betrayed, and those who are abused, you've got a couple of options in front of you.

You can wrap yourself up in self-pity and victimology. You can respond, as you have been treated, with hate. Or you can listen to the gospel of Christ.

And here you can find a genuine and a real hope. So, what I am going to do, Lord willing, with this passage is not come even close to beginning to exhaust it or be comprehensive with it, but just pick out a couple of the elements of reconciliation that are here, hopefully for the encouragement of the people of God.

So, first thing, reconciliation is obviously reversal. And by that, right in front of us, we've got the reversal of the alienation and the distance that he spoke of there in verse 11.

[9 : 13] Verse 11 and 12 is recounting the distance between people and between God. And I find this interesting in my study of the word reconciliation, that wherever it comes up, he wants us dwelling on our past.

It's fascinating to me. But he marshals and brings in front of us the garbage that we used to be and that we used to live in.

And he wants it to have it clearly in front of our minds. And it's fascinating. Every time reconciliation comes up, we're either enemies of God or in 2 Corinthians, we're dead.

Here, he's got it in front of us. But you'll notice that twice here, he tells us, remember the past. See, there's an appropriate biblical way to look at the past, and there's an unbiblical way to look at the past.

If you look at it unbiblically, it can become a chain, and you can become stuck in the muck and in the mire and have the past dictate to you. But what he does here is fascinating.

[10:18] First thing he does when he wants us to remember is he begins to marshal in front of us the absolute hopelessness of our situation, the alienation that we were from the plan of God, and he brings before us like five dimensions of the Gentile lostness.

You're without Christ. Enough said? Not quite. You were strangers to the state of Israel, meaning you were not part of the people of God.

You had no claim on the covenants of promise, meaning that you were not part of the program of redemption that God had instilled and put in this world. You were without hope, and you were without God.

And I would really like to be able to convince people that that's true. I don't know how many times I have heard Christians say things like, you know, even before I knew the Lord, God was in my life because of this, that, or some other kind providence.

Well, he was in your life, but he was not in your life in any kind of saving way. You were without God. And you would think, all right, that's a bad situation, but the point that he is making here is that that alienation and that hopelessness is not heaped on somebody that's innocent.

[11:41] If your eyes go up to the first verses in chapter 2, he is there marshalling out in front of us dimensions of our depravity. Hey, you've got five of those, give or take.

Dead in trespasses and sins. There's guilt and absolute spiritual inability. Talks about how we were running around like lemmings following the course of this world.

Their values, their beliefs, their standards. We were running around doing what they did. And we were stuck in the kingdom of Satan. He was our prince.

And we thought we were doing our own thing. We didn't recognize that he had a ring in our nose and he was leading us around doing his thing. And we were stuck as children of disobedience under the wrath of Almighty God.

In other words, sinfully, morally, we were helpless. And on top of that, then we were hopeless.

[12:51] Now, I would love to go into all those things and unpack all of those things. But that would take all afternoon. And even though Craig basically begged me to preach for two hours today, I will not do that.

Instead, I want to raise the question of why he wants us to think about this. Why does he want us to enter into our past lostness and our past separation from God?

And without claiming to be the mind reader of the Holy Spirit or anything like that, I think it is wrapped up some way in the radical, thorough contrast of what we are now as Christians.

You'll notice there in verse 11, it begins with a therefore. Well, the therefore, you know, you want to throw up your hands and say, all right, wherefore? We'll go up one verse. You're created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

That new creation that he has made us. That is the identity of what defines a Christian throughout the rest of this paragraph.

[14:06] Fundamentally, thoroughly, at the basis of our being, you as a Christian, you are not what you used to be. That needs to sink in deep into our faith.

Not what you used to be. And see, this contrast is so amazing. Let your eyes go up to the paragraph up above and you can see it. The decisive, transforming power has entered those hopeless people.

Verse 4, there is this mercy, this rich, great mercy of God and this mighty, great love of God that has instilled and he throws in there, but God.

And then you come down to verse 13 and there you see it again. But now, something has happened in our autobiographies.

