

THE GIFT OF RECONCILIATION Prt 1

One of the best things that God gave human beings is the gift of relationships.

Without relationships, life has no meaning.

If you think about it, you are what you are because of the relationships around you. At the center of your wellbeing there are relationships. Some relationships are straightforward whilst some are complicated. Lately I have learnt of a new type of relationship called “situationship” – apparently this is when a guy and a girl are friends but somehow one of them wished it was more than just friendship. This is when we say it is complex.

God created us as social beings and one of the reasons for our creation was for fellowship with God.

My relationship with my wife has defined a lot of what you see, it defines my dress code, it defines my outlook to life, it determines how all the other relationships go.

- It sounds like I am hyping up this issue of relationships but before you shut me down, let's get a little bit deeper with this issue; how was it for you when one of those key relationships soured up. How was it when you could not speak to your parents for a whole year, how was it when you could not see eye to eye with your previous pastor.
- The reality is that when a relationship goes down, it goes down with a whole lot of other things.
- Now, what if I tell you that God can restore some of those relationships, with your permission and involvement of cause.
- This brings me to our topic this morning. I want to talk to you on the subject matter **THE GIFT OF RECONCILIATION.**
- Yes, this is a tough one and I can hear you saying “pastor couldn't you find another topic”. Well, if you are feeling like that, then this message is for you.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

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- Here we have one the most uplifting scriptures penned down by Paul. In here, Paul is telling us of God's full intention when Jesus came down to earth.
- God's intention as mentioned in verse 18 was to reconcile humanity to Himself through Christ.
- Reconciliation signifies a change of status of relationship. It implies that there was a breakdown in a relationship and now there is harmony and fellowship.
- Earlier on I alluded to the pain that happens whenever a significant relationship dies and saints, the greatest breakdown in relationship is what happened when man sinned against God in the garden of Eden.
- That sin ripped through the heart of God and brought a rift between God and man.
- Something outside of man, needed to happen to redress that enmity between man and God.
- God, out of His own volition and love, sent Jesus His only son with the gift of reconciliation.
- The cross is the symbol of reconciliation and because of the cross, we were reconciled, and all things became new.
- Because of the death of Jesus, you and I are no longer powerless and enemies of God. Something beautiful happens when reconciliation happens.
- Because of this reconciliation, you and I have fellowship with Father God, you and I have an inheritance in God, you and I have a future with God.
- This is not where the story ends, look at verse 19b:

2 Corinthians 5: 19b...And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors...

- Jesus came as the tool for reconciliation and after reconciling us to God, He commissioned you and I to carry on with distributing the gift of reconciliation.
- For a moment, I want you to think of all the relationships that have broken down around you and consider what it would look like if reconciliation is given an opportunity to unfold.
- Many of you are hurting because of severed relationships. Whenever we have dysfunctional relationships around us, it is difficult to make meaningful progress in life.

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- God wants to heal some relationships in this coming season and wants your involvement in doing so.
- What did it take for Jesus to fulfill the mandate of reconciliation? If we do what Jesus did in reconciling us to God, we will be able to reconcile with many people around us.

1. Humility mixed with self-denial paves the way for reconciliation.

- Whenever a relationship has been damaged, there will be damaged emotions, trust is betrayed, there will be a lot of animosity and unhappiness.
- For reconciliation to happen, one of the aggrieved parties must choose to humble themselves and exercise grace in the moment.
- There is no guarantee that the other person will come along but someone has to start the process so as to give reconciliation a chance.
- It takes a spirit of humility and selflessness to give reconciliation an opportunity.
- Our Lord Jesus was that person, who decided to come to sinful people so as to give reconciliation a chance.

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

- Jesus denied Himself of the heavenly privileges and glory and came down to earth as a man.
- This was a humbling moment for the son of man. This needed to happen so as to create an opportunity for reconciliation.
- Paul is then encouraging you and I to have the same attitude regarding relationships.
- Be the mature person, swallow your pride and build a bridge for reconciliation.
- If you have been the wronged person in the bad relationship, it will take humility for you to create contact with the person who wronged you.
- Jesus didn't have to come on earth but because the relationship between man and the Godhead was important, the Godhead had to make a difficult choice.
- You will choose humility and self-denial if the damaged relationship is important to you.

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- What could be unlocked in your life by rebuilding certain relationships around you?
- Now, you might be asking “why should I be the one to make the first move?” The answer to that question is found in verse 18:

2 Corinthians 5: 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

- When you are reconciled with God, there is a transference of the ability to exercise the same gift of reconciliation towards others.
- It means that in every child of God, there is a grace to reconcile with people.
- The same Paul says in *Romans 12 :17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Carefully consider what is right in the eyes of everybody. 18 If it is possible on your part, live at peace with everyone.*
- Reconciliation might only result in two people being humane towards one another. If he is the father of your children and the guy cheated on you, I am not saying go back to him but I am saying let there be peace between the two of you.
- If you are the older party in the relationship, it will take humility for you to come and create an opportunity for reconciliation. I want to challenge everyone in that scenario, to take the high road and make it easier for the younger person.

2. Be decisive about reconciliation.

- The devil does not want functional and healthy relationships and because of that, he will give you many reasons why it cannot happen.
- The day that you consider reconciliation, you will start seeing how the timing is not right, you will start convincing yourself about the other person’s unreadiness.
- What am I saying, be careful of distractions as you consider reconciliation.
- Taking a leaf from our Lord Jesus, when the idea came up in heaven, Jesus did not waste time asking for the idea to be implemented at a better time.
- He prepared himself and asked for a body to be made available.
- Reconciliation is highly contested in the spirit because of the innumerable benefits that come out of it.
- Jesus was very decisive and determined about the matter.

Hebrews 10:5 Therefore when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. 6 In burnt offerings and

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sacrifices for sin You have had no pleasure. 7 Then I said, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Your will, O God." 8 Above, when He said, "Sacrifice and offering, and burnt offerings and offering for sin You did not desire, neither did You have pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the Law), 9 then He said, "Lo, I come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first so that He may establish the second.

- When God prompts you to initiate reconciliation, walk in obedience and decide to follow through.
- You need to make up your mind, you need to shut out all the distractions and lies of the devil and proceed ahead with intent.
- When Jesus came on earth, He continued with His decisiveness, not allowing anything to derail the reconciliation agenda.
- This is indicated by the type of talk He had.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but to do the will of Him who sent Me.

John 4:34 Jesus explained, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.

John 12:27 And My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify Your name! Then there came a voice from the heaven saying, I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.

- So, saints, we need humility and decisiveness so as to give a chance to reconciliation.