

“Peace through the Blood of His Cross”
(Colossians 1:19-20)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. If there's anything we've learned from our Reformation Series thus far, it's this:
 - a. If we want to see things change around us – to see reform in government, economics, society's morals, even in the way our nation treats the environment – hearts need to be changed.
 - b. And if we want to see hearts changed, we must communicate the Gospel – it alone is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes.
 - c. It's when we communicate the Gospel that the Spirit of God works on hearts to bring His people to Christ.
 - d. This is what He did almost three hundred years ago in England – through a small band of men (and women) armed with nothing more than the simple message of the Gospel – He turned England around.

2. But if we are to communicate this message, there are a few things we need:
 - a. We need to believe that God's Word is true in everything it says – that God exists, that there is a heaven and hell, that it does matter what we believe and how we live.
 - b. We must believe that men are at war with God and God with them, that because of they are, they are lost and will perish forever; but that the Lord really offers to end that warfare and give them eternal life.
 - c. We must be convinced that the Gospel is the only message the Lord uses to save – that there aren't many ways of salvation; there is only one – through Jesus Christ.
 - d. We need to be convinced that the Lord still uses the Gospel to save – that He will bring His people to salvation through our witness of it.
 - e. And we must love the Lord and our neighbor enough to make the necessary effort to get that Gospel out to them – if our hearts aren't in it, we will do little or nothing to reach other; but if they are, then there is nothing that will stop us.

B. Preview.

1. The Gospel is the power of God to salvation.
 - a. It is the Word through which we can be reconciled to God, through which His infinite love is revealed.
 - b. But how can there be a Gospel? How can a just God who has been infinitely offended by our sins, offer us His love in Jesus Christ?
 - c. He can do so only through a just payment - one that is great enough to pay for our all our sins.
 - d. This is what He has done through the cross of His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - (i) Jesus made that payment.

(ii) By shedding His blood on the cross – by laying down His own life – He has brought peace.

2. This is what we'll see this morning: In order to reconcile us to God,
 - a. The Father had to be willing to give us His Son.
 - b. The Son had to become one with us.
 - c. He had to be willing to make this payment.
 - d. And His payment had to be great enough to save us.

II. Sermon.

A. First, that you might be reconciled to God, the Father had to be willing to give His Son for you.

1. First, He had to be willing to provide a payment.
 - a. He didn't have to provide any payment.
 - (i) He could have left you and all men to perish in your guilt.
 - (ii) We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).
 - (iii) The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).
 - (iv) He justly could have executed His justice on each one of us.
 - b. But He chose not to do so:
 - (i) He chose to have mercy.
 - (ii) He chose to give grace.
 - (iii) He chose to love – love is the only thing that could have moved Him, not His justice or hatred of sin – these would only result in our destruction.
 - (iv) “For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself” (v. 19-20).
2. Having purposed to make this payment – which He did from all eternity – there was also only one way He could do it – through His Son.
 - a. We'll see in a few moments that only One who is divine could make this payment.
 - b. But it was also important that the One who did it be God because of the love and worship we would owe – not only to the One who would give us the sacrifice, but also to the One who would make it.
 - c. And so the Father, out of His infinite love, gave that which was most precious to Him – His only begotten Son – that you might be reconciled to Him.

B. Second, for you to be reconciled to God, the Son had to become one with you – part of the human race.

1. Justice demands that the one who commits the offense be punished.
 - a. There is only one exception: a substitute.
 - (i) As long as payment is made, justice is satisfied.
 - (ii) And so the Lord will accept the payment from another
 - b. The substitute, however, must be equal.