There is some power, some saving grace that has come from the outside. And in the larger context of this paragraph, what he has done is he basically goes down all of those points that he mentioned about our lostness and hopeless and helpless estate and shows how they are absolutely reversed.

[15:21] You used to be without Christ. Well, he says, now you are in Christ. You used to be without hope. Well, now you have a hope in chapter 1.

He used to be without God. Well, now, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in verse 18, we have that God. In fact, that God inhabits us as a holy temple in the rest of this chapter.

And the point that he is making is everything about you is different. You are not the same as you used to be. And with that, you've got a new purpose.

See, to be a new creature in Christ, you are created in Christ unto good works. In other words, you are part of the solution to this fractured world in which we live.

Created in Christ unto good works. Well, that majesty, that purpose to be created in Christ unto good works is expounded in the rest of the book.

[16:31] The idea that in Christ there is this fundamental change of our life gets expounded in chapters 4, 5, and 6.

Those good works are described there as almost a miraculous life. Something you could never do. Something you could never do as an old creation.

Live a life of sacrificial love. Live a life of persevering patience with the sins of others. Forgive as God has forgiven.

Live a life that is just miraculous. And if we don't get it into our world view and iron it down into our personal self-image that I am a new creation in Christ, we will never even make a run at it.

He wants us to remember who we were so that we can remember that we've got this amazing life that we are called to live. So we are meant to remember.

[17:36] And not only that, I sincerely believe that there is a different effect in our life because we are created in Christ unto good works. You a Christian?

You take that name? Yeah. The very idea is you are living proof.

You are the hard evidence that there is a God that inserts himself into hopeless and helpless situations. You've been exactly where this world is.

And you can step back and you can say, look at my life in all honesty, but God. But God. There is a God who is rich in mercy and who has great love with which he loves people who are dead in trespasses and sins.

And you can look back and you can say, yes, there is a God of tremendous power in verse 6. A power that is able to raise the dead, the spiritually dead.

[18:46] You can go on and you can say, yes, there is a God who is able to do what Paul is going to say in chapter 4 is exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.

And you are the living proof that that is real. This is not some kind of myth that we are talking about. In real lives, the power of the new creation is evidence that God is able to deal with all of this.

All this fragmentation. You know what that makes your life? A living parable.

An object lesson that the gospel is true. All of a sudden, everything about us becomes the proof positive that no matter how alienated and separated and divorced and broken this world is, you're the walking, talking evidence that things can be put back together.

So I think he wants us to remember that for that kind of reason. He wants us to know and he wants us to live in such ways that we are not what we used to be.

[20:10] And the world can take hope when he sees us, when it sees us. I guess that means automatically we need to straighten up.

And that we need to live the life that Jesus Christ would have us live. We have a tremendous purpose. Well, second thing about reconciliation here is in verse 13, very simply, it is in Christ. Now in Christ, you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. And again, wherever the idea of reconciliation comes up, the efficacy of the blood of Christ and the atonement on the cross comes forward in the apostles' thinking.

Something real happened at Calvary 2,000 years ago outside the walls of Jerusalem when God contemplated the cross of Christ.

He put away his hostility and he put away his wrath and he put away his anger and the propitiation that Jesus Christ is became very fundamental in the dynamic of God dealing with us.

[21:23] But just for the sake of ease here, a couple of observations. If it is in Christ, then reconciliation demands a mediator.

And you would say, well, we are the people of God. We are the church of Jesus Christ. You don't need to tell us that. Well, I happen to be a Christian.

And I happen to know in my own conscience and in my own experience how often I try to approach God without a mediator. And how often in a very left-handed kind of way it comes across, if I have had a bad day, I don't feel worthy to be in his presence.

And if I have had a good day, then I feel much more fit to talk to him and to hope. But is that a Johnstonsism or is that part of the way the little Pharisee inside of you responds as well?

You see, whenever we want to approach God based upon ourself, we are functionally denying that Jesus is a necessary mediator. And we go through the torment of not having a sufficiency of mediation.

[22 : 36] And so we're always living at this distance from God, which if we are brought near by the blood of Christ is not necessary.

