

Our God Saves



February 3rd

Agents of Reconciliation

AGENTS OF RECONCILIATION

Series – Our God Saves

- there is not a ‘type’
 - wandering & wayward
 - uninterested & unlikely
 - religious & resistant
 - rebellious & running

*God’s Arm is not too short!

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Reconciling Man to Himself:

we were corrupted, captive, condemned
we are given:

- Life instead of Death
- Freedom instead of Captivity
- Kindness instead of Condemnation

* God has taken action, has done what we could not, and offers to us new life, reconciled to Him

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2 Cor. 5:17-21

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 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 men’s sins against them.”

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“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. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

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1. We Are a New Creation. vs. 17-18
 - new people – new creation
 - once dead in trespass and sin – alive
 - once enslaved to sin nature – free
 - once guilty and condemned – clean
 - old has gone – new has come!
 - how? - *“from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ”*

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2. Called to Live Out the New Life

vs.18-21

- designed to play out in public – seen
- agents:
 - active, participating, involved in
- ambassadors:
 - representing, speaking for, having best interest at heart and in action.
- *“committed to us the message of reconciliation”*

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3. Agents and Ambassadors reflecting...

a) Love

- motive for God in doing for us
- we are the recipients of that love
- told clearly to have this love

Mk 12:31 *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”*

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John 13:34-35 *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

- what is done from duty and obligation easily seen, and easily discounted

- what is done from a heart of love demands a deep response

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b) Serving

- Jesus came as a servant to us

- Phil. 2:6-8 *“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

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⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!”

- call's for us to lay down entitlement, and change our attitudes.

- Jesus washing the Disciples feet, is clear about his expectations for disciples.

John 13:12-17

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c) Forgiveness vs. 19,21

- our sin taken – his righteousness

given

- removed as far as east is from west

- to be reconciled – forgiveness

essential

- Jesus connects our experience and practice

Matt 6:12 *“Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors”*

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Question of Peter – Matt 18:21-22 “*Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?”*”

²² *Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times”*

- Parable of the Debtor – vs.23ff
- To be an agent of forgiveness you must:

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- forgive self – God has, you need to
- forgive family – yours, of God, extended
- forgive others – offense, injustice, failure

*cannot reflect what God has done, be an agent of reconciliation with unforgiveness in your life.

d) Extending Grace

- mercy – not receiving what I do deserve
- grace – receiving what I don't deserve

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Eph 1:7-10 *“In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordant with the riches of God’s grace ⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹ And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,”*

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2 COR. 4:15 *“All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.”*

- living lives where the grace we experienced spills out towards others, is essential to being agents of reconciliation

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2 Cor. 2:14-17 *“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him. ¹⁵ For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?”*

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SO WHAT?

1. You Are a New Creation In Christ
 - old is gone, reconciled to God
2. You Have been Given a Role
 - agents – active in dispensing
 - ambassadors – reflecting the values

*God has chosen you, what kind of reflection are you being?

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3. Essential Evidences for us to consider
 - a) Am I motivated by Love?
 - what's stopping God doing this in me?
 - b) Am I Serving with Humility?
 - would those around me see Jesus in my service to those around me?
 - c) Am I Living in Forgiveness?
 - d) Am I intentionally being an agent of Grace that allows others to encounter Christ