- (i) You may not give the life of your dog or your cat for your life – the payment isn't equal.
 - (ii) It's true that in the Old Covenant, it appeared that the Lord was granting forgiveness on the basis of animal sacrifices, but that wasn't the case.
 - (a) The author to the Hebrews writes, "For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Heb. 10:4).
 - (b) It's impossible because the payment isn't of the right kind or of the right value – only a human sacrifice will suffice.
 - (1) The Lord abhorred human sacrifices because they were typically the involuntary sacrifice of innocents to worship false gods.
 - (2) In justice, however, if a man chose to give his life for another, that would be acceptable – but few would be willing to do this.
 - (c) Why did the Lord forgive His people when they sacrificed animals?
 - (1) It was only because they pointed to the One who would become a man, to the One who would willingly lay down His life.
 - (2) They pointed to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
 - (3) When those sacrifices were offered in faith, the penitent one was forgiven for Christ's sake.
2. The point is this: Jesus became a man that He might sacrifice Himself to save you.
- a. He took on Himself your nature.
 - (i) He was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary, by the Holy Spirit, so that He wouldn't be infected with the sin of Adam.
 - (ii) But He was of her substance – He partook of her nature – that He might be one with you.
 - b. And in your nature, He did what was necessary to save you.
 - (i) He obeyed the righteous requirements of God.
 - (ii) And He died to pay the penalty for your sins on the cross.
 - (iii) Again, the author to the Hebrews writes, "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives" (Heb. 2:14-15).
 - c. The Father was willing to send His Son into the world, and the Son was willing to come into this world as a man to save you through His obedience and death.
- C. Third, that you might be reconciled to God, Jesus had to be willing to make the payment.
- 1. Sometimes we forget that Jesus took the obligation to pay a debt that He didn't owe.
 - a. He is the absolutely holy and blameless eternal Son of God.

- b. As a man He did nothing but what was pleasing and honoring to His Father from the heart.
 - c. He didn't deserve to be punished, to suffer, or to die.
2. But He was willing to go through these things to save you.
- a. He was willing to take your guilt on Himself. Peter writes, "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross" (1 Pet. 2:24).
 - b. He was willing to stand in your place before His Father's bar of justice.
 - c. He was willing to face God's wrath – to face hell on the cross – as He became sin for you. Paul writes, "He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21).
 - d. Why was He willing?
 - (i) Because He loved His Father enough to carry out His will to save you – He prayed in the garden, "not My will, but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42).
 - (ii) Because He loved you enough to lay down His life – if you believe in His name this morning.
 - (iii) And because He knew He would receive you as the reward of His work (Isa. 53:10-11).
 - e. The Father was willing to give you His Son out of His infinite love, and the Son was willing to become one with you, to take your place in judgment, and to suffer hell and die, because of His love for you.
- D. Finally, for you to be reconciled to God, Jesus' payment had to be great enough.
1. We saw earlier that the Father could accept another person in your place. But how could He accept one person for so many?
 - a. The Bible says that the blood of Christ redeemed a multitude which is so numerous that no one can number it (Rev. 7:9).
 - b. How could the Father accept the payment of a mere man for so many and be just, especially when the sins of each are infinitely serious?
 2. The answer is that Jesus was no mere man.
 - a. If He had been, then Satan could object – he could argue that God was not just.
 - b. But he has no such argument – Jesus is worthy.
 - (i) He is more than a man.
 - (ii) Paul writes, "For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him" (Col. 1:19).
 - (a) This is the fullness of the Godhead.
 - (b) Not that Jesus had the entirety of the divine nature in Himself – but being God, He possessed the entirety of that infinite Being.
 - (c) He is God in human flesh, and being God, He is infinitely precious, infinitely valuable and can make an infinite payment.

- (d) Only He could – which is why it was necessary that the One who die for us be God.
- c. Through His death, He has fully discharged our debt and satisfied His Father's justice.
 - d. Through His death, we have peace with God.
 - e. Through His death, we are reconciled to God.
 - f. "For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. 1:19-20).
 - g. And don't forget why He did this: Peter writes, "That we might die to sin and live to righteousness" (1 Pet. 2:24).
 - h. Has your debt been removed? Do you have peace with God? Have you been reconciled with Him? If not, then trust in Him this morning.
 - i. The Father, out of His great love, sent Jesus His Son into the world to save; Jesus, out of His great love for the Father and for man, was willing to become a man to lay down His life; if you are willing to come to Him, He will save you. Look to Him now in faith and receive His offer of life and love.
 - j. For those of you who have, look now to the Table to remind you of His love and His sacrifice, and prepare to come in faith. Amen.

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