In fact, it is a denial of the virtue of the blood of Christ. And so even for Christians, we must remember we need a mediator. And God has given us an all-sufficient mediator.

And we are welcome in the presence of God based upon the blood and the righteousness of his son, which never loses its virtue. So he is that.

I wish I had opportunity and time to expound on the fullness of this Christ that is presented to us here. Because not only do we need a mediator, but we need a full Christ to be a mediator.

The picture of Christ in this passage, in these passages here in Ephesians, is just magnificent. He is a whole Christ. We will never be reconciled to God with some kind of stripped-down model of Jesus Christ.

[23 : 44] You can see it a little bit here. You recognize that he describes Christ in all of his offices. Back in chapter 1, he is a king. He was raised from the dead and seated at the right hand, far above all principalities and powers and names that are named.

He is a great king. A few verses down, we read that amazing statement in verse 17, that he came and preached peace to you who were far off.

That is a description of the prophetic office of Christ, that ongoing preaching ministry that Jesus Christ still maintains as the gospel goes forward.

And here in verse 13 in our passage, he is a priest. We are brought near by the blood of Christ. That is Old Testament language that is taken out of the temple.

See, geographically and physically, to worship in the Old Covenant, you had to come near. Well, he takes all of that, and what he is using is the idea that in our relationship to God, sacrifice draws us near to God.

[24 : 56] And in the efficacy of the sacrifice, that high priest has sacrificed his own blood and has effectively drawn us near to God. And so, we've got all of his offices here.

And not only that, but if you've got real sharp eyes, you've got his deity here. Again, we can't take time to do it, but the framework of all of this matter of reconciliation, you can see in verse 18, it is a triune framework that he's got going.

Through him, in one spirit, we have access to the Father. And in chapter 1, that begins with this beautiful burst of praise in the opening paragraph and ends in that magnificent prayer.

All of that is Trinitarian. Three times he goes through what each person of the Trinity accomplished in his role as Savior. And he repeats the refrain of worship to the praise of his glory for Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And so, when he speaks about Christ in chapter 2, he's got that sense of Godhood wrapped up into all of this. And if we were to take the time to compare this with parallel passage in 2 Corinthians 5 that deals with reconciliation, we find that what Paul attributed to God in 2 Corinthians 5 is here attributed to Christ.

[26 : 28] In 2 Corinthians 5, it is God who reconciles. Well, here, you can see verse 14 and 15, Christ reconciles.

Back in 2 Corinthians 5, it is God who makes new creations. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. God has done that. Well, here, Christ is the creator.

And you can see he has made us, in verse 14, both one. And in verse 15, create in himself one new man. And what the apostle is doing is he sees the work of the Father and the Son as being so interchangeable.

It doesn't matter if he's talking about God the Father or God the Son. He's talking about God. And the point that he's making is powerful. Only God can create a Christian.

Only God can reconcile men to God. It is God's work. And to God be the glory. There's another aspect of the person of Christ that is here.

[27 : 37] And that is, without using the words, he is presented here as the second Adam. Because the third point is, reconciliation is really the creation of a new human race.

Now, follow closely. Follow closely. In verse 14, you see that word, who has made us? Well, that's the same word that in verse 10, when he's talking about we are his workmanship.

The root of that is the same word. It's a word that describes creation. Paul is going back to verse 10, here in verse 14. And the same thing down in verse 15, where he says that he might create in himself one new man.

That word create is the same word in verse 10. You are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. What the apostle is doing here is he's unfolding another dimension of the new creation.

See, in verse 10, that paragraph up above, primary focus of that seems to be very individual. Now, we kind of like take it personally.

[28 : 58] I was dead in trespasses and sins. I was following the devil. I was following the court. But God, marvelously, savingly by grace, came into my life.

And he made me a new creation. And the primary emphasis seems to be individual. But here in verse 14 and 15, it's corporate.

It's not that he's made me a new creation. He's made us. He's created us together. While the philosophers are arguing about the problem of the one and the many, Jesus solved it.

He made us one new man. Jew, Gentile, Christ created a new man.

It's important. He cannot overestimate the significance of what he has just said about the church of Jesus Christ.

[30 : 06] The body of new creatures. And by new creation, when he thinks of it corporately, he's not thinking of it as just a metaphor.

It's not just a picture. It is a fundamental fact of reality. He has made a body of new creations.

Again, I wish we had time to go to it.

But in 2 Corinthians 5, he defines at least a number of elements about what it is to be a new creature in Christ. That passage, you know that passage well. If any man be in Christ, he's a new creation.

Well, that's the summary of what he has just described. Paul goes on. But all of this is of God, he says. So, all right, what is it to be a new creation?

You've got to go up a few verses above that. And that's where he says, the love of Christ constrains me. He says, because we believe if he died for all, then all died.

[31 : 08] That they who live might no longer live for themselves. In other words, this new creation means that there is spiritual life in Christ Jesus. And with that new life comes a new purpose of life.

Henceforth, no longer live for themselves. But for him who died and rose again for them. And then he describes about a new judgment that we've got.

He says, from now on, he says, we don't know anyone according to the flesh. We used to know Christ according to the flesh. But being a new creature, I've got a whole new perspective on people and especially on Jesus.

And being a new creature in Christ, I see his glory. And I see him as being infinitely excellent. And I see him as being worth living for.

And that changes everything. And that's what he's got in mind here in Ephesians 2 when he speaks about the church being a corporate new creation.

[32 : 17] In Jesus Christ, we've got new eyes to see the world with. And to see each other with.

And to see Jesus with. And in Christ, we've got a new purpose about living for each other. And this is what makes the church the very opposite of the world.

Somebody has defined the world in its moral depravity as being corporate flesh.

I think that's pretty good. Just fallenness and sinful nature permeates everything and everybody.

That's the world.

Well, the church is the opposite. The church is corporate new man. Corporate regeneration.

[33 : 18] Corporate life of Christ. And you can kind of summarize it like this. Take yourself as an individual. There was a day in your life when a miracle took place.

If you're a Christian, you were united by faith to Jesus Christ. And the life of Jesus began to live in you.

That resurrection life, you were united to him in such a way that his righteousness and his image began to be stamped upon your character.

And he joined you together. And he joined you together. Didn't leave you in isolation. He joined you together with a whole bunch of other people who were united to Christ.

And in Christ, division, strife, separation, alienation was brought to an end.

[34 : 21] In Christ, you who as an individual were one with Christ became a we who are one with Christ.

And the life and the image of Jesus Christ began to be created on an entire body. It is a fascinating transformation.

But what happened is, as one new man, he took us to God. And reconciled our relationship with God.

And when our relationship with God was right, the formula for love and unity and peace between people is right as well.

That vertical relationship heals the horizontal relationship entirely. So when he thinks about this Jew-Gentile thing, he no longer thinks of them as being two groups.

[35 : 31] Jews are not just the circumcision according to the flesh anymore. In fact, we can go to chapter 4 and we see the Gentiles, those of you who are Gentiles, are no longer considered to be Gentiles.

He begins to tell us there, don't walk like the Gentiles walk. Those are Gentiles. You are not. Not two groups. Not two races.

Not two tribes. United together as a new creation in Jesus Christ. In other words, a whole new human race.

Jesus is presented here as the second Adam. See, first Adam had a commission. He was to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

But not just with human beings. He was to fill the earth with the images of God. But sin devastated that. And instead of filling the earth with the images of God, sin, condemnation, and death permeated.

[36 : 38] And Adam filled the earth with his own image. This race needed a second Adam. And Christ received the same commission.

He was to make a new creation. And to fill that creation with his image. In fact, Isaiah 53 puts that basically in words like this.

This is Isaiah 53 in verse 10. And you know the context very well. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him. He has put him to grief.

When he makes his soul an offering for sin. Hear this. He shall see his offspring. And prolong his days.

The will of the Lord will prosper in his hands. Not like first Adam. But in his hands. Out of the anguish of his soul.

[37 : 41] He will see and be satisfied. By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant. Make many to be accounted righteous. For he shall bear their iniquities.

The amazing work of Jesus Christ. In reconciling man to God. Reconciles the race. That is in his image. We are his seed.

His descendants. Washed in his blood. Given his righteousness. Having him as being our inheritance. Taking us till we are co-heirs with Christ for eternity.

It is an amazing salvation that he has accomplished. We are the people who will populate the new heavens and the new earth. He has begun that work now.

Absolutely praise God. Praise God isn't even close to what he deserves to hear from us. We've got such an amazing salvation. And what was accomplished in Christ.

[38 : 43] How he did all of this. A couple of requirements. In order to make this new creation. He has to destroy. The cause for separation.

Speaking about Jews and Gentiles here. He's talking about that middle wall of partition. See. One of the purposes. For which God gave the ordinances.

And the law of Moses. Was specifically designed to separate Jews and Gentiles. God's program. Was to isolate Israel morally and spiritually.

To preserve them. As the line through which the Messiah would come. And every family on the earth would be blessed. And so he made laws. Like.

Circumcision. Diet laws. Like. Like. The ritual laws of the temple. No. Well. All you got to do is turn to Acts chapter 20.

[39 : 46] And you see how that. Middle wall of partition. When Paul. They thought Paul brought a Gentile. Into that part of the temple. Where he was not supposed to go. Murder was on everybody's mind. And how it all devoured into that.

But what Christ did. Is he took all those laws. And in his blood. And on his body. He fulfilled them. And satisfied them. And brought them to an end. And that division. That God had made. Between Jew and Gentile. Was devastated.

And Jew and Gentile. At this point. In the new covenant. Are brothers together. Together. And with that. Every other.

Division. Falls. See. Because. I'm a Gentile. And I know what you Gentiles. Are thinking. You are thinking. My division. Really isn't basically.

[40 : 42] With the Jews anymore. But look at all the. Gentile. Gentile. Divisions. I mean. You got race. You got.

Red. Yellow. Black. And white. And everybody. Hates everybody. You got. Economics. And the 99%. Covet. The 1%.

And the 1%. Couldn't care less. About the 99%. And you got. All of that. And then you got. The educated classes. And the uneducated classes. And they can't get along. And you can break it down.

A thousand different ways. Until you come to the conclusion. California is on one end. Of the country. And everybody else. Is on the other end. Of the country. And nobody can get along. With them. What about these Gentile.

Gentile divisions. This is magnificent here. Notice how he takes the Gentiles. As a single unit. With all of their races.

[41 : 38] And all of their cultures. And all of their ethnicities. And he contemplates them as a unit. And he brings them as a unit. Together.

In Christ. And the point is. All the hostility. Is destroyed. And as a Gentile. You know exactly how it happened.

If you're a Christian. There was a day. When in your heart. And in your spirit. You knelt at the foot of the cross. Of Jesus Christ. And you looked up at that cross. And you understood. Things you never understood before.

And you understood how heinous. Sin was. Your sin. And you hated it. And you saw what a magnificent.

Savior he is. And you bowed in abject love. For the beautiful person. Who would die as a substitute. For you. And the old man.

[42 : 37] Died. And the hate was taken out. And love. Was put in. And the point is. All of you different Gentiles.

From whatever ethnic background. From whatever cultural background. Any educational. They're all one. The foot of the cross. And Jesus Christ.

For every one of you. Was worth living for. The point is. In order for him. To unite. He had to destroy. The foundations.

And the reasons for division. And he had to do one other thing. In verse 17. He had to come and preach peace. You remember Luke 24.

When Jesus rose from the dead. And he met the disciples. In the upper room. You remember what he said. Three times. Peace be unto you. What's fascinating is.

[43 : 39] He didn't say that to him. Any other time. His crucifixion. And his resurrection. Accomplished. The peace. Of reconciliation. There's a.

Passage. The gospel of John. Where Jesus looks ahead. To the time of his ascension. When he would be out of the earth. And he says in John 10.

Other sheep have I. Who are not of this fold. Not of the Jewish fold. Them also. I.

Must. Bring. They will listen. To my voice. There will be one. Flock. One.

Shepherd. Shepherd. When Paul. Came to Ephesus. And he began to preach. Jesus Christ. It wasn't just the words.

[44 : 38] Of a man. But there were sheep. That were out there. That were hearing the gospel. And they heard. In the preaching. Of a human being. The very voice.

Of the Christ. And the good shepherd. Spoke to them. In such a powerful way. Because see. Being a new creature. Means that God creates. New ears. To listen. To a voice.

That you didn't know before. And you as a Christian. You got up. And you followed him. Just like Matthew did. Out of his tax gathering office. When Paul begins.

To expound. This whole idea. Of a new creation. And. I'm in chapter 4 now. And I'm a little bit bothered. By the ESV translation. Speaking about it.

As he goes through the contrast. Between what they used to be. And what the Gentiles are. In verse 20. He says. But that's not the way you learn Christ. Assuming that you have heard.

[45 : 38] My version says. About him. There is no about there. Assuming you have heard him. And were taught in him. As the truth is in Jesus. To put off your old self.

Which belongs to the former manner of life. And is corrupt through deceitful desires. And to be renewed in the spirit of your minds. And to put on the new self. Created in the likeness of God. In true righteousness and holiness. That's the new creation. And it comes when Jesus Christ. The great ascended.

Enthroned priest. King. Begins to preach. And what he preaches. Is peace. The gospel. Of peace. And with the power.

That is only in the son of God. He gives ears to hear that. And so not only. Did he put away. What caused the division. He came. And preached peace.

[46 : 35] Have you heard that. I mean every one of you. Of every age. You've heard the gospel many, many times.

From this very pulpit. Undoubtedly. But have you only heard the voice of a man. Have you heard the voice of Jesus Christ. Christ. Pronouncing peace.

In his blood. Pronouncing that that old depravity. Can be wiped away. And that old helplessness. And hopelessness. Can be gone.

Have you heard Christ. Christ. And have you gotten up. And followed him. Because I tell you. That is. Reconciliation. Being made at peace with God.

Through Jesus Christ. And at peace. With all of his people. So basically. In terms of the elements of reconciliation.

[47 : 35] You've got it. Reconciliation is a reversal. Complete. And thorough. And reconciliation. Reconciliation is in that one.

Effectual. All sufficient. Mediator. Whose blood is necessary. And sufficient. Who never fails. To save those for whom he died. And that reconciliation. Unites you to a whole people. A church of Jesus Christ. See. This is the doctrine of the church.

The reason Paul brings up reconciliation. In Ephesians. Is because he's preaching the doctrine of the church. The church is meant to show.

That practical love. That visible unity. And that deeply felt oneness.

[48 : 37] That adorns the doctrine of reconciliation. Reconciliation. If our lives are indeed. Object lessons. Of the gospel of reconciliation.

Then it must live in the congregation. Of the people of God. Can you get a drift. Of how wicked. The sin of schism is. The very divisiveness. That sometimes creeps into churches. It is a flagrant denial.

Of the cross of Jesus Christ. In Ephesians. When he expounds all this. In very practical ways. He says things like.

Keep the unity of the spirit. In the bond of peace. He says things like. That are absolutely impossible for. He says. Imitate God.

[49 : 36] That's chapter 5. In verse 1. Do you know the verse before that? Be kind. One to another. Tender hearted. Forgiving one another.

As God for Christ's sake. Has forgiven you. Imitate God. And he says. Walk. In love. Like Christ. Who loved us. And gave himself. For us. And then he goes on. And he describes. This magnificent body. Of believers.

This body. Of new creations. That live in love. And exercise harmony. And love the Lord Jesus. And find unity in him. Brethren.

We fall too far short. Let us rise. Let us rise. To the glory of Christ.

[50 : 33] By his grace. And for his glory. To the praise. Of the glory. Of his grace. Let us put in shoe leather. That there is a God. Who reconciles.

Let's pray together. God our father. We thank you. For the mercies. That are in Christ Jesus. We thank you. For your faithfulness. And for your love. Now our Lord.

We bow before you. Help us in Jesus name. And for his sake. To put this gospel. So thoroughly. In the forefront. Of our minds. And hearts.

That it is visible. To all around us. That he would be glorified. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen.